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Academician on the Periphery

Johann Georg Walter in Modra

Katarína Kolbiarz Chmelinová

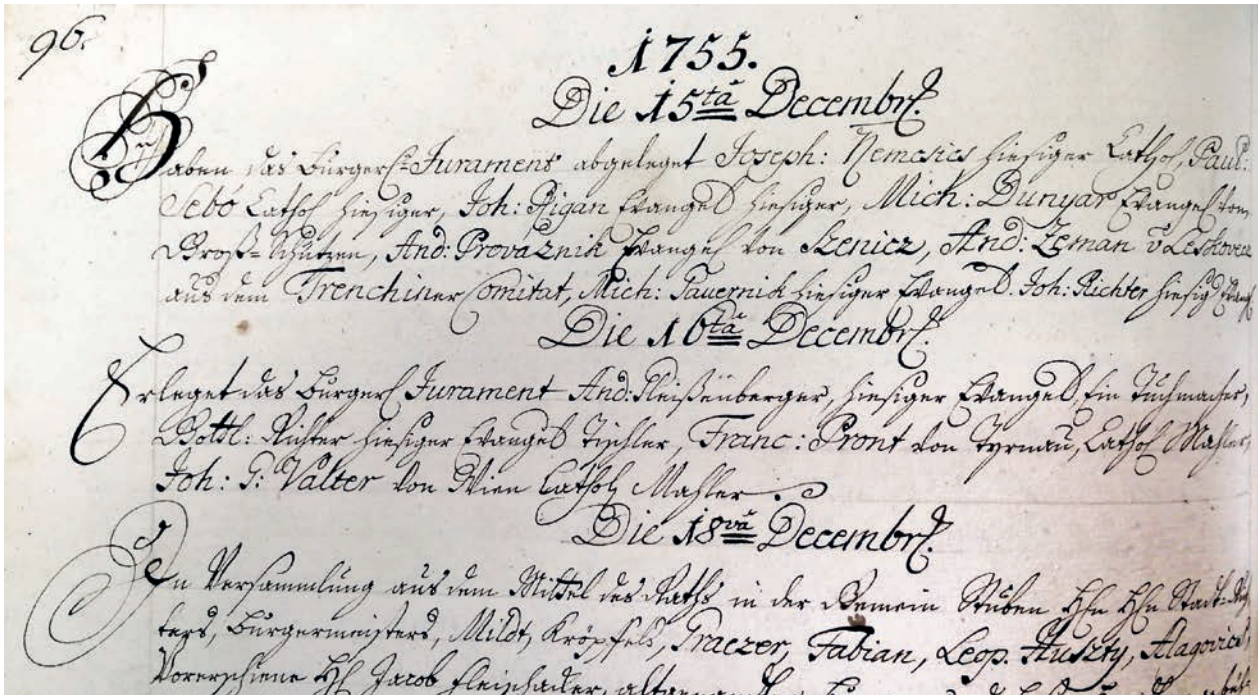
Despite several partial findings, our image of an academically trained painter is mostly formed by a generalizing tradition implying his position in the top ranks among artists as well as certain style uniformity. In many aspects, these ideas are anchored in the 19th century and cannot be applied to 18th century Central Europe. At that time, the k. k. Hofakademie der Maler, Bildhauer und Baukunst (Imperial and Royal Court Academy of Painters, Sculptors, and Architecture) in Vienna became a crucial training institution for artists. The ambitions of this institution did not yet measure up to reality; however, its influence in the middle of the century became essential. Based on new research, this study presents an example of the heretofore unknown painter, Johann Georg Walter. After completing his studies at the Vienna Academy, Walter settled in the small wine town of Modra, outside the local artistic centres. For several decades Walter created various types of paintings, but primarily sacral paintings. He can be considered as a model example of a painter who disseminated Vienna's impulses on its periphery, one of the hundreds that the Academy trained. New findings about him also allow us to pursue a wider range of issues related to how the Vienna Academy graduates were able to find work and the issues of the transfer, modification, and rooting of its impulses outside artistic centres.

Keywords: academically trained painter; Imperial and Royal Court Academy of Painters, Sculptors and Architecture in Vienna; Johann Georg Walter; Modra; 18th century; periphery

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The importance within Central Europe of the Vienna Art Academy is unquestioned. Significant research has been focused on its history, but is far from exhaustive.¹ In the first half of the 18th century, the ambitions of this young institution and its representatives regarding their status and economic and creative guarantees had yet to live up to reality. Its roots are connected with the private academy founded by the painter Peter Strudel von Strudendorff (1660–1714)² in 1692 in Vienna according to the Rome and Paris models. In 1705, during the reign of Joseph I, it even gained the status of an imperial institution, however, it closed its doors after Strudel's death in 1714, and more than a decade passed until another artistic academy was founded in Vienna during the reign of Charles VI. Its existence began in 1726 under the name *K. k. Hofakademie der Maler, Bildhauer und Baukunst* (Imperial and Royal Court Academy of Painters, Sculptors and Architecture) with Vienna court painter Jacob van Schuppen (1690–1751)³ as its director. Being of French origin, the *Académie des Beaux-Arts* in Paris became the natural model for the statutes that he prepared. However, the institution faced many difficulties, aside from limitations on space which resulted in the need to move from place to place. In spite of receiving a certain degree of backing from the emperor, the will to establish the newly opened academy in the spirit of the statutes drawn up by Van Schuppen was lacking. Older artistic organizations resisted the introduction of the academy as an institution, and the protests of guilds and city and university painters were largely responsible for the failure of Van Schuppen's project.⁴ He fought resolutely in the second quarter of the 18th century, but without success. The emperor did not confirm the academy statutes and it received even less support from the court after the death of Charles VI. Academy expenditures were cut, and issues over space resulted in the suspension of teaching from 1745 to 1749.⁵ The academy's revival and subsequent success occurred under the guidance of Adam Philipp Losy von Losinthal (1705–1781) after Van Schuppen's death in 1751. The institution received rec-



1 – Reference to Walter’s town privileges in Modra, 1755

tor’s statutes, as for the first time Empress Maria Theresa granted the degree of “rector magnificus” and painter Michelangelo Unterberger (1695–1758) became its rector. This marked a new era in the academy’s history. Van Schuppen’s earlier phase, connected with the second quarter of the 18th century, was a period of struggle for the institution, its statutes, and its graduates. In many respects, this was still a question of professional prestige rather than a guarantee of real benefits. Despite various problems, Van Schuppen’s academy played a significant role in changing the artistic environment of Central Europe. Thanks to the influence of the first successes of its graduates and teachers, particularly in the 1740s, the status of art and artists changed within and beyond Vienna.⁶ And it was during this decade that the name of the virtually unknown painter Walter appears in the Vienna Academy records.

Until very recently, all that we knew about Johann Georg Walter (Valter, Walther) was that he was a painter from Vienna who married there in 1748 and in 1755 became a burgher in the small wine-producing town of Modra in the west of present-day Slovakia.⁷ Not long ago, an overlooked source document appeared in the Hungarian literature which mentioned him as a native of Vienna and among the students of the Vienna Academy from 1743 to 1749.⁸ No information related to his birth in Vienna, which can be estimated to have occurred in the late 1720s or early 1730s, has so far been uncovered.⁹ According to the Academy’s records, he came from an artistic family. Documents show that his father, Ignaz Walter (Valtter) was a sculptor work-

ing in Vienna from 1739 to 1748. They also show that Johann Georg had two brothers, Sebastian, of whom we know nothing, and Ignaz, who, like his father, was a sculptor and a teacher of drawing; his existence was later documented in Buda in 1778. They lived together in “in Waxkerzlerischem Haus” in the Mariahilf district of Vienna.

