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STAGING FAITH IN SOUTH GERMANY: THE TRIUMPHAL REWORKING OF CATHOLIC DEVOTIONAL SPACES AROUND 1600

by Jeffrey Chipps Smith

For almost a half century, from about 1530 to 1580, the Catholic Church in Germany was on the defensive.[1] The Protestant Reformation's success prompted fears of the impending demise of Catholicism in most of the German-speaking lands. In a letter of 1555 to Ignatius of Loyola, his superior general in Rome, the Jesuit Jerome Nadal, then in Vienna, wrote:

> There is a very grave danger that if the remnant of Catholics here are not helped, in two years there will not be one in Germany. Everybody says this, even the Catholic leaders. What stirs me most is the awareness that practically everyone has lost hope that Germany can be salvaged.[2]

Clearly that dire fate did not happen yet even in the aftermath of the Peace of Augsburg of 1555, the revival of the Catholic Church in Germany was slow. From an art historical perspective, there was little new construction of either Catholic or Protestant churches, beyond a few palace chapels, during that half century.[3] Only with the erection of the imposing Jesuit church of St. Michael's in Munich between 1583 and 1597, did Catholic princes and clergy begin to entertain new architectural or decorative projects.[4] There would be a burst of activity during the next few decades until the horrors of the Thirty Years's War (1618–48) prompted another hiatus.

In keeping with the theme of this conference, my paper focuses on three prominent examples of the artistic re-workings of existing churches in South Germany around 1600. I shall address a parish church – the Frauenkirche in Munich, a monastery – St. Ulrich and Afra in Augsburg, and a cathedral – St. Maria and St. Korbinian in Freising. Collectively these three projects

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[1] This essay, like my original talk, is intended as an introduction to the broad topic of artistic re-workings around 1600. I wish to thank Pedro Memelsdorff for the invitation to participate in this fascinating symposium and the Kimbell Art Foundation of Fort Worth for its support of my research.

[2] F. Cervós and Miguel Nicolau (eds), *Epistolae P. Hieronymi Nadal Societatis Jesu: ab anno 1546 ad 1577 nunc primum editae et illustratae a patribus eiusdem societatis*, Madrid: Typis Augustini Aurial, 1898 (Monumenta historica Societatis Iesu 13), I, 98 and 301; as cited in William V. Bangert and Thomas M. McCoog, *Jerome Nadal, S.J., 1507–1580: Tracking the first Generation of Jesuits*, Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1992, 135, 147.

[3] Henry Russell Hitchcock, *German Renaissance Architecture*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981, 201–240; Jeffrey Chipps Smith, *German Sculpture of the Later Renaissance. Art in an Age of Uncertainty*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994.

[4] Georg Skalecki, *Deutsche Architektur zur Zeit des Dreissigjährigen Krieges. Der Einfluss Italiens auf das deutsche Bauschaffen*, Regensburg: Friedrich Pustet, 1989 (PhD. diss., Universität des Saarlandes, 1987); Jeffrey Chipps Smith, *Sensuous Worship. Jesuits and the Art of the Early Catholic Reformation in Germany*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004.

embody more than just the desire to modernize their churches. Art was a highly visible means of expressing triumphalism, which I would define as a sense of confidence in the correctness of Catholic faith, the antiquity of the Roman Church and its institutions, and the efficacy of its saints. With its sensuous appeal to the eye, the mind, and, hopefully, the heart, art materialized Catholic beliefs.[5] As we shall see, sound also played an important role in each of these projects.

Munich

The Frauenkirche was constructed originally in the 12th century as Munich's second parish church.[6] Completely rebuilt as a Gothic-style hall church and on a much more massive scale between 1468 and 1488, it became the town's primary church as well as the burial sepulcher for the Wittelsbach dukes of Bavaria up to Albrecht V (r. 1550–1579). In 1576 Duke Albrecht acquired the relics of St. Benno, who had been the bishop of Meissen from 1066 to 1106. The 16th century had hardly been a peaceful time for Benno and his relics.[7] He was canonized only in 1523 by Pope Adrian VI (r. 1522–1523) at the urging of Duke Georg of Saxony (r. 1500–1539), a staunch Catholic and vocal critic of Martin Luther. Georg's plans for an elaborate exhumation ceremony in Meissen Cathedral prompted a blistering verbal attack by Luther. The reformer's treatise, entitled *Against the New Idol and the Old Devil Soon to be Resurrected at Meissen*, dated 1524, described the saint's elevation as „a fool's game [...], a lie and deceit of the devil."[8] Within months of Duke Georg's death in 1539, a Protestant crowd sacked Benno's tomb and destroyed his shrine. Benno's relics, which earlier had been spirited out of Meissen, were moved at least twice before being offered a safe haven in the Residenz, the ducal palace in Munich. Two years later, in 1578, the collegiate chapter of the Frauenkirche petitioned the duke requesting to obtain possession of Benno's relics so the faithful could see and venerate his remains. On June 6, 1580, the saint's feast day, Wilhelm V (r. 1579–1597), Duke Albrecht's son and heir, transferred Benno's remains to the choir of the Frauenkirche. He declared Benno to be a patron saint of Munich and of Bavaria. The saint's cult grew

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5   Smith, *Sensuous Worship* (see n. 4), 35–52.
6   Peter Pfister, „Das Kollegiatstift zu Unserer Lieben Frau in München (1495–1803)", in: Georg Schwaiger and Hans Ramisch (eds), *Monachium Sacrum. Festschrift zur 500-Jahr-Feier der Metropolitankirche Zu Unserer Lieben Frau in München*, two vols, München: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 1994, I, 291–413, esp. 342–347.
7   Philipp M. Soergel, *Wondrous in His Saints. Counter-Reformation Propaganda in Bavaria*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993 (Studies on the History of Society and Culture 17), 62–63, 181–191; and Jeffrey Chipps Smith, „Salvaging Saints. The Rescue and Display of Relics in Munich during the Early Catholic Reformation", in: Virginia Chieffo Raguin (ed.), *Art, Piety and Destruction in the Christian West, 1500–1700*, Farnham: Ashgate, 2010 (Visual Culture in Early Modernity), 23–43, 34–37 with references to additional literature.
8   *Wider den neuen Abgott und alten Teufel, der zu Meissen soll erhoben warden*, Wittenberg, 1524.

gradually. Jesuit students staged an elaborate play about his life in 1598. Pilgrims were attracted by the mounting number of new miracles attributed to St. Benno, which were documented in a miracle book published in 1601 and almost annually updated thereafter.[9] A new Benno Brotherhood, designed to aid the poor, was approved by the papacy in 1603. A vita or life of the saint was published a year later.

