

Bohemian Painters in Silesia in the Baroque Period. Career Paths and Recipes for Success

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Since the Middle Ages Silesia was a convenient place to work for artists, who came to this region from the territory of neighbouring Bohemia. This phenomenon reached its apogee in the Baroque era, which is considered to be the Golden Age of art in Silesia. Apart from sculptors, the presence of Bohemian artists in Silesia was especially evident among numerous painters, who were active on this territory. What paths of career did they choose? What were their typical recipes for success in this region? Why was Silesia such a good place to work for newcomers from Bohemia in the Baroque period? This article brings answers to these questions. It is based on the results of the four-year scientific project “Baroque painting in Silesia”¹. The new data enabled us not only to reconsider a problem of artistic migration between Bohemia and Silesia, but also to formulate a concept of a common artistic region of the Lands of the Bohemian Crown in the years 1648–1740.



¹ The scientific project *Baroque Painting in Silesia* (2012–2016) was financed by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education in Poland as part of the National Programme for the Development of the Humanities (No. 11H 000780).

² See B. Lipczyńska, *Barokowa panorama Śląska. Malowidła Felixa Antona Schefflera w gmachu Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego*, “Roczniki Sztuki Śląskiej” vol. 16 (1997), pp. 117–139.

I

Anyone who enters through the main entrance of the building of the University of Wrocław (Breslau) – part of the Jesuit complex built in Wrocław on the site of the former imperial castle – is surprised by the grandeur of the painterly stairwell décor. The spectator sees the great panorama of Silesia painted in 1734². The vault plafonds above the stairs present the most important lands of this province [fig. 1]. Prosperity and all-encompassing mood of bliss arise from all the de-



pictions: opulently clothed and pleased representatives of various professions, on the background of magnificent cities and monumental palaces and monasteries, proudly show the attributes of natural riches and developed industry in the region. Silesia is shown there as one of the richest lands of the Bohemian Crown and the Habsburg monarchy, an enclave of prosperity and happiness, thriving under the wise rule of the Habsburg dynasty emperors.

Although the paintings were clearly of ideological character, the image of Silesia as a land of prosperity they show did not differ greatly from the real state of the province at the time. In the history of Silesia, Baroque was the period of peace and economic and cultural heyday. Silesia experienced no acts of war since 1648, the signing of the Peace of Westphalia which ended the Thirty Years' War, until 1740, the year of the military incursion of Prussian troops into Silesia. The peace fostered the economic development of Silesia which was a ruined country with decimated population after the Thirty Years' War. The farming economy of the nobility, trade and weaving, speciality of Silesia, became the driving force of the Silesian economy³.

There is no doubt that the series of paintings in the stairwell of the University of Wrocław building was an imperial "propaganda poster" directed at all the students of the Jesuit Academy and visiting guests. What is important, this high class artistic act of Habsburg agitation was done through the medium of painting and its creator was Felix Anton Scheffler (1703–1760), an excellent fresco painter born in Mainburg near Munich who settled in Wrocław in 1732⁴. In the Baroque period painting became one of the most effective means of propaganda in Silesia which influenced both elites and general public. For the Catholic Church, religious congregations and the pro-Habsburg nobility, as well as Silesian protestants and the authorities of Silesian cities it was the painting that became the means of legitimising social position as well as owned and newly acquired privileges. It was also considered a tool in the fight for accomplishing political and religious goals. Paintings also became the desired luxurious items of collector's fascination which was visible in dynamically growing local art collections⁵.

This resulted in a huge demand for all sorts of paintings which local painters could not meet decimated by the Thirty Years' War. Eminent Silesian artists were emigrating. For example, Bartholomaeus Strobel the Younger (1591 – after 1647) left Silesia in 1633 and settled in the neighbouring Kingdom of Poland⁶. The ones who decided to stay were quite often more involved in saving their lives than artistic activities. The years 1633 and 1634 were especially tragic. A few major Silesian cities such as Świdnica (Schweidnitz) and Jelenia Góra (Hirschberg) burned down⁷. Plague broke out in Wrocław besieged by the Swedish army which resulted in deaths of more than 18,000 residents of the city, among them many artists⁸.

il. 1 F. A. Scheffler, *The Dutchy of Świdnica and Jawor*, 1734, fresco decoration; Wrocław, the main staircase in the building of the University of Wrocław. Photo: M. Mádł



³ See G. Wąs, *Dzieje Śląska od 1525 do 1806*, [in:] M. Czaplinski [et al.], *Historia Śląska*, Wrocław 2002.

⁴ See E. Dubowy, *Felix Anton Scheffler. Ein Beitrag zur Kunstgeschichte des 18. Jahrhunderts*, München 1926; A. Szela, A. Kozieł, *Scheffler (Schaeffler) Felix Anton*, [in:] *Malarstwo barokowe na Śląsku*, ed. A. Kozieł, Wrocław 2017, pp. 648–656.

⁵ See M. Mencfel, *Skarbcze natury i sztuki. Prywatne gabinety osobliwości, kolekcje sztuki i naturalistów na Śląsku w wiekach XVII i XVIII*, Warszawa 2010, *passim*.

⁶ See J. Tylicki, *Bartholomiej Strobel – malarz epoki wojny trzydziestoletniej*, vol. 1, Toruń 2000, pp. 38–39.

⁷ See G. Wąs, *op. cit.*, p. 173.

⁸ See M. Goliński, *Na obrzeżach wojny i monarchii absolutnej*, [in:] M. Kaczmarek [et al.], *Wrocław, dziedzictwo wieków*, Wrocław 1997, p. 96; P. Oszczanowski, *Między Waltherem a Willmannem. Malarstwo Wrocławia 1. połowy XVII wieku*, [in:] *Willmann i inni. Malarstwo, rysunek i grafika na Śląsku i w krajach ościennych w XVII i XVIII wieku*, ed. A. Kozieł, B. Lejman, Wrocław 2002, p. 128.



