



Exportación de vidrio de Bohemia a España y Portugal en el siglo XVIII.

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RESUMEN

La invención del cristal de Bohemia fue un requisito previo para el comercio mundial de este surtido de moda, que dentro de Bohemia se concentraba en la región de Nový Bor-Kamenický Šenov, en el norte de Bohemia. Se trataba de vidrio hueco, candelabros y, más tarde, espejos. En el siglo XVIII, las empresas comerciales de Nový Bor y sus alrededores establecieron sucursales permanentes en el extranjero, las llamadas fábricas, desde donde gestionaban los mercados locales y lejanos. Al mismo tiempo, además de las ciudades hanseáticas del norte de Alemania, se centraron principalmente en la Península Ibérica, desde donde también exportaban a las colonias. En España se establecieron en Cádiz, Sevilla, Alicante y La Coruña, y trabajaron en Lisboa u Oporto en Portugal. ¿Sobre qué principios funcionó este negocio? ¿Cómo era la vida cotidiana en las fábricas? ¿Qué tipo de personas estaban involucradas en este negocio? Estas son las principales preguntas a las que dará respuesta el estudio.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Siglo XVIII; comercio; exportación; vidrio de Bohemia; España; Portugal.

EXPORT OF BOHEMIAN GLASS TO SPAIN AND PORTUGAL IN 18th CENTURY.

ABSTRACT

The invention of Bohemian crystal glass was a prerequisite for world trade in this fashionable assortment, which, within Bohemia, was concentrated in Nový Bor-Kamenický Šenov region in northern Bohemia. These were hollow glass, chandeliers and later mirrors. During the 18th century, trading companies from Nový Bor and the surrounding areas established permanent branches abroad, so-called factories, from where they managed both local and distant markets. At the same time, in addition to the Hanseatic cities in the north of Germany, they focused primarily on the Iberian Peninsula, from where they also exported to the colonies. They settled in Cadiz, Seville, Alicante, and La Coruña in Spain, and worked in Lisbon or Porto in Portugal. What principles did this business work on? What was daily life like in the factories? What kind of people were involved in this business? These are the main questions that the study aims to answer.

KEY WORDS: 18th century; trade; export; Bohemian glass; Spain; Portugal.

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1 INTRODUCTION – THE BEGINNINGS OF THE BOHEMIAN GLASS TRADE

The territory of today's Czech Republic lies in the centre of Europe, at the crossroads of trade routes connecting the geographical west of the continent with the east and the south with the north. The first glass products in the form of beads were imported from the Mediterranean region as early as 2,000 BC. Glass was first produced in Bohemia by the Celts. They produced it in large quantities from the 3rd to the 1st century BC. These were mainly beads and bracelets. Procedures for making stained glass in the region are first mentioned in sources in the 12th century. The production of hollow glass in the country has been archaeologically documented since the second half of the 13th century, when Bohemia was ruled by the last kings of the Přemyslid dynasty, who based their domestic and international power ambitions on newly discovered silver deposits, among the largest in the world. In the same century, the country also began to produce lampwork rosary beads on a large scale. As the standard of living of the court and city dwellers improved, the demand for luxury goods such as glass increased, not only for representational purposes but also for private use¹.

The first records of the export of Bohemian glass to German and Austrian countries from the second half of the 14th century are connected with the reign of the Francophone House of Luxembourg. Thanks to his rulership skills, the Bohemian, Italian and Burgundian King and Roman Emperor Charles IV made the country a respected Central European centre of education, crafts and trade between 1346 and 1378. But then came a steep decline. After a drop caused by a Europe-wide social, societal and economic crisis in the late 14th century, connected also with the Black Death pandemic, Bohemia was plagued by years of religious wars. The situation stabilised only with the accession of the Polish-Lithuanian Jagiellonian family to the Bohemian throne in 1471. However, it was not until the reign of the Roman Emperor, King of Bohemia and Hungary and Archduke of Austria, Ferdinand I of Habsburg, between 1526 and 1564 that glass production flourished again. He was born in Spain because his mother was Joanna I of Castile, Queen of Castile and Leon. More and more glassworks for producing hollow and window glass began to be established in the deep manor forests, especially in the north and south of Bohemia, and their founders were mainly evangelical glassmakers from German lands.

The promotion of glassmaking brought with it not only economic benefits but also the possibility of satisfying the personal tastes and social prestige of the nobility, newly shaped by the European cultural ambitions of the royal court. Gradually, a manufacturing base was created from which the Bohemian glass industry continued to benefit in subsequent periods. By the end of the century, Bohemian glass was already being exported abroad. This is evidenced, for instance, by the activities of the merchant Peter Hille from Chřibská in the Nový Bor-Kamenický Šenov region, who sold hollow glass at the court of the Saxon Elector in Dresden in 1599.

The logical decline in production and trade occurred during the Thirty Years' War, which began in Bohemia and lasted from 1618 to 1648. After the victory of the Catholic Habsburgs, Protestants were outlawed in the country in 1627. The inhabitants of this religion, including the glassworks managers, had to convert to Catholicism or emigrate. The property of Protestant nobles who opposed the crown was confiscated and acquired by new owners, primarily imperial generals of Western or Southern European origin. At the same time, before the middle of the 17th century, a new type of glass entrepreneurs appeared in Bohemia. They no longer based the prosperity of their glassworks on their technical expertise, but on their social contacts and managerial skills. They also brought capital from other industries, such as the linen trade, into the glass industry.

The main impetus for the large-scale export of Bohemian glass came in the last two decades of the 17th century, when the first glassmakers in south-west Bohemia, on the estate of the Buquoy family, the Princes who came from France, began to melt perfectly clear, thick-walled potassium-calcium glass predestined by its hardness to be decorated with cut and engraving – Bohemian crystal. As such goods with their optical and aesthetic properties ideally suited the fashionable Baroque taste, they soon became very popular².

Cutters, engravers and painters were then concentrated mainly in northern Bohemia. Glass decorators were organised into guilds to break free from dependence

on the owners of glassworks. The first guild was established in Chřibská as early as 1669. In the 18th century, the Nový Bor-Kamenický Šenov region became a centre of Bohemian glass export. In the last quarter of the 17th century, the glass merchants of the Nový Bor-Kamenický Šenov region started to travel abroad, initially with backpack and wheelbarrows. Their destination was mainly neighbouring Saxony (Leipzig). The demand for Bohemian glass continued to grow, and soon, the exporters joined in so-called wheelbarrow fellowships, where ten to twelve traders would go to the markets together. Before the end of the 17th century, wheelbarrows were replaced by four- or six-horse-drawn carts. The wholesale trade in Bohemian glass was born³.

Its founder is believed to have been Johann Kaspar Kittel of Polevsko, the glassworks owner (ca. 1650-1715), whose descendants and relatives were among the most influential and successful merchants of the time. It is said that Kittel first heard about suitable markets from knife sharpeners who travelled through northern Europe. He learned from them that there was little glassware in the local households. So he recruited reliable men, loaded them with glass in wheelbarrows and sent them to Lower Saxony, Denmark and the Netherlands. They quickly disposed of the cargo and returned home. It wasn't long before the glassmaker sent out the first carts⁴.