This study of Johann Georg Walter at the Academy is related to the specific years of 1743, when he enrolled in the Academy with his brother Ignaz; 1744, without his brother; and then 1749 along with Ignaz and Sebastian, when he was already married.¹⁰ The curriculum at the Academy, when Van Schuppen was its head, comprised a class for beginners focussing on the basics of drawing, perspective, and architecture, and advanced drawing classes using models and antique items.¹¹ Various other classes were opened; for example, records from 1739 indicate the inclusion of an anatomy class. The Academy’s seat frequently changed and when Walter began to study there teaching took place in cramped quarters on the second floor of the west wing of the Hofbibliothek.¹² The ages and professional interests of the students varied. Some came from the Empire’s outlying territories, including a small number from the Kingdom of Hungary, but most hailed from Vienna.¹³ According to preserved enrollment lists from 1743–1744, Walter’s classmates included the painter and fresco painter Caspar Franz Sambach (1715–1795) of Wroclaw, who along with his studies in Vienna worked in Donner’s workshop and later returned to the academy as a teacher; the painter Josef Stern (1716–1775) of Graz, who later worked in Moravia in addition to

his other activities as the court painter of Leopold Count of Dietrichstein; and young Anton Maron (1731–1808), a famous portraitist.¹⁴ During his studies, Walter was definitely aware of the Academy competitions, although his name never appeared in the lists of successful students.¹⁵ Anton Schuncko (1712–1770), a painter of Czech origin, who like Walter, was among the academicians in the second painting class a year later, succeeded in the academic competitions in 1743 and 1744. Franz Zoller (1726–1778), a student and assistant of Paul Troger and an academy member from 1760, is also mentioned among the participants. Franz Xaver Karl Palko (1724–1767) won the gold medal in this competition in 1745 for his painting *Judith with the Head of Holofernes*. This marked the conclusion of his studies and launched his career in Bratislava.¹⁶

Walter's inclusion in the list of academically trained artists drawn up in 1745 by Jacob van Schuppen, and submitted to *Obersthofmarschal* Johann Joseph Count of Khevenhüller (1706–1776), is an important and heretofore overlooked fact.¹⁷ He is specifically mentioned in the 26 August 1745 addendum to the original list dated 22 February of that year. At that time, Van Schuppen was fighting to promote his institution and its graduates. He included in this list only those few dozen academy students who were acknowledged as academically trained artists and he requested the granting of the status of academic artists for them along with the benefits which this entailed. He placed the artists in two classes without any explanation of the criteria for this division. Both included teachers and students, as well as members and aspirants of the Academy.¹⁸ In the aforementioned August addendum, Johann Walter is enlisted as a painter second-class, along with several other previously mentioned painters, such as Anton Schuncko, Franz Zoller, Anton Schmidt, and Joseph Ignaz Mildorfer. Although no official decrees regarding the completion of studies existed at the Academy at that time,¹⁹ the aforementioned record implies that this artist had completed his training and demonstrated the required quality of work by the summer of 1745.

We must also remember that from 1745 to 1749 instruction at the Academy was suspended due to shortage of space. Moreover, considering the nature of the training at that time, we can assume that along with his studies as well as later when the Academy was closed down Walter was working in one of the local studios and not at his father's sculpture workshop. However, although we have yet to find documents related to his external academic training, this assumption is supported by the fact that he also mastered the fresco technique, which required practice with one of the many fresco masters working in Vienna.²⁰ Academy artists could make use of their study of architecture, which was oriented towards theory and design, in mural paintings. From this it is clear that Walter's training had a dual-track quality; it was both academic and traditional.

Considering the aforementioned, Walter's return to the Academy in 1749 after its reopening was certainly not related to any desire to complete his academic training, despite a tradition which suggested that the academically trained painter designation required the completion of 4 years of study. Today we know that this concept did not apply in 18th century Vienna and that the time artists spent at the Academy varied.²¹ As we have already mentioned, Walter was acknowledged as an academically trained artist by the Academy management four years earlier. Nevertheless, it was not unusual for students, including professional painters, to enrol at the Academy several times. In addition to the ambition to acquire new degrees and status, which in reality had been still uncertain before 1750, these artists enhanced their qualifications in an effort to get a better job or a competitive advantage. It was also related to the opening of new courses.²² That could have been Walter's motivation at the beginning of his artistic career, as we can assume that after the closing of the Academy, from which he graduated as an academically trained painter, he developed his practice. His marriage in 1748 only supports this fact, although we have no information related to his independent artistic work at that time.

We have a substantially clearer picture of Walter's work in the Kingdom of Hungary. Current research has connected up previously overlooked references of him as well as a considerable amount of information. We know that he was married when he arrived in Modra in the west of present-day Slovakia. Modra, which acquired free royal town privileges in 1607, underwent an economic and cultural boom in the 18th century, after the cooling down of the uprising of the Hungarian estates against the rule of the Habsburg dynasty. From 1720 to 1780, the population of this town, which featured a Protestant majority, increased twofold to just under five thousand. Its relatively prosperous economy was based on viticulture. The most important patrons of art were not the nobility, but the Catholic and Lutheran churches, each of which had German and Slovak congregations.²³ Walter appears in the town's records for the first time along with his wife Anna Maria on 28 February 1755, in connection with the baptism of their daughter Anna Maria.²⁴ Thus we can assume that they had lived in the town before that date. Eight additional baptism announcements appeared; the couple baptized Cecilia Margaret in April 1756, Joseph Leopold in November 1758, Barbara Eleonora in December 1760, Maria Tereza in April 1763, Catharina Clara in August 1765, Elizabeth Amalia in November 1767, Rosalia Apolonia in July 1769, and Benedict in September 1773.²⁵ The signature "*I. G. W. pictor junior 1765*" found by Walter's mural at the Church of Saint John the Baptist in Modra perhaps belonged to an otherwise undocumented son. In that case, he had to have been born before his father's arrival in Modra, since his birth is not recorded



2 – Johann Georg Walter and unknown sculptor, **Decoration of the Presbytery of the Church of Saint John the Baptist in Modra, 1764–1766**

there. Documents for the baptisms of Walter's nine children confirm the painter's permanent work and family status in this town over the course of two decades. They also show that from his arrival he was connected with the local German Catholic community at the Church of St Barbara in Modra, which at the time of his arrival included twenty-eight German families.²⁶ The repeated names of godparents and baptismal witnesses show that the artist had close relations, particularly with the families of Johann Ridiger, Turris magister and the rector of the German school and his wife Catharina, the town captain Johann Caspar and his wife Clara, and Johann and Regina Hütter.²⁷ The brief reference related to the granting of town privileges in Modra in 1755 requires amending. A careful reading of the pertinent source indicates that on 16 December of that year another painter Franciscus Pront (Brandt, Brand) referred to as a Catholic of Trnava²⁸ acquired town privileges along with Walter, referred to as a painter and Catholic of Vienna. [Fig. 1] This could be the son of Carl Wilhelm Brand, a painter from Killenburg, Netherlands, who acquired town privileges in Trnava in 1727.²⁹ No con-

