

Tadej Pungartnik, Regional Museum Maribor

### **The Language of Peace**

Like other countries, Styria also had its own territorial army. Besides the infantry it also included cavalry units, which were comprised of harquebusiers and cuirassiers. Because of their equipment, they later belonged to the group of the so-called heavy cavalry.

From the middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> century the heavy cavalry was increasingly replaced by harquebusiers, because they were more flexible, because of the lighter equipment. They were armed with a harquebuse, which also gave them their name. The weapons for the army mostly came from the armoury of the Styrian estates in Graz. As a sovereign's city, Maribor was mostly supplied with weapons from the Court armoury in Graz, where they bought both the weapons needed by the citizens for their defence, as well as the weapons for the armament of the mercenaries. Single pieces of weaponry have survived over four centuries and are today exhibited in the Regional Museum Maribor.

On the basis of research conducted on the archive sources and a comparison of the weapons, kept in the country armoury in Graz and the Regional Museum Maribor we may conclude, that the individual pieces surely arrived in the city at the river Drava from Graz. The marks on some halberds, spears and swords prove the thesis that the pieces were bought from the armoury, which had commissioned Upper Austrian masters for their production. Among all these pieces however, no equipment of the mercenaries of the territorial army, the so-called Landsknechte, has been preserved. During the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries they presented the infantry of the mercenary army. Initially they were armed with long-spears and equipped with a burgonet and a chest-armour. In tight lines the infantry attempted to repel assaults of the cavalry, while at the same time protecting the marksmen, which during the shots were engaged in the time-consuming reloading of the guns.

The equipment of the Landsknechts can still be found in the Landeszeughaus in Graz, which is a part of the Universalmuseum Joanneum. With the loaned objects we will temporarily complete the permanent exhibition, and would also like to point out, that the ties between the two cities have never been completely cut off.

Erwin Niederberger, Guardia Svizzera Pontificia

## **The Uniform of the Pontifical Swiss Guards in Vatikan**

Michelangelo! Or not?

"These are the Swiss Guards, their uniform was designed by Michelangelo", is an explanation of a roman guide to a group of tourists, that is frequently heard at the entrances of the Vatican City where the Guards are on duty. But is it true, that Michelangelo, the famous sculptor, painter and architect, had nothing better to do than to design military uniforms?

The first uniform clothing of an army was the use of livery, an insignia that was attached to the soldier's clothing. In the chronicles describing the welcome given by the Pope Julius II., from the family della Rovere, the founder Pope of the Swiss Guard, on January 22nd 1506, to the first Swiss Guards, nothing refers to their dress. They probably wore the white cross of Switzerland or the Papal crossed Keys sewn on their chest. Their weapons were the halbard and the broadsword, and their shoulders, chest and arms were protected with metal armour.

In the 16th century, soldiers usually wore a doublet or a jacket, fitted at the waist and ending in a point at the front that went under the belt, and all kind of hats, helmets or caps. During the following centuries, the uniform, hats and helmets of the Swiss Guard was changed several times reflecting the contemporary fashion or to wear the colours and the coat of arms of the regnant Pope. The uniform which is in use today dates back to 1914 and was codified by the Swiss Guard Commandant of the time, Jules Repond, who was inspired by the Rafaelo's famous frescoes, abolished all other types of hats and introduced the simple beret still worn today. The beret reveals the soldier's rank. Furthermore, he replaced the pleated gorget or throat-piece with a plain white collar, that complements the white gloves, he improved the cuirass, or armor and had it remodeled after the original design. Nowadays the full dress – uniform consists of gorget, white gloves and the pale grey helmet with an ostrich feather plume and the coat of arms of the della Rovere family on it.

On May 6th 1527 the imperial forces of Charles V. attacked the solders of the Swiss guard on the steps of St. Peter's Bassilica and massacred 147 guards on duty. Only 42 guards survived the massacre. Their bravery ensured that Pope Clement VII., from the Medici family, escaped to safety, down the Passetto di Borgo, a secret corridor which still links the Vatican City and the Castle of the Holy Angel in Rome. That is why, to this day, the 6th of May is the day of the swearing-in ceremony of all new recruits of the Swiss Guard and the Guards still wear the colours of the Medici family: red, blue and yellow.