Kittel is often overshadowed by the figure of his contemporary Georg Franz Kreybich (1662-1736). This trained glass painter and engraver from Kamenický Šenov made thirty glass trade journeys across Europe between 1686 and 1721, from Italy to Sweden and from England to Russia and Ottoman Empire. Kreybich left behind a travel diary that is a unique – and the oldest known – source for historians to learn about the “world through the eyes of a merchant” at a time when Bohemian glass was becoming a profitable export commodity. Unlike Kittel, however, Kreybich was a soloist, travelling alone with his goods with few exceptions, often decorating the glass on the spot, and had no long-term major partners in the centres of European trade⁵.

By the beginning of the 18th century, the export of Bohemian glass had taken on a solid form: exporters, primarily associated in ambitious and financially more stable business associations (companies), had their glass produced and refined according to the tastes of the customers to whom they supplied their goods; some of them also participated financially in its decoration. However, they did not limit their trade to Bohemian glass; they also sold German, English, French, and Dutch glass worldwide. They also offered other goods such as costume jewellery, ceramics, textiles, toys and musical instruments. At first, wholesalers from Hamburg (Altona) were essential customers. The goods were sent to them in the crates via coachmen. However, the symbol of the success of the trading companies was not the ancient Hanseatic city but the Iberian Peninsula – especially Spain with the cities of Cadiz and Seville, from where trade with the American colonies was conducted. Bohemian glass exporters also operated permanent sales warehouses in Portugal, the Netherlands, Italy, Russia and the Ottoman Empire⁶.

The first usable statistical data on the export of glass from Bohemia are preserved from the years 1732 (98,557 guldens 10 kreuzers), 1733 (94,830 guldens 34 kreuzers) and 1735 (70,962 guldens). Others are for 1752 (281,640 guldens), 1768 (352,740

guldens) and 1771 (243,000 guldens). About 60% of this value was attributed to hollow glass, 30% to sheet glass and mirrors, and 10% to glass costume jewellery and small glass goods. Throughout this period, glass exports were among the most important of the country's handicraft industries, with the value of exports increasing rapidly after the mid-18th century⁷. The trade turnover, fortunes and profits of the largest Nový Bor-Kamenický Šenov companies are genuinely remarkable. According to the accounting books, the firm Rautenstrauch, Hiecke, Stolle & Preissler made a profit of around 27% annually in trade with Spain between 1740 and 1755. In total, the firm made 203,154 guldens and 10 kreuzers during this period. The turnover between 1751 and 1755 was 82,495 guldens 54 kreuzers (profit 24,860 guldens 22 kreuzers), while between 1740 and 1743 it was only 11,389 guldens 4 kreuzers (profit 3,366 guldens 5 kreuzers)⁸. Between 1766 and 1773, the competing firm of G. A. Janke was very successful. On 1,329 chartered ships it carried goods worth 296,137 guldens 37 kreuzers⁹. The trading company Gerthner, Hansel & Comp. operated in Amsterdam for eighty years and averaged an annual profit of 18.7% throughout its existence¹⁰.

It is worth noting that in the case of the wholesale trade in Bohemian glass, merchants often imported exotic and luxury goods (tobacco, spices, fine cloth, furs, leather, etc.) from abroad to Bohemia in large quantities. *"The report of the Commercial College dated July 6th, 1735 mentions the great wealth of glass merchants from Bohemia, who lent considerable sums of money abroad to representatives of the nobility (...) among the debtors of the glass wholesalers was even the King of Spain, who borrowed 250,000 guldens from them"*¹¹.

Some estate owners were also aware of the importance of the glass business and began to put mercantilist economic theories into practice. For instance, today's Nový Bor (formerly Haida) was made a town in 1757. In a short time, it became an export centre in the true sense of the word and thus established itself at the expense of Polevsko, Skalice and Kamenický Šenov. Six years later, a Piarist school was established in Nový Bor, whose curriculum was already adapted for the sons of exporters¹².

Evidence of the success of Bohemian glass on foreign markets in the 18th century can be seen in the steep increase of cases when Bohemian glassmakers were lured abroad, which the state administration tried to prevent by issuing a ban on their travel outside the borders of the monarchy. The first of these rescripts came into force in 1752. Nevertheless, glassmakers from Bohemia were working in Switzerland, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Lorraine and perhaps even South America. For example, in La Granja, Spain, a royal glass factory was founded in 1727, which later also produced Bohemian-type glass¹³.

The most famous type of Bohemian Baroque, Rococo and Classicist glass, exported to the world, is richly decorated cups, goblets, decanters and plates made of hand-blown crystal glass. Moreover, the lavish Baroque dining required equally decorated multi-piece table and drink sets. The luxurious crystal glass was decorated with cutting, engraving, gilding and coloured enamels, while the common types were decorated with only an unpretentious cut. Motifs included gallantry and hunting scenes, allegorical scenes, flowers, monograms or geometric compositions. Decanters were also a novelty in shape,



Figura 1

Sample of Bohemian Baroque glass. Cup blown.
Cut crystal glass.
North Bohemia, after 1700, photo Aleš Kosina,
Collection of Museum of Glass and Jewellery
in Jablonec nad Nisou.



Figura 2

Sample of Bohemian Baroque glass. Wedding set.
Blown, cut, engraved crystal glass.
North Bohemia, Harrach Glassworks, Nový Svět / Neuwelt,
1716, photo Aleš Kosina
Collection of Museum of Glass
and Jewellery in Jablonec nad Nisou.

Figura 3

Sample of Bohemian Baroque glass. Double-wall cup.
Blown, cut, glued glass, gold foil.
North Bohemia, 1735–1745, photo Aleš Kosina,
Collection of Museum of Glass and Jewellery
in Jablonec nad Nisou.



which only appeared during the 18th century, as were, for instance, pocket perfume bottles. In Bohemia, the so-called double-walled goblets were also made, decorated with silver or gold foil, and ruby glass coloured with real gold was an exclusive feature. Ruby threads were also commonly used to decorate the stems of crystal goblets¹⁴.

However, innovations were not limited to hollow glass; in the 1720s, chandeliers with full-cut glass trimmings began to be made in north-eastern Bohemia. In the second half of the century, especially in the Nový Bor-Kamenický Šenov region, the production of mirrors with cut, engraved and thickly decorated glass frames developed. Similarly, glass costume jewellery (especially gemstone imitations and beads), made from the end of the 17th century onwards, began entering foreign markets, especially in northern Bohemia and the Jablonec and Turnov regions. Flat, sheet glass was also exported in large quantities, especially for glazing windows¹⁵.

Regarding trends, the Baroque style in glassmaking – not in shapes but in decoration – began to give way to the more subtle and ornate Rococo after the mid-18th century. Excellent examples are, for instance, paintings in colourful enamels on opaque white opal glass, imitating fashionable, exotic and expensive porcelain, or underpaintings on glass. Classicism, on the other hand, based on ancient designs, emphasised simple and artificial form and decoration, including cutting, engraving, and painting. For instance, the form of goblets and decanters changed significantly¹⁶.