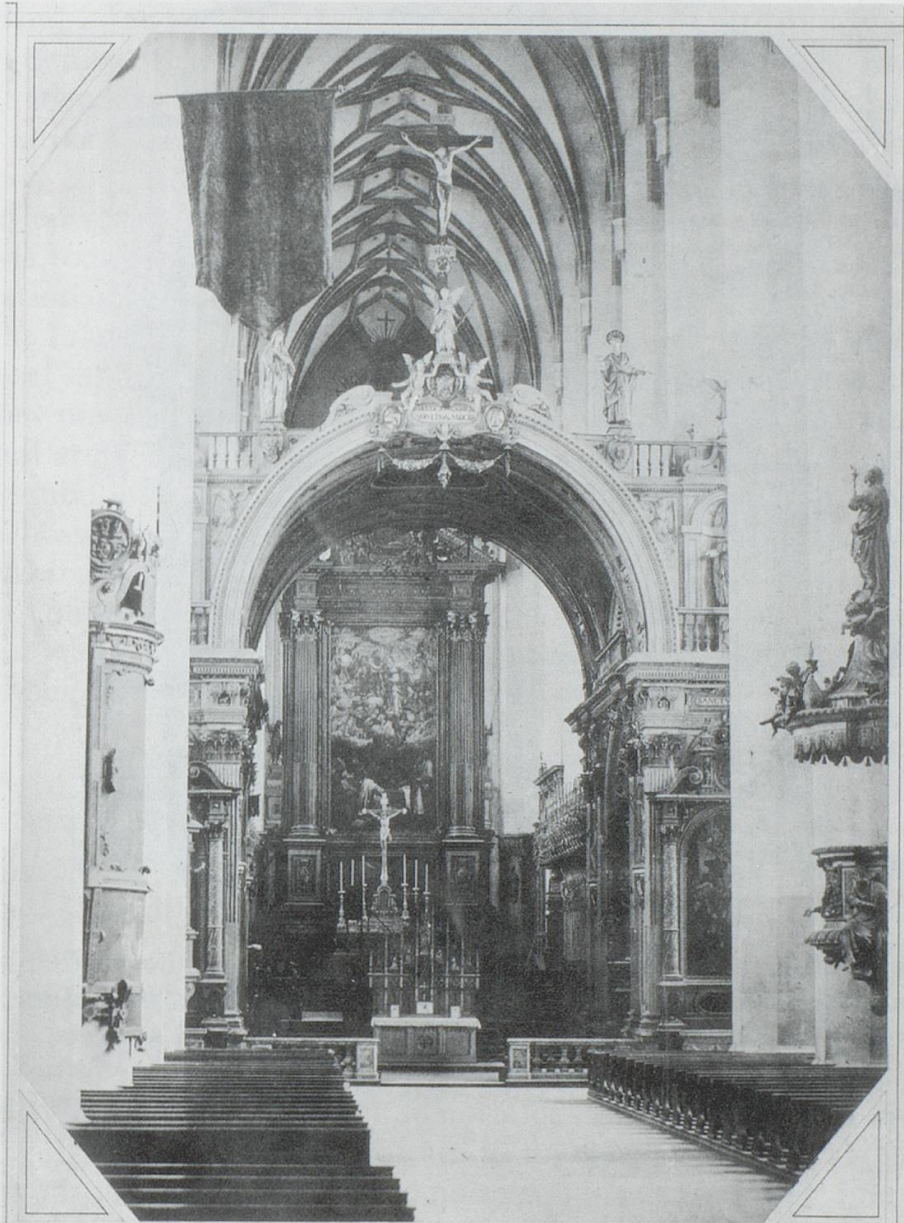Fig. 1:   Hans Krumper (design), *Arch of St. Benno* (*Bennobogen*), 1604–1607, demolished in 1858, Frauenkirche (Church of Our Lady), Munich (photo: Heinrich Theodor Hudemann, 1858).

[9] Soergel, *Wondrous in His Saints* (see n. 7), 185–186. The illustrated title page of the 1603 book is reproduced in Roland Götz and Peter Pfister, *Der heilige Benno*, Kehl am Rhein: Sadifa-Media, 2006, fig. 104.
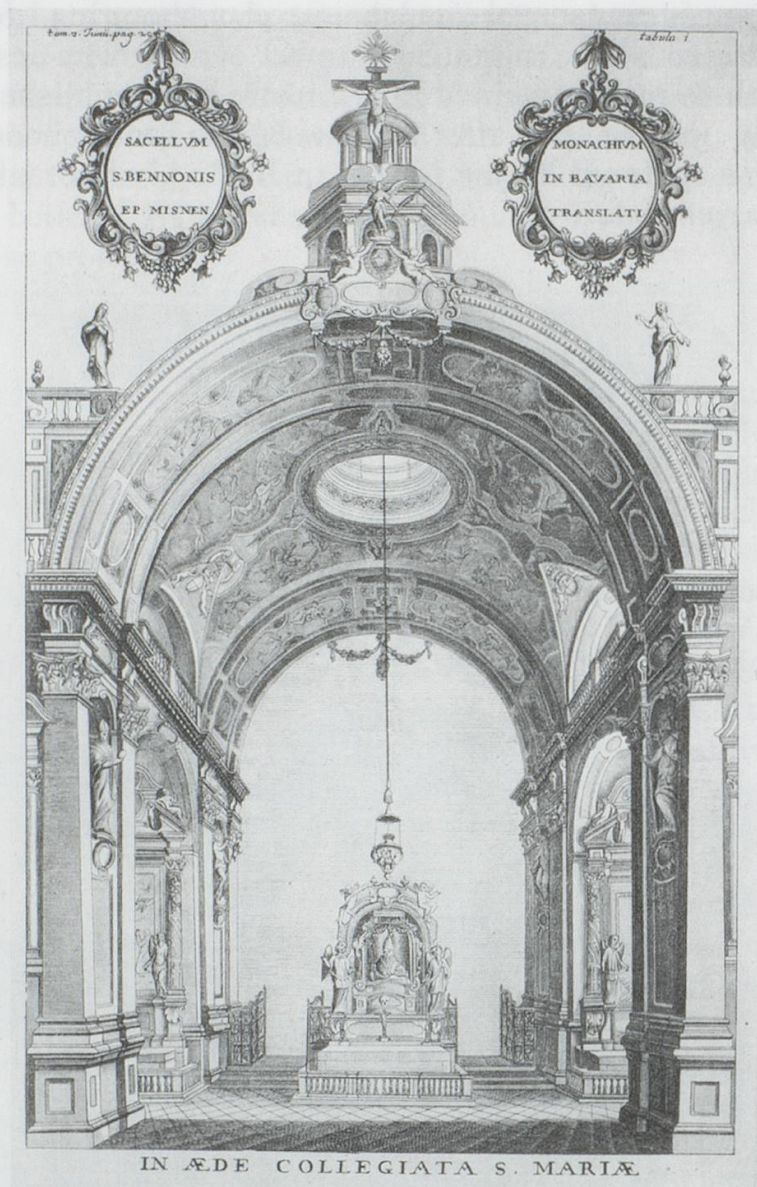
Fig. 2:   St. Benno Altar and Reliquary beneath the Arch of St. Benno (*Bennobogen*) in the Frauenkirche, Munich (recorded in the *Acta Sanctorum*, Iunii Tomus III [Antwerp, 1701], p. 204, tabula 1).

The catalyst for this surge in veneration of St. Benno was Duke Wilhelm even after he abdicated in 1597 in favor of his son, Maximilian I (r. 1597–1651). In 1604 Wilhelm initiated the construction of the *Bennobogen* or the monumental, four-sided triumphal arch of St. Benno that once dominated the western half of the choir of the Frauenkirche (cf. fig. 1 and 2).[10] Designed by Hans

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[10]   Karin Berg, *Der ‚Bennobogen' der Münchner Frauenkirche*, München: Tuduv, 1979; Pfister, „Das Kollegiatstift zu Unserer Lieben Frau in München (1495–1803)“ (see n. 6), 342–347; Rosa Micus, „Zur Regotisierung der Münchner Frauenkirche im Spiegel ihrer Darstellungen“, in: Schwaiger and Ramisch (eds), *Monachium Sacrum* (see n. 6), II, 69–102, esp. figs 7–8, 14, 18, 24–25, and 31 for other images of the *Bennobogen*.