Dr. Matthias Weniger, Bayerisches Nationalmuseum München

**Johann Baptist Straub – his sculpture of the Virgin and his portrait as guests in Maribor**

Johann Baptist Straub (1704–1784) has been active for many decades as the leading sculptor in Munich. He originated from Wiesensteig, then a Bavarian enclave in Swabia. He was trained by his father and by the Munich court sculptor Gabriel Luidl, and influenced by another sculptor to the Munich court, Guillielmus de Grof from Antwerp. Straub himself counted among his pupils such pivotal figures for 18th century art as Ignaz Günther, Christian Jorhan, and his nephew Franz Xaver Messerschmidt, who also came from Wiesensteig. Straub's son-in-law Roman Anton Boos would eventually take over his shop. Straub received his first own commissions towards 1730 in Vienna, but worked afterwards primarily for the churches of the large monasteries in and around Munich. He also produced some secular works.

The Bavarian National Museum of Munich owns several dozens works related to Johann Baptist Straub, among them a number of bozzetti for his larger sculptures. The museum lends two particularly personal objects to Maribor, where his brother Joseph had been active for many years: the well-known painted portrait of Johann Baptist Straub probably by Balthasar Augustin Albrecht, and the sculpture of the Virgin, which Johann Baptist Straub carved in 1759 for the façade of the house in the Hacken street in the centre of Munich he had bought for his family in 1741. In the combination of areas carved in relief and details emerging fully from this ground into truly three-dimensional forms, as well as in the treatment of the clouds, the faces and the adornments, the Hacken street Virgin can be considered representative for many of the underlying principles that mark the production of Johann Baptist Straub. It clearly shows the personal style of the artist who is justly famous for the fusion of the human body, ornamental details and architectural elements into one single form. Despite of the amount of workshop cooperation needed to fulfill the many large projects commissioned to Straub, these are characterized by some remarkably coherent features. This also allows to distinguish them from the creations of his brothers, of his teachers and pupils, and of the overall production of his time.

Stefan Mieleszkiewicz in Dorota Gutkowska, Narodni muzej v Varšavi

### **Table of Tekla Róża (née Radziwiłł) and Michał Serwacy Wiśniowiecki from the Furniture Collection of the National Museum in Warsaw**

A beautiful ebonized late baroque table with silver inlaid decoration was made in the period of reign of the Wettin dynasty in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, which was one of the biggest states in Europe of that time. Well documented origin and history that could be followed in detail are its special value. It was made for Michał Serwacy Wiśniowiecki and his wife Tekla Róża born Radziwiłł, both of magnate families, that played a prominent role in the modern history of the Commonwealth. Families' representatives for several generations held the most important secular and church offices, fostered culture and art.

A composition on the top of the table depicts initials of its owners and the coats of arms of both princes families – the "Korybut" of Wiśniowiecki and the "Trąby" placed on the chest of black eagle of Radziwiłłs. This piece of furniture was used as a representative console table in Wiśniowiec palace, ancestral domicile built by Michał Serwacy in 1732- 1733. Heraldic motives used not only on several pieces of furniture, but also in stucco decoration of the palace, as well as arranging a gallery of family portraits were means of demonstrating the splendour and emphasizing the family pride of the gentry.

It can be assumed that the table was made between 1741 and 1744 in a carpenter's workshop placed in a castle of Biała (in the Podlasie region), that belonged to mother of Tekla – Anna Radziwiłł (born Sanguszko). Princess Anna was an initiator of many artistic activities. She founded first on the territory of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth courtly workshops, that followed West European models. Most probably the table was made by carpenter Johann Her who originated from Dresden in Saxony. Similarities to furniture made in Dresden between 1720 and 1740 could be found in its form and decoration. Documents confirm also that Her created in Biała some other pewter inlaid works of decorative art.

After death of Michał Serwacy and Tekla Róża, the table was inherited by polish noble families of Ogiński and than Krasicki.