



University  
of Glasgow

Richter, M. (2017) Artists and artisans of polychrome wooden altarpieces in Southern Germany, Austria and Switzerland (c. 1600-1780). In: Kroesen, J., Nyborg, E. and Sauerberg, M.-L. (eds.) *From Conservation to Interpretation: Studies of Religious Art (c. 1100-c. 1800) in Northern and Central Europe in Honour of Peter Tångeberg*. Series: Art and religion (7). Peeters: Leuven, pp. 305-338. ISBN 9789042934665

There may be differences between this version and the published version. You are advised to consult the publisher's version if you wish to cite from it.

<http://eprints.gla.ac.uk/139310/>

Deposited on: 5 April 2017

Enlighten – Research publications by members of the University of Glasgow  
<http://eprints.gla.ac.uk>

This pdf is a digital offprint of your contribution in J. Kroesen, E. Nyborg & M.L. Sauerberg (eds), *From Conservation to Interpretation*, ISBN 978-90-429-3466-5

The copyright on this publication belongs to Peeters Publishers.

As author you are licensed to make printed copies of the pdf or to send the unaltered pdf file to up to 50 relations. You may not publish this pdf on the World Wide Web – including websites such as academia.edu and open-access repositories – until three years after publication. Please ensure that anyone receiving an offprint from you observes these rules as well.

If you wish to publish your article immediately on open-access sites, please contact the publisher with regard to the payment of the article processing fee.

For queries about offprints, copyright and republication of your article, please contact the publisher via [peeters@peeters-leuven.be](mailto:peeters@peeters-leuven.be)

— Art & Religion 7 —

FROM CONSERVATION TO INTERPRETATION

STUDIES OF RELIGIOUS ART (*c.* 1100 – *c.* 1800)

IN NORTHERN AND CENTRAL EUROPE

IN HONOUR OF PETER TÅNGBERG

edited by

Justin KROESEN, Ebbe NYBORG and Marie Louise SAUERBERG



PEETERS

Leuven – Paris – Bristol, CT

2017

# CONTENTS

## INTRODUCTION

- Peter Tångeberg – Conservator and Art Historian . . . . . 1  
Ebbe NYBORG

## THE HIGH MIDDLE AGES

- Some Notes Regarding the Conservation of the Viklau Madonna  
(Gotland, Sweden) . . . . . 11  
Håkan LINDBERG
- Ein rätselhaftes Wunder der Kunst – Fragen angesichts der Freiburger  
Goldenen Pforte . . . . . 23  
Markus HÖRSCH
- Polychrome Light in Medieval Norwegian Church Art (12th-13th  
Centuries) . . . . . 57  
Kaja KOLLANDSRUD
- The Master of the Næstved Virgin and his Workshop. Image Making  
in Denmark, *c.* 1300. . . . . 83  
Ebbe NYBORG
- A Furniture Fragment from Wells Cathedral. Revelations of Thirteenth-  
Century English Polychromy . . . . . 107  
Marie Louise SAUERBERG, Helen HOWARD & Warwick RODWELL

## THE LATE MIDDLE AGES

- Sakrale Kunst um 1400 im nördlichen Vorpommern . . . . . 139  
Detlef WITT
- Applikationen aus Weissmetall an Altarretabeln 1400-1450 in Mittel-  
und Norddeutschland . . . . . 173  
Peter KNÜVENER
- Retabel und Tabernakelschrein. Auf Spurensuche nach einer nieder-  
ländischen Sonderkonfiguration in der spätmittelalterlichen Altar-  
ausstattung . . . . . 217  
Justin KROESEN

Eine <i>Maria lactans</i> von Michel Erhart. Eine unbekannte Kleinskulptur der Ulmer Spätgotik . . . . .	259
Stefan ROLLER & Harald THEISS	

#### THE EARLY MODERN PERIOD

Konfessionelle Bilderwelten – Ein kurzer Abriss zum Werk und zur Rezeptionsgeschichte Bartholomäus Strobels d. J.. . . . .	285
Agnieszka GAŚIOR	
Artists and Artisans of Polychrome Wooden Altarpieces in Southern Germany, Austria and Switzerland (c. 1600-1780) . . . . .	305
Mark RICHTER	
A Colourful Secular Relic – Peter Tångeberg's Reconstruction of the Polychromy of the Royal Warship Vasa . . . . .	339
Unn PLAHTER	
LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS . . . . .	359
BIBLIOGRAPHY OF DR PETER TÅNGEBERG, 1965-2014 . . . . .	361

ARTISTS AND ARTISANS  
OF POLYCHROME WOODEN ALTARPIECES  
IN SOUTHERN GERMANY, AUSTRIA  
AND SWITZERLAND (c. 1600-1780)

Mark RICHTER

In the past, art historians discussing polychrome wooden altarpieces often tended to consider only the sculptor, thereby ignoring the polychromer and other craftsmen, such as the carpenter or joiner, who were also involved in the creation of such a work.<sup>1</sup> This may seem surprising since polychromy has been an integral component of European wooden and stone sculpture over the centuries. Although sculpture and painting are traditionally executed by different hands, a polychromed sculpture was conceived as a single, seamless work of art when completed. Therefore, there was an interdependency of the sculptor's skills and those who polychromed the surfaces. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the so-called 'preparer' (German: Bereiter), an artisan who has often been overlooked in this specific work relationship or collaboration, also played an important role.<sup>2</sup> A sculptor had to create a figure whose form was clearly defined, while the polychromer, and in many cases the preparer as well, had to respect the specific texture and details of the wood and the carving he or she was about to paint. The technical aspects of creating polychrome sculpture define the very essence of the sculpture, not only in terms of its aesthetic appeal, but also in the context of its religious interpretation. However, because they

<sup>1</sup> This is confirmed by Roberta Panzanelli, who stated: "As affecting as polychromy really is, the reluctance to accept colour as appropriate to sculpture has led to some bewildering scholarly results"; see: R. PANZANELLI, *Beyond the Pale: Polychromy and Western Art*, in R. PANZANELLI — E.D. SCHMIDT — K. LAPATIN (eds), *The Color of Life: Polychromy in Sculpture from Antiquity to the Present* (exh. cat. The J. Paul Getty Museum & The Getty Research Institute), Los Angeles CA, 2008, 2-17, here 4.

<sup>2</sup> A recent study shows that the specialization of another type of artisan, the 'preparer', also needs to be taken into consideration when discussing collaboration and workshop organization in German-speaking Central Europe. Preparers were a specific group of painters who did not design or compose, but instead carried out specific tasks such as gilding and polychromy as well as all the preparatory work associated with painting and polychroming. J. NADOLNY, *One Craft, many Names: Gilders, Preparers, and Polychrome Painters in the 15th and 16th Centuries*, in J. BRIDGLAND (ed.), *15th Triennial Meeting of the ICOM Committee for Conservation, New Delhi, 22-26 September 2008* (ICOM-CC Preprints), New Delhi, 2008, 10-17.

chose to work in wood rather than in the more classical mediums of marble or bronze, Central European sculptors and polychromers and their works have often been dismissed by scholars of Western art.

The history of specialization within the painters' and polychromers' craft in German-speaking Central Europe is complex and has still not been completely defined, although we know that, in general, the production of religious sculptures and altarpieces was strictly governed by the guilds since the Middle Ages.<sup>3</sup> In the late Middle Ages, the practical exam given to journeymen panel painters who applied for master status in certain cities included the task of painting sculpture (German: Faßmalerei).<sup>4</sup> Less frequently, the sculptor was also the painter of the work, as was the case with Veit Stoss' Annunciation Group (1517/18) in the St Lorenzkirche in Nuremberg.<sup>5</sup> This exception was possible because Stoss worked in a self-governed Free Imperial City (German: Freie Reichsstadt) where painting and sculpture were considered to be free arts and, though overseen by the Nuremberg City Council, were not subject to guild regulations.<sup>6</sup>

During the Middle Ages, each guild had its own regulations, which strictly delineated the different spheres of competence and regulated commercial practice. One of the more significant, but also more problematic, rules was that wood sculptors were not allowed to paint sculpture and painters were not allowed to carve wood; this situation remained unchanged at least until the eighteenth century.<sup>7</sup> Although this formula sounds simple, the reality was often

<sup>3</sup> For more information on the specialization of Northern European painters and polychromers in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, see: H. HUTH, *Künstler und Werkstatt der Spätgotik*, Darmstadt, 1967 (revised ed., originally published Augsburg, 1923); M. HASSE, *Maler, Bildschnitzer und Vergolder in den Zünften des späten Mittelalters*, in *Jahrbuch der Hamburger Kunstsammlungen*, 21 (1976), 31-42; See also: NADOLNY, *One Craft, many Names*, on the specialized type of craftsman, the 'preparer', which makes it very clear just how complex this topic is.

<sup>4</sup> T. BRACHERT — F. KOBLER, *Fassung von Bildwerken*, in *Reallexikon zur deutschen Kunstgeschichte*, vol. 7, München, 1979, col. 743-826, here 748-752.

<sup>5</sup> J. RASMUSSEN, *Der Englische Gruß*, in R. KAHSNITZ (ed.), *Veit Stoss in Nürnberg: Werke des Meisters und seiner Schule in Nürnberg und Umgebung*, München, 1983, 194-209, here 202. It is also documented that Stoss polychromed Tilman Riemenschneider's famous Münnertstadt altarpiece in 1505/06, see: J. CHAPUIS (ed.), *Tilman Riemenschneider. Master Sculptor of the Late Middle Ages* (The National Gallery of Art, Washington & The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York), New Haven CT — London, 1999, 213-216.

<sup>6</sup> M. BAXANDALL, *The Limewood Sculptures of Renaissance Germany*, New Haven CT — London, 1980, 106.

<sup>7</sup> Huth mentioned several surviving contracts which confirm this specialization: *Künstler und Werkstatt*, 70. A good example of this division of labour between the sculptor (Tilman

very different. The intimate relationship between panel painting and polychrome wooden sculpture and their production for an altarpiece makes matters even more complicated, and it appears to have been a constant cause of quarrels and discussion among the guilds in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. In some cities, painters were allowed to hire their own sculptors, which meant that they were in the position to deliver finished polychrome sculptures.<sup>8</sup> This naturally led to angry protests by the sculptors.<sup>9</sup>

Although guild regulations strictly forbade sculptors from painting their works themselves, they must have been intimately acquainted with a wide range of polychroming techniques, the materials involved (colourants, binders, metallic leaves and powders) and the additional work it entailed before and after (engraving, chasing and punching).<sup>10</sup> Evidence for this in the eighteenth

Riemenschneider) and the painter (Johann Wagenknecht of Würzburg) is documented on a parchment inscription found in the cavity of the Steinach crucifix from 1518; see: J. BIER, *Tilman Riemenschneider. Die späten Werke in Holz*, Wien, 1978, 125. We find a very similar situation in Spain (c. 1350-1700), where the production of religious sculptures was strictly governed by guilds: the guild of carpenters (carpinteros) for the sculptors (escultores), and the guild of painters (pintores) for the painters who polychromed them. For more information on the guilds in medieval Spain see: J. BERG-SOBRE, *Behind the Altar Table. The Development of the Painted Retable in Spain, 1350-1500*, Columbia MO, 1989. In Golden Age Spain, sculptors would carve their figures and prepare them 'in white' (en blanco) with gesso but were strictly prohibited from polychroming these works themselves. This type of work was reserved for a special painter commonly known as a painter of (religious) imagery (pintor de ymaginería). This title appears on all the diplomas (cartas de exámenes) awarded to painters who had been technically examined before the painter's guild (in Spanish: gremio). Only then were they allowed to practise their art or trade and legally sign contracts. It is documented that Diego Velázquez took and passed the exam for 'pintores de ymaginería', and the same is also suspected of Francisco de Zurbarán, see: X. BRAY, *The Sacred made Real. Spanish Painting and Sculpture 1600-1700*, in *The Sacred made Real: Spanish Painting and Sculpture 1600-1700* (exh. cat. The National Gallery), London, 2009, 15-44, here 18 and 28.