Krumper and largely completed that year, the arch filled the width of the choir. It included four side altars, adorned with paintings, located against the front and inside walls plus a larger central altar under the vault. The gallery on top displayed a wooden crucifix carved by Bartholomeus Steinle and, to the sides, statues of the Virgin and John the Evangelist. Unfortunately, the *Bennobogen* was dismantled in 1858 when the Frauenkirche was given new neo-Gothic decoration.

The central altar beneath the arch exhibited the beautiful silver reliquary bust of St. Benno, which the goldsmith Paulus van Vianen made in 1601–1604 (fig. 3).[11] It seems to have been commissioned by the collegiate chapter at the urging of Duke Wilhelm. Funds came primarily from local residents and the Munich city council. The shrine, studded with precious stones, shows Benno dressed in episcopal robes and holding his symbols of a fish and book. The reliquary is today kept in one of the south ambulatory chapels.

The creation of the *Bennobogen* transformed the appearance of the liturgical heart of the Frauenkirche.[12] Benno was promoted as a model of human frailty and personal sanctity. Continued miracles ascribed to the saint confirmed his intercessory powers. The triumph of Catholic faith is literally framed within a triumphal arch. This re-working of the choir of the Frauenkirche served as a potent symbol of the Catholic Reformation and of the piety of the rulers of Bavaria, who were buried in the crypt.[13] Music played an important role in the Frauenkirche. There was a gallery on top of the arch where singers and musicians could perform. At the western end of the nave is an organ loft, which was widened in 1629 to accommodate the new instrument built by Hans Lechner, dating to 1629–1631.[14]

[11] Helmut Seling, „Die Silberbüste des heiligen Benno", in: Schwaiger and Ramisch (eds), *Monachium Sacrum* (see n. 6), II, 505–520.

[12] In 1604 Johann Mayer remarked, „Was soll nun weiter sagen ich vom neuen Bau sehr kostbarlich? Mit Worten ich zu keiner Zeit die Zier und auch künstlich Arbeit kan sprechen auss. Tut mir vertrauen, es muss ihn einer selber schauen. In teutschen und auch welschen Landen ist nie kein solcher bau gestanden." (cited in Götz and Pfister, *Der heiligen Benno* [see n. 9], 18). A monumental new high altarpiece with the *Assumption and Coronation of the Virgin*, painted by Peter Candid between 1617 and 1620, is visible at the rear of our fig. 1. Brigitte Volk-Knüttel, „Der Hochaltar der Münchner Frauenkirche von 1620 und seine Gemälde von Peter Candid", in: Schwaiger and Ramisch (eds), *Monachium Sacrum* (see n. 6), II, 203–232.

[13] Subsequently, the Tomb of Emperor Ludwig of Bavaria (r. 1328–1347), commissioned by Maximilian I and created by Hans Krumper and Dionys Frey in 1619–1622, was also located in the choir beneath the *Bennobogen*. This stressed the intimate ties between the Bavarian dukes and the Frauenkirche. Hans Ramisch (ed.), *Das Grabmal Kaiser Ludwigs des Bayern in der Münchner Frauenkirche*, Regensburg: Schnell & Steiner, 1997.

[14] Georg Brenninger, „Die Orgeln der Münchner Frauenkirche", in: Schwaiger and Ramisch (eds), *Monachium Sacrum* (see n. 6), II, 581–592, esp. 582–583 and fig. 1.

Fig. 3:   Paulus van Vianen, *Reliquary of St. Benno*, 1601–1604, silver, Frauenkirche,
         Munich (photo: after Helmut Seling, „Die Silberbüste des heiligen Benno"
         [see n. 7], II, 507, fig. 1).

Augsburg

The venerable Benedictine monastery of St. Ulrich and Afra in Augsburg, founded
in 1012, began an ambitious rebuilding of the church in 1467. Construction
stopped during the religious turmoil of the 1530s (fig. 4). Parts of the nave
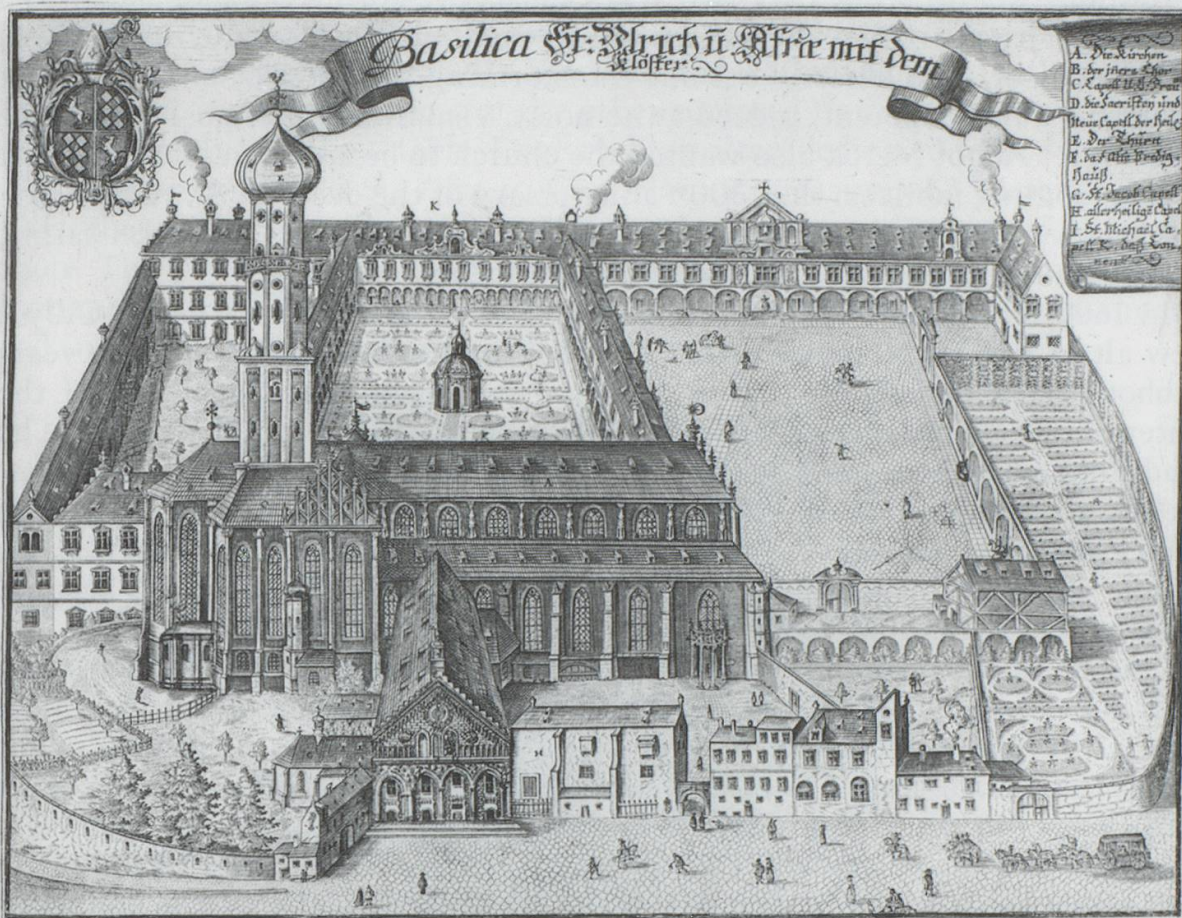were then unvaulted and there was no choir. In 1537 Protestant iconoclasts