⁹ See **A. Muła**, *Johann Claessens z Antwerpii. Nadworny malarz biskupa Franciszka Ludwika von Neuburg*, „Dzieta i Interpretacje” vol. 7 (2002), pp. 37–54; *idem*, *Nieznane obrazy o tematyce mitologicznej z auli gimnazjum Carolinum w Nysie*, [in:] *Nysa. Sztuka w dawnej stolicy księstwa biskupiego*, ed. **R. Hołownia**, **M. Kapustka**, Wrocław 2008, pp. 275–288; **A. Muła**, *Krzyszowski opat Dominicus Geyer i malarze (1696–1726)*, [in:] *Wokół Karkonoszy i Gór Iżerskich. Sztuka baroku na Śląsko-czesko-łużyckim pograniczu*, ed. **A. Kozieł**, Jelenia Góra 2012, pp. 143–156.

¹⁰ See **E. Kloss**, *Michael Willmann. Leben und Werke eines deutschen Barockmalers*, Breslau 1934; **H. Lossow**, *Michael Willmann (1630–1706) – Meister der Barockmalerei*, Würzburg 1994; **A. Kozieł**, *Michael Willmann i jego malarska pracownia*, Wrocław 2013, p. 21.

¹¹ See **R. Sachs**, *Böhmische und mährische Künstler in schlesischen Quellen, Alt-Drucken und Zeitungen bis 1945*, [in:] *Śląsk i Czechy. Wspólne drogi sztuki. Materiały konferencji naukowej dedykowane Profesorowi Janowi Wrabecowi*, eds. **M. Kapustka**, **A. Kozieł**, **P. Oszczanowski**, Wrocław 2007. See also **R. Sachs**, *Lexikon der bildenden Künstler und Kunsthandwerker Schlesiens bis 1945*, vol. 1: A–B, Breslau 2001; **R. Sachs**, **D. Błaszczuk**, **U. Ososko**, *Leksykon śląskich artystów plastyków i twórców rzemiosła artystycznego*, vol. 29: *Powiat wrocławski*, Wrocław 2010.

¹² Silesian Jesuits may serve as an example. See **Z. Lec**, *Placówki jezuickie na Śląsku do 1740 roku*, [in:] *Silesia Jesuitica. Kultura i sztuka zakonu jezuitów na Śląsku i w hrabstwie kłodzkim 1580–1776. Materiały konferencji naukowej zorganizowanej przez Oddział Wrocławski Stowarzyszenia Historyków Sztuki (Wrocław, 6–8 X 2011) dedykowane pamięci Profesora Henryka Dziurli*, ed. **D. Galewski**, **A. Jezierska**, Wrocław 2012, pp. 35–40; **D. Galewski**, *Jezuici wobec tradycji średniowiecznej. Barokizacja kościołów w Kłodzku, Świdnicy, Jeleniej Górze i Żaganiu*, Kraków 2012.

¹³ See **P. Mat'a**, *Der Adel Böhmens und Schlesiens in der Frühen Neuzeit in vergleichender und beziehungs-geschichtlicher Perspektive*, [in:] *Szlachta na Śląsku*, ed. **J. Balcke**, **J. Harasimowicz**, München 2010, pp. 223–262; **J. Balcke**, *“Blask śląskiej szlachty”. Szlacheckie elity Śląska od średniowiecza po schyłek panowania Habsburgów / “Die Glanz des schlesischen Adels”. Die adeligen Eliten Schlesiens vom Mittelalter bis zum Ende der Habsburgischen Herrschaft*, [in:] *Szlachta na Śląsku. Średniowiecze i czasy nowożytnie / Adel in Schlesien. Mittelalter und frühe Neuzeit* [exhibition cat.], ed. **M. Bauer [et al.]**, Muzeum Miedzi w Legnicy, Dresden 2014, pp. 18–43.

Therefore, after the Thirty Years' War foreign painters from all over Europe were eagerly coming to Silesia. Among them were artists from the leading European artistic centres of that period such as Rome, Vienna, Munich and Antwerp like Johann Claessens (died 1716), a painter born in Antwerp, who settled in Nysa (Neisse) before 1694 and became a court painter and butler of Franz Ludwig von der Pfalz-Neuburg, the Bishop of Wrocław and the brother-in-law of the emperor Leopold I⁹. However, the majority of painters who came to Silesia originated from provincial towns located on the outskirts of Europe, like Michael Lucas Leopold Willmann (1630–1706) – the most outstanding Baroque painter in Silesia – who came from Prussian Kaliningrad (Königsberg) and in 1660 settled down by the Cisterian Abbey in Lubiąż (Leubus)¹⁰.

II

By far the largest group among the foreign painters who were working in Silesia were people who came from the neighbouring Bohemia – both indigenous Czech people as well as painters from other nations who were living there: Germans, Italians, Dutch and Flemish people. Their presence in Silesia is attested not only by numerous preserved paintings but also the results of systematic archival queries carried out primarily in the Silesian parish records. Research started by Reiner Sachs in the mid-1970s shows a clear quantitative leap in the presence of Bohemian and Moravian artists in Silesia during the Baroque period despite the fact that it covers only part of the preserved archival sources¹¹. This boom began at the end of the Thirty Years' War and reached its zenith around year 1700. It stopped during the Silesian Wars (1740–1763).

The migration of the artists from Bohemia to Silesia was easier due to both the closeness of the two countries and convenient transport routes, as well as a dense network of institutional and familial associations of artistic patronage. Although the Wrocław diocese was administratively connected to the Archdiocese of Gniezno in Poland, most Silesian religious congregations, the main strength of the Catholic Church in Silesia, belonged to the Bohemian religious provinces with the capital in Prague¹². Numerous estates in Silesia belonged also to the representatives of the Bohemian aristocracy, such as Nostitzs, Tschernins, Lobkowiczs, Liechtensteins, Herbersteins or Sternbergs¹³. The example of the Cistercians from Krzeszów (Grüssau), who collaborated with Benedictine monks from Broumov, Carmelites from Prague, the bishop of Hradec Králové and count Franz Anton von Sporck from Kuks, shows that for many Silesian border monasteries Bohemia was their natural background¹⁴.