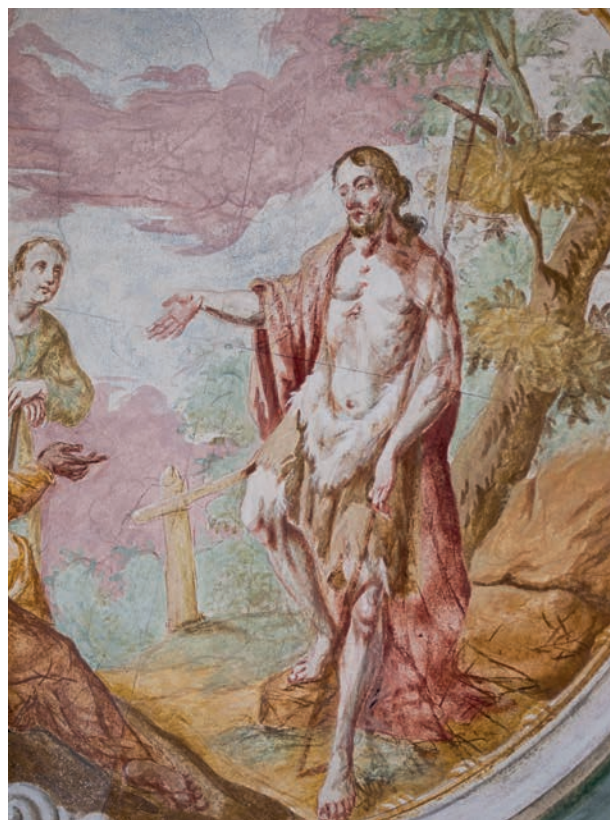
nection has been established between Walter and Brandt, but their cooperation, perhaps even within a single studio, cannot be ruled out. The simultaneous arrival of both artists in a small town indicates a certain demand for painting that could have been related to the changes in the hitherto unpreserved interior of the church administered by the Order of the Benedictines. We must also mention that Walter became a magistrate shortly after his arrival. In January 1757, Johann Georg Walter (Catholic) was the fourth name on the ballot, and after being elected, he was included in the *sexaginta viri* – community board, a position he also held the following year.³⁰

Walter's key work was his decoration of the presbytery in the Church of Saint John the Baptist in Modra, which was owned by the local Slovak Catholic community.³¹ Radical modifications to this church occurred in the 1760s under the leadership of two priests, Georg Komparics (in Modra from 11 April 1759, to 12 April 1764) and Johann Nepomuk Pauer (in Modra from 10 May 1764, to 1778).³² The presbytery was significantly changed in 1763 as a result of major structural modifications, which included new vault-

3 – Johann Georg Walter, Murals of the Church of Saint John the Baptist in Modra, 1765



ing and the construction of a new sacristy.³³ From 1764 to 1766, late rococo furnishings and decorations were added. A new altar and representative murals bearing the signature of Johann Georg Walter were also added. [Fig. 2] Paintings covered the vault and the entire sidewalls of the presbytery including the window copings.³⁴ The artist created a series of decorative framings of figural paintings in pastel colours of light violet, green, and orange/ochre. The artwork is dominated by two depictions in the main longitudinal axis of the vault oriented towards the view from the nave. A circular scene of Saint John the Baptist preaching in the countryside is located directly above the high altar.³⁵ [Figs. 3, 4] An illusive painting of retreating mirrors in a white frame is situated in green and violet similarly framed fields with two decorative vases in the western and two floral festoons in the eastern corners. Four violet fields with figures of putti are connected to the painting on the presbytery walls above its windows in the horizontal axis of the vault field. One of the couples is decorative, featuring two putti on the sides of a vase with flowers, and the second is connected to Saint John the Baptist; the putto on the left carries a tray with the head of the saint [Fig. 5] and the putto on the right bears the sword used for his decapitation and the martyr's palm frond. The second vault field closer to the nave is not directly related to the patron saint of the church, but has various symbolic elements referring to the Catholic church. The scene composed in pyramid fashion in the central axis features the Lamb of God on the Book of Life with seven seals known from the Book of Revelations. A massive rock with a church appears in the background with Papal signs on the top. The motif is wrapped in violet almond-shaped clouds. The Lamb of God is accompanied by figures of the main apostles at the sides, St Peter with keys on the left and St Paul with a book and a sword on the right. Next to the Apostles' feet feature illusive consoles with pairs of angel children carrying symbols of Holy Writ and the Eucharist (chalice, communion wafer) on Peter's side and an anchor, a symbol of hope for life in heaven, on Paul's side. The painting continues on the adjacent sidewalls in two other decorative chasuble fields with vases lined with putti. The freshly painted whole represents a topical decorative-illusive concept. The colour composition, the repertoire of ornaments with fine rocaille, and the self-assured painting technique of the figures are evidence of the work of a not exceptional but nevertheless experienced master. His name is not present directly in the sources and among the list of expenditures we can find only summary data related to this time, according to which 1 227 Guldens and 63 Groschen were paid for the sanctuary and the new sacristy.³⁶ However, his signature along with the date have been preserved on the northern wall above the ledge. [Fig. 6] This is proof that this is the work of Johann Georg Walter of 1765, and the aforementioned second signature with the addendum



4 – Johann Georg Walter, **Saint John the Baptist**, detail of the ceiling painting, 1765. Modra, Church of Saint John the Baptist

Junior was found on the wall behind the high altar painting.³⁷ [Fig. 7] We do not know of any other ceiling paintings done by Walter, but we can assume that in addition to Vienna artwork he also knew of executions near where he worked and lived. Highly admired paintings by Vienna masters were created in the Church of Saint Elizabeth of Hungary in Bratislava (Pressburg) in the 1740s (Paul Troger, Johann Jakob Zeiller, 1742) as well as in the Trinitarian Church (Antonio Galli-Bibiena, Karl Jakob Unterhueber, 1744–1745). At the time of Walter's arrival in Modra, Empress Maria Theresa and her husband supported the creation of the murals in the Basilica of Our Lady of Sorrows in Šaštín (Jean Joseph Chamant, Johann Lucas Kracker, Joseph Ignaz Mildorfer, 1755–1757), which is only 70 kilometres away.³⁸ It is difficult to conclude that he was part of that team, but he knew at least half of the Vienna masters working there and based on the colours and motifs used in his Modra fresco, he also knew the ceiling paintings from Šaštín.

Besides the murals in the church, we can also ascribe Walter's contribution to the creation of its high altar. Except for the newer tabernacle, its look corresponds with the description of the canonical visitation of Josef Batthyány in 1781 and the even more detailed description of the visitation of Alexander Rudnay in 1823.³⁹ According to these, the altar

built in 1764 featured a painting of Christ's Baptism at the centre with statues of St Joseph and St Anna by the columns at the sides, with an oval window above it and tall windows on the sides framed by statues of St Zachary and St Elizabeth. The mensa Domini was situated separately and the portalile altar was not sanctified until 1779, by Bishop Stefan Nagy. Despite the documented date of origin, the altar was paid for in 1766, perhaps after the completion of the reconstruction of the presbytery and the murals.⁴⁰ According to sources, an old debt was paid to the unnamed painter of the altar in the amount of 80 Guldens and 80 Groschen; an old debt was also paid to a carpenter from Pezinok in the amount of 180 Guldens and 80 Groschen. The iconography of the altar corresponds with the consecration of the church to Saint John the Baptist, the prophet who foretold the arrival of the Saviour. It also emphasizes the family motif in Christianity. The main axis of the altar meaningfully rises from Christ's body in the tabernacle to his Baptism in the painting, up to the heavens with the dove of the Holy Spirit in the extension, which merges into the motif of the Holy Trinity together with the figures of Christ and God the Father in the extensions of the side altars.