<sup>8</sup> The guilds in Basel (1463) and Munich (1475) allowed painters to hire their own sculptors, which means that they were in the position to deliver finished polychrome sculptures. See: BAXANDALL, *The Limewood Sculptures*, 112 and H. PORTSTEFFEN, *Form and Polychromy: Two Different Concepts in One Object. Notes on Seventeenth-Century Sculpture Workshop Practices in Bavaria*, in V. DORGE — F. CAREY HOWLETT (eds), *Painted Wood: History and Conservation*, Los Angeles CA, 1998, 156-165, here 159.

<sup>9</sup> BAXANDALL, *The Limewood Sculptures*, 112.

<sup>10</sup> For research on this aspect, especially in connection with works by the Bavarian sculptor Ignaz Günther and the polychromers he worked with, see the following publications: F. BUCHENRIEDER, *Gefaste Bildwerke*, in M. PETZET (ed.), *Arbeitshefte des Bayerischen Landesamtes für Denkmalpflege*, 40, München, 1990, 87; S. BRÜHLMANN — E. EMMERLING — E. MAYER, *Vnd(er) Direction gemacht worden. Faßmaler und Kistler an Werken von Ignaz Günther*, in *Jahrbuch des Vereins für Christliche Kunst*, 20 (1998), 123; and R. KARBACHER, *The Altmanstein Crucifix by Ignaz Günther*, in M. KÜHLENTHAL — S. MIURA (eds), *Historical*

century is an invoice for the high altarpiece in Baldersheim (Franconia, Germany) by the sculptor Johann Michael Joseph Auwera (1711-1758), who in 1753 received payment for his assessment of the polychromy carried out on his work.<sup>11</sup> To guarantee that their sculpture maintained the high quality expected of them, many sculptors frequently collaborated with a small number of trusted polychrome painters with whom they were familiar. Meinrad Guggenbichler and Ignaz Günther are two sculptors for whom this practice is clearly documented (Fig. 1).<sup>12</sup>

### The situation in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries

Since the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, it had been more or less common practice in Southern Germany and Austria to commission large projects such as altarpieces or other ecclesiastical furnishings to only one master, who would act as the general contractor with various subcontractors.<sup>13</sup> This meant that a painter, sculptor, or in some cases a carpenter, carried out part of the work in his own workshop and subcontracted additional work to other artists and/or artisans.<sup>14</sup> In such situations, the creative idea of the object was attributed to the artist who controlled, signed, and delivered the work. There

*Polychromy. Polychrome Sculpture in Germany and Japan*, München, 2004, 72-87, here 73. Ulrich Schiessl also emphasized this aspect, as well as the strict division of work between painter-polychromer, carpenter and sculptor, which is documented for some altarpieces in Bavaria, although a few exceptions are also mentioned, see: U. SCHIESSL, *Rokokofassung und Materialillusion. Untersuchung zur Polychromie sakraler Bildwerke im süddeutschen Rokoko*, Mittenwald, 1979, 10-11.

<sup>11</sup> G. MENTH, *Die Bildhauerfamilie Auwera in Aub. Zu Leben und Werk der Bildhauer im 18. Jahrhundert zwischen Main und Tauber* (Stadt Aub: Kunst und Geschichte, 2), Wolfratshausen, 1987, 199, Q19.

<sup>12</sup> Two sculptors for whom this is very evident are Meinrad Guggenbichler and Ignaz Günther. Guggenbichler collaborated with the painter and polychromer Matthias Wichelhammer on a total of eight altarpieces in Upper Austria, see: M. RICHTER, '...verguldt und die Fuederung an Khlaidern schenist lassirt werden sole...'. *The Technique of Coloured Glazes on the Holy Ghost and St. Sebastian Altarpieces in the Former Monastery Church of St. Michael in Mondsee (Upper Austria)*, in E. EMMERLING — M. KÜHLENTHAL — M. RICHTER (eds), *Lüsterfassungen des Barock und Rokoko = Coloured Glazes on Metal Leaf from the Baroque and Rococo Period*, München, 2013, 207-282, here 208. It is documented that Günther mainly worked together with Nikolaus Nepauer and Augustin Demmel, both of whom were painters, polychromers and gilders. For more information, see: KARBACHER, *The Altmannstein Crucifix*, 80 and BRÜHLMANN — EMMERLING — MAYER, *Vnd(er) Direction gemacht worten*, 123.

<sup>13</sup> See: HUTH, *Künstler und Werkstatt*, 23 and PORTSTEFFEN, *Form and Polychromy*, 159.

<sup>14</sup> BAXANDALL, *The Limewood Sculptures*, 118.



Fig. 1 Mondsee (Austria), former monastery and Catholic parish church St Michael, Holy Ghost altarpiece (1679-1681), sculpture of St Bernhard of Clairvaux (after conservation) by Johann Meinrad Guggenbichler (sculptor) and Matthias Wichelhammer (polychromer). Wichelhammer was the polychromer of eight altarpieces by Guggenbichler. Photo: Michael Kühnlenthal, Huglfing (Germany)

are also various cases in Germany where separate contracts were made with individual artists and artisans.<sup>15</sup> In any case, this meant that a division of work was customary. Few sculptures were polychromed by the sculptor himself (for example, Veit Stoss) or by his own workshop (for example, Michael Pacher).

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the production of altarpieces became more complex. One reason for this is the addition of a painter to the traditional constellation of artists and craftsmen who were responsible for the making of an altarpiece. This painter was responsible for the main (canvas) paintings of an altarpiece and was often identical to the polychromer, especially in the case of those works in smaller rural churches outside the larger cities.<sup>16</sup> Separate contracts for separate steps of the work appear to be the general practice, although this could vary depending on the region or the artists and artisans involved.<sup>17</sup> Various cases of a general contractor being commissioned to organize and carry out a large project such as an altarpiece have also been documented, as in the cases of the sculptor Hans Waldburger (c. 1570-1630), the painter Wilhelm Faistenberger (1623-1690), the polychromer Judas Thaddäus Sichelbein (1684-1758), and the sculptor Ignaz Günther (1725-1775) (Fig. 2).<sup>18</sup>

<sup>15</sup> BAXANDALL, *The Limewood Sculptures*, 118.

<sup>16</sup> M. KOLLER, *Barockaltäre in Österreich: Technik, Fassung, Konservierung*, in *Der Altar des 18. Jahrhunderts. Das Kunstwerk in seiner Bedeutung und als denkmalpflegerische Aufgabe* (Forschungen und Berichte der Bau- und Kunstdenkmalpflege in Baden-Württemberg, 5), München — Berlin, 1978, 223-269, here 226-236; SCHIESSL, *Rokokofassung und Materialillusion*, 10.

<sup>17</sup> BRÜHLMANN — EMMERLING — MAYER, *Vnd(er) Direction gemacht worten*, 123.

<sup>18</sup> The sculptor Hans Waldburger and his workshop in Salzburg were contracted for various altarpieces between 1624 and 1628: J. RAMHARTER, 'Weil der Altar altershalben unförmlich und pauffellig...'. *Rechtsfragen zur Ausstattung der Sakralbauten im Salzburger Raum* (Fontes rerum Austriacarum, 3rd series, vol. 12), Wien, 1996, 293-305. Ignaz Günther worked under the direction of the court architect François de Cuvilliés on sculptures for the large hall and the chapel of Seinsheim Castle (Sünching, Bavaria), or under Joseph Anton Wunderer, the court painter from Freising who was responsible for the main altarpiece of the church of St Andreas in Freising (Bavaria). BRÜHLMANN — EMMERLING — MAYER, *Vnd(er) Direction gemacht worten*, 125; See also: K. KOSEL, *Ein Spätwerk des Francois Cuvilliés. Neue Archivalien über bayerische Rokokokünstler*, in *Verhandlungen des Historischen Vereins für Oberpfalz und Regensburg*, 107 (1967), 103-120, here 106; P. VOLK, *Der Hochaltar der ehemaligen Stiftskirche St Andreas in Freising* (Ars Bavarica, Doppelband 67/68, part 1), München, 1992, 53-70, here 54. Judas Thaddäus Sichelbein was, in fact, the main contractor for various altarpieces in Southern Germany and Switzerland: M. RICHTER, *Coloured Glazes of the High Altarpiece by Judas Thaddäus Sichelbein and his Workshop in the Former Monastery Church of Rheinau (Switzerland)*, in E. EMMERLING (ed.), *Lüsterfassungen des Barock und Rokoko*, 409-454, here 415-418. Wilhelm Faistenberger was responsible for the work of the carpenter/joiner, painter, and sculptor on the Austrian altarpieces in Taxenbach and Zell am See, see: M. KOLLER, *Fassung und Faßmaler von Barockaltären*, in *Maltechnik 3 — Restauro* (1976), 157-172, here 162.



Fig. 2 Rheinau (Switzerland), former Benedictine monastery church, high altarpiece by Judas Thaddäus Sichelbein and his workshop (1723) with well preserved polychromy. Photo: Fotoarchiv Kantonale Denkmalpflege Zürich, Zürich

Further systematic research is still required in order to comprehend this aspect better, especially with regard to the differing procedures and rights in the different regions, cities, churches and monasteries.

Generally, a commissioned work was planned using a drawing or sketch ('Visier') or a polychromed model that had been approved by the patron.<sup>19</sup> Several coloured designs on paper and small models for altarpieces and sculptures have survived.<sup>20</sup> These were meant to define the commission and provided an aid for the cooperation of the different artists and artisans connected with the work, such as the painter, sculptor, and carpenter/joiner. In the contract, which was not always in written form, the patron, artists and craftsmen fixed the work, time and manner of delivery, as well as compensation and payment, which may have also included products produced by the patron's monastery (for instance wine). Contracts were made with each artist and artisan separately, and although they are not signed as often as easel and wall paintings, they did sign their works.<sup>21</sup> An exceptional example of this practice is the Kircheiselfing *Pietà* from 1758 in the parish church of St Rupert in Eiselfing (Bavaria) (Figs 3 and 4). The limewood sculpture carved by Ignaz Günther and polychromed by Augustin Demmel is signed on the reverse by both artists: *Ign: Gündler / 1.7.58 let. / Aug: Demel, / Pict.*<sup>22</sup>

<sup>19</sup> SCHIESSL, *Rokokofassung und Materialillusion*, 22; RAMHARTER, *Weil der Altar*, 32-35; J. RAMHARTER, *Historische Quellen zur Barockaltar — Herstellung in Österreich*, in M. KOLLER (ed.), *Gefasste Altäre und Skulpturen des Barock 1600-1780* (Restauratorenblätter, 20), Klosterneuburg — München, 1999, 27-32, here 28-29. See also the use of a 'Visier' for altarpieces by Jakob Simon Lamberti (painter and polychromer), Johann Georg Mohr (sculptor) and Johann Pfisterer (carpenter and joiner), see: M. RICHTER, *The Materials and Techniques of the Coloured Glazes used on the High Altarpiece in Georgenberg (Austria)*, in EMMERLING (ed.), *Lüsterfassungen des Barock und Rokoko*, 283-306, here 290.