For many artists from Bohemia, Silesia was only a place for temporary work. Most often they arrived for a short period of time to create a particular work of art and came back to Bohemia after that.



il. 2 J. Hiebel, *Calamities of the Thirty Years War*, 1726, fresco decoration; Świdnica, the Cathedral Church of St. Stanislaus and St. Wenceslaus, the Chapel of Our Lady of Świdnica. Photo: M. Mádl

One of the examples may be the stay of Wenzel Lorenz Reiner (1689–1743) in Wrocław in the years 1725–1726 when on commission of the abbot of the Premonstratensian monastery in Wrocław, count Ferdinand von Hochberg, he was working on a fresco decoration in the Hochberg’s chapel by the Premonstratensian Church of St. Vincent and St. Jacob in Wrocław¹⁵. The arrival of Johann Hiebel (1679–1755) in 1726 in Świdnica, where, by the commission of local Jesuits, he created illusionistic fresco paintings on the vault and the West wall of the Butchers’ chapel at the parish church of St. Stanislaus and St. Wenceslaus in Świdnica (Schweidnitz) is another example [fig. 2]¹⁶. Some of them were establishing long-term cooperation with Silesian principals,



¹⁴ See A. Kozieł, *Barokowy splendor klasztorów i pałaców*, [in:] *Śląsk, perła w Koronie Czeskiej. Trzy okresy świetności w relacjach artystycznych Śląska i Czech* [exhibition cat.], 6 V – 8 X 2006, Akademia Rycerska, Legnica, 17 XI 2006 – 8 IV 2007, Valdštejská jízďárna, Prague, ed. A. Niedzielenko, V. Vlnas, Praha 2006, pp. 297–313; A. Kozieł, *Nie tylko Legnickie Pole. Relacje artystyczne między klasztorami Benedyktynów w Broumovie i Cystersów w Krzeszowie w dobie baroku*, [in:] *Barok na Broumovsku ze śląskiej perspektywy. Historia i współczesność*, ed. A. Wojtyła, M. Wyrzykowska, Wrocław 2018, pp. 11–21, 113–123.

¹⁵ See G. Grundmann, *Barockfresken in Breslau*, Frankfurt am Main 1967, pp. 11–12, 47–55; A. Kaczmarek, *Geyner versus Reiner. Zum fraglichen Mitautor der Fresken in der Hochbergschen Kapelle zu Wrocław (Breslau)*, “Umění” vol. 58 (2010), no. 1, pp. 57–62; P. Preiss, *Václav Vavřinec Reiner. Dílo, život a doba malíře českého baroka*, vol. 1, Praha 2013, pp. 487–505. Unfortunately, the fresco decoration had been destroyed in 1945 and in the years 2010–2013 was unsuccessfully reconstructed by E. Pill.

¹⁶ See H. Hoffmann, *Die Katholische Pfarrkirche in Schweidnitz. Eine Führung*, Schweidnitz 1930, pp. 28–31; J. Fronek, *Johann Hiebel (1679–1755). Malíř fresek středoevropského baroka*, Praha 2013.



il. 3 A Painter from Vrchlabí, *St. Bernard of Clairvaux converts Duke Wilhelm of Aquitaine*, 1687–1689, fresco decoration; Jelenia Góra-Cieplice Śląskie-Zdrój, the former Cistercian Presbytery (at present Muzeum Przyrodnicze). Photo: M. Pulik

like Ignaz Preissler (1676–1741), a glass painter from Kunštát who in the years 1715–1729 most probably dwelt periodically in Wrocław and worked for the local collector, Ernst Benjamin von Löwenstädt und Ronnenburg¹⁷. It was similar in the case of an anonymous painter from Vrchlabí in the Karkonosze Mountains (Riesengebirge) who from 1672 till 1692 did painting commissions for the Cistercian Abbey in Krzeszów (Grüssau), including the fresco decoration in the building of a former Cistercian presbytery in Jelenia Góra-Cieplice Śląskie-Zdrój (Bad Warmbrunn) (1687–1689) [fig. 3]¹⁸. There were also Jesuit *coadjutores* from the Bohemian religious province, who were often sent to Silesian Jesuit colleges in order to carry out specific artistic tasks¹⁹. The best example is Johann Kuben (1697–1772) – a Jesuit monk and painter from Bystrzyca Kłodzka (Habelschwerdt) who worked in Silesia in many places but in the Jesuit Church of the



¹⁷ See H. Brožková, *Dílo Daniela a Ignáce Preisslerů z východních Čech. K originalitě kolowratské dílny*, [in:] *Vybrané kapitoly z dějin českého výtvarného umění a uměleckého řemesla. Sborník z cyklu přednášek konaných v Národním muzeu v Praze v roce 2001*, Brno 2001, pp. 60–67; J. Šůla, *Ignác Preissler, domácí malíř skla a porcelánu v Kunštátě, a jeho rodina*, “Východočeské listy historické” vol. 19/20 (2002), pp. 195–224; M. Žerník, *Preisslerowie – barokowi malarze szkła i porcelany i ich związki z czeskimi oraz śląskimi mecenasami*, [in:] *Wokół Karkonoszy...*; *eadem*, *Wrocławski kolekcjoner Ernst Benjamin von Löwenstädt und Ronnenburg i jego zbiory*, “Roczniki Sztuki Śląskiej” vol. 22 (2013), pp. 77–94.

