

Abstract

Master Hartmann and the Swabian Woodcarving at the Beginning of the 15th Century

The stonemason Master Hartmann from Ulm is known to art historians already long time, but his role in Swabian woodcarving at the beginning of the 15th century, however, still evokes numerous questions. Although Hartmann is believed to work simultaneously in the hut and the woodcarving workshop, the average quality of his works, and the fact, that he was accepted as a citizen only in the year 1528, more than ten years after we encounter him in Ulm records for the first time, indicates certain complications of this hypothesis. In this doctoral thesis, Master Hartmann is studied from the perspective of social and cultural situation in Ulm at the beginning of the 15th century. Attention is given to his position in the hut organization on the construction of Ulm Minster and his artistic activity on the western façade, which in its iconographical concept reflects also the historical background. The second part of the thesis focuses on the woodcarving workshop, where the Altarpiece of Dornstadt was made, and on the phenomenon of wide distribution of this style around the entire Swabia. The Ulm workshop is presented in the context of the city and its minster hut, former local centers and even more distant regions. Around 1415, a very active cultural transfer can be observed, mostly with the Middle Rhine cities. Ulm, which around 1400 did not have any considerable woodcarving tradition, became in a very short time the main artistic center of the Upper Swabia. Exactly in this time of enormous growth of the Free Imperial City of Ulm, it is possible to observe on the example of Master Hartmann, how the relation of the society to the art and the standards of the patrons in the city council changed.