In the case of Georg Anton Janke & Comp., we also have evidence from 1766 to 1773 of a specific range of goods delivered to the branches in Seville and especially in Cadiz (the leading destination with a 65% share). In the period under review, the most significant volume of items was luxury hollow glass, mostly in the price range from 30 to 60 kreuzers per piece, which went to the Seville and Cadiz branches. These included, for instance, *“small painted goblets with handles, square goblets, large and small gilt goblets, a case with a gilt pin, gilt jelly cups, gilt fruit jugs, cut liquor cups, cut salt cellars, painted or gilt plates, gilt tea and coffee cups, extra-large decanters with gold flowers, white gilt cat heads, glass mice, Johannes chalice, gilt twelve-month goblet, aspersorium with rubies, gilt and painted vases, large glass baskets with lids, cut sugar bowls, coffee pots with lids, beer glasses with lids, gilt square goblets”*¹⁷.

The most expensive exported goods were mirrors in the price range from 19 to 66 guildens and crystal glass chandeliers, whose prices oscillated between 9 and 65 guildens depending on the size and complexity of the design. Flat glass accounted for a significant share of the exported goods in terms of items (price around 1 gulden 40 kreuzers/piece), while a small share was accounted for by ordinary glassware such as apothecary jars, bottles, etc. at a meagre value (e.g. 40 pieces of apothecary bottles at 19 kreuzers). The delivery of microscopes or crystal buttons and stones to Cadiz in 1766 is also recorded in the accounting documents as well as the sale of porcelain, tin figures of generals and soldiers with cannons and pontoon bridges, musical instruments (bassoons, trumpets, horns, pianos, flutes, rattle), coloured women’s, men’s and children’s stockings or waxed canvas and framed paintings (even just frames)¹⁸.

THE FORM OF BOHEMIAN GLASS TRADE ON THE IBERIAN PENINSULA

The gateway of Bohemian glass to Spain, Portugal and their colonies was the port city of Cadiz. An exposition of Bohemian exports linked to their activities in Hamburg is documented here as early as 1691¹⁹. Among the first merchant companies from the Nový Bor-Kamenický Šenov region to make a lasting impact in Spain in the first half of the 18th century were the firms of J. A. Trauschke (La Coruña) and Rautenstrauch, Hiecke, Stolle & Preissler from Polevsko (Cadiz, Seville, Madrid, Granada). The firm of Georg Anton Janke from Nový Bor was active in Cadiz, Seville, Valencia and Barcelona. The merchant Georg Anton Janke, originally from Skalice, first travelled to Cadiz from Amsterdam in 1725. He founded a company with two partners there, operating in Cadiz, Seville and Portugal. Janke then returned to Bohemia, from where he managed the business. He ran the firm under his own name until 1760 when it was renamed Georg Anton Janke & Comp. By 1770, it had moved from Skalice to Nový Bor. In the meantime, a branch office was also established in Valencia; the one in Cadiz was closed in 1836²⁰. In Cadiz and Seville, the company was run by Andreas Hellmich & Elias Preysler. The company, owned by Christian Anton Kittel and Georg Franz Fischer, was settled in La Coruña. Georg Anton Janke (Lisbon, Porto) and J. A. Trauschke (Porto) were the first companies to enter Portugal²¹. How did such companies and their factories work?

From the very beginning, trading companies were not part of the guild organisation. They worked essentially on the principle of today’s commercial companies, comprising public or silent partners. However, they differed significantly from today’s companies in that they had a strong religious foundation, which formally influenced not only the activities of the company but also the private lives of the partners and employees. Catholic piety permeated business writings, and the deep faith of the partners was manifested in donations to religious institutions, including charities. In 1718, for instance, Christian Franz Rautenstrauch generously supported the building of a church in Polevsko, to which he donated the high altar²². To the church in Skalice, one of the factories in Cadiz donated a painting of the Taking Down of Christ from the Cross by Murillo; another, from Seville, donated a ceremonial chasuble richly decorated with gold and a large silver monstrance. The merchant Johann Georg Trauschke was also a benefactor of the Skalice church. At his own expense, he had the bell tower and the tower above the sanctuary covered with copper and a statue of St. John of Nepomuk erected in front of the rectory²³.

Since there were many partners in companies and the profits (or losses) were considerable, a good written contract between the partners was one of the necessities for good functioning, in addition to Christian standards of conduct²⁴. One of these was drawn up by Johann Josef Hansel (1755-1834), from 1812 the head of the Nový Bor firm Gerthner, Hansel & Comp. The company, founded in the mid-18th century under the name Gerthner, Ostritz & Comp., was one of the largest in the business. Its founders, who had previously traded in yarn and linen, concentrated mainly on trade with the Netherlands²⁵.

In the introduction, Hansel emphasises, in particular, the Christian *“Don’t do unto others what you don’t want done unto you”*, which every businessman must always keep in mind. Also emphasised are *diligence, thrift* (a partner can only lend from his own, not

the firm's, assets without the consent of others) and especially a *strong Christian faith*, including charity, as prerequisites for a promising business career²⁶.

Established trading companies set up permanent branches abroad – factories that distributed, sold and purchased goods. Most of them were located in the Iberian Peninsula. Initially, they depended entirely on the parent company, which was usually based in Bohemia. Later, they became more independent. Life in the factories was very similar to a monastic cloister. It was characterised by seclusion, a fixed daily routine, strict discipline, regular spiritual exercises and – last but not least – the exclusion of women. The head of the company was always a merchant, elected for three years, who led up to fifteen employees. These were further subdivided into a strict hierarchy according to length of service. Each employee was entitled to free housing, food and linen and medical assistance in the event of illness. The most senior subordinate was an assistant to the superior: he handled customs matters, kept the general ledger, ordered goods under the superior's supervision and supervised the other employees. Supervision also meant supervising the cleanliness of the rooms, the staff's shop and clothing, cooking and managing the pantry.

All factories in the Iberian Peninsula were subject to the same daily schedule, regardless of which company ran it. In summer, the shop was open from seven in the morning to seven in the evening, but with the usual siesta after lunch. After closing time, employees moved to their rooms to rest. Popular pastimes included talking, reading, writing or playing musical instruments. Gambling, such as dice or cards, was, of course, strictly forbidden. Dinner was followed by the rosary and evening prayer until the 1820s. On Saturday, the superior read the text related to the Sunday sermon to all the subordinates from the bible. Confession was obligatory once a month. The penalties for breaking the rules were severe. For the first offence, the offender was sharply reprimanded by the superior; for the second, he was sent to Bohemia with a written reprimand, where he did not escape punishment. Most of the time, thanks to the interconnectedness of most merchant families, he lost the opportunity to work in exports.

As already mentioned, there was strict seclusion in the factories throughout the week, which could only be broken in commercial matters (dealing with customs, accounting for goods, etc.). The house was locked for the night, and the superior kept the key. A specific exception occurred on Sundays and holidays when the shop remained closed. On those days, after breakfast, all the employees divided into groups and went to church for mass. Then they had time for a short walk around town until lunchtime. Needless to say, visits to pubs, cafés, and female acquaintances were forbidden. In the afternoon, there was a joint outing to the town promenade or the nearby countryside under the guidance of the superior. Until 1820, employees had to go in pairs and were only allowed to go on trips without a leader from 1826. If the factory staff were musical, musical performances were held after the walk, to which even friends of the company who did not belong to the house were invited. At the stroke of ten, the entertainment ended²⁷.