¹⁸ See A. Kozieł, *O nowo odkrytych malowidłach freskowych w budynku dawnego probostwa w Cieplicach Śląskich-Zdroju*, “Roczniki Sztuki Śląskiej” vol. 20 (2012), pp. 71–90; *idem*, *The Cycle of Frescoes in the Former Cistercian Presbytery in Cieplice Śląskie-Zdrój (Silesia). A New Contribution to St. Bernard of Clairvaux Iconography in Central Europe in the Baroque Period*, “Ars” vol. 46 (2013), no. 2, pp. 209–222.

¹⁹ See V. Ryneš, *Umělci a umělečtí řemeslníci, jezuitští koadjutoři v barokní době*, “Umění” vol. 6 (1958), pp. 402–410.



il. 4 J. Kuben, *The Legend of the Holy Cross*, 1739-1745, fresco decoration; Brzeg, the Parish Church of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. Photo: M. Mádl



il. 5 P. Brandl, *The Assumption of the Virgin Mary*, 1731-1732, oil on canvas, around 700 × 350; Krzeszów, the Parish Church of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary, the main altar. Photo: J. Buława



il. 6 E. Paritius, *Portrait of George III, Duke of Legnica and Brzeg*, 1664, oil on canvas, 111 × 100, Brzeg, Muzeum Piastów Śląskich. Photo: A. Kozieł

Exaltation of the Holy Cross in Brzeg (Brieg) created the work of his life, quadrature fresco decoration of the nave, side chapels and lofts and the illusionist altar on the East wall of the chancel (1739–1745) [fig. 4]²⁰. If painters from Bohemia were already recognised and famous in their country, they could count on high fees for their work in Silesia. The best example is the remuneration of Peter Brandl (1668–1735), who in the years 1731–1732 created a magnificent painting *The Assumption of the Virgin Mary* for the main altar in the Cistercian Abbey Church in Krzeszów [fig. 5] for an enormous fee in the amount of 3000 guilders – the highest fee the artist earned throughout his career²¹.

Therefore, many artists from Bohemia decided to settle in Silesia permanently. A few of them even managed to get very prestigious positions as court painters like, for example, Ezechiel Paritius (1622–1671) who had been born in Litomyšl or Litoměřice and who was active from 1655 in Brzeg on the court of Dukes of Legnica and Brzeg²² [fig. 6]. Another one was the Flemish artist Johann Franz de Backer (1680 – after 1737) born in Antwerp, the former painting gallery in-



²⁰ See R. Nowak, *Ku większej chwale Boga i czci Krzyża Świętego*, [in:] *Magia iluzji. Dzieło Jana Kubena*, red. B. Szybowski, Opole 2000; P. Oulíková, *Przyczynki do życia i twórczości Jana Kubena w Czechach*, [in:] *Kościół pw. Podwyższenia Krzyża Świętego, Brzeg, Cz. 1*, ed. S. Majewski, Gliwice 2009, pp. 63–80; R. Nowak, *Personalizacja dziejów Krzyża Świętego z kościoła Podwyższenia Krzyża Świętego w Brzegu*, [in:] *Silesia Jesuitica...*

²¹ See J. Prokop, *Petr Brandl. Životní a umělecký epilog 1725–1735*, Praha 2006, pp. 104–115; A. Kozieł, *Peter Brandl w Krzeszowie. Znane fakty, nieznanne obrazy*, [in:] *Śląsk i Czechy...*, pp. 341–356; *idem*, *Působení Petra Brandla ve Slezsku*, [in:] *Petr Brandl (1668–1735). Studie*, ed. A. Steckerová, Praha 2018, pp. 103–119.

²² See A. Więcek, *Ezechiel Paritius, nadworny malarz Piastów śląskich*, "Biuletyn Historii Sztuki" vol. 24 (1962), no. 3/4, pp. 410–417; *idem*, *Ezechiel Paritius z Litomyšla i jego działalność na Śląsku i w Polsce / Ezechiel Paritius z Litomyšle a jeho činnost ve Slezsku a v Polsku*, "Časopis slezského muzea" vol. B 13 (1964), pp. 17–22; A. Rombowski, *Malarz Ezechiel Paritius. Nowe fakty i nowe wątpliwości*, "Opolski Rocznik Muzealny" vol. 2 (1966), pp. 371–375; M. Macura, *Paritius (Pariss, Pariz, Paricius) Ezechiel (Ezechiell, Ezechiel)*, [in:] *Malarstwo barokowe...*, pp. 602–604.



il. 7 J. M. Steiner, *The Vision of St. Hedwig*, 1750, oil on canvas, 315 × 130 cm;
Dobroszów, the Parish Church of St. Hedwig. Photo: J. Buława

spector of count Franz Joseph von Tschernin in Prague, who after the bankruptcy of his patron moved before the year 1724 to Wrocław and was granted the position of the court painter of the Bishop of Wrocław, Franz Ludwig von der Pfalz-Neuburg²³.

However, the positions of court painters were available only for the few. That is why some of the artists from Bohemia decided to work in guilds in Silesian cities. Getting a position of a guild painter in some of the Silesian cities was not easy, because the guilds were protecting the local painting market against the outside competition. This was happening in Brzeg where for a long time prohibitive rules virtually prevented the new painters from settling in the town²⁴. Similarly, in Wrocław everyone who wanted to become a guild master had to work two years in a workshop of one of the local guild masters after completing the mandatory studies and a working trip (*Lehrzeit*). Despite the fact that since 1644 the guild authorities agreed to exempt new painters from this requirement for a fee in the amount of roughly 50 thalers it was an inconvenient rule, especially for the artists who had already achieved certain professional positions²⁵. Despite this, some of the Bohemian artists managed to settle in Wrocław and become employed as guild painters such as Daniel Datschitzki called Schwinustka (1647) who came from Zbiroh *via* Prague or Hans Jacob Grechel from České Budějovice (1671)²⁶.

