

With the help of Goethe

An attempt to allocate a paperweight to the Riesengebirge area

Gerd Mattes, © 2007

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In the book *Glass Paperweights. The Heritage of the 19th Century Riesengebirge and Isergebirge Glassworks* the Author - Marek Kordasiewicz shows on page 92. (Figures 130. and 131.) two sulphide paperweights from our collection, containing a bust of Goethe, which he attributes to the Harrach Glassworks in Neuwelt (Fig. 1., 2.).

Paris 1795-1877) based on a model of Goethe made by Christian Daniel Rauch (1777-1857). The medallion should recognise the 50th anniversary of Goethe working for the Count of Weimar. Goethe himself appreciated the medallion that much that he used it himself as a gift to felicitators, even as a print¹ (Fig. 4.).



Figure 1.

Within the course of the year I have tried to find facts to support this theory.

A similar paste can be found in a paperweight from the Clichy glassworks (Fig. 3.).

The paste dates back to a medallion of 1824 by Jean Francois Antoine Bovy (Geneva and

¹ Vol. II « Das Böhmisches Glas 1700-1950 » Passauer Glasmuseum , page 185, Fig. II.271, describes a footed beaker:...The encased paste with Goethe probably became into being from a medallion from Antoine Bovy Genf 1824

Bildnis Gläser der Sammlung Heine in Karlsruhe, Eberhard Schenk zu Schweinsberg, Parkland Verlag, Stuttgart, pages 88/89



Figure 2.

A clue to support the theory that pastes from France were used in the Harrach Glassworks in Neuwelt can be found in an article from Jarmila Brožová² stating that Steigerwald (glass – dealer from Würzburg, Germany) ordered the paste for Johann Pohl in Paris, based on a letter dated 1829, where Steigerwald promised Pohl replacement for the broken paste.

It is evident that the pastes with the medallion of Goethe has been used in the Harrach Glassworks in Neuwelt.

In the Museum of Applied Arts in Vienna the following item with the number 60 can be found in the department of „*Empire Style*“: *Beaker, Neuwelt (Bohemia), before 1830. Glass: Harrach Glassworks, Neuwelt (Bohemia) colourless glass, blue-cased inside and „Inglazed paste“ of porcelain (relief portrait of Goethe).*

The blue case inside and the relief portrait of Goethe is identical with the paperweight shown in Figure 1.

² ANNALES DU 5e CONGRÈS DE L' ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONALE POUR L' HISTOIRE DU VERRE, Prague 6-11.Julliet 1970 « Eingelaste Pasten der Neuweiler Glashütte aus der ersten Hälfte des 19ten Jhts. von Jarmila Brožová, Kunstmuseum Prag



Figure 3.

Even the Passau Glass Museum shows a footed beaker Inv.Nr. Hö 52 49 from Neuwelt 1835-1840 with encased pastes with a portrait of Goethe (see footnote 1.).

Another cup attributed to Harrach Glassworks with the same paste of Goethe is shown in recently released book about encased pastes on page 262³.

It is evident that the Harrach Glassworks produced paperweights and exhibited paperweights with cut in figures and encased pastes in 1845 Vienna Third General Austrian Trade and Industry Exhibition (Dritte allgemeine österreichische Gewerbe-Ausstellung), together with paperweights from Pietro Bigaglia from Venice⁴.

Additionally, Jarmila Brožová quotes in her article (see footnote 2.):

“Encased pastes decorates seals and handles from paperweights in square form”

³ LES VERRES À INCLUSION du XIXe siècle, CRISTALLO-CÉRAMES ET ÉMAUX von Léon Darnis

⁴ Bericht über die dritte allgemeine österreichische Gewerbe-Ausstellung in Wien 1845 (Report about the Third General Austria Trade and Industry Exhibition in Vienna 1845), Wien 1846, page 99



Figure 4.

Based on all this findings there is no doubt that this paperweight in square form originate from the Glassworks of Neuwelt/Harrach.

The second paperweight containing a paste of Goethe on the Latticinio ground and the ring of blue canes undoubtedly originates from the area of the Riesengebirge and in all probability from Harrach Glassworks in Neuwelt. I don't have any other idea which glassworks from this area was able to produce such a paperweights.

This is also stated in the book: "The Legend of Bohemian Glass"⁵ on page 77., where it says:

They [in the Harrach Glassworks in Novy Svet / Neuwelt] were the only factory in Europe making glass items with molten pastes . First mention of such pastes appears in their correspondence and bills from January 1821, when [Johann] Pohl sent the results of his experiments to Count Harrach in Vienna.

It is also noticed in the Official Report from the General German Trade and Industry Exhibition, (Amtlicher Bericht über die allgemeine Deutsche Gewerbe-Ausstellung)

Berlin 1844 about the Harrach Glassworks in Neuwelt:

"Except in France the encased pastes, busts in goblets and other items are produced in such a beauty and cleanness".

If at all, I suppose only Carlsthal or Josephinenhütte might have knowledge and ability to produce such a paperweights, but so far, no proof has been found.

Because of the usage of the same / identical paste and technique, the paperweight from Figure 1. could only have been produced by Harrach Glassworks in Neuwelt

Photography by the Author

⁵ The Legend of Bohemian Glass, Antonín Langhamer, TIGRIS Czech Republic 2003