<sup>20</sup> P. VOLK, *Bemerkungen zu einigen Altarmodellen des 18. Jahrhunderts*, in K. KALINOWSKY (ed.), *Studien zur Werkstattpraxis der Barockskulptur im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert*, Poznań, 1992, 269; M. KOLLER, *Entwurf, Material und Technik der Barockaltäre und ihrer Modelle*, in M. KRAPF (ed.), *Triumph der Phantasie. Barocke Modelle von Hildebrandt bis Mollinarolo* (exh. cat. Österreichische Galerie), Wien, 1998, 39-48; P. VOLK, *Tendenzen der Altarbaukunst in Bayern und Schwaben im 18. Jahrhundert*, in KRAPF (ed.), *Triumph der Phantasie*, 65-72; M. KOLLER, *Zur Restaurierung Barocker Altarmodelle*, in IDEM (ed.), *Gefasste Altäre und Skulpturen des Barock*, 33-40.

<sup>21</sup> M. KOLLER, *Barockaltäre in Österreich: Technik, Fassung, Konservierung*, in *Restauratorenblätter der Denkmalpflege in Österreich*, 2 (1974), 17-65, here 33; KOLLER, *Barockaltäre in Österreich* (1978), 230; SCHIESSL, *Rokokofassung und Materialillusion*, 14; P. VOLK, *Johann Baptist Straub 1704-1784*, München, 1984, 89.

<sup>22</sup> BRÜHLMANN — EMMERLING — MAYER, *Vnd(er) Direction gemacht worten*, 126.



Fig. 3 Eiselfing, St Rupertus in Eiselfing (Landkreis Rosenheim, Germany). The polychrome limewood *Pietà* created in 1758 by Ignaz Günther for this church is generally known as the 'Kircheiselfing Pietà'. Photo: Wolf van der Mülbe



Fig. 4 Eiselfing, St Rupertus in Eiselfing (Landkreis Rosenheim, Germany). The ‘Kircheiselfing Pietà’ is the earliest documented piece to have been painted by Augustin Ignaz Demmel. The sculpture, which is 129 cm high, 110 cm wide and 40 cm deep, is signed on the reverse by both artists: *Ign: Günder / 1.7.58 / et. / Aug: Demmel, / Pict.* Photo: Edmund Melzl, Bayerisches Landesamt für Denkmalpflege, München

What was the status of the polychromers, sculptors and other craftsmen involved in the making of altarpieces and other ecclesiastical furnishings? In the Baroque period, the sculptor was usually the main contract partner and had to subcontract polychromers and other craftsmen to complete such complex works of art. An early and typical example of this is the polychrome high altarpiece by Hans Waldburger, which was originally made for the former Benedictine collegiate church in Salzburg in 1628.<sup>23</sup> The very detailed contract describes Hans

<sup>23</sup> The entire altarpiece was dismantled in 1853 and moved to the Catholic subsidiary church in Scheffau (Austria). M. KOLLER, *Bildhauer und Fassmaler um 1620: Hans und Anton Waldburger*, in IDEM (ed.), *Gefasste Altäre und Skulpturen des Barock*, 69-76, here 70.

Waldburger as the main contractor who was responsible for subcontracting the painter (Anton Waldburger?) and the carpenter/joiner: the sculptor received 400 gulden<sup>24</sup> for his work, whereas the polychromer painter received 530 gulden and the carpenter/joiner 160 gulden.<sup>25</sup> The fees of the polychromer, which at first sight often seem remarkably high in comparison to the sculptor, are more or less typical for the seventeenth century. Carpenters generally received half or even less than what the sculptors obtained for their work, whereas the polychromers were often paid more than double what the sculptors earned. This has been confirmed for various works by Hans Waldburger, Thomas Schwanthaler and Johann Meinrad Guggenbichler.<sup>26</sup> In the case of Thomas Schwanthaler's 'double altarpiece' (1676) in the church of St. Wolfgang (Austria), the contract states that the carpenter or joiner Matthias Weber is to receive 280 gulden for his work, whereas Schwanthaler's fee of 750 gulden stands in stark contrast to the 1730 gulden the painter Franziskus Gamann earned for his polychromy.<sup>27</sup> Half of the total sum of 2760 gulden went to pay for the materials the artist used for the entire polychromy.<sup>28</sup> An exception is the contract for the high altarpiece intended for the Premonstratensian collegiate church in Schlägl (Austria). The altarpiece was completed between 1624 and 1626 but was unfortunately destroyed by a fire in the church in 1702. The detailed contract states that Hans Waldburger subcontracted the polychromy to his brother Anton Waldburger, who was a painter in the Austrian town of Schärding. It is interesting that both brothers received 1500 gulden for their work, which may be explained by the fact that the sculptor, Hans, was not only responsible for the sculptures and all other carvings of this altarpiece, but also had to carry out

<sup>24</sup> In terms of the historical weights, all the currencies in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Germany and Austria vary regionally and over time, and no certain conversion factors are known unless explicitly cited in local legal regulations or elsewhere. Gulden (English: guilder) is derived from the Old Dutch for 'golden'. The 'gulden' originated as a gold coin (hence the name) but was also a common name for a silver or base metal coin. The name was often interchangeable with florin (*fl.*) in Southern Germany and Austria (c. 1600-1780) since they were equivalent. In Darmstadt (c. 1600) 1 florin was equal to 1 gulden (Goldgulden). Starting in 1753, the gulden became the main currency in Austria and Bavaria (1 gulden = 60 Kreuzer, 1 Kreuzer = 4 Heller), see: H. VOIGTLÄNDER, *Löhne und Preise in vier Jahrtausenden*, Speyer, 1994, 78-83.

<sup>25</sup> KOLLER, *Bildhauer und Fassmaler um 1620*, 70.

<sup>26</sup> *Die Bildhauerfamilie Schwanthaler 1633-1848: vom Barock zum Klassizismus* (exh. cat. Augustinerchorherrenstift Reichersberg), Linz, 1974.

<sup>27</sup> M. BAUBÖCK, *Rieder Bildhauer-Verträge vor 300 Jahren*, in *93. Jahresbericht des Bundesgymnasiums Ried im Innkreis (Oö) über das Schuljahr 1964/65*, Ried, 1965, 3-17, here 6.

<sup>28</sup> M. KOLLER, *Der Doppelaltar Thomas Schwanthalers in St. Wolfgang*, in IDEM (ed.), *Gefasste Altäre und Skulpturen des Barock*, 101-108, here 102.

the carpentry work. The polychromy desired by the patron is also described in detail, in particular with a passage on the use of coloured glazes on silver leaf.<sup>29</sup>

The status of the artists of German-speaking Central Europe changed to a certain extent in the mid-eighteenth century. Documents that have survived in connection with various Bavarian artists, such as Johann Baptist Straub and Ignaz Günther, often confirm a similar tendency with regard to the payments received by the artists and artisans. In Fürstzell (high altarpiece, former Cistercian monastery church), the sculptor Straub received 755 florin (plus thirty-five florin for transport costs) for his work, whereas the polychromer Andreas Math and his workshop were given 813 florin, which does not include the 314 florin that he was given for the order of gold leaf he had to buy for the gildings.<sup>30</sup> What is rather startling is the very low payment for the carpenter, Jakob Kelchgruber, who only received fifty-nine florins for his work on this very large altarpiece. An exception is the high altarpiece of the Catholic parish church of St George in Bichl (1752), where Straub received substantially more for his work (300 florin) than the polychromer Joseph Geiger (180 florin).<sup>31</sup> The accounts preserved in connection with Augustin Demmel's work at Sünching Palace (Sünching, Bavaria), and at the former Benedictine monastery church in Rott am Inn (Bavaria) indicate that, on large-scale building or projects for ecclesiastical furnishings, polychromers were not subcontracted by stuccoers or sculptors but were treated as specialists with separate contracts.<sup>32</sup> In some cases it may be assumed that such contracts for the polychromers covered materials, but in other documented cases the artist and/or contractor were

<sup>29</sup> 'Was drittens die lasierungen auf das silber anlangt, sollen von gueten, gerechten Farben gemacht warden, damit dieselben bestaendig verbleiben und nit ausrauchen moegen', RAMHARTER, *Weil der Altar*, 296.

<sup>30</sup> VOLK, *Johann Baptist Straub*, 189.

<sup>31</sup> VOLK, *Johann Baptist Straub*, 185.

<sup>32</sup> For Demmel's work and contracts as listed in the account books of Sünching Palace, see: K. BENAK, *Schloss Sünching. Ein Gesamtkunstwerk des höfischen Rokoko in Bayern* (Regensburger Studien zur Kunstgeschichte, 7), Regensburg, 2009, 169-171; See also: J. WENZEL, *Der Hochaltar der Schlosskapelle Mariae Himmelfahrt in Sünching*, in EMMERLING (ed.), *Lüsterfassungen des Barock und Rokoko*, 509-518, here 510-512. For the contracts between the monastery at Rott am Inn and Demmel and his fellow polychromers Josef Hepp, Johann Leyerer and N. Mittendorfer, see: W. BIRKMAIER, *Intra quinquennium... Ein zeitgenössischer Bericht zum Kirchenneubau in Rott am Inn*, in *Heimat am Inn — Beiträge zur Geschichte, Kunst und Kultur des Wasserburger Landes, Jahrbuch 1993*, Wasserburg am Inn, 1994, 66-72; W. BIRKMAIER, "Extract der Unkosten 1781" — *aus der Bauzeit der Roither Kirche, 2. Teil*, in *Heimat am Inn — Beiträge zur Geschichte, Kunst und Kultur des Wasserburger Landes, Jahrbuch 1997*, Wasserburg am Inn, 1997, 51-53.

responsible for purchasing the materials they required themselves.<sup>33</sup> That, at least, is one possible explanation for the fees of the polychromer, which at first sight often seems remarkably high.

