

REPETITION

Fibre by fibre twisted into yarn,
Weft after weft inserted into texture,
Motive after motive forming a pattern.
With repetition of each step evolves the whole.

Always the same movements of the hand.
Continuity. Persistence. Rhythm. Time.
Breathing-in. Breathing-out.

PICKING STICK, well-worn after 40 year of work on a hand loom
(handle attached by cords to a device at both ends of the shed to propel the shuttle through
the shed to the other end with a flick of the wrist)

CYCLE

Live with the cycle of nature.
Harvest the flax growing from the soil under our feet.
One year better. One year worse.
Make use of it all. All of it precious.
Waste unknown.

Spinning, in the wake of the eternal cycle.
First artificial rotary movement long before the wheel was invented.
A thread forms – endless, but so easily severed.

PANCAKE COIL
for winding-up the yarn

A BOND

Organisation in guilds.
Pride and honour, hierarchy and status.
Solidarity and togetherness.

Rules for work, behaviour and learning.
Rules for economy, moderation, sincerity.
None too many, none too big, none alone.

Chests. Banners. Stamps. Symbols.
Keeping distance from others.
Either belong or be excluded.

TWO KEYS FOR THE GUILD'S CHEST: Each guild had at least two guild masters who each held a key for the guild's chest in which money and important documents were kept. The chest could only be opened by both unlocking at the same time thus preventing anybody take money single-handedly.

PRUDENCE

Simple solutions. Practical thinking.
Common sense.

Ingenuity. Progress. Development.
Improvising and repairing.

Technical precision and mathematical skill.
Zeros and ones. Lifting and lowering.
Simple but brilliant.

“SUPPENBRUNZER” [soup pisser]

Bird made of wood shaving that used to hang above the dining table in a farm house symbolising the Holy Ghost. It also was a gauge for the degree of humidity in the room. If humidity was high, the steam rising from the soup condensed on the bird and dripped back into the pot. The weaver knew then that the climatic conditions for linen making were ideal.

RICHNESS

Spinners, weavers, tool makers, reed makers,
Sizers, bleachers, manglers, rope makers,
Dyers, template makers, blueprinters, tailors –
A wealth of professions.
So many flicks of the wrist.
So much knowledge.

So many associations.
So many pubs.
So many customs, songs and feasts.

So much illness.
So many children.
So much suffering. So much joy.

TWO PRINTING BLOCKS, used for applying embroidery patterns. Pear wood , brass bridge,
probably 2nd half of the 19th c., crafted by the template maker Christian Conradi of Haslach.

QUALITY

Strong yarn, dense weave, tightly mangled –
Good cloth. Durable.

One ell is the human measure of things,
Different lengths in different places.
Take measures, measure for measure. Weigh, judge.
Find the right gauge to act properly.

Decide on the quality and be able to reproduce it.
Small selection, long-lasting.

Examine, inspect, stamp, reject.
Protection against non-professionals. Authorities. Rules.
Laws and loop holes.

LINEN INSPECTION STAMP, high-quality linen was stamped by official inspectors and released for the market. The five eagles (falsely called larks) were part of the coat of arms of the Hapsburg possessions in the Eastern Alpine region, the Duchies 'Ob der Enns' and 'Unter der Enns'. Today those eagles are still the coat of arms of Lower Austria.

LEARNING

Learning by doing.
Look over the master's shoulder.
Think along. Work along. Got it.
Adopt methods.
Let them become ingrained.

Journeyman years. Render services.
New work-shops. New people. New countries.
Openness and exchange, spanning borders.

School as an institution much later.
Systematic learning – weave construction and decomposition.
Design patterns, draw point paper designs,
Paint in red square after square,
Inscribe carefully, practice diligently. Got it.

CERTIFICATE OF APPRENTICESHIP

“ belonging to the honourable Andrae Gansser linen weaver. In the year 1788”

FLEXIBILITY

Flexible material in one's hands every day
Influences body and soul.
Soft fibres, soft fabrics, soft heart ?

Think everything the textile way, solve technical problems the textile way,
Easy to adjust, easy to disassemble, easy to replace.
Knot shafts, tie up treadles,
Wrap the reeds, thread the heddles.

Tare, re-stress, attach another weight.
Variable and never-the-less stable.

React to what is there. Flexible timing.
Work and leisure time are inseparable.
Make the best of it, day-in, day-out.
Sometimes more. Sometimes less.

VESSEL FOR HEATING PITCH to produce pitch bound reeds.
The reed dictates the number of warp threads and beats in the inserted weft thread onto the already existing weave. The cane is split and then bound between the ribs of wood with string. Depending on the thickness of the yarn there are differently spaced reeds. In the end the wrappings are tarred and the canes stabilised.

IMPORTANCE

The meaning of small things.
Carefulness and awareness.
Do more than is necessary. Love of detail.

Much linen in the chest – a good match.
Investment, added value, appreciation.

The meaning of one's role.
The meaning of faith.
The meaning of nature.

The meaning of a pattern. Mirror of its time.
Subtle ambassadors of the spirit.
Woven stories, statements,
Values transported.

DETAIL OF A POINT PAPER DESIGN FOR THE TABLE CLOTH "THE HUNTER'S WEDDING":
According to legend a hunter celebrated his wedding in a lodge in the Böhmerwald woods.

Because of the heavy snow no guests came. Instead all the animals of the woods were invited. The original version of the damask table cloth was produced in Southern Bohemia in xxx and had the Wittinghausen Ruin in its border. In the Mühlviertel version the ruin was replaced by the gate tower of Haslach, surrounded by oak leaves. The intricately woven cloth attracted attention beyond the borders, and was much in demand in Nazi times as a symbol of patriotism. Today the table is reproduced on Jacquard machines.

ORDER

Warp ends – prepare the warp.
Crossing thread and Gängelkreuz.

1, 3, 5 lifted
2, 4, 6 lowered

Let the threads speak for themselves.
Respect their natural order.
Heddle by heddle, reed by reed. Repeat by repeat.

All have their place in the system.
No breaking away, no faltering.
One after the other. Everybody gets his turn.
Stability, orientation, reliance.

Minor deviations from the norm are stimulating.
Variation always based on the same principle.
An open world in confinement. Orderliness sets you free.

.... REED for producing woven ribbons and belts. On this simple weaving implement the warp ends are threaded through holes and slits. The up and down movement of the reed lifts or lowers the ends in the holes. The ends in the slits, however, remain in the same position thus creating a shed.