From a typological point of view, this is a topical form of the apse altar, whose column reredos is directly connected to the presbytery walls.⁴¹ The stage design effect of this late rococo whole is supported by the integration of the three windows of the presbytery into its structure. Light coming through them combines the scale of colours of the painted altar and the actual architecture with white and gold accents, including the statues polychromed in white. It also serves to lighten the whole. The accenting of the long central axis of the reredos by interrupting the lintel between the columns also contributes to this, since the columns lost their weight-bearing function due to this. The painting of the Baptism of Christ in rich colours with the expressively shadowed musculature of the central figures and angels is the core of the altar. [Fig. 8] The composition suggests that the painter based it on a print model.⁴² The exact model for the work is still unknown, but the figure of the large adoring angel on the cloud [Fig. 9] comes from a model in print ascribed to Thomas Christian Wink, and was used also in Galliarti's painting in Nitra and the fresco in Šaštín ascribed to Mildorfer.⁴³ The quality of the altar statues exceeds the common average of similar executions in the area. The artist has created a suggestive impression of slender full-plastic figures with fully mastered anatomies in a relatively shallow form. The white and golden surface finish leads us to compare them with the statues from the high altar of the parish church in Pezinok created ten years earlier by Stefan Steinmasler.⁴⁴ However, the studied artwork from Modra has nothing of the post-Donner classicizing orientation of the Pezinok statues. Concerning their style, they are connected to a different, late rococo tradition. Their creator probably



5 – Johann Georg Walter, **Putto with the head of Saint John the Baptist**, ceiling painting, 1765. Modra, Church of Saint John the Baptist



6 – **Signature of Johann Georg Walter**, ceiling painting, 1765. Modra, Church of Saint John the Baptist, the northern wall of the presbytery

came from Bratislava or Trnava. The local sculpture scenes of that time have not been sufficiently researched and we lack the evidence to be able to ascribe certain artworks to some of the documented sculptors such as Joseph Leonard Weber in Trnava.⁴⁵ We can see a certain similarity in the



7 – Initials of Johann Georg Walter – junior, ceiling painting, 1765. Modra, Church of Saint John the Baptist, the western wall of the presbytery behind the high altar

statues from the church in Lošonec near Trnava or the statues from the church in Kaplna created by an unknown master.⁴⁶ The artists who created the high altar of the Modra church did not sign their works and the available sources do not mention them. However, in the year of payment for the artwork, vice-inspector Johann Michalowicz noted that 5 Ducats and 80 Groschen were paid for an unspecified commission to the painter Brandt, who could be connected to the subsequently mentioned painting of a standard.⁴⁷ In the same year, Johann Spalow (no profession specified) also received 16 Guldens and 80 Groschen for the new Holy Sepulchre.⁴⁸ It seems these are not related to the altar. In the case of the altar painting, the fresco above the altar signed by Walter serves as a hint when looking for the creator. Despite the differences in technique, the painting is so close to him, based on the nature of the figures, that the painting may be ascribed to him. But we do not know if this artist also created the concept of the altar as a whole, harmonized with the fresco.

As far as Johann Georg Walter's other work is con-

cerned, our knowledge is significantly fragmented despite new findings. A certain part of his work is known only from archive sources. For example, in the first documented year of his life in Modra, the payment of 1 Gulden to the painter Walter for his work on an unpreserved Holy Sepulchre was mentioned in the church expenditures.⁴⁹ He received 122 Guldens from the funds of the Church of Saint John the Baptist in 1767 for the unpreserved altar in the upper chapel of Our Lady of the Snows in Modra.⁵⁰ In addition, we can consider Walter to be the creator of altar paintings from the former Church of Saint Barbara (preserved in fragments as a part of the Church of Saint Stefan) in Modra where he was a member. These are large paintings of the Nativity and Saint Barbara, which today are located in the choir loft in the Church of Saint Stephen.⁵¹ Both works have been damaged, but in terms of style, can be dated to the third quarter of the 18th century. Moreover, legible fragments of the figures refer to similar modelling of forms and attention to detail, such as the analogical type of the old man's face and the specific shape of the eyes featuring a distinctively wavy eyebrow line, as can be seen in the paintings in the presbytery of the Church of Saint John the Baptist. Unfortunately, with just small exceptions, the records related to payments for paintings in Modra are very general, and without any other documents, it is difficult to connect them to specific artists.⁵² It should be remembered that Walter was not the only painter in the city at the time and that, in addition to Brandt, other masters from the surrounding area could occasionally be invited to various paid jobs. From what we know, he worked regularly for the Slovak and German Catholics of Modra and his works decorated the three main churches in town – the German Church of Saint Barbara in the town centre, the Slovak Church of Saint John the Baptist in the lower section of town and the Chapel of Our Lady of the Snows between them.

The most recent knowledge regarding the artistic work of Johann Georg Walter is from the Capuchins' chronicle from Pezinok. According to this source, in 1773 all the paintings of the monastery church and its choir loft originally created by Josef Kurtz (ca 1692–1737) were restored by Walter, a painter from Modra.⁵³ In the case of the local paintings on the side altars of St Elizabeth and St Felix, some believe that Walter was their creator sometime after 1778.⁵⁴ The present-day appearance of these obviously newer works repainted in the naïve style do not permit the necessary verification. However, one way or another, Walter's work for the Capuchins in Pezinok, which primarily entailed period restoration, represented an extensive commission. At the time of its execution, the documents related to Johann Georg Walter's work in Modra end. From the first half of the 1770s, we have the records of his payments to the town's contribution registers for the fourth circuit in 1773 and 1774.⁵⁵ The last documented payment is from the end of April 1774, when he is mentioned in the



8 – Johann Georg Walter, **Baptism of Christ**, detail of the high altar painting before restauration, 1765. Modra, Church of Saint John the Baptist

town reports. The report states that he was paid 1 Gulden and 25 Groschen from the town treasury for a painting of unspecified grids in the Benedictines' Church in Modra.⁵⁶ We are not familiar with the further fate of this artist. His name does not appear in the records of the deceased in Modra or Pezinok, where he worked for the last time, and we cannot rule out the possibility that he left the town after 1774.⁵⁷

In conclusion, we can state that Walter's range of works was wide and varied from ceremonial murals through altar and easel paintings up to decorations and artisan work. This was at variance with the idea of an academically trained artist; in fact, a statute written by Van Schuppen forbade artisans from doing craftwork. However, it was not unusual in the 18th century.⁵⁸ Studying at the academy and even the degree of academically trained painter carried a certain prestige, but they did not guarantee adequate commissions or earnings for the ordinary life of an artist. In the late 18th century this was manifested by Anton Tallman of Tulln, Lower Austria in Bratislava, who after completing his studies at the Vienna Academy,

Painted house numbers and restored municipal books.⁵⁹ Extending one's scope of work ensured the necessary commissions and perhaps, in addition to the skills of the artist, the distance of his place of work from the artistic centre was a determining factor. In environments with fewer demands for more difficult artistic implementations, we can consider that to be a necessity. The reason for Walter's choice of Modra as his place of work, after what seemed to be a promising start to his career in Vienna, is still unknown. Although at the time of his presence in Modra, the town underwent a certain boom, it was a place of little significance between Bratislava and Trnava. Bratislava (Pressburg) represented the main "point of supply" for Vienna Academy students in the Kingdom of Hungary and Trnava was not only a centre of religious life but the second most important artistic centre of the region.⁶⁰ We can only assume that it was a commission, perhaps from the Benedictines, which brought this Vienna artist here. Why did he remain for so long? Aside from other local commissions and the virtual absence of competition, Modra offered rel-



9 – Johann Georg Walter, **Angel from the Baptism of Christ**, detail of the high altar painting before restoration, 1765. Modra, Church of Saint John the Baptist

atively easy accessibility to Bratislava and Trnava. Possibly it allowed him to work at various sites. The lower cost of living in Modra could also have been a factor.