From today's point of view, the internal order of the running of companies and their factories may seem too one-sidedly "religious". Here, we must also consider not only the



Figura 4

Sample of Bohemian Rococo glass. *Vessels for Holy Water.*

Blown hot glass, North Bohemia, probably Riedel Glassworks in Kristiánov / Christianstal, after 1775, photo Tomáš Hilger, Collection of Museum of Glass and Jewellery in Jablonec nad Nisou.

Figura 6

Sample of Bohemian Rococo glass. *Allegory of Continents.*

Blown, painted, gilded white opal glass, North Bohemia, Harrach Glassworks, Nový Svět / Neuwelt, 1760–1780, photo Aleš Kosina, Collection of Museum of Glass and Jewellery in Jablonec nad Nisou.



Figura 5

Sample of Bohemian Rococo glass. *St. John of God – Patron of Granada.*

Exported to the Iberian Peninsula. Blown, cut, painted glass, North Bohemia, 1770–1780, photo Tomáš Hilger, Collection of Museum of Glass and Jewellery in Jablonec nad Nisou.



piety above of the merchants but also the Spanish environment of the “most Catholic kingdom”. However, it should not be overlooked that compliance with these regulations ensured the long-term prosperity of companies in a foreign environment, based on the simplicity and clarity of the hierarchical structure (i. e. including accountability), as well as on the efficiency that is vital for business.

From the countries where the Nový Bor-Kamenický Šenov region exporters did business, however, not only money for the goods sold came to Bohemia, but also new cultural and social stimuli. When Johann Anton Preyssler returned home from Spain for the first time around 1755, he caused a great stir in the area because he was dressed in the unusual fashion of red stockings. The same country also brought tomato growing to the region, which was used to make a sauce for meat. Some traders even married abroad. For instance, Josef Sisckke, whose father came from Skalice and settled in Matanzas, Cuba, left his wife behind after his first visit to the village so that she could learn at least some German²⁸.

THE PROFILE OF RAUTENSTRAUCH & HIECKE COMPANY AND ITS OWNERS

Christian Franz Rautenstrauch (1677–1743), who came from Chomouty in the Nový Bor-Kamenický Šenov region, was the founder of one of the most important commercial glass companies in Nový Bor. He began his career as an employee of Johann Kaspar Kittel, the Polevsko glassworks owner and merchant. Around 1710, he headed to Russia as one of the first Bohemian glass exporters by sea. He sold the goods, and upon his return in 1712, Kittel married him to his daughter Salomena. However, the latter died while giving birth to her first child. Rautenstrauch therefore soon remarried, this time to Apollonia née Oppitz, daughter of Daniel Oppitz, a butcher and farmer from Polevsko²⁹. He also left Kittel’s firm and established his own company in Polevsko with Josef Anton Hiecke (1702–1768) from Skalice. Spain and Portugal became the target of their commercial efforts after the decline of the unstable Russian market. In 1743, when Rautenstrauch died, the company operated factories in Cadiz, Seville and Madrid³⁰.

In the first half of the 18th century, Johann Anton (Juan Antonio) Preyssler, Johann Heinrich Schierer, the widow Apollonie Rautenstrauch (†1775) and the eldest son Augustin Rautenstrauch (†1791) became companions of the company [26]. The company’s name was changed to Rautenstrauch, Hiecke, Stolle & Preissler. Rautenstrauch’s other sons Josef, Silvester and Franz Stephan embarked on an ecclesiastical career. The last of these became one of the leading figures of the Austrian Enlightenment church reforms [27]. Soon after the middle of the century, Johann Anton Hiecke (1740–1813), the son of Josef Anton Hiecke, appeared among the companions³¹.

The company was very successful until 1774, when the Hiecke family parted company with the Preysslers in bad blood. Therefore, a new trading company called Hiecke, Rautenstrauch, Zincke & Comp. was founded with its headquarters in Nový Bor. In addition to the “old” partners Johann Anton Hiecke (the company’s director) and Apollonia and Augustin Rautenstrauch, its founders also included Johann Wenzel Hiecke (1746–1828), Bartholomäus Hiecke (1748–1775) and Johann Anton Zincke. Of the Spanish branches,

Cazid went to them, and Seville remained with the former partners. Later, a branch in Cartagena was also established. The two oldest partners resided in Nový Bor (the firm’s headquarters probably from 1781), the other two in Spain. In 1775, the firm had already deposited 200,000 guildens of the conventional coin in interest-bearing long-term deposits. When Johann Anton Hiecke died in 1812 and was succeeded at the head of the company by his brother Johann Wenzel Hiecke, the company operated, in addition to Cadiz, branches in Alicante, Amsterdam, Hamburg and Mexico³². The company operated until 1848 when it was dissolved. At the beginning of the 19th century, the company also established a branch in Baltimore, North America³³.

As early as 1787, Kaspar Bienert, active in developing Spanish trade, was among the partners. His brother-in-law was Dr. Thaddäus Hänke (1761-1816), nicknamed the “Austrian Humboldt”. Although he studied philosophy at the university in Prague, he became known primarily as a botanist and natural scientist, a universal scholar and practitioner. After making a name for himself in the scientific community and gaining the favour of the Austrian Emperor Joseph II, he became a member of the scientific expedition of King Charles IV of Spain in 1789, which was sent to the Spanish colonies in America and the East Indies. Its task was to draw up an accurate nautical chart, chart the sea currents, identify suitable harbours, and collect geographical, economic and industrial information that might be useful to Spain. As Hänke was a guest of the Spanish monarch and thus had access to the highest circles, the firm of Hiecke, Rautenstrauch, Zincke & Comp. supported him during his voyage and obtained him as a commercial agent with the right to conclude deals. Hänke travelled all over South America and the Philippines. He did not return home of his own accord, dying in Cochamba, Bolivia³⁴.

1 JOHANN ANTON HIECKE, THE PARTNER

Johann Anton Hiecke (1740–1813), son of the founder of the predecessor of Hiecke, Rautenstrauch, Zincke & Comp. Josef Anton Hiecke (1702–1768) travelled from Skalice to the company factory in Cadiz at the age of ten. He was accompanied on the journey by an older companion. On May 2, 1750, they set off with wagons of goods for Lüneburg, North Germany, and continued to Hamburg. They boarded a Danish merchant ship there, which took them to Spain. On 12 July, the companions first set foot on Spanish soil in the port of Bahia near Cadiz. From there, Hiecke set out with a cover letter from his father to his business partner and relative, Johann Anton Preyssler.

At the time of his arrival, his uncle Johann Heinrich Schierer was in charge of the firm’s Cadiz factory (from 1749). Hiecke soon worked his way up in the trade and briefly worked in Seville, Cordoba and Granada. In 1758, Schierer even gave him the position of superior. Hiecke did not return to Bohemia from Cadiz until June 1762, when he boarded a Dutch ship bound for Amsterdam. The sea voyage took 36 days and then he used the services of stagecoaches. He returned home after twelve years in Spain.