Fig. 4: Daniel Mannasser, *Aerial View of St. Ulrich and Afra Church*, Augsburg, 1626, engraving (in: Hertfelder, *Basilica SS. Udalrici et Afrae Augustae Vindelicorum* [see n. 20], foldout plate between pp. 4 and 5 [Staatliche Graphische Sammlung, Munich]).

cleansed the church of its art.[15] Lutheran services were celebrated there until 1548 when Emperor Charles V entered the city soon after his decisive victory over the Protestants at the Battle of Mühlberg. Augsburg became officially biconfessional beginning in 1555.[16] When Jakob Köplin (r. 1548–1600) was elected abbot, he inherited a monastery in disarray with few monks and an unfinished

[15] Friedrich Zoepfl, *Geschichte des Bistums Augsburg und seiner Bischöfe*, München: Schnell & Steiner, 1969, II, 173–463; Jörg Rasmussen, „Bildersturm und Restauratio", in: *Welt im Umbruch: Augsburg zwischen Renaissance und Barock. Ausstellung der Stadt Augsburg in Zusammenarbeit mit der Evangelisch-Lutherischen Landeskirche in Bayern anlässlich des 450. Jubiläums der Confessio Augustana – Beiträge*, Augsburg: Augsburger Druck und Verlaghaus, 1981, 95–114, esp. 106–108.

[16] Paul Warmbrunn, *Zwei Konfessionen in einer Stadt. Das Zusammenleben von Katholiken und Protestanten in den paritätischen Reichsstädten Augsburg, Biberach, Ravensburg und Dinkelsbühl von 1548 bis 1648*, Wiesbaden: F. Steiner, 1983 (Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für europäische Geschichte Mainz. Abteilung für abendländische Religionsgeschichte 111); Ph.D. diss., Universität Freiburg i. Br., 1981/82.

building.[17] Köplin spent fifty-two years capably restoring the monastery to a sound spiritual, financial, and structural state. Johann Merck (r. 1600–1632), his successor, immediately set out transforming the interior of this august monastery into a potent, indeed quite noisy, visualization of post-Tridentine theology.[18] Abbot Merck also wanted the church to be an impressive stage for two upcoming jubilees: the 1300th anniversary of the death of St. Afra, Augsburg's first Christian martyr and one of the city and diocese's patron saints, in 1604 and the monastery's 600th anniversary in 1612.

In 1600 St. Ulrich and Afra was almost a blank canvas artistically. Only a few altars had been replaced since the 1537 iconoclasm. In just twelve years Abbot Merck completely transformed (or re-worked) the appearance of the interior. As he proudly proclaimed in a stone inscription tablet of 1612, he had completed the construction of the choir, erected the organ or choir gallery at the western end of the nave and the new chapel dedicated to the Virgin Mary above the sacristy, he commissioned four great altars, and renewed the whole church.[19] In his history of the monastery, published in 1627, Bernard Hertfelder claims that Merck brought the church to perfection.[20]

One of Merck's first decisions was to replace the relatively new high altar, commissioned by Abbot Köplin and carved by Augsburg sculptor Paulus Mair (fig. 5).[21] When consecrated in 1571, Mair's retable was one of the first major altarpieces made for a Catholic church in the German-speaking lands since the 1520s and the advent of the Reformation. At a height of 16.5 meters, it was also one of the largest. In 1601 the abbot transferred Mair's altarpiece to the newly constructed Marienkapelle (or Schneckenkapelle as it is popularly known) above the new sacristy. Abbot Merck ordered Hans Degler, a sculptor from nearby Weilheim, to carve a new high altar, which was placed in 1604 (fig. 6). Although only separated by about thirty years, the two high altarpieces

[17] Romanus Kistler, *Basilica dass ist herrliche Kirchen des Frey-Reichs Klosters St. Ulrich und Afra in Augsburg*, Augsburg: Johan Michael Labhart, 1712, 6; Placidus Braun, *Geschichte der Kirche und des Stiftes der Heiligen Ulrich und Afra in Augsburg*, Augsburg: Moy, 1817, 31–32, 42–44; Wilhelm Liebhart, *Die Reichsabtei Sankt Ulrich und Afra zu Augsburg. Studien zu Besitz und Herrschaft (1006–1803)*, München: Kommission für Bayerische Landesgeschichte, 1982, 182–197; Christoph Bellot, „Zur Neuausstattung von St. Ulrich und Afra zwischen 1600 und 1612", in: Manfred Weitlauff (ed.), *Benediktinerabtei St. Ulrich und Afra in Augsburg (1012–2012)*, Augsburg: Vereins für Augsburger Bistumsgeschichte, 2011, two vols, I, 856–902 and II, 181–209; and Jeffrey Chipps Smith, „Sculpting Sacred Theater. Hans Degler and the Basilica of St. Ulrich and Afra in Augsburg", in: Karin Friedrich (ed.), *Erschliessung des Raumes. Konstruktion, Imagination und Darstellung von Räumen und Grenzen im Barockzeitalter*, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2014 (Wolfenbütteler Arbeiten zur Barockforschung 51), two vols, I, 207–228.
[18] Liebhart, *Die Reichsabtei Sankt Ulrich und Afra zu Augsburg* (see n. 17), 197–212.
[19] Kistler, *Basilica* (see n. 17), 11–12.
[20] Bernhard Hertfelder, *Basilica SS. Vdalrici et Afrae Avgvstae Vindelicorvm*, Augsburg: Aperger, 1627, 18–19. Also Kistler, *Basilica* (see n. 17), intro, fol. B1 verso.
[21] Kistler, *Basilica* (see n. 17), 41–42; Michael Hartig, *Das Benediktiner-Reichsstift Sankt Ulrich und Afra in Augsburg (1012–1802)*, Augsburg: B. Filser, 1923, 44; Smith, *German Sculpture of the Later Renaissance* (see n. 3), 112–113, fig. 76.