The Vienna Academy produced many artists like Walter in the second quarter of the 18th century. Only a fragment was included by Van Schuppen on the list of academically trained painters which contains a significant percentage of names that are completely or almost unknown today.⁶¹ Unlike Walter, the majority of students never even received academic acknowledgment. A more detailed study of these forgotten academically trained artists and students is not among the more popular topics of art history, except for broader territorial-based overviews. This is due to the fact that it is anchored in a narrow location, has scant potential for wider supra-regional reflection, and requires lengthy research of largely non-distinctive figures and their executions of uneven quality. These artists worked at various regional levels and ensured the promotion of ideas concerning the acad-

emy, its position in artistic training, its artists, and their orientation across the vast regions of the Central European Habsburg monarchy. Finding out more about them could lead to unexpected knowledge of their wider significance and illuminate some interesting cultural processes. Through their everyday work, they disseminated the initiatives of the leaders of the art centre to various regions in a form that was more acceptable in this environment. Walter's generation played an irreplaceable role in this process. The importance of these individually indistinct creators was not in any exceptional quality, but in their number and their ways of adapting current stimuli to the needs of different regions. Through their work, the image of the academy settled in a wide space administered by the Habsburgs, in spite of the fact that it was still just an alternative to traditional forms of artistic training and its prestige was not very helpful to artists.⁶² After all, even Walter's training comprised his studies at the academy and time spent traditionally in art workshops. Available sources referred to him only as a painter, or a painter from Vienna. We have not found any use of the designation "academically trained painter", as opposed to the designation of painters established in more important centres of this region such as Andreas Zallinger (1738–1805) in Bratislava, Joseph Zanussi (1737–1818) in Trnava or Anton Schmidt (1713–1773) in Banská Štiavnica. In the environment he chose, this probably wasn't necessary. The relative lack of wider competition could be an explanation for this oversight. The small royal town of Modra where Walter settled could hardly be called a secondary artistic centre at that time. It was not even a seat of more significant offices or the aristocracy, who could have had more distinctive requirements for their own visual presentation. And yet it became attractive and managed to provide a livelihood for two painters for almost a quarter of a century.

This paper represents a probe into fine art life on the outskirts of period artistic development. Becoming familiar with life on the lower rungs of the art scenes in specific regions is an issue for regional cultural history as well as a reason to support current art-historical theories on the connection between art centres and areas outside it referred to as a periphery, region, or local environment.⁶³ It shows the need to take into consideration the period content of the terms used, which in the case of "academically trained artist" and "periphery" do not mirror present practice.⁶⁴ At the same time, it calls for a clearer differentiation of the various components of this broadly defined environment, which lacks clear borderlines and has a relative hierarchy.⁶⁵ An environment whose quality of art output is connected with the functional transformation of models and will always remain in the shadows of grandmasters. However, by overcoming the dualistic paradigm of the centre and the periphery, it detaches itself from negative connotations and gains in importance.

Notes:

- ¹ Cf. Carl von Lützow, *Geschichte der Kais. Kön. Akademie der bildenden Künste, Festschrift zur Eröffnung des neuen Akademie-Gebäudes*, Wien 1877. – Walter Wagner, *Die Geschichte der Akademie der bildenden Künste in Wien*, Wien 1967. – Nikolaus Pevsner, *Die Geschichte der Kunstakademien*, München 1986.
- ² Manfred Koller, *Die Akademie Peter Strudels in Wien (1688–1714), Mitteilungen der Österreichischen Galerie* 14/58, 1970, pp. 5–74. – Idem, *Die Brüder Strudel. Hofkünstler und Gründer der Wiener Kunstakademie*, Innsbruck – Wien 1993.
- ³ The academy was re-established in 1725, but its activities actually began in 1726. More about the painter see Pierre Schreiden, Jacques van Schuppen (1690–1751), *Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte* XXXV, 1982, pp. 1–107.
- ⁴ Simon Mraz, *Die Geschichte der Akademie der bildenden Künste in den 30er und 40er Jahren des 18. Jahrhunderts unter besonderer Berücksichtigung des internationalen, politischen und künstlerisch-organisatorischen Umfelds* (diploma thesis), Universität Wien, Wien 2007, pp. 90–117.
- ⁵ Wagner (note 1), p. 27.
- ⁶ See for example Pavel Suchánek, *Měšťanství a akademičtí sochaři v 18. století. Případ Wolfganga Trägers*, *Opuscula historiae artium* 60, 2011, pp. 42–48.
- ⁷ Pavel Horváth, *Výtvarní umelci a stavební remeselníci na Slovensku v posledných storočiach feudalizmu*, *Vlastivedný časopis* 28, 1979, Nr. 1, p. 48. Cf. also Alexander Hajdecki, *Auszüge aus den Wiener Pfarrmatriken und dem Totenregister der Stadt Wien*, in: Albert Starzer (ed.), *Quellen zur Geschichte der Stadt Wien* Abt. I, Bd. VI, Wien 1908, p. 158. – Klára Garas, *Magyarországi festészet a XVIII. Században*, Budapest 1955, p. 261. At a related time, another painter of the same name from Moravian Libava worked in the town Trenčín. See Anna Petrová-Pleskotová, *Maliarstvo 18. storočia na Slovensku*, Bratislava 1983, p. 111, note 123. Cf. Michaela Haviarová – Tomáš Haviar – Jozef Tihányi – Kristína Zvedelová, *Architektonicko-historický a umeleckohistorický výskum Kostola sv. Jána Krstiteľa*, Modra 2011, manuscript in the Archive of the Roman Catholic parish office in Modra (Archív r. k. farského úradu v Modre), p. 70.
- ⁸ Enikő Buzási, *Forráások a magyarországi, erdélyi, valamint magyar megrendelésre dolgozó külföldi művészek bécsi akadémiai tanulmányaihoz (1726–1810). Quellen zum Studium ungarischer, siebenbürgischer sowie ungarischer Aufträge ausführender ausländischer Künstler an der Wiener Akademie (1726–1810)*, Budapest 2016, pp. 64, 272–273. In the record of the Academie of December 2, 1743, literally stated: “Walter Johannes von hier gebohr[en] [...]”.
- ⁹ Diözesanarchiv Wien, Taufbuch, Pfarre Mariahilf, 1709–1749, sign. 1–1a. On-line: <https://data.matricula-online.eu/de/oesterreich/wien/06-marihilf/01-01a/?pg=1> (viewed December 14, 2021).
- ¹⁰ Archiv der Akademie der bildenden Künste Wien, *Nahmen=Register Aller deren, Welche die von Ihro Röm: Kai: Und Kön: Cath: Mai: CARLO SEXTO Anno 1725 aufgerichtete Anno 1726 den 20 Aprilis aber das erste Mahl eröffnete Freie Hof=Academie der Mahlerei, Bildhauerei und Baukunst Frequentiert haben: Zusammen getragen von Leopold Adam Wasserberg: Der Academie Secretario und 1740 angefangen*, signature 1a, pp. 247, 264 a 289. I would like to thank Artur Kolbiarz for providing a copy of the original. Buzási (note 8), pp. 272–273.
- ¹¹ Wagner (note 1), p. 27. – Enikő Buzási, „Ein jung wil zeichnen lernen“. A bécsi akadémi tanulmányok szociológiai háttere, in: Buzási (note 8), p. 43.
- ¹² Until 1742 it was on three floors of the Althon-Haus, cf. Anna Jávor, *Művészönvendékek Bécsben. Az akadémiai képzés lehetőségei, gyakorlata és rangja a 18. században*, in: Buzási (note 8), p. 11.
- ¹³ Between 1726 and 1753, 3 796 students of the academy were mentioned, almost half of them from Vienna, 96 from the Kingdom of Hungary; cf. Buzási (note 11), p. 42 with reference to Felix Czeike, *Wien. Kunst- und Kultur-Lexikon*, Munich 1976. – Felix Czeike, *Die Herkunft der Schüler der Akademie der bildenden Künste 1726–1753*, *Wiener Geschichtsblätter* 31, 1976, pp. 77–79. – Klára Garas, *Zur Kunstübung an der Wiener Akademie im 18. Jahrhundert – Die Preisstücke*, in: *Prijatelj Zbornik II. Povijesti umjetnosti u Dalmaciji* 33, 1992, pp. 405–423.
- ¹⁴ *Nahmen=Register* (note 10), pp. 256, 259–260.
- ¹⁵ Lützow (note 1), p. 23, 57–60, 68, 147, 175–176. To later awarded students see Anton Weinkopf, *Beschreibung der k. k. Akademie der Bildenden Künste. 1783 und 1790*, Wien 1875, pp. 14–32. – Joke T. C. Kuijpers, *Hofpreise der k. k. Akademie der Bildenden Künste in Wien, 1772–1794*, in: *Academies of Art between Renaissance and Romanticism*, *Leids kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 4–5, 1989, pp. 378–405. – Die Wettbewerbe der Wiener Akademie von 1731–1754, in: Eduard Hindelang (ed.), *Franz Anton Maulbertsch und der Akademiestil*, Langenargen – Sigmaringen 1994, pp. 326–341.
- ¹⁶ Weinkopf (note 15), pp. 29–30. – Mraz (note 4), p. 166.
- ¹⁷ Mraz (note 4), p. 167. The author only mentions the name of the painter Walter unknown to him with a note “*Nichts gefunden*”.
- ¹⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 143. – Archiv der Akademie der bildenden Künste, VA 2, fol. 15v–16r: „Liste des Academiens présentée au Marechal de Cour le 22 fevrier 1745“; cited by Ferdinand Gutsch, Michael Angelo Unterberger in den Akten der Akademie, in: Johann Kronbichler – Alfred Sammer – Ferdinand Gutsch, *Michael Angelo Unterberger in seiner Wiener Zeit*, Wien 1992, pp. 69–71.
- ¹⁹ Buzási (note 11), p. 62. The decrees began to be issued only after the school reform of Joseph II.
- ²⁰ Jozef Medvecký, *Anton Schmidt 1713–1773. Život a dielo barokového maliara*, Bratislava 2013, p. 20.
- ²¹ Prescribed 4 years study states; *ibidem*, p. 17. Cf. Artur Kolbiarz, *Silesian Painters and Sculptors at the Vienna Academy of Fine Arts in the Years 1726–1780. A Contribution to the History of Academism in the Early Modern Period*. *Arts*. 2021; 10(4):86, <https://doi.org/10.3390/arts10040086> (viewed December 14, 2021).
- ²² More details to the issue Buzási (note 11), pp. 45–46, 62–63.
- ²³ See Ján Dubovský, *Náboženské a kultúrne pomery, školstvo*, in: Ján Dubovský – Juraj Žudel (edd.), *Dejiny Modry*, Modra 2006, pp. 65–216.
- ²⁴ Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic, State Archives in Bratislava – Modra branch, Modra Town Hall (Ministerstvo vnútra Slovenskej republiky, Štátny archív v Bratislave – pobočka Modra, Magistrát mesta Modra), *Matricula Ecclesiae Modrensis S. Barbarae Parochialis germanicae Nationis, 1755–1777*, inv. č. 429, 1755, 28. 2. A painter enrolled without a profession as Johann Georg Valter and his wife Maria, the godparents were “*Joanne Ridiger Turris Magistro*” with his wife Catherine assisted by Clara, wife of Johann Caspar.
- ²⁵ *Ibidem*, 24. 4. 1756, 23. 11. 1758, 21. 12. 1760, 17. 4. 1763, 10. 8. 1765, 26. 11. 1767, 25. 6. 1769 and 19. 9. 1773. The painter’s name is written inconsistently in two forms, mostly like Valter but also Walter, in the part of the records emphasizing the profession by adding the word “*Pictore*”. The painter and his wife are also registered as a witness to the baptism of Ignatius, son of Ignatius Leiehtgenger and wife of Mariana, whose godparents were “*Turris Magistro Joanne Ridiger*” and Catharina; *ibidem*, 27. 2. 1759.
- ²⁶ Dubovský (note 23), p. 180.
- ²⁷ *Matricula Ecclesiae Modrensis S. Barbarae Parochialis* (note 24), April 24, 1756, August 10, 1765. Hütter’s profession is not mentioned in the records, and his possible relationship to probably a generation older, Andrej Hütter (Huetter, Hueth), a city sculptor in Bratislava, originally from Bavaria, is not yet known. See Mária Malíková, *Údaje z matrík o bratislavských sochároch a kamenároch 18. storočia*, *ARS. Časopis Ústavu dejín umenia SAV* 2, 1983, p. 91.
- ²⁸ Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic, State Archives in Bratislava – Modra branch, Modra Town Hall (Ministerstvo vnútra Slovenskej republiky, Štátny archív v Bratislave – pobočka Modra, Magistrát mesta Modra), *Protocollum Curiale Liberae ac Regiae Civitatis Modrensis, congestum et conscriptum per Ioannem Georgium Roth, Kuriálny protokol Modra 1754–1760*, Inv. Nr. 356, p. 96.
- ²⁹ Pavel Horváth, *Výtvarní umelci a stavební remeselníci na Slovensku v posledných storočiach feudalizmu*, *Vlastivedný časopis* 27, 1978, Nr. 1, p. 47. – Katarína Chmelinová, *K problematike umeleckého prostredia Trnavy v 18. storočí*, in: *Umenie na Slovensku v historických a kultúrnych súvislostiach*, Trnava 2006, pp. 45–52.

³⁰ Protocollum Curiale (note 28), 26. 1. 1757 a 27. 1. 1758.

³¹ At that time in Modra town, Catholics and Evangelics were already atypically divided in German and Slovak community. Katarína Kolbiarz Chmelinová, *Výzdoba interiéru v 17. a 18. storočí*, in: Erik Hrnčiariak (ed.), *Kostol sv. Jána Krstiteľa v Modre*, Modra 2021, pp. 54–56, 67.

³² See Dubovský (note 23), pp. 181–182. Name of the parish priest Pauer in the publication is Juraj, but correct is Johann Nepomuk Pauer. See archive materials – Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic, State Archives in Bratislava – Modra branch, Modra Town Hall (Ministerstvo vnútra Slovenskej republiky, Štátny archív v Bratislave – pobočka Modra, Magistrát mesta Modra), Church Accounts / *Regestum inspectoratus inferioris Ecclesiae status catholici S. Iohanni Baptistae dicatae, 1764, 1771*, Inv. Nr. 1945, 1952. In the 60s of the 18th century under the influence of the parishioners Kompars or Pauer, the Calvary was built near the church, paid for by the fines of non-Catholics. Archives of the Trnava archiepiscopal office, Canonical Visitation Records (Archív arcibiskupského úradu Trnava, fond Kanonické vizitácie), *Visitatio Canonica Parochiae et Ecclesiae L[ibe]rae et R[egiae] Civitatis Modrensis 1781, Batthyaniana Visitatio Parochiae Modrensis Die Decima Septembris Milesimi Septingentesimi Octuagesimi Primi In Praesentia Canonici Posoniensis Caspari Helmuth, Kanonická vizitácia Modra 1781*, Inv. Nr. 74, pp. 34–35. It is attributed to the circle of Donner's successor Stefan Steinmasler. Martin Čičo, Modra II, in: Martin Čičo – Michaela Kalinová – Silvia Paulusová, *Kalvárie a krížové cesty na Slovensku*, Bratislava 2002, pp. 240–242.

³³ Michaela Haviarová – Jozef Tihányi, *Kostol narodenia sv. Jána Krstiteľa – stavebný vývoj a nové zistenia*, in: Rastislav Šenkirík (ed.), *Sakrálné pamiatky Bratislavskej župy. Zborník príspevkov z konferencie Bratislavského samosprávneho kraja Dni európskeho kultúrneho dedičstva 2013*, Bratislava 2014, p. 62.