In general, however, it is difficult to determine the relative value attached to the work of sculptors versus polychromers. The accounts for the main altarpiece in Sünching Palace, for instance, do not indicate whether Augustin Demmel's fee was for painting Ignaz Günther's sculptures only or whether it encompassed further items. In other cases — the Rott am Inn account books, for example, or the receipts for Demmel's work in the St Benno Chapel in the Frauenkirche in Munich — such tasks are itemised.<sup>34</sup> In addition, contracts have not always survived, and in any case agreements may have been reached orally.<sup>35</sup> Moreover, the cost of the materials employed by sculptors and polychromers differed, and this is reflected in the payments made to them.<sup>36</sup> A clear instance of this is the tabernacle which Demmel decorated with gold and silver leaf for the Catholic parish church of Sts Peter and Paul at Faistenhaar (Bavaria): the sculptor, Joseph Gärgler, received forty-six florins, Demmel sixty-five florins.<sup>37</sup> Another good example is the side altarpieces in Rott am Inn; the sculptor Ignaz Günther received 500 florins for 'Two large side altarpieces (...) along with food and drink and procuring the wood', compared to 1500 florins paid to the polychromer of the altarpieces, N. Mittendorfer. For 'the 6 small side altarpieces' in the same church the sculptor received 400 florins, the polychromer 750 florins.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>33</sup> This is documented in the contract with the painter Georg Caspar Zellner for the polychromy of the high altarpiece in the church of St Valentine in Arrach from 1770. It is stated that Zellner was responsible for buying all the materials he needed for his work (gold leaf, copal resin, white spirit, glue, bole) except for the scaffolding, which was supplied by the church. E. EIS, *Marmorierungen der Fassmalerfamilie Zellners*, München, 2008, 167-168.

<sup>34</sup> K. BERG, *Der Bennobogen der Münchner Frauenkirche. Geschichte, Rekonstruktion und Analyse der frühbarocken Binnenchoranlage*, München, 1979, 76.

<sup>35</sup> SCHIESSL, *Rokokofassung und Materialillusion*, 6 and 15-16.

<sup>36</sup> Church account books of 1784/85, see: BRÜHLMANN — EMMERLING — MAYER, *Vnd(er) Direction gemacht worten*, 132. Volker Liedke supposes that "the cost of a sculptor's work on an altar generally amounted to less than that of the painter who created the painting and polychromed the wooden sculptures", see: V. LIEDKE, *Die Bildhauerwerkstätten im Kurfürstentum Baiern zwischen 1715 und 1779*, in *Bayerische Rokokoplastik, vom Entwurf zur Ausführung* (exh. cat. Bayerisches Nationalmuseum München), München, 1985, 14-26, here 17.

<sup>37</sup> BRÜHLMANN — EMMERLING — MAYER, *Vnd(er) Direction gemacht worten*, 132.

<sup>38</sup> W. BIRKMAIER, *Benedikt II. Lutz von Lutzenkirchen — Abt, Bauherr und "Heiliger Verschwender"*, in IDEM, *Rott am Inn. Beiträge zur Kunst und Geschichte der ehemaligen Benediktinerabtei, Weißenhorn*, 1983, 66-85, here 75.

All the eighteenth-century cases described above clearly indicate that the polychromer or painter was generally paid more than the sculptor, but this always depended on the contract as well as other factors. In the seventeenth century there are more variations in the payments to the various artists and craftsmen. However, this changed towards the end of the 1600s, when the eighteenth-century mode of payment began to be introduced. In the 1990s, Johannes Ramharter studied this aspect in more detail and stated that although one cannot compare the altarpieces with each other, the ratio between carpenter/joiner, sculptor and painter normally averages 1:2:3.<sup>39</sup>

### Painters, polychromers and gilders

In art historical and art technological literature, the term polychromer (German: Faßmaler) has gradually become a recognized job title, although this by no means completely represents its occupational profile in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. 'Polychromy' only outlines one field of the activities, which a painter who was trained on the basis of guild regulations needed to master, although there were painters who specialized in polychromy and/or gilding, but this was not the rule.<sup>40</sup> Explanations in dictionaries of art for this time period are frequently not precise enough or were not interpreted correctly; in fact, the term Faßmaler or polychromer was often compared with the definition given in the Middle Ages as first presented and discussed by Hubert Wilm.<sup>41</sup> Indeed, a painter of the Baroque and Rococo period can only really be called a polychromer or polychrome-painter if he or she painted and embellished a variety of objects with colours and metallic leaves. This included paintings on the walls and ceilings of churches, chapels and palaces or wooden sculptures, altarpieces, pulpits, organ encasements and other ecclesiastical furnishings. These individuals were also known for the painting of furniture, theatre stage designs or façades, and even carried out tasks such as gilding candlesticks and church door frames.

The German term 'Faßmaler' was normally not used as a professional title in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Instead, contemporary documentary sources such as contracts and invoices mainly used the title 'painter' ('Maler',

<sup>39</sup> RAMHARTER, *Weil der Altar* 1996, 44.

<sup>40</sup> SCHIESSL, *Rokokofassung und Materialillusion*, 8.

<sup>41</sup> Wilm merely defines a polychromer as 'one who produces polychromy', see: H. WILM, *Die gotische Holzfigur*, Stuttgart, 1942, 131.

‘Maller’, ‘Mahler’), as in the case of the painters and polychromers Anton Waldburger ([...] khunstreichen Antoni Walpurgern, burgern und mallern zu Scherding [...]), Cosmas Damian Asam (‘Herrn Kunst-Mahler Asam’) and Augustin Ignaz Demmel ([...] churfrtl: Mahler Augustin Ignati Demel [...]).<sup>42</sup> There is a particularly interesting description of the Würzburg painter and polychromer Ignatius Golch (‘burger und staffier in würtzburg’) who, in a document from 1726 describing the polychromy of the high altarpiece in Wolkshausen (Franconia), is also called ‘Kunstmahler’.<sup>43</sup> Golch signed this contract as a ‘Staffier’ or ‘Staffiermaler’, which in this particular case may be interpreted as a polychromer. Another document that confirms this definition is concerned with the original polychromy of the Hohenkirchen altarpiece (1637/38), which was carved by the famous Northern German sculptor Ludwig Münstermann (c. 1575-1638). Here, the term ‘gestaffiert’ is synonymous for ‘polychromed’.<sup>44</sup> Other uses of this term are found in connection with work by the polychromer Sebastian Schedel (*staffierer von aub*) and the painter Johann Baptist Schiderer (‘Vor dissen altar wie der wissen ausweisen zu staffieren [...]).<sup>45</sup> In the case of Schedel and the polychromy of the high altarpiece in Gaubüttelbrunn (1770), it is very interesting that the terms ‘staffiret’ and ‘gefasset’ are used together in one sentence ([...] das der neue Hohe Altar in dem Gotteshaus Gaubüttelbrunn ausstaffiert werde, [...] undt solcher gestalten aus staffiret und gefasset warden mus [...]), which indicates a difference between the two (‘Staffierer’ and ‘Faßmaler’). Although it is difficult to make a clear distinction between these two terms, ‘staffieren’ seems to have been more general in meaning and thus more practical. It seems to imply ‘painting and gilding’ in the larger sense, but this definitely requires further clarification.

<sup>42</sup> In the case of Hans Waldburger see: RAMHARTER, *Weil der Altar*, 296; Cosmas Damian Asam executed gilding and polychromy such as in Kloster Schöntal/Jagst (Staatsarchiv Ludwigsburg B 504/404, invoice 1753, folio 125), see: MENTH, *Die Bildhauerfamilie Auwera*, 199 and 203; BENAK, *Schloss Sünching*, 170-171.

<sup>43</sup> MENTH, *Die Bildhauerfamilie Auwera*, Q162.

<sup>44</sup> Original passage: ‘Den 7. May nach Höehnkirchen ge= / wesen, umb das Altar zu besehen / wie es gestaffiert’, see: P. KÖNIGFELD ET AL., *Die Restaurierung des Altarretabels und der Chorausstattung*, in P. KÖNIGFELD (ed.), *Das holzsichtige Kunstwerk. Zur Restaurierung des Münstermann-Altarretabels in Rodenkirchen/Wesermarsch* (Arbeitshefte zur Denkmalpflege in Niedersachsen, 26), Rodenkirchen, 2002, 51-109, here 51.

<sup>45</sup> Sebastian Schedel (‘staffierer von aub’) is mentioned in a document on the polychromy of the high altarpiece from 1770 in Gaubüttelbrunn (Franconia), see: MENTH, *Die Bildhauerfamilie Auwera*, Q32. ‘Staffieren’ was also used in connection with a document (estimate) from 1717 for the planned polychromy of the high altarpiece in the Catholic church St. Sebastian in Hof (Austria) by the painter Johann Baptist Schiderer. See: RAMHARTER, *Weil der Altar*, 213-224.

In 1972, Siegfried Hofmann stated that the actual execution of altarpieces was usually carried out in form of a division of labour between different workshops agreed upon by the patron: carpenter/joiner, sculptor, polychromer ('Staffierer', marbler, gilder) and painter of the main paintings of the altarpiece.<sup>46</sup> Here the term 'Staffierer' is also synonymous for a polychromer whose work and collaborations varied from altarpiece to altarpiece. In 1979 Ulrich Schiessl described 'staffieren' as a skill that a painter in Southern Germany and Austria should also master along with gilding and polychroming.<sup>47</sup> A late-eighteenth-century description in *Jacobsons Technologisches Wörterbuch* summarized the work of a 'Staffiermahler' in Northern Germany, which, due to different requirements in how artists and artisans organized their work in a commercial, social and religious context, led to the development of a much more well-defined profession:

Staffiermahler, ein Zweig der Maler, die sich von den künstlichen oder sendirten Malern merklich unterscheiden, nicht nur in Ansehung der Arbeit, sondern daß sie auch wie alle Professionisten zünftig sind, denn sie erlernten ihre Kunst nicht allein in einer festegesetzten Zeit, sondern sie müssen auch, wenn sie sich setzen wollen, ein Meisterstück verfertigen. Unterdessen verlangt man von dem Staffiermahler, dass er geschickt seyn soll, mehr als anstreichen, er muß nicht allein lackieren, vergolden, sondern auch wohl eine Stube mit Banden und anderen schlechten Zierathen ausmalen können (...).<sup>48</sup>

This text clearly describes a house-painter or decorator, who was a tradesman responsible for the painting and decorating of buildings and who was often in the same guild as the easel painter.

Due to the development and distinctive design of Baroque and Rococo polychrome art in Southern Germany, the painter needed to observe special requirements in order to fulfil the contracts from patrons of the church, court and civil affairs. Similar conditions were also documented in Austria, particularly in

<sup>46</sup> S. HOFMANN, *Arbeitsgemeinschaften bei oberbayerischen Altarbauten des 17. und 18. Jahrhunderts*, in B. RUPPRECHT (ed.), *Zwischen Donau und Alpen. Festschrift für Norbert Lieb zum 65. Geburtstag* (Zeitschrift für bayerische Landesgeschichte, 35), 1972, 164-173, here 164.

<sup>47</sup> SCHIESSL, *Rokokofassung und Materialillusion*, 8.

<sup>48</sup> Cited from *Jacobsons Technologisches Wörterbuch*, Berlin, 1784, 4th section, 130. Transl.: "Staffiermahler, a branch of the painting profession, which differs noticeably from that of easel painters, not only in the reputation of their work, but also that they belong to a guild like all trades people, since they did not learn their art in a specific time, but must also produce a masterpiece if they want to become a master in the trade. Moreover, the staffiermahler is required to be skilful, and not only in painting, lacquering, gilding, he must also be able to paint a room with bands and other inferior decorations (...)."