are very different in conception. Mair's retable looks back to late Gothic-style, multi-story triptychs. It originally included painted wings. The corpus figures of the Virgin and Child with Sts. Afra and Catherine stand rather stiffly. Their poses, matched by most of the other sculpted figures, convey a hushed or frozen quality to the retable. Degler's high altar, dedicated to St. Narcissus who in 303 converted St. Afra to Christianity, measures 23 meters high.[22] This physically imposing altarpiece fills the height and width of the new choir. The five-story retable explodes with energy. The strong architectural frame, conceived using a hybrid of classical decorative forms, clearly orders and integrates but does not constrain the figures.
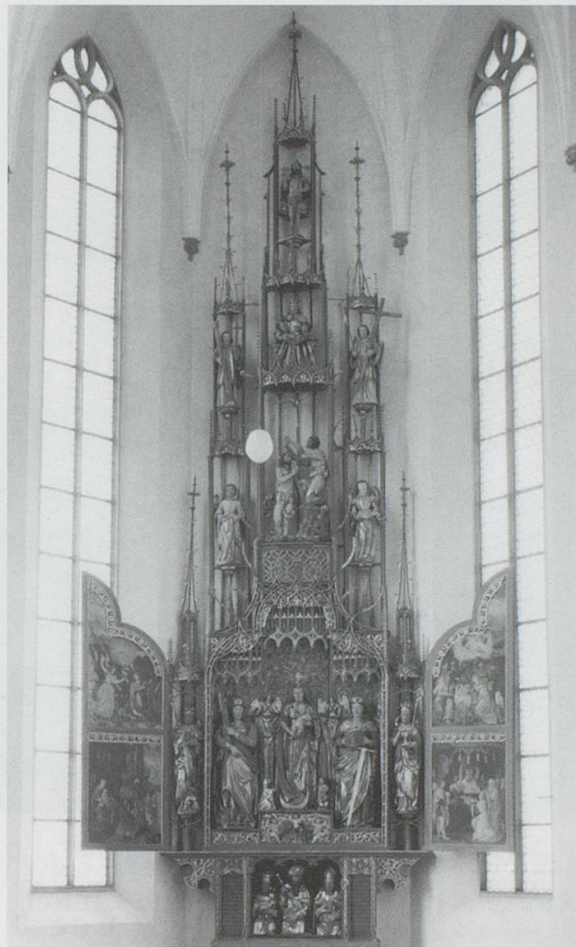

Fig. 5:   Paulus Mair, *Mary Altarpiece*, 1571, Marienkapelle, St. Ulrich and Afra Church, Augsburg (photo: Lichtbildstelle-Fotolabor, Stadt Augsburg).

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[22] On the altarpiece, see Hertfelder, *Basilica SS. Vdalrici et Afrae Avgvstae Vindelicorvm* (see n. 20), between 46–47; Kistler, *Basilica* (see n. 17), 5, 11, 29–30; Braun, *Geschichte der Kirche* (see n. 17), 46–47; Hartig, *Das Benediktiner-Reichsstift* (see n. 21), 45; Wilhelm Zohner, „Hans Degler (1564–1634/35)", *Lech-Isar-Land. Organ des Heimatverbandes Lech-Isar-Land* (1977), 76–89, 78–79; Rainer Laun, *Studien zur Altarbaukunst in Süddeutschland. 1560–1650*, München: Tuduv, 1982 (tuduv-Studien. Reihe Kunstgeschichte 33), esp. 113–131; Smith, *German Sculpture of the Later Renaissance* (see n. 3), 113–115; Smith, „Sculpting Sacred Theater" (see n. 17), 210–215.
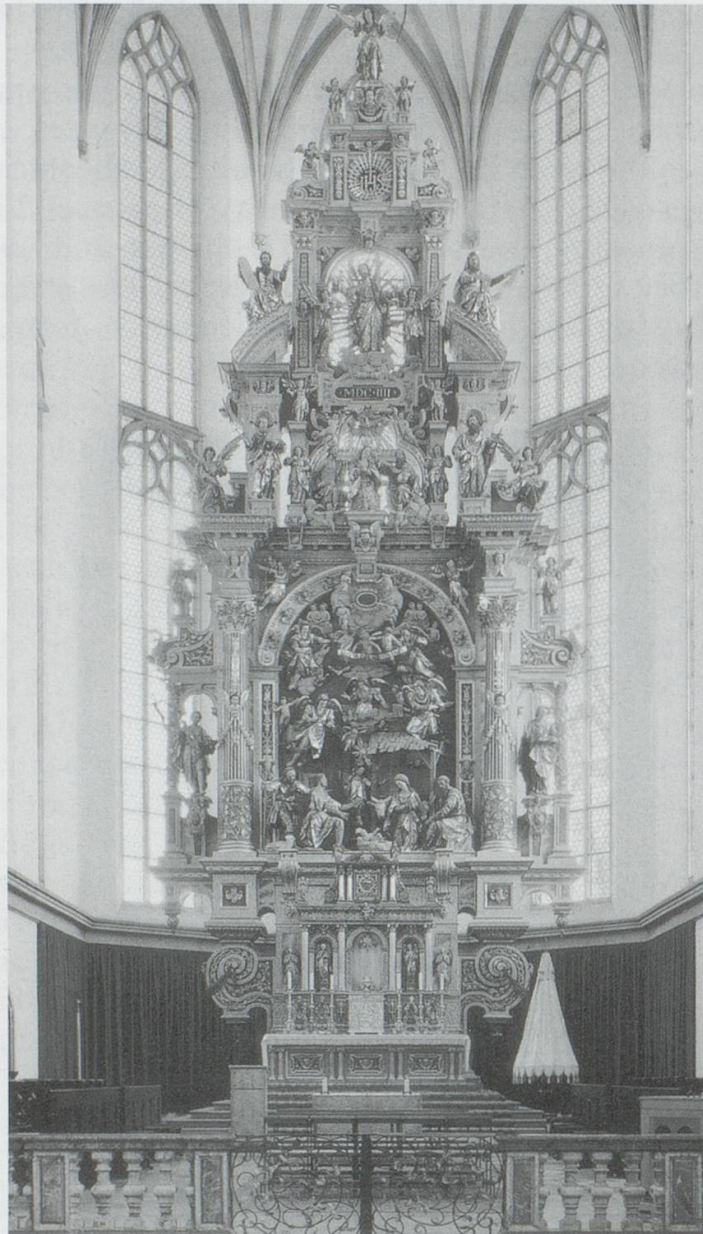
Fig. 6:   Hans Degler (sculpture) and Elias Greither the Elder (polychromy), *St. Nar-cissus* (High) *Altarpiece*, St. Ulrich and Afra Church, Augsburg, 1603–1604 (photo: author).

The corpus recalls a triumphal arch with angels rather than nikes in the span-drels (fig. 7). The projecting fluted columns enhance the stage-like appearance of the Nativity. Heaven and earth adore the Christ Child. Life-size and fully rounded figures of Mary, Joseph, and three shepherds fill the foreground. These coarse peasants uninhibitedly gesture at and stare towards Christ. Here and in his other sculptures for this church, Degler collaborated with Elias Greither the Elder, a Weilheim painter who brilliantly polychromed all of the figures. His life-like coloring heightens the intensity of Degler's expressive shepherd at left. Above the dilapidated stable, the thin veil between the celestial and terrestrial realms dissolves. Angels fill the sky as they strain to view Christ.
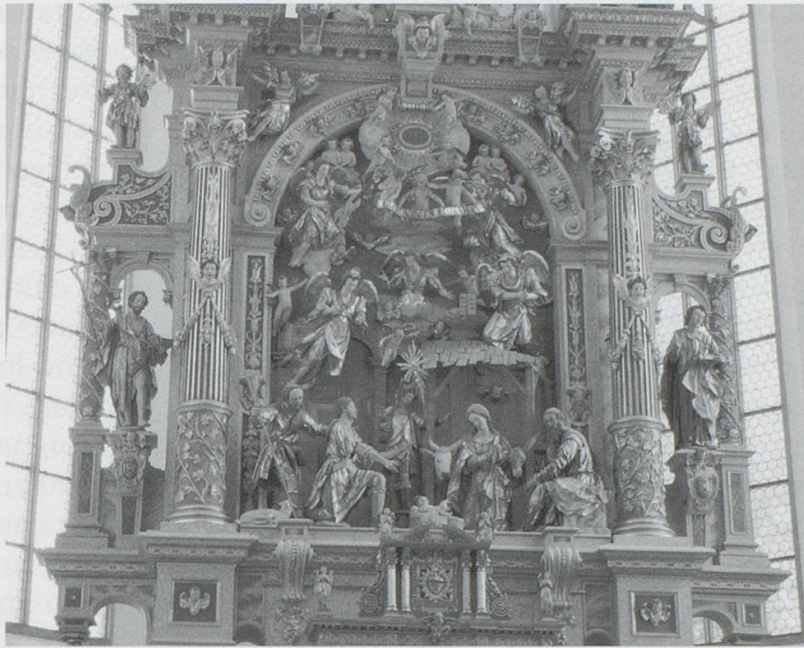
Fig. 7:   Detail of the corpus of figure 6 (photo: author).