³⁴ In the years 2013–2014 it was restored by Vladimír Plekanec. Fragments of older medieval decorations were found under the paintings.

³⁵ Ivan Rusina – Marian Zervan, *Príbehy nového zákona*, Bratislava 2000, pp. 31–33. – Engelbert Kirschbaum SJ † – Wolfgang Braunfels (edd.), *Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie* 7, Rom – Freiburg – Basel – Wien 1994, pp. 164–190. The figure of Saint John the Baptist in the Modra painting is one of the variants of the popular type in the Baroque, which can be seen, for example in the work of Alessandro Allori, *Sermon of Saint John the Baptist*, Palazzo Pitti Florence, 1601–1603. See <https://www.wga.hu/frames-e.html?/html/a/allori/alessand/preachin.html> (viewed October 5, 2021).

³⁶ *Regestum inspectoratus inferioris Ecclesiae* (note 32), 1765, Inv. Nr. 1946. The vice-inspector Michal Michalovics noted: “*Widanek na Sanctuarium a na novou Zakristiu jak calculus preukazuje in Suma N. Ultimo fl. 1 227 a 63 gr.*” [Expenditure on the Sanctuarium and the new sacristy as the account proves in Suma N. Ultimo fl. 1 227 and 63 gr.]. No further specifications or separate accounts are included. The only mention of a painter, without mentioning the name in that year, concerns the payment of 2 gold coins for Bethlehem. Reimbursement separately for murals is not stated in the years before or after their dating. Cf. *Regestum inspectoratus inferioris Ecclesiae* (note 32), 1764, 1766, 1767, Inv. Nr. 1945, 1947–1948.

³⁷ The signature is in the form: “*J. G. Walter Pictor A. 1765*”.

³⁸ Barbara Balážová – Jozef Medvecký, *Medzi zemou a nebom. Majstri barokovej fresky na Slovensku*, Bratislava 2009, pp. 69–73, 75–81, 97–105.

³⁹ *Visitatio Canonica* (note 32), p. 5. – Archives of the Trnava archiepiscopal office, Canonical Visitation Records (Archív arcibiskupského úradu Trnava, fond Kanonické vizitácie), *Decretum Visitationis Canonicae in Parochia Lib: Reg: Civitatis Modrensis 1823*, Canonical visitation Modra 1823, Inv. Nr. 5, p. 5. Between 2014–2016, the high altar was restored by Milan Flajžík, Juraj Gregvoren and the altar painting by Monika Hricková.

⁴⁰ *Regestum inspectoratus inferioris Ecclesiae* (note 32), 1766, Inv. Nr. 1947, points 14 and 16.

⁴¹ Herbert Karner, Apsaltäre. Zur Typengeschichte des barocken Hochaltars im Wiener Einflußgebiet, *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Kunst und Denkmalpflege* 51, 1997, pp. 366–379. – Cf. Michael Krapf, *Triumph der Phantasie. Barocke Modelle von Hildebrandt bis Mollinorolo* (Wechselausstellung der Österreichischen Galerie Belvedere), Wien 1998, pp. 243–245. – Katarína Chmelinová, *Miesto zázrakov – premeny barokového oltára*, Bratislava 2005, pp. 48, 55–57.

⁴² On Iconography Rusina – Zervan (note 35), pp. 72–75. The paintings from

Trnava and Jasov mentioned in: Mikuláš 2012b, 9 cannot be considered as a model of the painting. A period combination of several graphic patterns, which is common at the time, must also be taken into account. For known patterns used in our environment see http://barok.me/PROJ/KR_KrstKriSta.htm (viewed October 10, 2021).

⁴³ See http://barok.me/KAT/Kat_3x.htm#632 (viewed October 10, 2021). Cf. Elisabeth Leube-Payer, *Joseph Ignaz Mildorfer 1719–1775. Akademieprofessor und Savoyisch-Liechtensteinischer Hofmaler*, Wien – Köln – Weimar 2011, pp. 270–271.

⁴⁴ Mária Malíková, *Juraj Rafael Donner a Bratislava*, Bratislava 1993, p. 69.

⁴⁵ Cf. Ivan Rusina (ed.), *Dejiny slovenského výtvarného umenia – Barok*, Bratislava 1998. – Chmelinová (note 29), pp. 45–52. – Eadem, Beitrag zur Geschichte einer Künstlerfamilie im 18. Jahrhundert in Mitteleuropa. Der Bildhauer Joseph Leonard Weber und Trnava, in: Barbara Balážová (ed.), *Generationen, Interpretationen, Konfrontationen*, Bratislava 2007, pp. 151–165.

⁴⁶ Ingrid Halászová – Zuzana Lopatková, Umeleckohistorický a historicko-pramenný náčrt stavebného vývoja a interiérovej výzdoby rímskokatolíckeho kostola v Lošonci, in: Ingrid Halászová – Peter Megyeši – Richard E. Pročka (edd.), *Príbehy pamiatok a obrazov. Zborník príspevkov k sedemdesiatinám Ivana Gojdiča*, Trnava 2018, pp. 91–96. The statues from Kaplná are in the collections of the Slovak National Gallery in Bratislava with Inv. Nrn. P 1414, P 1415 a P 1416; https://www.webumenia.sk/dielo/SVK:SNG.P_1414;-SNG.P_1415;-SNG.P_1416 (viewed December 14, 2021).

⁴⁷ *Matricula Ecclesiae Modrensis S. Barbarae Parochialis* (note 24), 1759, 8. 2. According to the record, the painter's name was Francisco Brandt and he and his wife Catharina witnessed the baptism of Johann, son of Michael Mihalovics and his wife Sophie on February 8, 1759.

⁴⁸ *Regestum inspectoratus inferioris Ecclesiae* (note 32), 1766.

⁴⁹ *Regestum inspectoratus inferioris Ecclesiae* (note 32), 1755.

⁵⁰ *Regestum inspectoratus inferioris Ecclesiae* (note 32), 1767. Vice-inspector Johann Michalowicz wrote that he paid 122 golden coins to Mr. Walter in paragraph 32: “*zaplatil sem Panu Walterowu czo w hornej Capelne oltar Stafffiroval a Malowal 122 zl.*” [“I made a payment of 122 gulden to Master Walter, who painted and decorated statues in the upper chapel altar.”] The chapel can be identified with the new chapel of Our Lady of the Snows, which is listed at the Church of Saint John the Baptist, while the upper chapel in the sense of the Church of St. Barbara had a separate administration and accounts.

⁵¹ The paintings were cleaned and strengthened by Monika Hricková. According to the Canonical visitation of 1756, the Church of Saint Barbara in Modra had three altars – St. Barbara, St. Benedict and the Blessed Virgin Mary. See Archives of the Trnava archiepiscopal office, Canonical Visitation Records (Archív arcibiskupského úradu Trnava, fond Kanonické vizitácie), *Visitatio Archidiaconatus Posoniensis (Nicolaus Csaky)*, 1756, Canonical visitation Modra 1756, Inv. Nr. 2, p. 2.

⁵² For instance see *Regestum inspectoratus inferioris Ecclesiae* (note 32), 1768. Expenditures on craftsmen include an unspecified payment to an unspecified painter in the amount of 25 gold, 78 and a half groschen.

⁵³ Archives of the Capuchin monastery at Pezinok, *Archivium summarium seu acta memorabilia familiae Baziniensis patrum Capucinatorum ex omnibus dispersis scriptis ab anno MDCLXXIV in unum congesta, et conscripta per atrem Severum Modrensem Capucinum, annis 1747 et 1747 usque ad annum MoDo faC faCta eXpressa et eXarata, Vt Vt pVra, tVtaqVe hIstorla*, s.n. (Chronicle of the Capuchin monastery at Pezinok), Inv. Nr. 208, 1–6, 1773, p. 206.