Salzburg and surrounding areas.<sup>49</sup> In the case of simple painters (house painters, decorators), who needed to display a certain skill, virtuosity and mastery in connection with polychromy, it is difficult to place or classify their work in a specific category ('mechanische' or 'freie' Kunst). In order to understand this entire scenario better, further research on the divergent terminology and definitions is required.

In German-speaking countries, many of the contracted artists and their workshops were locally born, but there are also exceptions where important masters from abroad were commissioned. This importing of competition, which also led to conflicts, is demonstrated in the case of the renowned sculptor Johann Meinrad Guggenbichler and the painter Lorenz Exendorfer in 1689 in connection with the side altarpieces in the Catholic church of St Sebastian in Hof (Austria).<sup>50</sup> A group of local artists from Salzburg, consisting of the joiner/carpenter Christoph Stern, the sculptor Simeon Fries and the painter Adam Pirckmann, protested against contracting the two outside artists for the altarpieces in Hof. The Swiss artist Guggenbichler was the main problem since he was a foreigner. Taking advantage of his good relations with the Salzburg court, Fries submitted the protest against the contracting of a foreigner, whereby he avoided indicating the legal basis of his complaint.<sup>51</sup>

Another spectacular example of the competition between painters and guilders at the beginning of the eighteenth century is represented by several conflicts that took place over a time span of four years (1708-1712) between local workshops and a foreign newcomer named Jakob Simon Lamberti.<sup>52</sup> Lamberti, who came from the Bavarian city of Passau and settled in Golling (Austria) close to Salzburg in 1707, was known for his yellow-glazed silver leaf (imitation gold) (Fig. 5). This gold imitation using a secret varnish recipe ('arkanum') was much cheaper than real gilding and his use of this technique led to a lengthy conflict between him and other local painters and guilders.<sup>53</sup> This group of artists and artisans accused him of using an 'unstable' and non-durable technique. From contemporary documents we learn that Lamberti imported this technique from the dioceses of Roermond in the former Spanish Netherlands (now in the Dutch province of Limburg) and had worked with it on altarpieces in Passau

<sup>49</sup> KOLLER, *Fassung und Faßmaler*, 157-172.

<sup>50</sup> RAMHARTER, *Weil der Altar*, 158-162.

<sup>51</sup> RAMHARTER, *Weil der Altar*, 36-37.

<sup>52</sup> RAMHARTER, *Weil der Altar*, 178-213.

<sup>53</sup> RAMHARTER, *Weil der Altar*, 178-184.



Fig. 5 Georgenberg (Austria), subsidiary church of St George, high altarpiece by the sculptor Johann Georg Mohr and the polychromer and painter Jakob Simon Lamberti. Photo: Mark Richter

(Bavaria) and Braunau, Ranshofen, Hallein, Golling, Kuchl and Georgenberg bei Kuchl (all in Austria).<sup>54</sup>

Each legal transaction often also included a contract specifically for the delivery of altarpieces. It is understandable that the wording of various regulations was even more extensive the further away the contractor worked from the destination. Many monasteries in Austria had their own house artist and craftsmen who could work in situ in the churches and monastery buildings, which meant they did not need to heed the restrictions the guilds normally imposed upon them. A particularly good example of this is the monastery in Schlägl, which employed the sculptor Johann Worath (1609-1680) and the painters, polychromers and gilders Johann Melchior Ott, David Stangl, Joseph Rosenfelder and Michael Nothelfer between 1634 and 1713.<sup>55</sup> Worath worked in the monastery between 1642 and 1680.<sup>56</sup> Another case is the sculptor Johann Meinrad Guggenbichler, who in 1679 was employed by the abbot to work for the monastery in Mondsee.<sup>57</sup>

In order to obtain residency, an assistant or journeyman needed to prove ownership of a house and a workshop, which was often only possible by marrying into an existing partnership.<sup>58</sup> That the entire German-speaking area of Central Europe contains such a great abundance and density of Baroque furnishings may be explained by the fact that workshops were even found in the smallest of villages in rural areas where there was much less competition. It was probably also beneficial to be able to contract an artist or artisan whose workshop was located close by.

<sup>54</sup> R. PREISS, *Die Lamberti, Löxhaller und andere Barockmaler in Golling*, in R. HOFFMANN — E. URBANEK (eds), *Golling. Geschichte einer Salzburger Marktgemeinde*, Golling, 1991, 400-405; See also: RICHTER, *The Materials and Techniques*, 286-290.

<sup>55</sup> I.H. PICHLER, *David Stangl (1599-1671): Maler, Fassmaler und Vergolder in Grein, Linz und Schlägl*, in *Jahrbuch des Oberösterreichischen Musealvereines*, 140/1 (1995), 181-204, here 197-198.

<sup>56</sup> Worath was also involved in a conflict during his time at the monastery at Schlägl. He had tried to deliver some sculptures to Linz, which he had carved with the approval of the abbot, but this did not succeed due to protests by the church congregation. RAMHARTER, *Weil der Altar*, 37.

<sup>57</sup> B. HEINZL, *Johann Meinrad Guggenbichler (1649-1723). Der Bildhauer des Stiftes Mondsee*, Passau, 1999, 10.

<sup>58</sup> KOLLER, *Barockaltäre in Österreich* (1978), 228. In sixteenth-century Nuremberg, painting, unlike goldsmithing, was a 'free trade' without a guild and regulated directly by the city council; this was intended to encourage growth in a city where much art was becoming linked with book publishing, for which Nuremberg was the largest German centre. Nonetheless, there were rules; for example, only married men could operate a workshop.

The great number of artists and artisans in Austria and Southern Germany also resulted in many of them not being able to make a living from what they earned. They often needed a second occupation, which is documented in many cases; sculptors worked as carpenters, innkeepers, or brewers, or they served as market judges, town councillors, school directors, sacristans or even night-watchmen.<sup>59</sup> Various eighteenth-century Bavarian documents revealed that church sacristans, market clerks or even grocers polychromed works of art.<sup>60</sup> According to these sources, the church sacristans were most frequently the authors of a variety of polychromed ecclesiastical furnishings such as altarpieces and sculptures.<sup>61</sup>

In German-speaking countries, the journey of artists is an important phenomenon, which contributed to the dissemination of artistic forms and techniques. During the journeymen's years it was customary to travel in these countries, whereas, court and academy artists (primarily painters) often travelled to Italy, a tradition that continued until the end of the eighteenth century. Many painters from these regions chose to spend time in Italy at some point in their careers to broaden their artistic experience; most visited Rome. Good examples of this are Cosmas Damian Asam (1686-1739) and Jakob Simon Lamberti (c. 1663-1722), both of whom went to Rome.<sup>62</sup> The great Austrian court painter Johann Michael Rottmayr (c. 1654-1730) travelled to Venice in 1675 and studied in the studio of the German painter Johann Carl Loth (son of Ulrich Loth).<sup>63</sup> The various encounters of travelling journeymen, as in the case of sculptors, are nicely illustrated in connection with the workshops of the two famous Austrian sculptors Thomas Schwanthaler and Veit Adam Vogl, where both Andreas Thamasch from Tyrol and Wolf Weissenkirchner from Salzburg

<sup>59</sup> KOLLER, *Barockaltäre in Österreich* (1978), 228.

<sup>60</sup> SCHIESSL, *Rokokofassung und Materialillusion*, p. 9.

<sup>61</sup> SCHIESSL, *Rokokofassung und Materialillusion*, 9.

<sup>62</sup> Cosmas Damian traveled to Rome, sponsored by the abbot of Tegernsee (Bavaria), in order to receive further education there. Presumably his brother accompanied him on this trip. The works of Giovanni Lorenzo Bernini made a profound impression on him, and in 1713 he received the first prize of the Accademia di San Luca in the presence of the Pope. See: B. RUPPRECHT, *Der Deckenmaler Cosmas Damian Asam*, in B. BUSHART — B. RUPPRECHT (eds), *Cosmas Damian Asam, 1686-1739: Leben und Werk*, München, 1986, 11-27, here 13. The painter and polychromer Simon Jakob Lamberti is first documented in Rome in 1687 before he came to Bavaria and finally Austria. PREISS, *Die Lamberti*, 400-402.

<sup>63</sup> See: *Lexikon der Kunst. Malerei, Architektur, Bildhauerkunst*, vol. 10, Erlangen, 1994, 190-191. See also: R. BAUMSTARK — F. BÜTTNER — M. DEKIERT — A. GOTTDANG (eds), *Ulrich Loth. Zwischen Caravaggio und Rubens* (exh. cat. Alte Pinakothek München), München, 2008.

were working at the same time (1668-1671).<sup>64</sup> During the making of the high altarpiece for the Catholic pilgrimage church in Brunnenthal near Schärding (Austria) in 1667, the Schärding carpenter/joiner Johann Finck employed five journeymen from Donauwörth (Bavaria), Znojmo/Znaim (formerly Bohemia), Miltenberg (Bavaria), Burgheim on the Danube River (Bavaria) and Loket/Ellbogen (Bohemia).<sup>65</sup> The travel diary of the Bavarian sculptor and journeyman Franz Ferdinand Ertinger, as well as other similar but rare historical documents, inform us about the travel route and the received impressions and inspirations (Fig. 6). Ertinger, from Immenstadt (Allgäu), worked between 1690 and 1697, among other cities, in Munich (workshop of Andreas Faistenberger), Linz, Lambach, Mondsee (workshop of Johann Meinrad Guggenbichler), Salzburg (workshop of Simeon Fries), Admont, Graz, Brünn, Breslau and Prague.<sup>66</sup>

### Artistic variability

Since the 1970s, various important studies on artists and artisans in Southern Germany and Austria have presented information on a variety of people who were designated as polychromers or polychrome-painters.<sup>67</sup> The impressive variety of groups suggests the complexity of this field and just how difficult it is to properly assess the art of polychromy and the creators. The boundaries between house painters, polychromers, gilders and artists of altarpiece paintings are often fluid. This clearly indicates their artistic variability in an impressive fashion, although the guilds strictly separated these artists and artisans from the work carried out by masons and limers (application of whitening or whitewash),

<sup>64</sup> M. KOLLER, *Material, Fassung und Technologie der Schwanthaler und die Problematik von Restaurierung und Erhaltung ihrer Werke*, in *Die Bildhauerfamilie Schwanthaler 1633-1848*, 187-217.

<sup>65</sup> KOLLER, *Barockaltäre in Österreich* (1978), 228.

<sup>66</sup> E. TIETZE-CONRAT, *Des Bildhauergesellen Franz Ferdinand Ertinger. Reisebeschreibung durch Österreich und Deutschland* (Quellenschriften für Kunstgeschichte und Kunsttechnik des Mittelalters und der Neuzeit, XIV), Wien — Leipzig, 1907.

