

Experiences of a Traveling Tawer Apprentice (1751)

Abstract

This travel account written by tawer apprentice Samuel Klenner conveys the wide geographical range of apprentice journeys. The travel phase of an apprentice came directly after the learning phase; both were basic prerequisites for the master craftsman's examination that enabled craftsmen to practice their trade. That apprentices traveled in the company of their equals was completely in keeping with the conventions of the time. During their stays with master craftsmen in other cities and towns, their knowledge and skills were expanded. There was also an additional cultural exchange, in which specialized knowledge and skills were passed on. Not least, the routes established and followed by traveling apprentices helped the Rhine-Danube-Alps-Adriatic region become a defined cultural area.

Source

I finally came to the tawer trade in 1715, spent three years learning at my father's, and, after having endured the training phase, I was released in 1715 from the entire trade in Breslau [Wrocław] and taken into the apprentice group. After I had worked for my father as an apprentice for a year, I began my travels on the 17th of April, 1720, in God's name. My first trip was from here to Breslau; then I traveled with a tawer apprentice by the name of Gottfried Scheffler through Upper Silesia, Moravia, and Austria to Vienna. From there, we went to Preßberg [Bratislava] in Hungary because of Holy Communion; from Preßberg we went back again to Austria, to Viennese Neustadt, eight miles from Vienna, which is a big city. There, I worked for fifteen weeks with Carl Siltingern, and then I went back to Hungary, where my companion was working. From there we went together to Ödenburg [Sopron], took communion at that location, swung back to Austria, went from there through Upper and Lower Styria to Gratz [Graz], then through Crannerland [Carniola] to Labach [Laybach]. After that we went to Venice, through Friauler- and Forlainerland [Friuli region where Furlan/Friulian is spoken], where we got work on the way in Görtz [Gorizia], the capital of Forlainerland, and were under contract with the master craftsman Joseph Thalern for thirty-four weeks. Then we traveled from Görtz across the Adriatic Ocean to the very large and beautiful city of Venice. From there our trip led to Padua, and then we journeyed over the Venetian mountains and came to Trident [Trento] in Etschland [Adige River Region in South Tyrol]. Then we went through Tyrol to Innsbruck, then through Bavaria into Habsburg territory, and found work with the royal tawer in the capital and Royal Residence City of Salzburg. But we went back to the Empire after three weeks because we had not received communion for a long time, and went through Upper Austria, otherwise called the Land above the Ens [River], through the Bishopric of Passau in Bavaria, after that to Regensburg and Nuremberg, where we took communion. Then we proceeded through Franconia to Würzburg and Frankfurt on the Main, after that to Mainz, from Mainz to Worms, then through the Electoral Palatinate to Mannheim and Heidelberg, from there to Speyer, which is an imperial city, and then through Upper and Lower Alsace, to Landau and Straßburg, from there to Rastadt through the Baden area, and then through Württemberg to Stuttgart, from there through Swabia to Ulm and Augsburg, then into Bavaria to Munich and from there to Landshut. After we had wandered about in the Empire for five weeks, we went back to Regensburg, where we had left our things, and from there through the Bavarian Palatinate to Amberg, from there to Eger, from Eger to Slavic-speaking and German-speaking Bohemia to Rokezan [Rokycany], where we worked for fourteen days, and then to Prague and Jungbunzel [Jungbunzlau, Mlada Boleslav]. After that, we again went to Moravia, Olmütz [Olomouc], from there to Teschen [Cieszyn] in Upper Silesia, and from there to

Pilitz [Bielitz, Bielsko] on the Polish border, where my companion, Gottfried Scheffler, left me. After I worked eight weeks there, I went to Poland, to Cracow, and worked there for five calendar quarters for master craftsman Joachim, during which time I took communion once, in a village called Langenacht, six miles from Cracow. From Cracow I went to Warsaw, and from there to Thoren [Torun] in Polish Prussia, where I was under contract to master craftsman Christoph Härteln. Then I went to Danzig [Gdansk], and from there to Königsberg [Kaliningrad] in Prussia, where I worked for Mr. Heinrich Gallert, of the commendable Schöppenstuhl [bench of jurors] at the Rose Garden, Assessor, for three calendar quarters. But from here I went back by way of Frischenhaff [Vistula Lagoon], first to Danzig and then again to Thoren, where I again worked for the master craftsman Christoph Härteln for five calendar quarters. After the gates of the city Thoren, which had been locked for some time because of the commotion and storming of the Jesuit collegium, were opened again, I traveled, after enduring a great deal of anxiety, through Poland to Posen, from there to (Polish) Lissa [Leszno], and finally gracious God helped me, so that I arrived fresh and healthy in my home city of Steinau on the 8th of December, 1724, the Friday after St. Nicholas's Day, after I had spent some good hours and some bad hours in foreign lands for four and three-quarter years. The name of the Lord be praised for that!

Source: Samuel Klenner, *Der Reisende Gerbergeselle oder Reisebeschreibung eines auf der Wanderschaft begriffenen Weißgerbergesells*, published by David Siegert, bookseller, Liegnitz, 1751, pp. 2-5. Available online at: https://reader.digitale-sammlungen.de/de/fs1/object/display/bsb10913287_00005.html

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