In other Silesian cities obtaining the title of a guild master by Bohemian artists was much easier. This was especially true for the urban centres located in duchies which were under the direct management of the Habsburg administration. For example, Johann Michael Steiner (1709–1767), a painter born in Nowa Ruda (Neurode) in the County of Kłodzko (Glatz) settled in Ząbkowice Śląskie (Frankenstein) with his two brothers: Johann Georg and Johann Franz²⁷. Jeremias Joseph Knechtel (1679–1750) born in Šelty near Česká Kamenica in the Northern Bohemia decided to live in Legnica (Liegnitz) around year 1700²⁸. Both painters established prospering painting workshops in a short period of time. They became some of the main suppliers of religious paintings for Catholic principals in the South-Western part of Silesia [fig. 7]. What is more, Knechtel got prestigious positions in the Legnica authority structures – he became a member of the local Council of Twelve Men (Zwölfter) and a court juror. The artistic and social position which Knechtel acquired in Silesia was so strong that in 1730 he applied for a honourable position of a royal court painter in Prague²⁹.

Despite these facilitations artists from Bohemia often gave up applying for admission to guilds and decided to take up work as servitors of big monasteries in cities or rural areas of Silesia. They settled and continued their painting activities in the areas which were under the jurisdiction of the Catholic Church. In urban areas it automatically excluded them from the municipal law and dependence on guilds. For example, in Wrocław there were two such areas: Cathedral



²³ See A. Muła, *Johann Franz de Backer i jego związki z Czechami. Kilka uwag na temat życiorysu i oeuvre flamandzkiego malarza*, [in:] *Śląsk i Czechy...*, pp. 327–340; M. Artysiewicz, *Johann Franz de Backer i wrocławscy dominikanianie*, [in:] *Historia, kultura i sztuka dominikanów na Śląsku 1226–2013. W trzecieścielecie beatyfikacji bł. Czesława*, ed. D. Galewski, W. Kucharski, M. L. Wójcik, Wrocław 2015, pp. 249–261; A. Kozieł, *Backer (Becker, Peckert), Johann Franz de (Joannes Frans, Frans, Joh. Francisco, Franciscus)*, [in:] *Malarstwo barokowe...*, pp. 282–286.

²⁴ According to the privilege granted in 1605 none foreign painter could work in Brzeg in lifetimes of the local painters: Martin Gerlach, Georg Hoffmann, Balthasar Bredt, Melchior Horn and Adam Burchard. Later only three painters at most could work in the town and this restraint was repeated in the confirmation of the privilege in the year 1615. The limits were even reduced, when in 1651 the dukes of Legnica and Brzeg: George Louis and Christian agreed on the request of the painter Johann Reuss, that only two painters could work in the city because of tragic situation of local painters, which had been caused by the Thirty Years' War. See W. Wackernagel, *Malerinnungen in Brieg, in Prag und in anderen Städten*, "Monatschrift von und für Schlesien" vol. 2 (1829), pp. 508–511; A. Schultz, *Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der schlesischen Maler (1500–1800)*, Breslau 1882, pp. 10–11 and A. Kozieł, *Malarstwo barokowe na Śląsku w społeczno-ekonomicznym i artystycznym kontekście*, [in:] *Malarstwo barokowe...*, p. 33.

²⁵ See A. Schultz, *Der Kampf der Breslauer Malerzunft um ihre Privilegien im XVI. und XVII. Jahrhundert*, "Jahrbücher für Kunstwissenschaft" vol. 2 (1869), pp. 350–361; *idem*, *Untersuchungen...*, pp. 9–12.

²⁶ See A. Kozieł, *Barokowy splendor...*, p. 303; *Malarstwo barokowe na Śląsku...*, p. 34.

²⁷ See A. Kozieł, *Steiner (Steinner, Steinere) Johann Michael (Johann Melchior)*, [in:] *Malarstwo barokowe...*, pp. 693–697.

²⁸ See E. Kłoda, *Jeremias Joseph Knechtel – malarz zapomniany?*, [in:] *Jeremias Joseph Knechtel – legnicki malarz doby baroku* [exhibition cat.], ed. A. Kozieł, E. Kłoda, X 2012 – IV 2013, Muzeum Miedzi w Legnicy – Akademia Rycerska, Legnica 2012, pp. 37–67; *eadem*, *Who was Jeremias Joseph Knechtel? A Few Remarks about an Unknown Baroque Painter from Bohemia*, "Czech-Polish Historical and Pedagogical Journal" 2016, no. 1, pp. 65–76; *eadem*, *Knechtel (Knechtl, Knecht) Jeremias Joseph*, [in:] *Malarstwo barokowe...*, pp. 480–491.

²⁹ See E. Kłoda, *Who was...?*, pp. 65–76.

il. 8 F. A. Schmut, *St. Gregory the Great* (from the cycle of *Four Fathers of the Church*), 1727, oil on canvas, 198 × 130 cm; Złotoryja, the Parish Church of St. Hedwig. Photo: A. Kozieł

il. 9 Ph.Ch. Bentum, *St. Peter and St. Paul*, 1735, oil on canvas, 450 × 220 cm; Nysa, the Parish Church of St. Peter and St. Paul, the main altar. Photo: J. Buława



Island (Dominsel) with Sand Island (Sandinsel), as well as the parish of St. Adalbert by the Dominican monastery³⁰. A group of artists who came from Bohemia lived there, in the vicinity of today's Dominican Square (Dominikaner Platz) and New Market (Neumarkt). They were, among others, Franz Anton Schmut from Prague who specialised in oil paintings [fig. 8], Ignaz Depée, a fresco painter from Český Krumlov and the most excellent of them, Christian Philipp Bentum, a Dutchman who after a period of study and cooperation with Brandl before 1734 moved from Bohemia to Silesia where at first he worked for Lubiąż Cistercians and later also for other religious congregations like Order of the Holy Sepulchre [fig. 9], Knights Hospitallers,