Some carry musical instruments. All seem to be singing „Gloria in Excelsis Deo" („Glory to God in the Highest" [Luke 2:14]), the hymn inscribed on the scroll with which the angels announced Christ's birth to the shepherds. Another angel holds an open book on which is written „Et verbum caro factum est" („And the word was made flesh" [John 1:14]). At the top of this scene four angels surround a cloud punctuated with a radiant oval containing the Tetragrammaton, the Hebrew letters signifying God.

Degler's high altar activates the choir of St. Ulrich and Afra. The Adoration of the Shepherds in particular strongly recalls the Christmas plays then common across Germany and the rest of Europe during Advent. Degler stages sacred theater in sculpted form. His carefully crafted scenes are easy to read and emotionally accessible. Gestures tend to be purposefully exaggerated to hold our attention. The prophets Moses and Elijah exclaim openly as they hold a tablet and scroll. Saints Peter and Paul balance each other as they turn their bodies slightly inward. The two Saint Johns have more expansive poses especially John the Baptist who threatens to step forward. The gestures of veneration and awe range from Mary's quiet contemplation to the demonstrative poses of the two shepherds in the foreground. In between are the angelic displays of joy.

If the high altar was a test then Degler passed. Abbot Merck commissioned him to carve the adjoining altars of St. Afra and St. Ulrich by the entrance of the choir as well as the prominent new pulpit (1608) in the nave (fig. 8). Degler, aided again by Greither, finished the two altarpieces in 1607. Collectively these offer a remarkable visual and iconographic ensemble. They are stylistically unified and thematically related. The altars are dedicated to the three main high church feasts: Christmas, Easter, and Pentecost. Together they seem to form a monumental triptych.

Abbot Merck ordered Hans Reichle's beautiful bronze *Crucifixion*, which was finished in 1605 (fig. 9).[23] Although this sculptural group is now set by the entrance to the choir, it originally was situated in the center of the nave behind the *Kreuzaltar* (Cross altar), which served the laity.[24] Reichle, who trained in Florence with Giambologna before returning to Germany, devised an elegant and highly moving composition. Christ's humanity is stressed. Although his body is shown as beautiful even when crucified, it is seen as isolated, vulnerable, and small against the rigid cross. Mary Magdalen wails pitifully as she clutches the base of the cross. With her back turned to the congregation, she allows the viewer to imagine her facial expression. The Virgin Mary, arms apart and looking down, conveys deep sorrow and heart-rending resignation over her son's fate. John the Evangelist stares and gestures up at Christ. They offer three poignant responses to Christ's death for the viewer's contemplation, meditation, and emulation. Reichle likely also authored some of the thirty two large terracotta statues of holy martyrs that once stood in niches lining the walls of the choir and transept.[25] These represented saints whose relics were housed in St. Ulrich and Afra.
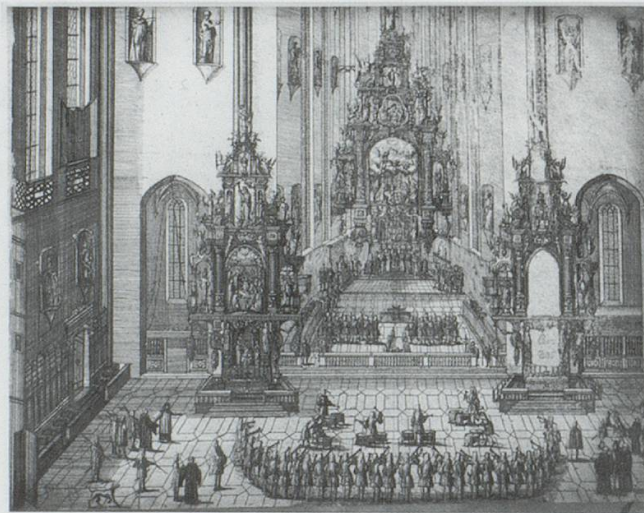

Fig. 8:   Daniel Mannasser, *View of the Choir and Crossing, St. Ulrich and Afra Church*, 1626, engraving (in: Hertfelder, *Basilica SS. Udalrici et Afrae Augustae Vindelicorum* [see n. 20], foldout plate between pp. 36 and 37 [Staatliche Graphische Sammlung, Munich]).

[23]   Kistler, *Basilica* (see n. 17), 32–33; Braun, *Geschichte der Kirche* (see n. 17), 45; Bruno Bushart, „Zu den Umbauprojekten des Kreuzaltars von Hans Reichle in St. Ulrich und Afra in Augsburg", *Kunstchronik* 25 (1972), 293–295; Helmut Friedel, *Bronzebildmonumente in Augsburg 1589–1606, Bild und Urbanität*, Augsburg: Mühlberger, 1974 (Abhandlungen zur Geschichte der Stadt Augsburg 22), 88–95; Thomas Paul Bruhn, „Hans Reichle (1565/70–1642)", Ph.D. diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1981, 67–70, 167; Monika Soffner and Franz Wolf, *Augsburg – Basilika St. Ulrich und Afra*, Passau: Kunstverlag Peda, 2004, 20; Dorothea Diemer, „Hans Reichles Werke für St. Ulrich und Afra", in: Weitlauff (ed.), *Benediktinerabtei St. Ulrich und Afra in Augsburg* (see n. 17), I, 903–926.
[24]   Hertfelder, *Basilica SS. Vdalrici et Afrae Avgvstae Vindelicorvm* (see n. 20), 19.
[25]   The cycle is illustrated in fig. 8. A few fragments, now reduced to the busts, are in the Maximilianmuseum in Augsburg; cf. *Welt im Umbruch* (see n. 15), II, cat. nos 575–576.
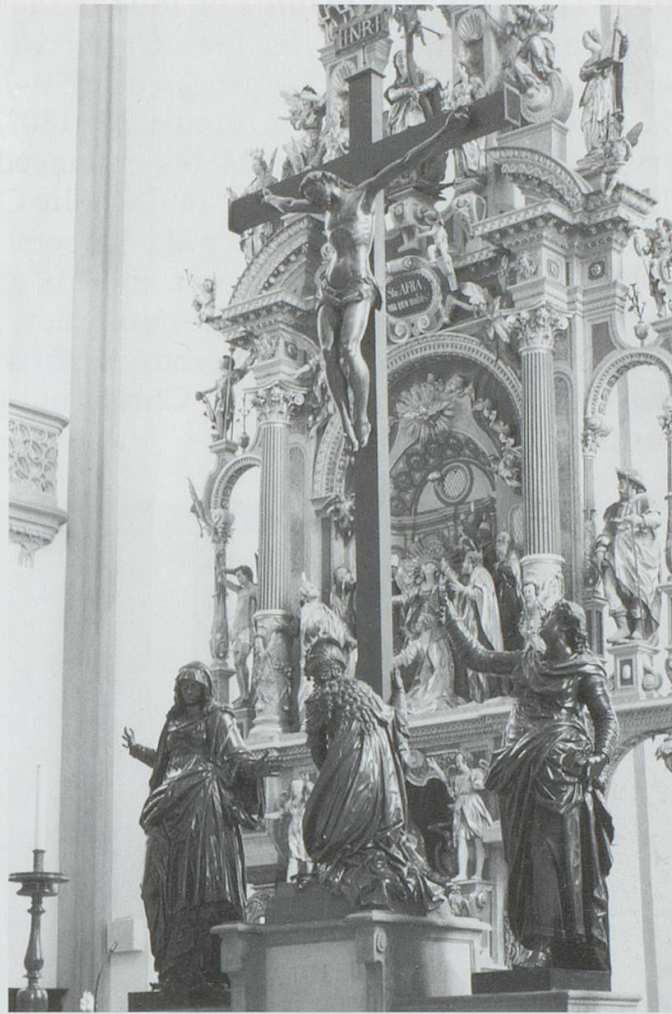
Fig. 9:   Hans Reichle, *Crucifixion*, 1605, bronze, St. Ulrich and Afra Church, Augsburg (photo: author).