<sup>67</sup> KOLLER, *Barockaltäre in Österreich* (1974); KOLLER, *Fassung und Faßmaler*; KOLLER, *Barockaltäre in Österreich* (1978); SCHIESSL, *Rokokofassung und Materialillusion*; MENTH, *Die Bildhauerfamilie Auwera*; BUCHENRIEDER, *Gefasste Bildwerke*; BRÜHLMANN — EMMERLING — MAYER, *Vnd(er) Direction gemacht worden*; U. SCHIESSL, *Techniken der Faßmalerei in Barock und Rokoko: ...daß alles von Bronze gemacht zu sein schiene* (Bücherei des Restaurators, 3), Stuttgart, 1998; A. HALLINGER, *The Munich Court Artist Augustin Demmel (1734-1789): Artistic Variability of a Polychromer*, in M. KÜHLENTHAL — S. MIURA (eds), *Historical Polychromy. Polychrome Sculpture in Germany and Japan*, München, 2004, 213-243.



Fig. 6 Map of Central Europe after the Peace of Westphalia (1648). The red line marks the boundaries of the Holy Roman Empire (after *The German territorial states from 1378 to 1806, Germany 1648*, IEG-Maps — Kartenserver am Institut für Europäische Geschichte Mainz, Germany). Included in this map is the journey of the Bavarian sculptor Franz Ferdinand Ertinger in the year 1690 (thin purple line) according to the map by Ramharter (Illustration: RAMHARTER, *Weil der Altar*, 343; map by Bernhard Bayer, München)

as well as other areas of the building trade.<sup>68</sup> As mentioned above, the work of a painter and/or polychromer painter was always strictly separated from that of a sculptor and carpenter/joiner. Carpenters or joiners were not allowed to perform any work traditionally executed by a polychromer. Even the priming of furniture (including ecclesiastical furnishings) was forbidden, although

<sup>68</sup> KOBLER, *Fassung von Bildwerken*; KOLLER, *Barockaltäre in Österreich*, 283.

carpenters and joiners were allowed to stain and varnish the wood of altarpieces (in the black-gold style) in Bavaria.<sup>69</sup>

It was very rare for a single person to be both a painter and a sculptor. Single works such as sculptures, candleholders or even small altarpieces were often delivered polychromed and gilded by the sculptor in agreement with the patron. Before delivery, the patron usually gave the piece to a painter, whose work he paid for personally. Considering the importance of this aspect, it is always necessary to evaluate the historical sources as critically and thoroughly as possible. Inaccurate entries in invoices can lead to the false assumption that some sculptors actually did polychrome their work themselves. The note found in the Altmannstein crucifix by Ignaz Günther from 1764 should not be interpreted as proof that Günther polychromed his work himself.<sup>70</sup> Various scholars have reflected on the meaning of the wording and concluded that Günther did not polychrome the crucifix himself, but instead commissioned a polychromer to carry out this function:

Dises CrusiVix gemacht, Und gefast Und hergeschenckht der Kunst Reiche Herr Franz Ignatÿ güntder Bilt Hauer in München gebürtiger schreiners sohn alhier in altmannstein, anno: 1764. Den 29 abril<sup>71</sup>

Nevertheless, it is documented that the Bavarian sculptor Anton Sturm (1690-1757), who carved sixteen sculptures of various emperors for the Imperial Hall ('Kaisersaal') of the Benedictine monastery in Ottobeuren, also executed the preparatory layers (ground, mordant) and gilding of six of these works, whereas the other ten sculptures were later completed by the polychromer Judas Thaddäus Sichelbein.<sup>72</sup> A very unusual example for a sculptor is the polychromy and painting (main canvas paintings) of the altarpieces and pulpit of the Catholic parish church of Gschnitz (Tyrol), executed in 1763 by Johann Perger, who signed his work on the painting of a side altarpiece: *Johann Perger, sculptor,*

<sup>69</sup> Various 17th-century altarpieces in the black—gold style are mentioned. The gildings were executed by a gilder or polychromer; SCHIESSL, *Rokokofassung und Materialillusion*, 10.

<sup>70</sup> J. TAUBERT, *Farbige Skulpturen. Bedeutung, Fassung, Restaurierung*, München, 1978, 195; SCHIESSL, *Rokokofassung und Materialillusion*, 11; BRÜHLMANN — EMMERLING — MAYER, *Vnd(er) Direction gemacht worden*, 123.

<sup>71</sup> Cited from KARBACHER, *The Altmannstein Crucifix*, 72. Transl.: "This crucifix was made, polychromed, and presented as a gift from the talented artist Franz Ignaz Günther, sculptor in Munich, and son of a native carpenter here in Altmannstein, ANNO: 1764, the 29th of April".

<sup>72</sup> G. BAYER, *Die Malerfamilie Sichelbein 1580-1758. Lebensbilder und Werke*, Lindenberg, 2003, 49-50.

*pinxit* 1763.<sup>73</sup> Also interesting is a statement by the court sculptor Johann Baptist Hagenauer, who made the high altarpiece of Köstendorf (Austria), in which he calls for precise priming. In order ‘not to waste the quality of carving’, he wanted to be contracted for the priming and the polychromy as well.<sup>74</sup> The diary of the Bavarian sculptor Anton Wiest only once mentioned polychroming work in connection with his contract for the moated castle of Sandizell near Schrobenhausen (Bavaria).<sup>75</sup> In this particular case, Wiest was in charge of the polychroming work and also settled the accounts for this work. Some workshops, such as the one directed by the Joseph Anton Feuchtmayer, an important Austrian Rococo stuccoist and sculptor who was active in southern Germany and Switzerland, also had immediate access to painters and gilders who worked under his direction.<sup>76</sup>

Polychromy was occasionally carried out by laymen who often had no previous training, except perhaps for helping out in the studio of a painter, polychromer or gilder with a specific activity (such as grinding of colours), where they came in contact with the techniques that were employed.<sup>77</sup> The polychromy produced by monks, friars and nuns was normally not considered to be the work of amateurs, as they were usually trained in the workshops of the monasteries, cloisters and abbeys. Ulrich Schiessl and Ingrid Stümmer describe a number of works on which the polychromy was executed by exactly this group of artists and artisans.<sup>78</sup>

Journeymen specialized in polychroming were also employed by fresco painters to support them in various tasks, including the tracing of cartoons, which

<sup>73</sup> KOLLER, *Fassung und Faßmaler*, 164.

<sup>74</sup> Translation from the original German text: “To preserve my pleasure in the clear carving and diversity of facial expression and not, as has often enough happened to me, to find it wasted by poor priming; to the extent that neither the clear contours, the diversity of expressions, nor the difference between the flowers and the other ornaments could be discerned, nor who it was made by and what it was meant to be, therefore I plan to take over not only the carving but the polychromy as well (...)”. This statement may reflect the situation and the feelings of the sculptors who had to pass their work on to a painter, or who were contracted separately. If one presupposes any professional pride, such discontent must have been widespread. RAMHARTER, *Weil der Altar*, 240.

<sup>75</sup> SCHIESSL, *Rokokofassung und Materialillusion*, 11.

<sup>76</sup> Various invoices from Feuchtmayer document that he charged for gilding and polychroming work; SCHIESSL, *Rokokofassung und Materialillusion*, 11.

<sup>77</sup> SCHIESSL, *Rokokofassung und Materialillusion*, 9.

<sup>78</sup> SCHIESSL, *Rokokofassung und Materialillusion*, 9; I. STÜMMER, *The Recumbent Figure of St Alto in the Abbey Church in Altomünster*, in KÜHLENTHAL — MIURA (eds), *Historical Polychromy*, 47-61, here 48-50.

were often used in the technique of fresco painting.<sup>79</sup> It is also documented that they were involved in the polychroming of various architectural stucco elements in churches.<sup>80</sup> Schiessl stated that it is justified to assume that some of the greatest mural painters in Southern Germany and Austria trained in, or at least had contact with, a workshop where polychroming and gilding were practised.<sup>81</sup> One of them is the Baroque easel and fresco painter Franz Joseph Spiegler, who was most likely initially a polychromer at the beginning of his career.<sup>82</sup> The fresco painter Johann Hiebl, who was born in Ottobeuren in 1681, was first an apprentice in the workshop of the polychromer Judas Thaddäus Sichelbein in Wangen in the Allgäu (Bavaria) before he trained with the renowned Italian painter and architect Andrea Pozzo (1642-1709) in Vienna in 1706.<sup>83</sup> Renowned fresco painters and their workshops often took on contracts for the polychromy. The Bavarian painter Johann Baptist Enderle (1725-1798) and his workshop are also known to have carried out contracts for polychroming, gilding and even house painting, which is similar to the painter and polychromer Franz Joseph Soll who was mainly active in the Bavarian Chiemgau area (see below).<sup>84</sup>

Seventeenth- and eighteenth-century female artists and artisans were also involved in art work, despite difficulties in training, travelling and trading their work, as well as in gaining recognition. This is also the case with those employed as painters and polychromers in Southern Germany and Austria. The evidence found in historical documents has proved to be particularly interesting, since women were prohibited from performing any artistic activities of this type until the beginning of the eighteenth century.<sup>85</sup> In Bavaria, this law changed by the middle of the eighteenth century. This becomes evident from various sources from this period, particularly in legal and administrative documents pertaining

<sup>79</sup> SCHIESSL, *Rokokofassung und Materialillusion*, 13.

<sup>80</sup> SCHIESSL, *Rokokofassung und Materialillusion*.

<sup>81</sup> SCHIESSL, *Rokokofassung und Materialillusion*.

<sup>82</sup> SCHIESSL, *Rokokofassung und Materialillusion*.

<sup>83</sup> N. LIEB, *Ein Ottobeurer Künstler in Böhmen*, in *Lueg ins Land. Beilage zum Allgäuer Beobachter*, 2 Jg., no. 19, Memmingen, 1935, 75. Sichelbein is documented as the contractor and polychromer of various sculptures and altarpieces in the Benedictine monastery of Ottobeuren between 1727 and 1732. BAYER, *Die Malerfamilie Sichelbein*, 49-50.

<sup>84</sup> K.L. DASSER, *Johann Baptist Enderle*, Weissenhorn, 1970, 10. In the case of Franz Joseph Soll see: E. ABELE, *Franz Joseph Soll, ein Rokokomaler des Chiemgaus*, in *Jahrbuch des Vereins für Christliche Kunst in München*, vol. VI (1925/26), 1-10.

<sup>85</sup> SCHIESSL, *Rokokofassung und Materialillusion*, 11.

to painting and polychromy of sacred art.<sup>86</sup> There are also exceptions, as indicated by the well-documented and prominent Bavarian examples of Maria Theresia Asam (1657-1719) and Maria Salome Asam (1685-1740).<sup>87</sup> The painter and polychromer ('[...] khunstreiche Frau Maria Theresia Asamin, Mahlerin [...]') worked in the studio of Georg Asam (1649-1711), whom she married in 1680.<sup>88</sup> Documents show that she polychromed and gilded various works in Benediktbeuren and Bichl (Bavaria).<sup>89</sup> Maria Salome Asam, the sister of the renowned Cosmas Damian Asam, was trained as a painter and polychromer in the family studio and appears in documents as having worked on frescos, canvas paintings and polychromy, including some altarpieces in the monastery church of Sts George and Martin (1723/24) in Weltenburg (Bavaria) and the Catholic church St Nepomuk or 'Asamkirche' (side altarpiece, dated 1736) in Munich.<sup>90</sup>

Another interesting case is Magdalena Engstler, who is documented as either a polychromer or a gilder in archival sources dealing with altarpieces and pulpits in Franconia.<sup>91</sup> The use of coloured glazes on metal leaf, among other techniques, is specifically mentioned in all of these documents. Manfred Koller points out that painters often had to carry out a variety of tasks, ranging from painting walls and doors (house painter) to executing easel paintings and the polychromy and gilding of sculptures, altarpieces and other works. Documents attest that Margareta Magdalena Rottmayr, who was an organist and painter ('Margareta Magdalena Rottmayrin, Organistin und Malerin zu Laufen [an der Salzach]') polychromed, gilded and painted various works for the Catholic

<sup>86</sup> SCHIESSL, *Rokokofassung und Materialillusion*, 11; see also: A. SCHLICHTHÖRLE, *Die Gewerbsbefugnisse in der kgl. Haupt- und Residenzstadt München*, vol. I, Erlangen, 1844, XLII.