³⁰ See E. Wernicke, *Neue Ermittlungen zur Geschichte der schlesischen, insbesondere Breslauer Maler*, "Schlesiens Vorzeit in Bild und Schrift" vol. 5 (1888), pp. 7-15; A. Muła, *Anton Polcke na nowo odkryty. Zapomniane źródła i nieznanne oeuvre nadwornego malarza doby późnego baroku*, [in:] *Slezsko, země Koruny České. Historia a kultura 1300-1740*, ed. H. Dáňová, J. Klípa, L. Stolárová, Praha 2008, vol. B, pp. 611-621.





il. 10 J. F. Hoffmann, *Jacob's Dream*, 1734–1735, fresco decoration; Jelenia Góra, the Parish Church of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. Photo: M. Pulik

³¹ See B. Lejman, *Philip Christian Bentum, malarz śląskiego baroku*, Warszawa 2008, *passim*; A. Kozieł, *Bentum (de Bentum, de Benthum, Bentom, Benthom, Bentam, Bendum, Bendomb, Benton, Fentum, Vendum, Wendum) Philipp Christian (Philippus Christian, Philipe Christian)*, [in:] *Malarstwo barokowe...*, pp. 297–302.

³² See M. Pierzchała, *Późnobarokowy wystrój malarski kaplicy dworskiej w Sarnach i jego twórca Jan Franciszek Hoffmann*, "Roczniki Sztuki Śląskiej" vol. 14 (1986), pp. 117–137; T. Mikołajczak, "Sub Mariae tutela Carmelus quiescit": historia dwóch barokowych ołtarzy z Wizją Św. Szymona Stocka z dawnego kościoła karmelitów w Strzegomiu, "Dzieła i Interpretacje" vol. 8 (2003), pp. 139–151; D.-M. Chałat, *Malowidła sklepienne kościoła łaski w Jeleniej Górze – katolicka sztuka w służbie protestantów*, [in:] *Wokół Karkonoszy...*, pp. 131–141.

Premonstratensians and noble families³¹. When newcomers from Bohemia could not obtain employment as guild painters or monastery servitors, they sought other unconventional career paths in Silesia. An example of this is Johann Franz Hoffmann (1701–1766) born in Kłodzko who married Anna Maria Puschmann in 1731, a widow of an innkeeper in Krzeszów. The inn Hoffmann managed until 1737 became a base for his rich artistic activity for catholic and protestant founders in Silesia [fig. 10]³².

III

Why were Bohemian painters so eager to settle in Silesia and succeeded there commercially and artistically? It seems it depended not only on the artistic but also non-artistic factors. Of course, there is no doubt that works by Bohemian artists were of high or very high artis-

tic quality and despite the existence of a local painting school initiated by Willmann and continued by his students and followers³³, Bohemian painters were usually winning against local ones. Their high specialisation, visible especially in the field of fresco painting, made it easier. It is visible in Silesian works of Reiner, Hiebel or Hoffmann, as well as the career of Depée, a little-known pupil of Franz Gregor Ignaz Eckstein. In the light of recent research, he turned out to be the author of a number of significant fresco paintings, for example the fresco decoration on the dome in the Chapel of the Blessed Celsus at the Dominican church in Wrocław (1726) – the flagship commission of Wrocław Catholics – ceilings paintings in the Knights of the Order of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem Church in Łosiów (Loslau) (1730–1731) [fig. 11] or the fresco decoration in the Dominican church in Opava (Troppau) (1733–1736)³⁴.

The successes of Bohemian painters in Silesia would surely be much less significant if not for the fact that they were Catholics. Most of the Silesian population consisted of Protestants. Despite the fact that the Peace of Westphalia guaranteed them a limited religious freedom, soon after the end of the Thirty Years' War the Catholic Church began the counter-reformation offensive strongly supported by the Habsburg authorities. The Lutheran churches in the hereditary principalities were being taken over. Protestants were often forced to change their religion and in the event of a refusal the only solution left was to emigrate. It was commonplace for Catholics to buy estates of the protestant nobility. Protestants could not become officials not only in the case of the state administration, but also in municipal authorities outside of Wrocław³⁵. Only the 1706 intervention of the Swedish King Charles XII ended such ruthless actions. As a consequence the Emperor Joseph I, fearing the outbreak of war, gave in and in 1707 signed a Convention in Altranstädt under which Silesian Protestants reclaimed 121 churches and six new Lutheran-temples could be built in principalities belonging to the king³⁶.

This conflict between Silesian Catholics and Protestants caused extreme confessionalisation of social life. It pertained also to the artistic patronage – both Protestant and Catholic founders preferred artists of the same confession³⁷. Therefore, in Silesia painters working for founders associated with the Catholic Church and the Catholic nobility were almost exclusively Catholic. Artists from Catholic Bohemia benefited from that. They were supported not only by various institutions of the Catholic Church but also the imperial authorities and pro-Habsburg nobility. This allowed them for a rapid social advancement in Silesia which can be seen not only in careers of some artists, but also in their records in parish books. For example, when on the 2nd of March 1735 in the Dominican church in Wrocław a baptism of the Bentum's daughter, Anna Theresia, took place, the baby was held by people that could be the godparents of a child of one of Silesian aristocrats: the wife of the Director of the Superior Office,