⁵⁴ Erika Lanczová, *Kapucínsky kostol a kláštor Najsvätejšej Trojice v Pezinku* (Mgr. thesis), Comenius University in Bratislava, Bratislava 2014, p. 55.

⁵⁵ Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic, State Archives in Bratislava – Modra branch, Modra Town Hall, Contribution Registers (Ministerstvo vnútra Slovenskej republiky, Štátny archív v Bratislave – pobočka Modra, Magistrát mesta Modra, Kontribučné registre) 1773/1774, Inv. Nrn. 5627 and 5628, ultima quarta, Joh. G. Valter and payments of 50 + 10 grochen.

⁵⁶ Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic, State Archives in Bratislava – Modra branch, Modra Town Hall, Modra Town Hall Records (Ministerstvo vnútra Slovenskej republiky, Štátny archív v Bratislave – pobočka Modra, Magistrát mesta Modra, Zápisnica magistrátu mesta Modra) 1774, Inv. Nr. 1279, 23. 4., p. 197. *Matricula Ecclesiae Modrensis S. Barbarae Parochialis* (note 24).

⁵⁷ *Matricula Ecclesiae Modrensis S. Barbarae Parochialis* (note 24) – Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic, Roman Catholic parish office at Pezinok (Štátny archív Bratislava, Rímsko-katolícky farský úrad Pezinok), Register, Deaths A–Ž 1751–1823 and 1784–1892, Inv. Nrn. 1534 and 1537. I thank Mr. Marián Babirát for help. See also on-line <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:9Q97-Y396-9N8?i=280&cc=1554443&cat=1436162>; <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:9Q97-Y396-96D?i=211&cat=1436162> (viewed January 14, 2021).

⁵⁸ Kolbiarz (note 21).

⁵⁹ Buzási (note 11), pp. 48–49. – Buzási (note 8), p. 260.

⁶⁰ Buzási (note 11), p. 48.

⁶¹ Mráz (note 4), pp. 143–169.

⁶² Cf. Buzási (note 11), p. 48.

⁶³ With references to previous key works on the issue: Enrico Castelnuovo – Carlo Ginzburg, *Zentrum und Peripherie*, in: *Italienische Kunst. Eine neue Sicht auf ihre Geschichte*, Berlin 1988, pp. 23–91. – Ján Bakoš, *Peripherie und kunsthistorische Entwicklung*, *ARS. Časopis Ústavu dejín umenia SAV* 1991, Nr. 1, pp. 1–11. – Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann, *Toward a Geography of Art*, Chicago – London 2004, pp. 154–163. – Stephen Campbell, *The Endless Periphery: Toward a Geopolitics of Art in Lorenzo Lotto's Italy*, Chicago – London 2019.

⁶⁴ To the periphery see Tomáš Valeš, *Znojmo and Its Surroundings: Local Center, Periphery or Something Completely Different?* in: Ondřej Jakubec (ed.), *Parallel inquiries: Art and visual culture in early-modern Central Europe*, Brno 2013, pp. 136–137, 141. To the academic artist see Kolbiarz (note 21).

⁶⁵ Ján Bakoš, *Región, periféria a umelecko-historický vývoj*, in: idem, *Periféria a symbolický skok*, Bratislava 2000, pp. 130–150.

RESUMÉ

Akademik na periférii Johann Georg Walter v Modre

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Obraz akademického malíře je formován většinou zevšeobecňující tradicí předpokládající jeho umístění na vrcholu uměleckého žebříčku a také jistou uniformitu stylu. V mnohém jde o představy zakořeněné v 19. století, které nelze aplikovat na střední Evropu 18. století. Klíčovou vzdělávací institucí se tu tehdy stala vídeňská *k. k. Hofakademie der Maler, Bildhauer und Baukunst*. Její ambice a realita zdaleka ještě nebyly v souladu, ale po polovině století se její vliv stal zásadním. Ještě předtím však na ní studoval i syn vídeňského sochaře Johann Georg Walter (Valter, Walther), dosud téměř neznámý malíř. Po studiu na vídeňské akademii (1743–1744 a 1749), zvládnutí techniky fresky a zařazení do Van Schuppenova seznamu akademických umělců (1745) se Walter snad na pozvání benediktinů od roku 1755 usadil v malém vinařském městě Modra, na jihozápadě dnešního Slovenska. Tady, stranou lokálních uměleckých center, jakými byly Bratislava nebo Trnava, se necelé dvě dekády úspěšně věnoval různým typům malířské, zejména sakrální tvorby. Jeho klíčovou realizací je

výzdoba presbytáře kostela Narození sv. Jana Křtitele v Modre (1764–1765). Kromě nástěnné malby se věnoval i tvorbě oltářních obrazů a štafírování, přičemž jeho práce zdobily i další katolické objekty ve městě jako benediktinský kostel sv. Barbory nebo novou kapli Panny Marie Sněžné. V Modre byl naposledy zaznamenán na jaře roku 1774, krátce po rozsáhlém restaurování obrazů Josefa Kurtze v klášterním kostele kapucínů v nedalekém Pezinku (1773). Jeho další působení není známo.

Tato sonda do výtvarného života prostředí na okraji dobového uměleckého vývoje i do praxe umělce, jakých akademie vyprodukovala stovky, odkazuje také k širší problematice uplatnění studentů vídeňské akademie či otázkám transferu a modifikace jejich podnětů mimo umělecká centra. Lepší poznání nižších úrovní uměleckých scén konkrétních regionů není jen otázkou lokální kulturní historie, ale také argumentační podporou živých uměnovědných teorií o vztazích centra a oblastí mimo něj označovaných jako periférie, region či lokální prostředí. Poukazuje také na potřebu přihlížení k dobovým obsahům používaných pojmů, které se tak u akademického umělce stejně jako například u periférie neshoduje s dnešní praxí. Zároveň to vede k potřebě jasnější diferenciaci různých složek tohoto široce definovaného prostředí bez jasných hranic a s relativní hierarchií. Prostor, jehož kvalita umělecké produkce se pojí s funkční transformací vzorů a sehrává nezaměnitelnou roli v důležitých kulturních procesech společnosti.

Obrazová příloha: 1 – záznam o Walterových městských právech v Modre, 1755; 2 – Johann Georg Walter a neznámý sochař, výzdoba presbytáře kostela sv. Jana Křtitele v Modre, 1764–1766; 3 – Johann Georg Walter, nástěnné malby v kostele sv. Jana Křtitele v Modre, 1765; 4 – Johann Georg Walter, sv. Jan Křtitel, nástěnná malba (detail), 1765. Kostel sv. Jana Křtitele, Modra; 5 – Johann Georg Walter, putto s hlavou sv. Jana Křtitele, nástěnná malba, 1765. Modra, kostel sv. Jana Křtitele; 6 – signatura Johanna Georga Waltera, nástěnná malba, 1765. Modra, kostel sv. Jana Křtitele, severní stěna presbytáře; 7 – iniciály Johanna Georga Waltera ml., nástěnná malba, 1765. Modra, kostel sv. Jana Křtitele, západní stěna presbytáře za hlavním oltářem; 8 – Johann Georg Walter, Křest Krista, detail hlavního oltářního obrazu před restaurováním, 1765. Modra, kostel sv. Jana Křtitele; 9 – Johann Georg Walter, Křest Krista, anděl, detail hlavního oltářního obrazu před restaurováním, 1765. Modra, kostel sv. Jana Křtitele