Hiecke stayed in Skalice for six years. On August 25, 1766, he married Anna Maria Janke from Nový Bor, who came from a rival merchant family. On May 7, 1768, he again

travelled to Spain via Amsterdam. His cousin Joseph Preyssler travelled with him as a novice. The voyage on the English ship to Cadiz lasted 38 days and ended on July 28. However, Hiecke stayed on Spanish soil this time for only three years. In May 1771, he returned to Bohemia with his relative Johann Georg Janke. However, he travelled overland via France (Strasbourg) and German lands (Nuremberg) for the first time. They arrived in Nový Bor on August 23. However, there was not much good news waiting for Hiecke at home. During his absence, his father, mother, wife, daughter and soon afterwards his four-year-old son died.

Hiecke remarried after a time. In 1773, he took as his wife Maria Josefa Grossmann from Nový Bor, probably from a partner's family in the rival firm Gerthner, Ostritz & Comp. As he had done after his first marriage, he set off on his travels again, this time heading for St. Pauli, now a district of Hamburg, where he worked intermittently until 1781. After his final return to Bohemia, Hiecke moved with his wife from Skalice to Nový Bor, where he built a house. Here, he married for the third time in 1797 to Johanna Knoth from Lobendava near Šluknov in North Bohemia, who gave him nine children³⁵.

2 JOHANN ANTON ZINCKE, THE PARTNER

Unlike Hiecke, Johann Anton Zincke started in the company as an employee, not as the son of a partner. He travelled to the factory in Cadiz in 1759. He spent the first two years as a kitchen assistant before being "brought into the house". He closed his first deals in 1762. He constantly worked on himself, improving his mathematics, and his efforts bore fruit. When Johann Anton Hiecke, the head of the factory, went to Bohemia in 1771, he practically became his successor, although officially it was Hiecke's son. Zincke was supported by Johann Anton Preyssler, who wanted to win him over to his side.

In 1774, Zincke, living in Bohemia at the time, had to decide where to stand when the company began to fall apart. Having fallen out with Preyssler, accusing him, for instance, of favouring his descendants at the expense of the good of the company, he became a partner in the new firm of Hiecke, Rautenstrauch, Zincke & Comp. In the service of the new firm, Zincke and Augustin Rautenstrauch set out for Spain for the first time on March 21, 1775. It was not an easy task. In Barcelona, they were surprised by a letter announcing the sudden death of their partner Bartholomäus Hiecke. The warehouses of the factory in Cadiz were empty, as Preyssler had managed to sell all the goods before their arrival. A legal solution was offered, but as such a trial would have been expensive in Spain, and the partners had no documentary evidence with them, the action was dropped. But it was not only the goods that were in short supply; so were the employees, almost all of whom - except two - had left or joined Preyssler's new firm.

The partners faced a difficult situation. There were too many of them to begin with, which did not bode well for the company's future. In 1777, Zincke set off back to Bohemia via the Netherlands. In Amsterdam, he visited the Trauschke Trading Company, the manager of which was W. Müller. He granted the new firm a credit of 20,000 guildens, which Zincke undertook to settle within six months. He then headed



Figura 7

Sample of Bohemian Rococo glass. Bowl.

Blown, painted milk glass,
North Bohemia, Jizera Mountains, after 1775,
photo Aleš Kosina, Collection of Museum of Glass
and Jewellery in Jablonec nad Nisou

Figura 8

Sample of Bohemian Rococo glass. Pharmacy containers.

Blown, painted white opal glass,
North Bohemia, before 1790, photo Aleš Kosina,
Collection of Museum of Glass and Jewellery
in Jablonec nad Nisou



for Skalice to stay with his family, from where he set off again on September 1, 1777, via Hamburg to Cadiz.

According to Zincke, the company owed its survival to shopkeeping, as it could not survive on the glass trade alone. This state of affairs continued in the following period. It was not until 1782 that Zincke set out on his travels from Cadiz. This time, he headed for the Netherlands again. As the war with England raged on, trade in Cadiz declined, bringing the company significant losses (stock, reduced shipping, debts - unpaid goods in England). He, therefore, made a deal with some Spanish merchants and bought large quantities of cheese, butter and beans for them in Amsterdam. It was a profitable business. He did not have to put up any cash and received a good commission. In the same year, Zincke also managed to conclude a deal in Cadiz for 80,000 thalers, half of which he received immediately, and the other half was payable within half a year.

Also in 1782, a new sales representative, who had previously worked for a rival firm, joined the Cadiz factory. His speciality was haberdashery. Zincke, therefore, also began to trade in this commodity. He shipped goods worth 15 to 20,000 guildens a year to France and 500 pounds to England (Birmingham, Sheffield) and offered them on consignment in Spain. These were mainly horn buttons. From 1784 onwards, another haberdashery specialist worked for the firm³⁶.

In 1784, Zincke dispatched a large cargo of goods from Cadiz to Lima, the capital of the Spanish Viceroyalty of Peru, via the sales representative Augustin Rautenstrauch. The journey was paid for by an unnamed Spanish nobleman. Rautenstrauch set up a branch in Peru and initially did very well. Half the goods were paid for immediately. The whole year 1785 was marked for the Cadiz company by trade with Lima, where the first ships sailed in March and April. Rautenstrauch returned to Cadiz from there in 1788³⁷.

In 1786, Zincke also attempted to enter Mexico. In his own words, he took advantage of an offer from a Spanish friend who intended to set up a sales office there. The whole venture was financed by a certain Mr. Guerra, and Zincke put in goods, initially prepared for Lima, to the value of 60,000 Dutch stuivers (two thirds of which were to be paid in advance by two other business partners). These were mostly goods bought in England, France, Nuremberg and Augsburg. The ships were due to sail in February 1787. Zincke had already stocked two-thirds of the goods when one of the trading partners withdrew from the venture. Suddenly, 20,000 stuivers were missing, the business was abandoned, and Zincke fell seriously ill. The doctor decided to apply blood-letting therapy and recommended a change of climate. The merchant was not idle, handed over the Cadiz business to his subordinates and set off for Bohemia with his family on April 17, 1787. Zincke sailed from Cadiz to Altona on a Danish ship. On his return home, his doctor recommended a visit to the spa in Karlovy Vary, which he then visited. The treatment served its purpose, as Johann Anton Zincke was still alive in 1812³⁸.

THE TWILIGHT OF TRADING COMPANIES

The causes of the decline of the glass exporters from the Nový Bor-Kamenický Šenov region, the crisis in the sales of Bohemian glass at the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th century in general, have been dealt with most consistently by Arthur Salz and Jitka Lněničková³⁹. Salz identifies four basic aspects that led to the demise of traditional trading companies: political instability, a change in the direction of world economic policy, the end of Bohemian dominance in the perfect decoration of glass, and the fact that Bohemian glass was no longer cheap to produce. Lněničková adds the increase in internal competition in Bohemia, where glassworks were beginning to export on a large scale, without intermediaries. In any case, while at the beginning of the 19th century, the Nový Bor-Kamenický Šenov region trading companies operated 48 branches in Europe, after about fifty years, there were only three⁴⁰.