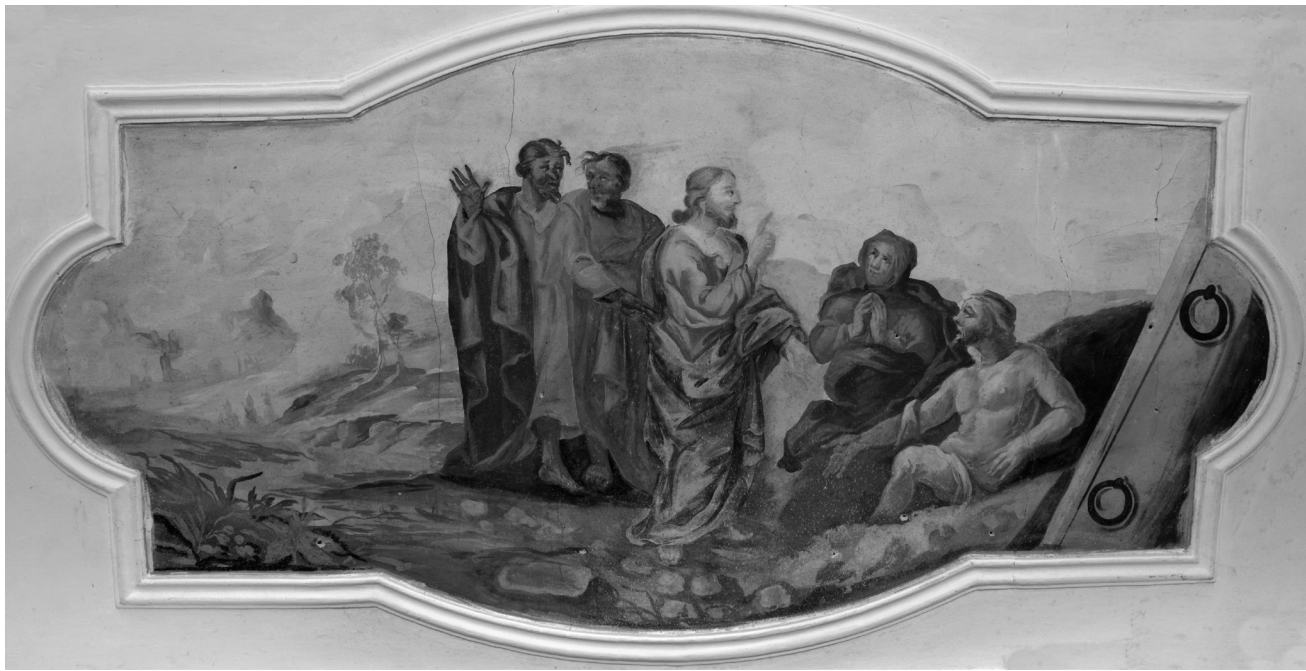
³³ See A. Kozieł, *Wielkie przedsiębiorstwo czy mała rodzinna firma? Kilka hipotez na temat warsztatu Michaela Willmanna*, [in:] *Willmann i inni...*; A. Kozieł, *Michael Willmann...*, *passim*.

³⁴ See M. Schenková, J. Olšovský, *Barokní malířství a sochařství v západní části českého Slezska*, Opava 2001, pp. 33–34, cat. no. M.4; A. Kozieł, *Depée (D'epée, Dpee, De Pee) Ignaz (Ignatio)*, [in:] *Marlarstwo barokowe...*, pp. 359–366

³⁵ See G. Wąs, *op. cit.*, p. 176.

³⁶ See *Cuius regio, eius religio. Trzechsetna rocznica powstania kościołów Łaski na Śląsku / 300. Jahrestag des Bestehens Gnadenkirchen in Schlesien*, ed. P. Oszczanowski, Jelenia Góra 2011.

³⁷ See R. Sachs, *Sztuka śląska od XVI do XVIII wieku. Uwagi krytyczne*, [in:] *Sztuka pograniczy Rzeczypospolitej w okresie nowożytnym od XVI do XVIII wieku. Materiały Sesji SHS*, Warszawa, październik 1997, ed. A. J. Baranowski, Warszawa 1998, pp. 77–93.



il. 11 I. Depée, *The Raising of Lazarus*, 1730–1731, fresco decoration; Łosiów, the Parish Church of St. John the Baptist. Photo: A. Koziel

countess Theresia von Schaffgotsch, countess Elisabeth Friderike von Proskau and count von Kollovrat³⁸.

This strong support ensured that Bohemian artists had, above all, access to various painting commissions for Catholic principals, which accounted for the dominant share of the Silesian painting market. They consisted of, among others, numerous works for both old Gothic churches with new Baroque interiors, as well as for newly built Baroque churches, chapels and monasteries. They were primarily elements of altars, pulpits or confessionals, as well as decorations of walls and vaults. In the case of large monastery churches and parish temples in cities, the number of these works sometimes reached up to a few dozens of all kinds of oil and fresco paintings³⁹. It offered great opportunities for self-fulfillment and Bohemian artists used them eagerly. Suffice it to say that almost 170 of oil and fresco paintings by Knechtel survived to our times and many of his lost or destroyed works are known⁴⁰ [fig. 12].

Such a large presence of Bohemian artists in Silesia is one of many proofs that – as I suggested in 2006 – Silesia and Bohemia, despite political, social and religious differences, formed one artistic area during the Baroque period⁴¹. While in the Medieval era and during the reign of the emperor Rudolf II the Silesian-Bohemian artistic relations had all the characteristics of a traditional relationship between the artistic centre at the imperial court in Prague and the Silesian province, in the Baroque period there was a situation of a “total” cultural exchange between two neighbouring countries belonging to one cultural region – the Habsburg monarchy with capital in Vienna. It was then that relations between Silesia and Bohemia



³⁸ See B. Lejman, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

³⁹ See A. Koziel, *Malarstwo barokowe...*, pp. 45–75.

⁴⁰ See Jeremias Joseph Knechtel..., pp. 121–264.

⁴¹ See A. Koziel, *Barokowy splendor...*, pp. 297–299.



il. 12 J. J. Knechtel, *St. Wenceslaus and the Emperor*, 1720, oil on canvas, 400 × 300 cm; Świdnica, the Cathedral Church of St. Stanislaus and St. Wenceslaus. Photo: J. Buława



⁴² More about Silesian Wars see C. Göhring, *Die Kriege Preußens gegen Oesterreich von 1740 bis 1866 und zwar der Erste und Zweite Schlesische, der Siebenjährige und Siebentätige Krieg*, Dresden 1867, *passim*; G. Wąs, *op. cit.*, pp. 187–248.