Abbot Merck also recognized the efficacy of music.[26] With the adoption of the Tridentine or Roman rite, the abbot encouraged more music involving four to six singers. His new organ or choir loft at the western end of the nave was finished in 1607. Abbot Merck expanded the existing organ, which Jakob I Fugger had donated in 1584, to include thirteen new registers and a new organ case with painted shutters completed by Matthäus Kager in 1608 (fig. 10).[27] In 1602 Gregor Aichinger, the church's former organist, dedicated his first book of compositions entitled *Divinae Laudes* to the abbot and other leaders of the Benedictine monastery. As Alexander Fisher has shown convincingly,

[26]   For what follows, see Alexander J. Fisher, *Music and Religious Identity in Counter-Reformation Augsburg, 1580–1630*, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004 (St. Andrews Studies in Reformation History), 6–7, 85–86, 106–108, 131–133, 197–199.

[27]   Hermann Fischer and Theodor Wohnhaas, „Die Orgeln von St. Ulrich und Afra", in: Weitlauff (ed.), *Benediktinerabtei St. Ulrich und Afra in Augsburg* (see n. 17), I, 1119–1145, esp. 1126–1132.

Aichinger's *Lacrumae D. Virginis et Ioannis* of 1604 is thematically related
to and seemingly was inspired by Hans Reichle's *Crucifixion*.[28]

When Augsburg's Bishop Heinrich von Knöringen (r. 1599–1646) consecrated
St. Ulrich and Afra as well as its altars on August 26, 1607, the church was
complete for the first time since 1467. Abbot Merck embraced the power of art
and music to proclaim the triumphant message of Catholic Church. Augsburg
was officially bi-confessional yet only twenty-six percent of the residents
identified as Catholic in 1634–1635.[29] The abbot and his artists used these
visually compelling artistic embellishments to signal their confessional dif-
ferences as they proclaimed the antiquity of Augsburg's Christian community,
the Catholic Church's authority as the heirs of Christ and the apostles, and
the power of its saints.

Fig. 10: Organ, St. Ulrich and Afra Church, Augsburg, ca. 1584 and 1608. Organ shut-
ters painted by Matthäus Kager, 1608 (photo: author).

[28] Alexander J. Fisher, „A Musical Dialogue in Bronze. Gregor Aichinger's *Lacrumae* (1604) and
Hans Reichle's Crucifixion Group for the Basilica of SS. Ulrich and Afra in Augsburg", in:
Jeffrey Chipps Smith (ed.), *Visual Acuity and the Arts of Communication in Early Modern
Germany*, Farnham: Ashgate, 2014 (Visual Culture in Early Modernity), 119–141.

[29] Herbert Immenkötter, „Kirche zwischen Reformation und Parität", in: Günther Gottlieb et
al. (eds), *Geschichte der Stadt Augsburg. 2000 Jahre von der Römerzeit bis zur Gegenwart*,
Stuttgart: Konrad Theiss, 1984, 391–412, 410; Fisher, *Music and Religious Identity* (see n. 26), 6.

Fig. 11: Interior view of the Nave and Choir, Freising Cathedral (photo: author).

Freising

Our third example of re-working is Freising Cathedral, whose diocese includes Munich. In 1622 Veit Adam von Gepeckh, bishop from 1618 to 1651, remarked that almost no German cathedral was as unimpressive as Freising. He complained that it had the „smell (or odor) of antiquity" („antiquitatem adeo olet").[30] The ancient edifice had already been rebuilt in the Romanesque style beginning in 1159. In keeping with the wishes of his predecessor, Bishop

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[30] Sigmund Benker, *Philipp Dirr und die Entstehung des Barocks in Baiern*, München: Franz X. Seitz, 1958, 55.

Veit Adam began consultations about renovating the cathedral already in November 1619.[31] From his perspective this must have seemed like an ideal time to update his building. Catholicism seemed ascendant especially after Duke Maximilian I of Bavaria's decisive victory over the Protestants at the Battle of White Mountain outside of Prague in 1620. Work began in July 1621. The Thirty Years's War would affect Freising but not until 1632.

The site on which the cathedral is built slopes downhill to the east. The nave is considerably lower than the western narthex and the choir, which stands raised up above a large crypt (fig. 11). In 1622 Bishop Veit Adam ordered the demolition of the late medieval choir screen, which had been erected in 1457.[32] Broad new steps extending almost the width of the nave were constructed. This unified the choir with the rest of the church. Meanwhile, the windows of the clerestory, galleries, and ground floor were modernized to improve their appearance and, significantly, to enhance the brightness of the interior. The entire church was richly stuccoed; however, this decoration was thoroughly altered in 1723–1724 by the Asam brothers, Cosmas Damian and Egid Quirin, who gave the cathedral its current look.

With the dramatic opening up of the sanctuary, Bishop Veit Adam decided to replace the high altar's retable of 1443.[33] Although its wings and frame are lost, the limewood corpus figures depicting the Virgin and Child, Saints Corbinian (Korbinian) and Sigismund, and Bishop Nikodemus della Scala (r. 1422–1443) survive in the Bayerische Nationalmuseum in Munich. The newly exposed choir needed a larger, more impressive focal point. Jakob Kaschauer's retable, even if it originally had an elaborate wooden superstructure, was inadequate in size and style as the stage for the post-Tridentine Roman liturgy. After considerable consultations and through the intermediary efforts of Father Jakob Keller, the rector of the Jesuit college in Munich, Bishop Veit Adam commissioned Peter Paul Rubens to paint the *Virgin of the Apocalypse*, which measures 5.5 by 3.7 meters without its frame (fig. 12). Rubens presents a titanic struggle

[31] Leo Weber, „Im Zeitalter der Katholischen Reform und des Dreissigjährigen Krieges", in: Georg Schwaiger (ed.), *Das Bistum Freising in der Neuzeit*, three vols, München: Erich Wewel, 1986–1989, III, 212–288, 254–262. See also Leo Weber, „Die Neugestaltung des Domes unter Fürstbischof Veit Adam von Gepeckh", in: Joseph A. Fischer (ed.), *Der Freisinger Dom. Beiträge zu seiner Geschichte. Festschrift zum 1200-Jährigen Jubiläum der Translation des hl. Korbinian*, Freising: Verlag des Historischen Vereins Freising e. V., 1967, 145; and Jeffrey Chipps Smith, „Rubens, Bishop Veit Adam von Gepeckh, and the Freising *High Altar* (1623–25)", in: Malcolm Smuts and Luc Duerloo (eds), *The Age of Rubens. Diplomacy, Dynastic Politics, and the Visual Arts in Early Seventeenth-Century Europe*, Turnhout: Brepols, 2016, 261–274.