Let us first consider Salz's arguments. He first cites the *political instability in the world in the third quarter of the 18th century*. He particularly points to the US War of Independence with England, which broke out in 1774. From 1777 onwards, France supported the American rebels; two years later, Spain began to intervene in the war and finally, from 1780, the Netherlands. Here, Bohemian merchants had large warehouses and lost many cases of glass to English naval attacks on the merchant ships of enemy countries. In addition, the warring countries were affected by the costliness, which, of course, did not benefit trade. In Spain, for instance, merchants were forced to pay the usual annual tax to the king as many as four times in one year. It only remains to be added that the French Revolution of 1789 and the events that followed (primarily the Napoleonic Wars) had an equally destructive effect on the glass trade. The political situation in Europe did not stabilise until after 1815.

Salz considers the second reason to be the *change in the direction of world economic policy* when a period of state-protected markets with high tariffs began, which, of course, also affected glass imports. It should be noted here, however, that this is a tendency common to the whole of the 18th century, and although it did escalate in the last quarter of the 18th century, it cannot be categorically linked to the decline of the glass trade. On the contrary, it is worth pointing out that the English dominated the Spanish ports at the beginning of the 19th century. They supplied the local market in large quantities with their glass production and significantly disrupted the links of the Bohemian trading companies with their local factories⁴¹.

On the other hand, there is almost nothing to object to in the third aspect. According to Salz, the *Bohemian dominance in the perfect decoration of glass ended*. It is true that Bohemian glassmakers of the second half of the 18th and early 19th centuries excelled more in skill than in artistic invention. Moreover, when imperial rescripts forbade glassmakers to leave the monarchy, they could only learn new techniques with difficulty. Glass companies and merchants played an important role here, too, for instance, Josef Johann Hansel, who can be considered the initiator of the large-scale production of glass decorated with "English" diamond cut in Bohemia, but probably not important enough. The fourth reason is also relevant: *Bohemian glass was no longer cheap to*

produce. Due to the shortage of wood, both the wood for heating the glassmaking furnaces and especially potash, the necessary raw material for its melting, became more expensive, which increased the production costs and, of course, the price of the finished glass, which lost its competitiveness.

In addition, Jitka Lněničková comments on the topic: *“However, English competition and trade difficulties were not the only causes of the disruption. The form of trade through companies also survived, and glassworks continued to look for independent routes to foreign markets. New and more modern forms of trade were emerging - the number of consignment warehouses was increasing, sales representatives were making the rounds to customers with samples of finished products or samples of products for delivery, and the order system and decorating the goods at the point of delivery were becoming less important. Transport options and a modern banking system also had an impact”*⁴².

To the above-mentioned causes of the decline of the Nový Bor-Kamenický Šenov region companies and their loss of position in the glass trade in the Iberian Peninsula, I think we can add one more. In 1800, a *deadly epidemic of yellow fever broke out in Spain*, and the disease was brought to Cadiz via a shipload of wool. Then, the disease struck Seville. The Schebek's edition reprints the diary of the merchant Anton Vinzenz Preyssler, who describes the course of the epidemic. Yellow fever broke out in Cadiz on August 15, and ten days later, the number of patients in the city had already reached 16,000. The dead were taken out of the city gates in carts, bonfires were lit in the squares, and 3–5 sick people languished in each factory. Soon after, another epidemic broke out in Seville, where the dead stopped being buried in the ground and were deposited in the surrounding fields. Thirty people a day were dying. On September 2, the number of patients in Cadiz had already reached 30,000, and all the factories, except that of the Janke company, were closed. Between two and three hundred people were dying there every day. On September 20, yellow fever also reached Seville, where the diary writer succumbed⁴³. And here we come to the heart of the problem.

Many glass merchants and factory employees, often promising sons and relatives of the owners of the companies, were among the epidemic's victims. The firm of Hiecke, Rautenstrauch, Zincke & Comp. alone lost five sons of partner Augustin Rautenstrauch. The trading companies thus lost their future to some extent; the family continuity was violently interrupted, and the structure had to be entered by “substitutes” who were originally destined for a different career path.

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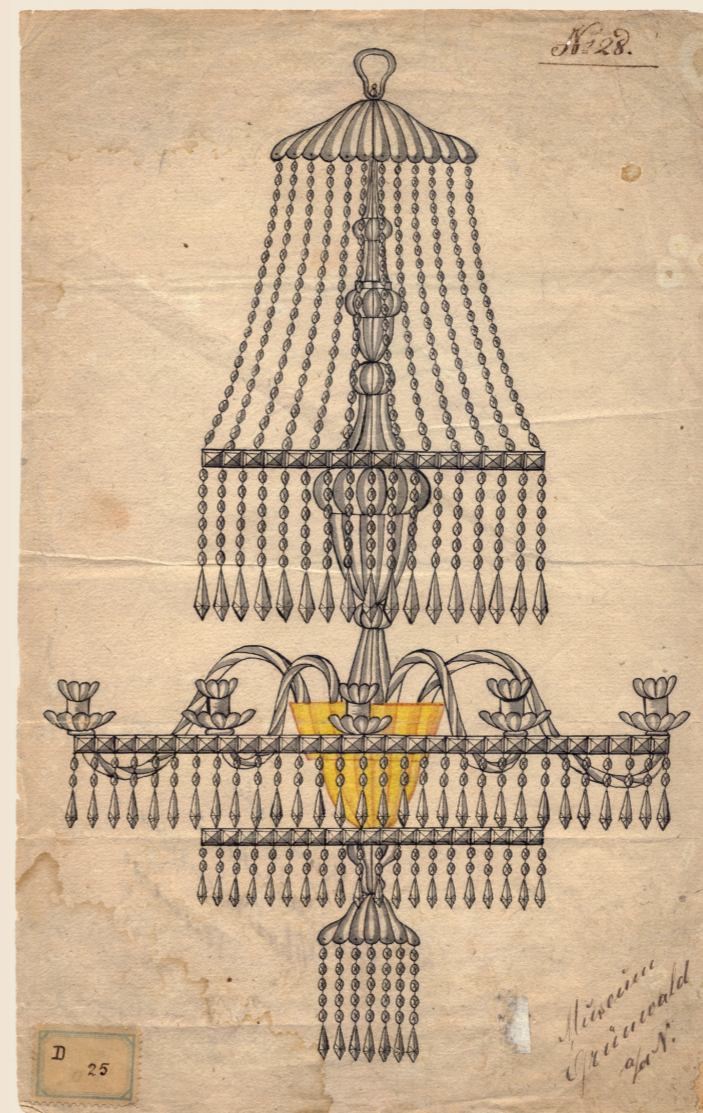


Figura 9

Sample of Bohemian Classicism glass. *Glass trimmings chandelier*. North Bohemia, probably Riedel glassworks in Nová Louka / Neuwiese or Křišťánov / Christianstal, before 1800, photo Aleš Kosina, Collection of Museum of Glass and Jewellery in Jablonec nad Nisou.

