Beyond “Art Collections”

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Beyond "Art Collections"

Owning and Accumulating Objects from Greek Antiquity to the Early Modern Period

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Susanne Wittekind

Treasures on Display

On the Forms of Exhibition of Medieval Church Treasures

In his influential work on collectors and collections, Krzysztof Pomian (1987) defined collections as ensembles of natural or artificial objects that are removed from the commercial market for a longer or shorter period of time and given special protection at a special location for the purpose of being viewed.[1] We have to ask whether or to what extent medieval church treasures can be considered collections, as Julius von Schlosser saw them in his famous and important work on cabinets of curiosities in 1908, and whether they ought to be seen as collections or the predecessors of such curiosities.[2]

The term "church treasure" carries both a material and a spiritual side. The latter side concerns the church treasure as part of the economy of grace, a treasure won by the sacrifice of Christ and his saints and by the virtuous life of the clergy that forms the "heavenly treasure" governed by the church for the salvation of the faithful.[3] On the material side, the church treasure (*thesaurus ecclesiae)* refers to the entire material holdings of a given

1 Krzysztof Pomian, *Collectionneurs, amateurs et curieux. Paris, Venise, XVIe–XVIIIe siècle*, Paris: Gallimard, 1987, p. 18.

2 Julius von Schlosser, *Die Kunst- und Wunderkammern der Spätrenaissance. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Sammelwesens*, Leipzig: Klinkhardt & Biermann, 1908, p. 10, pp. 18–21, refers to late medieval ritual displays to emphasize the—with some reservations—public character of church treasures; he sees them as maintaining the material remains of Antiquity, with reliquary busts and relics as trophies of victorious martyrs, not unlike antique heroes in statues, and with the reuse and reinterpretation of antique objects as an expression of the medieval love of fairy tale and exotic legend. Livia Cárdenas, *Die Textur des Bildes. Das Heiltumsbuch im Kontext religiöser Medialität des Spätmittelalters*, Berlin: Akademie, 2013, pp. 302–312, follows Schlosser in seeing *Heiltumsbücher* relic books as the precursor of modern museum catalogues.

3 For the clergy itself as *ornatus ecclesie* see the Prüfening inventory of 1165: "Quae adornantur in ecclesia, haec sunt: altare, sacerdos, ministri, scola chori, ambitus aecclesiae", in: Bernhard Bischoff (ed.), *Mittelalterliche Schatzverzeichnisse. Von der Zeit Karls des Großen bis zur Mitte des 13. Jahrhunderts*, Munich: Prestel, 1967, pp. 77–79, no. 73. On the church's treasury of grace, cf. Philippe Cordez,

church, including its landed property. It takes until the ninth century for a concept of treasure proper to develop, relating to the implements for liturgy: "thesaurus, sive ministerium vel ornamentum ecclesiarum" and referring specifically to the *vasa sacra,* paraments, reliquaries, or books and vestments.[4] Since the twelfth century, the term *thesaurus* began to be applied to the actual location where such items where kept, the treasury.[5] Oaths of office for treasurers, sacristans, or *custodes*, often recorded in gospel manuscripts along treasury inventories, place the protection of the treasury from loss by theft or sale as one of their highest priorities.[6]

By removing the often priceless items, made from precious materials, from economic circulation and storing them in a specially protected place, medieval church treasuries indeed fulfil one of Pomian's main indicators. However, where these collections exhibited, shown, made visible and accessible? Where, on what occasion, and for which audiences were they exhibited? Were treasures experienced as collections? To answer these questions, we need to turn to written sources like the inventories or chronicles of the high Middle Ages to understand the nature of church treasures and the conditions of their storing and display. We will also address the surviving locations of church treasures, on high altars, in sanctuaries, in sacristies, or in the dedicated treasuries and treasure houses of the twelfth to fifteenth centuries. The high medieval practice of presenting treasury objects on altars deserves particular attention.

Treasure and Ornatus Ecclesiae

It is a feat of imagination to visualize the rich decoration of medieval churches, long hidden, changed, or reworked in an endless succession of refurbishments (*renovationes*), destroyed in war, plundered, stolen, and melted down, or (in more fortunate cases) dispersed into private and State collections through revolutions and secularization. We depend on written sources like inventories and chronicles to reconstruct their original splendour. The inventories not only tell us about the range of objects kept in churches, but also about their order and hierarchy. The treasury inventories of the ninth to thirteenth centuries differ considerable in scope and structure. They include items kept in sacristies and treasuries and only used for certain occasions just as much as the regular furnishings and equipment

Schatz Gedächtnis Wunder. Die Objekte der Kirchen im Mittelalter, Regensburg: Schnell & Steiner, 2015, pp. 41–42.