[32] In 1613 Maximilian I issued a mandate ordering all choir screens in Bavarian churches to be torn down to enable the laity to observe the celebration of the liturgy without hindrance. Tobias Appl, „Der Ausbau geistlicher Zentren als Kernstück der Kirchenpolitik Herzog Wilhelms V. (1579–1597/98) in Bayern", Ph.D. diss., Universität Regensburg, 2009, 87. I owe this reference to Alexander Fisher.

[33] Rainer Kahsnitz, „Der Freisinger Hochaltar des Jakob Kaschauer", in: Rainer Kahsnitz and Peter Volk (eds), *Skulptur in Süddeutschland 1400–1770. Festschrift für Alfred Schädler*, München: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 1998 (Forschungshefte/Bayerisches Nationalmuseum 15), 51–98.

between the forces of good and evil. God directs St. Michael and other angels who vanquish the seven-headed beast of the Apocalypse and the satanic forces who threatened the Virgin Mary and Christ Child. The angels' intense focus contrasts with the despair of their foes. Mary, as the Apocalyptic Woman, crushes the serpent beneath her feet while holding Christ safely above the fray. This battle, staged in the sky above Freising and its cathedral, brings to mind the war then being waged across Germany and Central Europe between Catholic and Protestant forces. It was common to depict one's confessional adversaries as in league with Satan. Before the arrival of the invading Swedish troops, who sacked Freising in 1632 and on other later occasions, the cathedral's treasures including Rubens's picture were evacuated to Innichen in the south Tyrol for safety.

Fig. 12: Peter Paul Rubens, *The Virgin of the Apocalypse*, 1623–1625, Alte Pinakothek, Munich. Former High Altar of Freising Cathedral (photo: museum).

Fig. 13: View of the Choir, Freising Cathedral. *High Altarpiece* with 1926 replica of
Peter Paul Rubens's *The Virgin of the Apocalypse*. Hans Krumper (altar frame
design), 1623, and Philipp Dirr (sculptures), 1623–1624 (photo: author).

After negotiations with several masters, Bishop Veit Adam chose Hans Krumper's
design for the high altarpiece's frame (fig. 13). Krumper, Duke Maximilian I's
leading court artist, earlier designed the *Bennobogen* in Munich and he likely
influenced the shape of the three Augsburg altars carved by Hans Degler, who
was his brother-in-law. The bishop's court sculptor, Philipp Dirr, carved the
over-life-size standing statues of St. Corbinian, Freising's first bishop who died
in 729/730, and St. Sigismund, the Burgundian king martyred in 524, plus five
large, but now lost, angels for the superstructure.[34] These two statues together

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[34] Benker, *Philipp Dirr und die Entstehung des Barocks in Baiern* (see n. 30), 54–85, esp. 80–83,
and 168, doc. 45 (February 18, 1625); Karl Feuchtmayr, „Der Bildhauer Philipp Dirr aus Weil-
heim. Sein Verhältnis zur bairischen Skulptur des frühen 17. Jahrhunderts", *Das Münster* 6
(1953), 146–159, esp. 147–148. In the 1880s there were changes to the frame including re-
placement statues for the five larger angels as well as the two angels on either side of the
cartouche with the Holy Spirit.

with Rubens's Virgin Mary as the Apocalyptic Woman clearly present the cathedral's three patrons to the congregation. Each is fully legible even from the entrance to the nave some seventy meters away.[35] As their bodies turn slightly outward, Corbinian gazes with reserve down at the altar table while Sigismund forcefully looks out into the church. Their stable, if demonstrative, poses nicely balance the twisting and flowing rhythms of Rubens's picture.

The commissioning of a new high altar, the physical changes to the choir, an elaborate new pulpit, and the modernization of cathedral's windows were just part of the overall renewal project.[36] Bishop Veit Adam also revised the Marian program of the existing cathedral chapels.[37] The mostly new painted and/or carved altars illustrate Mary's life from her conception and presentation in the temple to her death and assumption. Rubens's *Virgin of the Apocalypse* fits integrally into this broader Marian program. At the same moment the choir was being reworked, the bishop ordered a grand new organ, completed in 1623, perhaps by Hans Lechner of Munich (fig. 14). Philipp Dirr carved the large polychromed angels perched on its frame.[38]

The re-workings within these three churches in Munich, Augsburg, and Freising in the early 17th century reflect the growing confidence of German Catholic leaders. After many decades of retrenchment in the face of the successes of Protestantism, princes and prelates turned once again to the visual (and aural) arts to embellish their churches. From the triumphal arch of St. Benno to the wholescale reimagining of St. Ulrich and Afra and Freising Cathedral, patrons and their artists created dynamic stages for the Catholic liturgy and communal devotion. Art's allure, its sensuous appeal to eye and ear and to mind and heart, offered many worshippers a tangible means for visualizing their faith.

[35] Benker, *Philipp Dirr und die Entstehung des Barocks in Baiern* (see n. 30), 83; Sigmund Benker, *Freising – Dom und Domberg*, Königstein im Taunus: Hans Köster, 1975, 27 (with view).

[36] Benker, *Freising – Dom und Domberg* (see n. 35), 41 and 44; Leo Weber, *Die Erneuerung des Domes zu Freising 1621–1630. Mit Untersuchungen der Goldenen-Schnitt-Konstruktionen Hans Krumppers und zum Hochaltarbild des Peter Paul Rubens*, München: Don Bosco, 1985, 129–133.

[37] The side chapels were decorated with scenes from the life of the Virgin though not all of the paintings and sculptures were completed prior to Bishop Veit Adam's death in 1651. These illustrated the Conception of the Virgin, Presentation of Mary in the Temple, Annunciation, Visitation, Nativity, Adoration of the Magi, Flight into Egypt, Death of the Virgin, Assumption, and, in the choir, Rubens's *Virgin of the Apocalypse*. Benker, *Freising – Dom und Domberg* (see n. 35), 46–47; Weber, „Die Neugestaltung des Domes" (see n. 31), 170–192.

[38] Benker, *Freising – Dom und Domberg* (see n. 35), 40; Weber, *Die Erneuerung des Domes* (see n. 36), 134–140. The names of the organ builder and the painter of the shutters are not listed in the documents. Melchior Heller's name was discovered inscribed on the exterior Annunciation during a restoration in 1980. If Heller was the painter, he is otherwise unknown. The shutters also have been attributed to Elias Greither the Elder; the shutters were temporarily removed when I took my photograph of the organ.

Fig. 14: Organ, completed 1623 with sculptures by Philipp Dirr, Freising Cathedral (photo: author).