⁴³ See A. Kozieł, *Czy granice państwowe mogą zatrzymać artystów? Wojny śląskie (1740–1763), nowe granice Śląska i artyści*, [in:] *Sztuka pograniczy. Materiały LXVI ogólnopolskiej sesji naukowej Stowarzyszenia Historyków Sztuki zorganizowanej przez Zarząd Główny i Zarząd Oddziału Lubelskiego, 16–17 XI 2017*, ed. L. Lameński, E. Błotnicka-Mazur, M. Pastwa, Lublin 2018, pp. 297–313.

⁴⁴ B. Lejman, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

⁴⁵ D. Zoedler, *Schlesisches Glass, schlesische Gläser. Geschichte und Geschichte*, Würzburg 1996.

became multifaceted: ranging from the common topics of religious depictions, the mutual exchange of artists and all kinds of works of art, to the community of artistic ideas and models. What is more, it was an artistic exchange which covered almost all of the existing art forms: sacral and secular architecture, stone and wooden sculptures and all kinds of paintings, as well as prints and glass art. Also the previous geography of artistic contacts broadened significantly: beside the traditional centre in Prague local artistic centres of the Silesian-Bohemian border emerged such as Hradec Králové, Kłodzko, Broumov, Kuks or Vrchlabí becoming the driving force of the cross-border cultural exchange. It is precisely why a large group of Bohemian painters active in Silesia in the Baroque period came from these border regions.

IV

Unfortunately, this period of “Silesian El Dorado” ended for Bohemian artists when the Prussian army entered Silesia in 1740. It led to outbreak of the First Silesian War, which was lost by the Habsburg monarchy. Signing the peace treaty in Berlin in 1742 ended this conflict. According to its obligations the Kłodzko county and the prevailing part of Silesia were separated from the Habsburg monarchy and became part of the kingdom of Prussia. However, it didn’t close warfare between Prussia and the Habsburg monarchy about this region. Empress Maria Theresa tried twice to regain the lost lands: in the years 1744–1745 and 1756–1763 within the Seven Years’ War. Eventually, these military efforts didn’t bear any results and the peace treaty signed in Hubertusburg in 1763 confirmed the obligation of the Berlin treaty⁴².

Certainly, the emergence of a new state border did not stop the flow of painters between Silesia and Bohemia⁴³. Due to that, however, the patronage of the Catholic Church and pro-Habsburg aristocracy, being the basis for the activities of Bohemian artists in Silesia, was significantly weakened. As a result, the most outstanding artists started emigrating from these areas, like Bentum, who briefly settled in Dresden after 1743 and then went to Prague⁴⁴. Also the network of mutual economic relations was severed due to the trade barriers introduced by Prussians. Suffice it to say that in 1743 a group of 40 desperate glass engravers from Cieplice-Zdrój sent a letter to the Prussian authorities in which they asked for a permission to buy Bohemian glass despite the trade barriers. Otherwise they would have been forced to move South to Bohemia⁴⁵. The Silesian and Kłodzko lands taken over by Prussia plunged into a cultural crisis for many years and became an artistic periphery of the new state with its capital in Berlin. Only the southern part of Upper Silesia entered the period of economic prosperity and cultural revival. This region, inhabited mostly by the Catholics, benefited from the neighbourhood with

Catholic Moravia and the part of Silesia which remained within the Habsburg monarchy and developed dynamically during the reign of the empress Maria Theresa (1717–1780). As a result in the second half of the eighteenth century many foundations of conservative, Catholic and sentimental character emerged in Upper Silesia. A majority of them was carried out by Catholic artists from the Habsburg Silesia and Moravia⁴⁶. But this history of Silesian-Moravian artistic relations is a topic for another paper.

Keywords

painters, Bohemia, Silesia, Baroque, artistic exchange, career paths

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⁴⁶ **J. Gorzelik**, *Franz Anton Sebastini – zbiorowy bohater sztuki górnośląskiej*, [in:] *Willmann i inni...*, pp. 262–269; **idem**, *Sztuka nowożytna 1526–1740–1800*, [in:] *Sztuka Górnego Śląska od średniowiecza do końca XX wieku*, ed. **E. Chojceka**, Katowice 2005, pp. 89–168; **A. Kozieł**, „Śląski Tiepolo”. *Szlak Malarstwa Barokowego im. Franza Antona Sebastiniego na Śląsku* [exhibition cat.], Muzeum Regionalne w Głogówku, Głogówek 2012.

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Summary

ANDRZEJ KOZIEŁ (University of Wrocław) / Bohemian Painters in Silesia in the Baroque Period. Career Paths and Recipes for Success

The article presents a problem of artistic migration of painters from Bohemia to neighbouring Silesia in the Baroque period. It brings answers to the questions what paths of career they chose and what their typical recipes for success in this region were. The paper is based on the results of the four-year scientific project “Baroque painting in Silesia” (2012–2016). There is no doubt that Silesia was a convenient place to work for artists from Bohemia in the Baroque period, which was time of peace and economic prosperity for this region (1648–1740). Many of Bohemian painters were active on this territory. They not only produced various works (oil canvases, fresco decorations) for Silesian patrons, but also willingly settled down in this region (i.a. Ezechiel Paritius, Daniel Datschitzky, Jeremias Joseph Knechtel, Johann Franz Hoffmann, Ignaz Depée) or lived there temporarily (i.a. Johann Hiebel, Johann Kuben, Peter Brandl, Wenzel Lorenz Reiner, Ignaz Preissler). Many of them achieved artistic and economic success in this region. Silesia was such a good place to work for newcomers from Bohemia in that time, because as Catholics they were supported by the Catholic Church, the imperial authorities and pro-Habsburg nobility and had access to various painting commissions for Catholic principals, which accounted for the dominant share of the Silesian painting market. The extreme confessionalisation of social life in this region allowed them for a rapid social advancement. This period of “Silesian El Dorado” ended for Bohemian artists with the outbreak of Silesian Wars (1740–1763).

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