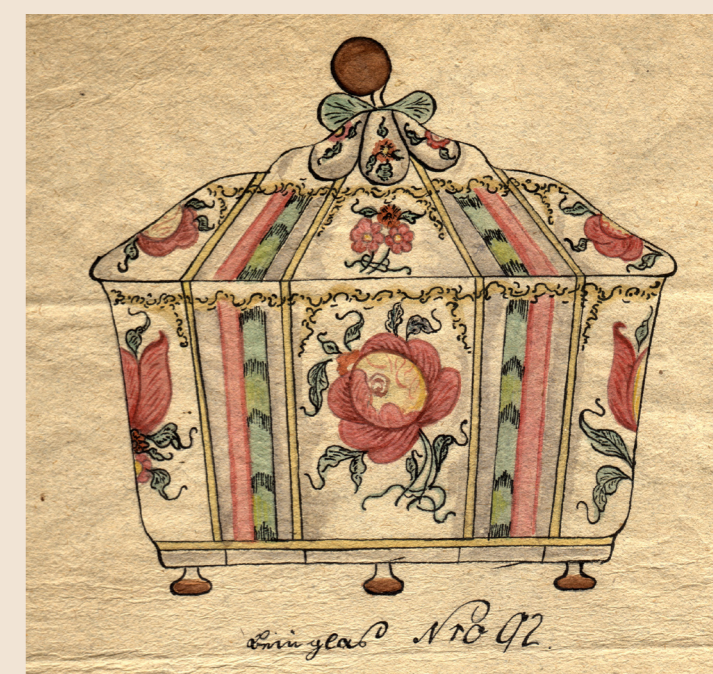
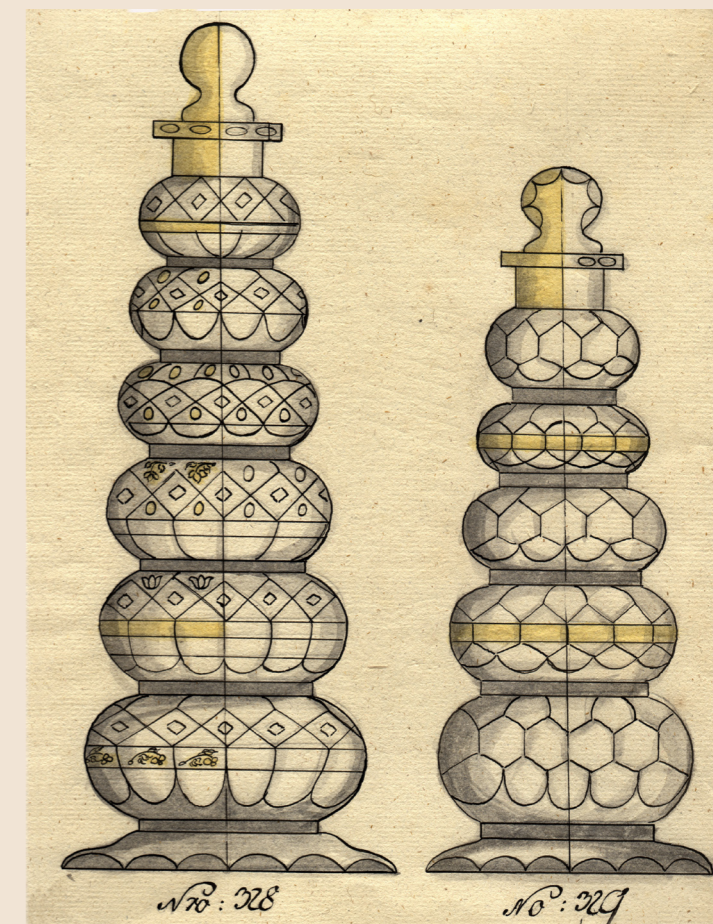


Figura 10-11-12

Sample of Bohemian Rococo glass. *Drawing from the pattern book*. North Bohemia, Harrach Glassworks, Nový Svět / Neuwelt, 1784–1788, photo Aleš Kosina, Collection of Museum of Glass and Jewellery in Jablonec nad Nisou

Figura 13

**Sample of Bohemian Rococo glass.
Decanter.**

Blown, cut, engraved glass,
North Bohemia, Jizera Mountains, 1779,
photo Aleš Kosina, Collection of Museum of Glass
and Jewellery in Jablonec nad Nisou.



Czech and German Names of the Places

The current Czech names of towns and villages are used in the text. Until 1945, however, many of them also had their original German names, which are listed here.

Chřibská - Kreibitz

Chomouty - Komt

Jablonec - Gablonz

Kamenický Šenov - Steinschönau

Lobendava - Lobendau

Nový Bor – Haida

Polevsko - Blottendorf

Skalice - Langenau

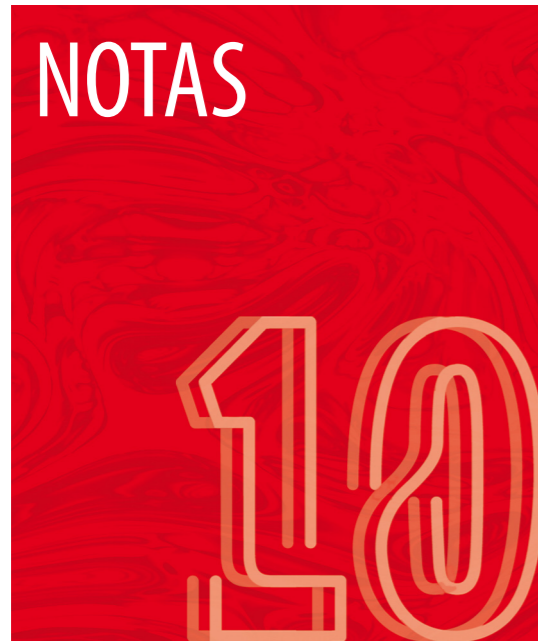
Šluknov - Schluckenau

Figura 14

**Sample of Bohemian Classicism glass.
Decanter and cup.**

Blown, cut, gilded glass, North Bohemia, after 1790,
photo Aleš Kosina, Collection of Museum of Glass
and Jewellery in Jablonec nad Nisou.





¹ DRAHOTOVÁ, O. ed., *Historie sklářské výroby v českých zemích I*, Praha, 2005, pp. 29–128; ČERNÁ, E., *Středověké sklárny v severozápadních Čechách. Mittelalterliche Glashütten in Nordwestböhmen*, Most, 2016, pp. 23–44; NOVÝ, P., “The Story of Jablonec Costume Jewellery”, *Journal of Glass Studies*, Vol. 64, 2022, p. 190. Generally about the history of glassmaking, e.g. TAIT, H. ed., *500 Years of Glass*, London 2012.

² DRAHOTOVÁ, O., *op. cit.*, 2005, pp. 191–246.

³ “Unseres Glashandels Anfang”, in SCHEBEK, E., *Böhmens Glasindustrie und Glashandel. Quellen zu ihrer Geschichte*, Prag, 1878, pp. 137–138.

⁴ “Die Vertreter des Glashandels”, in: SCHEBEK, E., *op. cit.*, 1878, pp. 61–62.

⁵ SCHLESINGER, L., “Reisebeschreibung eines deutschböhmischen Glasschneiders”, *Mittheilungen des Vereins für Geschichte der Deutschen in Böhmen* vol. 8, Nr. 1–2, 1870, pp. 220–235.