<sup>87</sup> A. MUNDORFF, *Die Asamfrauen: Malertöchter der Barockzeit*, in A. MUNDORFF — E. VON SECKENDORF (eds), *Electrine und die anderen: Künstlerinnen 1700 bis 2000*, Fürstenfeldbruck, 2008, 11-38; RUPPRECHT, *Der Deckenmaler Cosmas Damian Asam*, 13.

<sup>88</sup> The painter Georg Asam was not only known for his mural paintings in fresco technique, but was also renowned for his portraits and paintings for altarpieces. He also carried out decorative art for interiors as well as the polychroming and gilding of sculptures, altarpieces and pulpits. MUNDORFF, *Die Asamfrauen*, 13-14.

<sup>89</sup> Maria Theresia Asam is documented to have worked on the ceilings paintings and polychrome altarpieces and pulpit of the former Benedictine monastery church in Benediktbeuren as well as polychromy in the Catholic subsidiary church in Bichl (Bavaria); MUNDORFF, *Die Asamfrauen*, 14.

<sup>90</sup> MUNDORFF, *Die Asamfrauen*, 25-33.

<sup>91</sup> MENTH, *Die Bildhauerfamilie Auwera*, 325-326, Q32-4.

pilgrim church in Maria Bühel (1663-1674).<sup>92</sup> Another fascinating but slightly different example is documented in a portrait painting (*Self-portrait with his second Wife*) of the painter and polychromer Franz Joseph Soll from Trostberg, Bavaria (1734-1798) and his wife. In one hand Soll holds a painter's pallet with brushes, while with his other hand he points to his wife Maria Rosalia, who demonstratively holds a gilding knife and cushion to the viewer.<sup>93</sup> This picture provides highly interesting proof of the assistance of the craftswoman or female artist in the workshop.

As described in some of the cases mentioned above, gilders also polychromed works of art. This again confirms the fluid boundary between artists and craftsmen in German-speaking Central Europe, although it should be pointed out that the constellation in connection with a polychrome work of art often varied depending on various factors (guild regulations, patron's wishes, geographical situation, status of artist, etc.). Nevertheless, these examples clearly demonstrate that the specialization in both gilding and polychroming is not as distinct as in Southern European countries, especially Spain.<sup>94</sup> Although the practical scope of Spanish gilders was very similar to that of gilders in Central Europe, the differences in their interactions, in particular with the painter or polychromer, indicate that their status was quite different.<sup>95</sup>

<sup>92</sup> Margareta Magdalena Rottmayr is the mother of the great Austrian painter Johann Michael Rottmayr (c. 1654-1730). KOLLER, *Fassung und Faßmaler*, 161.

<sup>93</sup> A.J. WEICHSGLGARTNER, *Trostberger Rokoko: Ein regionales Kunstzentrum im Chiemgau*, Trostberg, 1998, 35-66. See also ABELE, *Franz Joseph Soll*, 1-10.

<sup>94</sup> Gilders (Spanish: 'doradores') were not only known for their gilding, but also had to prepare paints for polychroming. While little reference to the ability of the gilders to undertake painting or polychromy is found in statutes — those of Seville, for example, state that a master 'pintor del dorado' must make 'a good crimson and green in oil' ('[...] muy bien dar un carmí, y buen verde al olio reparado'), which indicates a glazing paint. NADOLNY, *One Craft, many Names*, 15; See also: R. BRUQUETAS GALÁN, *Técnicas y materiales de la pintura española en los Siglos de Oro*, Madrid, 2002, 381-383.

<sup>95</sup> In the sixteenth century the most minimal amount of painting had to be done by a master painter, because (as was stated in the statutes of Zaragoza): the painters were more learned and more experienced in the art of painting. But it should also be noted that the first thing that master painters learned to do was to gild, BRUQUETAS GALÁN, *Técnicas y materiales*, 382-383. In some areas further reorganization of the craft was the end result of the competition between the painters, polychrome painters and gilders in Spain; for example, in Madrid in 1614 the gilders were granted independence from the painters and drafted their own Guild ordinances (BRUQUETAS GALÁN, *Técnicas y materiales*, 381).

## Patrons

During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, painters in German-speaking countries made their living from a wide range of commissioned and uncommissioned works, including panel paintings, polychrome sculpture, drawings, woodcuts, engravings, and illuminated manuscripts. One of the most prominent examples is Albrecht Dürer (1471-1528), a South German painter, printmaker, mathematician, engraver, and theorist from Nuremberg. His vast body of commissioned and uncommissioned works includes various altarpieces and religious pieces, numerous portraits and self-portraits, and copper engravings.<sup>96</sup> Another exceptional and unique example is the court painter Lucas Cranach the Elder (c. 1472-1553), who was called upon by the Elector of Saxony (Friedrich III the Wise) to supply not only easel paintings and large-scale altarpieces, but also to produce huge wall and ceiling paintings on textile supports. Among many other tasks, Cranach is also documented as having been responsible for architectural polychromy (painting, gilding, inscriptions) on the interior and exterior of the castles at Coburg, Lochau, Altenburg, Wittenberg, Weimar and Torgau.<sup>97</sup> In the seventeenth century the variability of artists continued in German-speaking Central Europe — particularly in Southern Germany, Austria and Switzerland — and the subject matter remained predominantly religious, with works commissioned primarily by the Catholic Church or by wealthy families for their palaces and private chapels.

While Northern Germany had been greatly affected by the Protestant Reformation, seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Southern Germany and Austria remained mainly Catholic. Recognizing the need for change and reform, the Catholic Church answered the Protestant Reformation with its own Counter-Reformation (c. 1550-1650). The Catholic Church, which had been the greatest patron of the arts for centuries, affirmed the importance of the visual arts in propagating personal faith by depicting the lives of Christ and the saints. As a result, artistic commissions for churches and private patrons blossomed in these areas. Patrons in Southern Germany, Austria and Switzerland who

<sup>96</sup> M. SCHAWÉ, *Die Münchner Werke im Zusammenhang*, in G. GOLDBERG — B. HEIMBERG — M. SCHAWÉ (eds), *Albrecht Dürer. Die Gemälde der Alten Pinakothek*, München, 1998, 9-23.

<sup>97</sup> During the painting and decorating of Torgau castle (erected 1533-1536) Cranach supervised the work of carpenters, woodturners and woodcarvers. His workshop supplied designs for glaziers, carpet weavers, and goldsmiths. It was responsible for drawing and painting chandeliers, gildings, framing, painting tables, benches and chests, and decorating an organ; See: G. HEYDENREICH, *Lucas Cranach the Elder. Painting Materials, Techniques and Workshop Practice*, Amsterdam, 2007, 268.

commissioned ecclesiastical furnishings such as altarpieces (often with sculptures and central paintings), pulpits and confessionals, as well as other works, were mostly priests and their parish or the abbots and abbesses of monasteries. But as the wealth of princes, bankers and merchants increased, so did the demand for secular art. Therefore, secular benefactors, such as municipal authorities, estates, the emperor and family members, aristocrats, as well as rich citizens, should also be mentioned. In addition, confraternities and guilds (merchants, weavers, clothiers, tailors, brewers, millers, and shoemakers) frequently commissioned works too.

### Guilds

Since the Middle Ages, artists and artisans throughout Europe had been organized in guilds, which were sworn associations of tradesman based in individual towns. Depending on the country, this tradition was retained into the eighteenth century.<sup>98</sup> Guilds defined and controlled a particular area of technical competence. From the fifteenth century onwards, a city could have dozens of different guilds, and social, religious, and economic structures revolved around their rules and activities.<sup>99</sup> As Catholic associations, each had its own patron saint whose feast day it celebrated; for example, St Luke represented both the painters and the sculptors' guild and St Joseph the carpenters' guild. The organization within each guild was highly structured, with a constitution, rules and statutes. Officials implemented the legal statutes, monitored the training of apprentices, strictly controlled and maintained standards of work and levels of payment, and supervised the securing of patronage and the production of works of art (paintings, sculptures, altarpieces and other ecclesiastical furnishings).<sup>100</sup> They protected artists and craftsmen from 'foreign' competition, regulated relationships between rival workshops in the same city, and legislated against the growth of large, powerful workshops that could challenge the authority of the guild. Guilds also limited the number of apprentices that a master could take on, since they represented an invaluable source of semi-skilled, cheap labour that could lead to an unfair advantage between the competing workshops.<sup>101</sup>

<sup>98</sup> SCHIESSL, *Rokokofassung und Materialillusion*, 12.

<sup>99</sup> B.C. GANTNER, *Die Werkstätten der Wolfratshauser Altarkistler und Bildhauer im 17. Jahrhundert unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der 2. Jahrhunderthälfte* (Tuduv-Studien / Reihe Kunstgeschichte, 10), München, 1984, 12.

<sup>100</sup> GANTNER, *Die Werkstätten*.

<sup>101</sup> GANTNER, *Die Werkstätten*.

The guild in which a painter was enrolled was not necessarily concerned with painters alone. In Germany, Austria and Switzerland it was very common for painters to be enrolled in a guild of craftsmen working in other, more or less related, trades. Two fifteenth-century examples of this are the Munich guild of painters, sculptors, glaziers and silkworkers (1448 and 1461) and the Salzburg guild of painters, sculptors, shield-makers and glaziers (1494).<sup>102</sup> A historical source ('Aufstellung neuer Handwerkssätz') from 1627 documents the organization of painters, sculptors, carpenters/joiners, stove-fitters/potters and locksmiths in Wolfratshausen (Bavaria).<sup>103</sup> By the beginning of the seventeenth century, however, most guilds represented a single craft, although this was also dependant on the size of the city, since in Bavaria they only existed in major cities that had a sufficient number of craftsmen.<sup>104</sup>

Ulrich Schiessl stated that painters who were organized in a guild received the greatest percentage of polychroming contracts in Bavaria.<sup>105</sup> A good number of these painters were also masters in wall painting and were often renowned artists in their region. They provided their surrounding area, the administrative district, with painted works of all kinds, ranging from signs on church benches, paintings in high altarpieces, and stucco gildings to the polychromy of ecclesiastical furnishing for an entire church.<sup>106</sup>

<sup>102</sup> In Salzburg and Munich, as in several other cities, membership in two different guilds was possible. See: V. LIEDKE, *Die münchener Tafelmalerei und Schnitzkunst der Spätgotik* (Ars Bavarica, 17/18, Teil 1), München, 1980, 123-124; V. LIEDKE, *Salzburger Maler und Bildschnitzer, sowie Bau- und Kunsthandwerker der Spätgotik und Renaissance* (Ars Bavarica, 3), München, 1975, 49.