4 Cordez, 2015 (as fn. 3), pp. 28–29, quotes the Synod of Valence (855). Cf. Wilfried Hartmann (ed.), *Die Konzilien der karolingischen Teilreiche 843–859* (MGH, concilia III), Hannover: Hahn, 1984, p. 363.

5 Pierre Alain Mariaux, Collecting (and Display), in: Conrad Rudolph (ed.), *Companion to Medieval Art. Romanesque and Gothic in Northern Europe,* Malden: Blackwell, 2006, pp. 213–232, p. 214.

6 Andreas Bihrer, Die Handschrift im Gebrauch. Das Gerresheimer Evangeliar als Eid- und Sakristeibuch, in: Klaus-Gereon Beuckers, Beate Johlen-Budnik (eds.), *Das Gerresheimer Evangeliar. Eine spätottonische Prachthandschrift als Geschichtsquelle,* Köln: Böhlau, 2016, pp. 135–161. Anton von Euw, Das Evangeliar von St. Maria Lyskirchen. Bestimmung und Gebrauch einer mittelalterlichen Handschrift, in: *Jahrbuch des Kölnischen Geschichtsvereins* 64 (1993), pp. 15–36.

of churches. Many inventories begin with a listing of the *vasa sacra*, chalices and patens, followed by other vessels (*vascula*), censers, crowns, crosses and their bases, pyxes, shrines (*scrinia*), staves (*baculi*), thrones (*sella/thronus*), and images (*imagines*). Others start with a listing of reliquaries and relics.[7] Others again begin with paraments (*pallia, albae, cappae, casulae, stolae*) and include curtains, tapestries, and flags (*vela, cortinae, tapetia, dorsalia, vexillae*). Another regular category includes the books required for liturgy, gospels, *plenaria*, antiphonaries, and graduals. Sometimes, this becomes part of a dedicated library inventory, such as the Prüfening inventory of 1165, which emphasizes the treasure as the property of the monastic community with its iconographic programme as well (Glossarium Salomonis, Munich, Staatsbibliothek, Clm 13002, fol. 5v: fig.1).[8]

The inventories not only include mobile treasures, but also fixed installations: antependia and altar facings,[9] large crosses and crucifixes,[10] crowns and chandeliers (*coronae*).[11] Individual cases even give a description of altar decorations and the objects stored there.[12] The Prüm inventory of 1003 follows the order of altars, beginning with the main Holy Saviour altar and its equipment.[13] Other inventories again record the donors of items[14] and their locations.[15] The monks of Glastonbury, for instance, placed the ivory staff and

7 Bischoff 1967 (as fn. 3), nos. 23, 57, 58 and 64.

8 Ibid., no. 73; Elisabeth Klemm, Die Klostergemeinschaft von Prüfening im Spiegel ihres Schatzverzeichnisses, in: Milada Studničková (ed.), *Bohemia plena est ecclesiis—Čechy jsou plné kostelů. kniha k počtě PhDr. Anežky Merhautové*, Prag: Nakl. Lidové Noviny, 2010, pp. 37–44.

9 Bischoff 1967 (as fn. 3), no. 23 names Erstein (first half of the tenth century) with the high altars panels and ciborium as well as two *capsae*; the inventory of Abdinghof near Paderborn (no. 62b), dated 1016/1036, lists a "tabula ante principale altare argentea".

10 The inventory of Bamberg Cathedral of 1127 (ibid., no. 6) distinguishes between a large cross and a processional cross: "magna crux aurea gemmis ornata"—"parva crux aurea, qua solebat episcopus portare in celebracione misse".

11 Ibid., no. 38 (inventory of Krakow, dated 1110/1118): "duae coronae argentae pendentes"; no. 45 (Mainz Cathedral, dated 1253): "Erat corona magna pendens in choro ad similitudinem eius, que adhuc dependet ad sanctum Albanum, et una in medio templi"; no. 62b (Paderborn Abdinghof, dated 1016/1036): "Coronam argenteam ante principale altare continens in festis precipuis XII candelas in honorem omnium apostolorum. Aliam coronam eque argenteam in medio monasterii, continentem LXXII candelas in memoriam LXXII Christi discipulorum".

12 Ibid., no. 21 (inventory of Enger, first half of the twelfth century): "In cyborio habentur XX aurea lamina […], in altari vero aureo XXXIII de maioribus nodulis […] Super altari vero IIII capsae […], et tabula ligni domini et scrinium."

13 Ibid., no. 74: the Prüm inventory begins with the abbey's foundation and the donation by Emperor Lothar (r. 817/823–855), lists the relics and then the treasures by altar, beginning with the high altar with its four golden *capsae* with jewels and two silver shrines, crown, and a silver ciborium with seven lamps.