⁶ To the topic see: DRAHOTOVÁ, O., “Bohemian Glass Trade to Spain in the 18th Century”, *Annales du 10^e Congress de l’AIHV*, Madrid, 1985, pp. 497–506; DRAHOTOVÁ, O., “Obchod českým sklem”, in DRAHOTOVÁ, O., 2005, pp. 238–246; LNĚNIČKOVÁ, J., “Obchodníci sklem od poslední čtvrtiny 17. století do poloviny 19. století – profil sociální skupiny”, in KÁRNÍK, Z., ŠTAIF, J., eds., *K novověkým sociálním dějinám českých zemí I.*, Praha, 1999, pp. 239–294; LNĚNIČKOVÁ, J. “Bohemian Glass Trade in Spain and the Spanish colonies (until the mid – 19. century)” in *Prague papers on history of international relations*, Praha, 2001, pp. 61–74; NOVÝ, P., “Export českého skla ve století filosofie. Počátky a principy velkoobchodu – Obchodní

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⁷ KLÍMA, A., *Manufakturní období v Čechách*, Praha, 1955, p. 431.

⁸ SALZ, A., *op. cit.*, 1913, p. 268.

⁹ ŠIMÁNKOVÁ, D., *op. cit.*, 2003, p. 11.

¹⁰ SALZ, A., *op. cit.*, 1913, p. 269.

¹¹ KLÍMA, A., *op. cit.*, 1955, pp. 157–158.

¹² WÜRFEL, K., *op. cit.*, 1924, p. 127–131.

¹³ SLOKAR, J., *Geschichte der österreichischen Industrie und ihrer Förderung unter Kaiser Franz I.*, Wien, 1914, p. 511; About the influence of Bohemian glass and Bohemian glassmakers on glass production in Spain, e.g. PASTOR REY DE VIÑAS, P. *La Real Fábrica de Cristales de la Granja*, Segovia, 1998; ŠTĚPÁNEK, P., PASTOR, P., *Vidrio Español des Musée de Artes Decoratives de Praga*, La Granja, 2002.

¹⁴ DRAHOTOVÁ, O., *op. cit.*, 2005, pp. 206–237.

¹⁵ NOVÝ, P., *op. cit.*, 2022, pp. 191–193; ŠIMÁNKOVÁ, D., *op. cit.*, 2003, p. 11.

¹⁶ BROŽKOVÁ, H., DRAHOTOVÁ, O., *České sklo II.*, Praha, 1989.

¹⁷ ŠIMÁNKOVÁ, D., *op. cit.*, 2003, p. 12.

¹⁸ *Ibidem*, pp. 12–13.

¹⁹ LNĚNIČKOVÁ, J., *op. cit.*, 1999, p. 247.

²⁰ “Georg Anton Jancke reiste im Jahre 1725”, in SCHEBEK, E. (1878), pp. 93–94; ŠIMÁNKOVÁ, D., *op. cit.*, 2003, pp. 9–13.

²¹ “Die Vertreter des Glashandels”, in SCHEBEK, E. (1878), p. 63; “Unseres Glashandels Anfang”, in SCHEBEK, E., 1878, pp. 137–138.

²² “Geschichte der Familie Rautenstrauch von Stephan Rautenstrauch 1819”, in SCHEBEK, E., *op. cit.*, 1878, p. 65.

²³ “Unseres Glashandels Anfang und Verlauf von F. G. Zahn (Mit besondere Rücksicht auf Langenau)”, in SCHEBEK, E., *op. cit.*, 1878, p. 143.

²⁴ “Entwurf zu einem Compagnie-Contracte von Josef Hanzel”, in SCHEBEK, E., *op. cit.*, 1878, pp. 289–296.

²⁵ “Die Geschichte einer Glashandlungs-Compagnie (Gerthner, Ostritz, Hanzer). Ein Anhang”, in SCHEBEK, E., *op. cit.*, 1878, pp. 415–434.

²⁶ “Entwurf zu einem Compagnie-Contracte von Josef Hanzel”, in SCHEBEK, E., *op. cit.*, 1878, pp. 289–296.

²⁷ SCHINDLER, J., *Das religiös-sittliche Moment der alten Innungen von Böhmens Glasindustrie und Glashandel*, Linz 1883, pp. 12-24.

²⁸ “Unseres Glashandels Anfang und Verlauf von F. G. Zahn (Mit besondere Rücksicht auf Langenau)”, in SCHEBEK, E., *op. cit.*, 1878, p. 140.

²⁹ “Geschichte”, in in SCHEBEK, E., *op. cit.*, 1878, p. 66.

³⁰ “Die Vertreter des Glashandels”, in SCHEBEK, E., *op. cit.*, 1878, p. 63.

³¹ “Abschrift eines von meinem Vater, dem Herrn Anton Hiecke, verfassten und eigenhändig geschriebenen Aussatzes über seine Lebensgeschichte, wie folget”, in SCHEBEK, E., *op. cit.*, 1878, p. 74.

³² “Die Handlung Hiecke Rautenstrauch Zincke & Co.”, in SCHEBEK, E., *op. cit.*, 1878, pp 75–76; SIEBER J., “Dr. Thaddäus Hänke (1761-1817), seine Beziehungen zur haidaer Firma Hiecke, Rautenstrauch, Zincke und Komp., die Schicksale seiner Sammlungen”, *Mitteilungen des Nordböhmischen Excursions-Club*, 1914, p. 133.

³³ “Unseres Glashandels Anfang und Verlauf von F. G. Zahn (Mit besondere Rücksicht auf Langenau.)”, in SCHEBEK, E., *op. cit.*, 1878, p. 139.

³⁴ SIEBER J., *op. cit.*, 1914, pp. 130–131, 134.

³⁵ “Abschrift eines von meinem Vater, dem Herrn Anton Hiecke, verfassen und eigenhändig geschriebenen Aussatzes über seine Lebensgeschichte, wie folget”, in SCHEBEK, E., 1878, pp. 71–77; “Materialien zur einer geschichtlichen Darstellung der Gründung unserer Handlung”, in SCHEBEK, E., 1878, pp. 77–78.

³⁶ Förmliche Erklärung vom Auftrage bis zur Treunung der alten Handlung unter der Firma Hiecke Rautenstrauch Preysler & Cie. und der neuen: Hiecke Rrautenstrauch Zincke & Comp., in SCHEBEK, E., *op. cit.*, 1878, pp. 79–89.

³⁷ Reisebeschreibung des Augustin Rautenstrauch von Cadiz nach Lima und wieder zurück, von ihm selbst beschreiben, in SCHEBEK, E., 1878, p. 68.

³⁸ Förmliche Erklärung vom Auftrage bis zur Treunung der alten Handlung unter der Firma Hiecke Rautenstrauch Preysler & Cie. und der neuen: Hiecke Rrautenstrauch Zincke & Comp., in SCHEBEK, E., *op. cit.*, 1878, pp. 90–92.

³⁹ SALZ, A, *op. cit.*, 1913, pp. 269–271, LNĚNIČKOVÁ, J., *op. cit.*, 1999, pp. 239–294.

⁴⁰ LNĚNIČKOVÁ, J., *op. cit.*, 1999, p. 255.

⁴¹ SALZ, A., *op. cit.*, 1913, pp. 269–271.

⁴² LNĚNIČKOVÁ, J., *op. cit.*, 1999, pp. 254–255.

⁴³ “Anton Vinzenz Preissler’s Tagebuch”, in SCHEBEK, E., *op. cit.*, 1878, pp. 97–116.



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