<sup>103</sup> GANTNER, *Die Werkstätten*, 12.

<sup>104</sup> In the city of Český Krumlov (CZ, formerly Bohemia), there was one guild for every craft in the seventeenth and eighteenth century. Written sources collected in the State Regional Archive in Český Krumlov registered a total of 26 formerly existing guilds. Among them were the millers (1578), bakers (1595), cloth makers (1430), tailors (1489), weavers (1538), hatters (1585), dyers (1705), cobblers (1481), tanners (1545), furriers (1553), saddlers (1628) and belt makers (1661). Stonemasons, bricklayers and carpenters (1564) dealt with construction and building crafts and cooperated with other related crafts of joiners and coopers (1561), locksmiths, gun makers and cutlers (1546), blacksmiths and wheelrights (1555). Other crafts united potters (1538), ropemakers (1582), glassworkers (1651), soap boilers and candle makers (1714), and shopkeepers and tradesmen (1699). In the surrounding smaller towns or villages there were often guilds for related crafts or the craftsmen were accepted to the guilds of larger towns in the neighbourhood as village masters. The guilds were founded if there were many craftsmen who needed their own organization and management, as is the case with larger towns or cities.

<sup>105</sup> SCHIESSL, *Rokokofassung und Materialillusion*, 12.

<sup>106</sup> KOLLER, *Fassung und Faßmaler*, 161-165.

The number of painters incorporated in guilds was not small. In 1792 the administrative bursaries of master craftsmen in Munich, Landshut, Straubing and Burghausen showed the registration of twelve house painters or limers, two colour or pigment makers, ten lacquerers, 189 painters and one master gilder.<sup>107</sup> There were also fifty-two sculptors and 827 carpenter masters.<sup>108</sup> As was often the case, the painters were usually united with other occupations in a guild. This is why in Donauwörth there was ‘an honourable craft of the carpenters, glaziers, turners, painters, organ makers and sculptors’.<sup>109</sup> Only if the right craftsmen could not be found in the administrative district was it possible to ‘import’ foreign manpower. This aspect was treated very stringently. Since guilds were not sealable in Bavaria, the administrative districts or city municipalities were the only authorities who could issue the certificates for apprentices and masters.<sup>110</sup> More research is required in this area, especially with regard to the requirements for the training of craftsmen. Starting in 1731, the guild regulations also required a confirmation from the monarchy, which was normally regulated by the municipal authorities or administrative district.<sup>111</sup> As in many other occupations of artisanry, the painter’s rights often remained in one family over generations, which resulted in true painter dynasties.<sup>112</sup>

The training of the apprentices and the skill enhancement of the assistant or journeyman was not regulated anywhere. Guidelines did exist, but they were regionally different and variably interpreted. In principle, the master could only train one apprentice in succession, meaning that only those who could prove a conjugal birth were accepted.<sup>113</sup> In common with the guilds for other trades in Bavaria, painters were required to complete an initial apprenticeship of five to six years under one (or more) masters with an average premium or annual wage between thirty and forty gulden.<sup>114</sup> If the guild was satisfied with the work, the apprentice would then receive a letter of reference (German: *Lernbrief*) qualifying him as a ‘journeyman’ who was free to work for any guild member for one to three years.<sup>115</sup> After completing this period successfully, he could become a

<sup>107</sup> SCHIESSL, *Rokokofassung und Materialillusion*, 12.

<sup>108</sup> SCHIESSL, *Rokokofassung und Materialillusion*, 12.

<sup>109</sup> SCHIESSL, *Rokokofassung und Materialillusion*, 12.

<sup>110</sup> SCHIESSL, *Rokokofassung und Materialillusion*, 12.

<sup>111</sup> SCHIESSL, *Rokokofassung und Materialillusion*, 12.

<sup>112</sup> A good example is the painter family Sichelbein; See: BAYER, *Die Malerfamilie Sichelbein*.

<sup>113</sup> GANTNER, *Die Werkstätten*, 13.

<sup>114</sup> The wage of a sculptor apprentice was much lower, ranging from ten to fifteen gulden; GANTNER, *Die Werkstätten*, 13.

<sup>115</sup> GANTNER, *Die Werkstätten*, 13.

‘free master’, but for this he needed to acquire a birth letter (German: Geburtsbrief) signed by two guarantors confirming the date of his birth.<sup>116</sup> The journeyman could then apply for the permission to carry out his masterpiece, when he would normally have been between eighteen and twenty-five years. The sons of masters, or the journeymen who married the daughter or widow of a master, enjoyed the best preconditions, since they only had to fulfil half of the examination work required. Once someone had become a master, he could sell his own works, set up his own workshop and train apprentices of his own.

### Academies

Until the establishment of the first artistic academies from the mid-sixteenth-century onwards, workshops and guilds (or associations of artisans) were the basic units of artistic organization in Europe, and the practical side of the craft (painting, sculpture) was passed on mainly through word of mouth from master to pupil. As the visual arts became an important cultural and professional category, and as artists outgrew the guild system, they sought new forms of association. The academy, with the prestige of the name, and its humanistic associations with Plato’s Academy in Athens, seemed the logical structure.<sup>117</sup> In fact, artists preferred an academy to a guild for several reasons. Not only did they see themselves as more illustrious when belonging to an academy, but they were also better off financially and enjoyed considerable personal freedom.<sup>118</sup>

When considering the guilds, especially those of Central Europe, it becomes clear that they restricted artistic autonomy to a great extent. At least since the time of Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519), artists had prided themselves on their knowledge of scientific and humanistic subjects — the former including perspective, anatomy, light, colour, and proportions, the latter a knowledge of the Bible, mythology, legends and literary history. Artists knew the Classical stories and how to put them properly into visual form. Translating from word to image required artists to learn not only the tools of the trade, but to have some sense of rhetoric, as the art of communication. Through a liberal education, one grew in virtue and self-realization and took an important place in society. Humanism was the philosophy of life, with a belief in the value and dignity of

<sup>116</sup> GANTNER, *Die Werkstätten*, 14.

<sup>117</sup> J.P. CAMPBELL, *Academies and Associations*, in A. BOSTRÖM (ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Sculpture*, vol. 1, London, 2004, 7-9, here 7.

<sup>118</sup> CAMPBELL, *Academies and Associations*, 7.

man.<sup>119</sup> Because guilds were not schools, they could not educate artists in this new and civilising manner.

The first modern artistic academy, the *Accademia dell'Arte del Disegno* (Academy of the Art of Design) in Florence, was founded in 1563.<sup>120</sup> It was the first official school of drawing in Europe to promote what is now called Academic Art. It enjoyed the support and patronage of the Medici Family, as well as several artists including Michelangelo (both a sculptor and a painter), and from the Mannerist movement, Giorgio Vasari and Agnolo Bronzino.<sup>121</sup> The *Accademia di San Luca* (Academy of Saint Luke) was founded in 1577 as an association of artists in Rome. Under the directorship of Federigo Zuccaro, its purpose was to elevate the work of 'artists' — painters, sculptors and architects — above that of mere craftsmen.<sup>122</sup> It is noteworthy that one of the great Bavarian painters, Cosmas Damian Asam, travelled to Rome in 1711 and received the first prize of the *Accademia di San Luca* in the presence of the pope in 1713.<sup>123</sup>

In the seventeenth century, academies proliferated in Europe and took on the role of practical training in addition to providing a liberal education for painters and sculptors. The Royal Academies of Art in France, Austria and England were established in 1648, 1692 and 1768, respectively, and ran schools of instruction, held annual or semi-annual exhibitions, and provided venues where artists could display their work and cultivate critical notice.<sup>124</sup> Here, young artists could be promoted to prominence through patronage connections and seek protection of artistic interests. The *Akademie der bildenden Künste Wien* (Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna) was founded in 1692 as a private academy by the court painter Peter Strudl (c. 1660-1714).<sup>125</sup> This was the first general training centre for artists in Central Europe outside the guilds of St Luke (association of painters and other artists and artisans), modelled after

<sup>119</sup> J.E. SEIGEL, *Rhetoric and Philosophy in Renaissance Humanism. The Union of Eloquence and Wisdom, Petrarch to Valla*, Princeton, 1968, 232-233.

<sup>120</sup> CAMPBELL, *Academies and Associations*, 7-8.

<sup>121</sup> CAMPBELL, *Academies and Associations*, 7.

<sup>122</sup> CAMPBELL, *Academies and Associations*, 7.

<sup>123</sup> RUPPRECHT, *Der Deckenmaler Cosmas Damian Asam*, 13.

<sup>124</sup> A. MASSING, *French Painting Technique in the Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth Centuries and De La Fontaine's Academie de la peinture (Paris 1679)*, in E. HERMENS (ed.), *Looking Through Paintings: The Study of Painting Techniques and Materials in Support of Art Historical Research*, London, 1998, 319-376, here 319. See also: CAMPBELL, *Academies and Associations*, 8.

<sup>125</sup> The academy in Vienna has been shown to have received government subsidies from 1692 onwards; M. KOLLER, *Die Brüder Strudel. Hofkünstler und Gründer der Wiener Kunstakademie*, Innsbruck — Wien, 1993, 15.

the *Accademia di San Luca* (1593) and the *Académie de peinture et de sculpture* (1648).<sup>126</sup> Early students included the architect Franz Hillebrandt (1719-1797), who subsequently became chief architect of the Hungarian Treasury, and the portrait painter Daniel Schmidely. In 1753, Franz Ignaz Günther studied at the Vienna Academy of Fine Arts and won the annual students' competition.<sup>127</sup> Other members included the fresco painters Paul Troger, his pupil Franz Anton Maulbertsch, and Michael Angelo Unterberger, all of whom emerged as influential teachers and great painters of the churches and chapels of 'Holy Austria'.

### Conclusion

The complexity of the situation with regard to the guilds and academies indicates that although guild rules in Germany, Austria and Switzerland strictly delineated the different spheres of competence and regulated commercial practice, this general formula is much too simple to describe the situation of artists and artisans in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries precisely. Specialization within the crafts of painters, gilders, lacquerers, sculptors, and carpenters/joiners was extraordinarily complex, and in many ways has not yet been sufficiently determined: the reason is the fluid boundaries, especially between painters, polychromers and gilders. The historical documentary sources assembled and evaluated here demonstrate that the intricacy of this subject requires further research if we are to understand the making and the meaning of polychrome works of art in the Baroque and Rococo period more comprehensively.

<sup>126</sup> KOLLER, *Die Bruder Strüdel*, 15.

<sup>127</sup> A. FEULNER, *Ignaz Günther, kurfürstlich bayerischer Hofbildhauer 1725-1775*, Wien, 1920, 4-5. See also: P. VOLK, *Ignaz Günther. Vollendung des Rokoko*, Regensburg, 1991.