14 Ibid., no. 44 (inventory of Magdeburg, St. Sebastian, ca.1156): "Et unum magnum candelabrum, quod contulit Richburgis ad reponendum semper in medio choro"; no. 87, of 1181: Donation by Emperor Frederick Barbarossa to the Cathedral Dom of Strasbourg; no. 91 of 1238: the Cathedral of Trier received *Pannos sericos* from the Abbot of Morimond, a *Manutergium altaris* from Rudolf, Provost of St. Paulinus.

15 Ibid., no. 45 (inventory of Mainz Cathedral, 1253): "Erat pertica argentea concava deaurata, que tantum precipuis festis, ut in pasca, pentecostes, in dedicatione ecclesie, in festo patroni gloriosissimi confessoris beati Martini, in nativitate Salvatoris, ante altare pendebat. In qua vascula pendebantur quedeam eburneam, quedam argentea, formarum diversarum, omni reliquiis plena."

1 *Prüfening inventory of 1165*, in: *Glossarium Salomonis*, Munich, Staatsbibliothek, Clm 13002, fol. 5v.

coronation mantle donated by King Edgar on the altar during his memorial masses in the thirteenth century—a form of *memoria* of the royal patronage received by the abbey.[16] Several inventories note which paraments, missals, or other objects were used at which altars,[17] others record how such items were used only on special feast days or during important visits and on the special order of the bishop, such as the golden triumphal crucifix donated by the Archbishop of Mainz Willigis (975–1011).[18] Certain inventories again record the monetary value of the objects, be it as an expression of appreciation or an *aide-mémoire* for the possible scenario of having to sell the treasures in times of crisis.[19] Others state the material and make of the objects, which could be read as a sign of interest in the diversity and artistic quality of the treasures.

The treasures recorded in these inventories refer to the entire precious holdings and decoration (*ornatus)* of the church, irrespective of their location. In churches themselves, the *ornatus* refers mostly to the high altar and the sanctuary, that is, the spaces reserved for the clergy. Its first and foremost audience is the ecclesiastical community and, specifically, the celebrants, not the lay public. A distinction is made between permanent equipment and items used only for certain feasts. Many inventories, as we have seen, name and record the donors with their donations, ensuring their *memoria* and embedding the church and its community in the social landscape of individuals and families protecting and supporting it.

The link between treasure and donors' *memoria* is even more obvious in Ortlieb's chronicle of Zwiefalten (1135–1137): the description of the church lists the relics integrated in the altars, followed by a detailed description of the treasure that starts with the reliquaries and their donors and donations.[20] Continued by abbot Berthold of Zwiefalten (r. 1139–1169), the later chronicle also lists donations of lands as well as material gifts like money, cloaks, and tunics, curtains and tapestries from lay donors, and liturgical vestments and antependia donated by clergy.[21] Parts of these donations are kept, others are sold on to finance neces-

16 Stephan Albrecht, *Die Inszenierung der Vergangenheit im Mittelalter. Die Klöster von Glastonbury und Saint- Denis*, München: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2003, p. 255.

17 Bischoff 1967 (as fn. 3), no. 57: Muri, twelfth century; no. 77: Regensburg, St. Emmeran, ca.1000; no. 136: Liber ordinaries of Metz cathedral, 1105–1246, with instructions on which objects were to be used at feasts. Cf. Éric Palazzo, Le Livre dans les trésors du Moyen Âge. Contribution à l'histoire de la 'Memoria' médiévale, in: Jean-Pierre Caillet (ed.), *Les Trésors de sanctuaires, de l'Antiquité à l'époque romane*, Paris: Picard Diffusion, 1996, pp. 137–160.

18 Bischoff 1967 (as fn. 3), no. 45: Mainz, 1253: "Hec crux vero raro exponebatur, nisi forte presente rege vel alio magno principe et festo pasce vel nativitatis domini, et pontifice hoc iubente. Cum autem hoc fieri oportebat, tunc in loco valde eminenti in templo super trabem, ubi nulli alieno patebat accessus, a ministris fidelibus locabatur." Cf. Deutsche Inschriften Online—Inschriftenkatalog Stadt Mainz: http://www.inschriften.net/mainz/inschrift/nr/dio001-sn1-0003.html (accessed November 16, 2017).

19 Bischoff 1967 (as fn. 3), no. 61: Paderborn, end of eleventh century; no. 76: Regensburg, St. Emmeran 996; no. 80: Reichenau, mid-ninth century.

20 Ibid., no. 115; Luitpold Wallach, Erich König, Karl Otto Müller (eds.), *Die Zwiefalter Chroniken Ortliebs und Bertholds* (Schwäbische Chroniken der Stauferzeit 2), Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1978², Ortlieb, pp. 2–135, spec. the report on the altars' consecration in 1109 and their relics, Lib. II cap. 1 (pp. 96–109); on the reliquaries Lib. II cap. 2 (pp. 110–123).

21 Ibid., Berthold, pp. 136–288, cap. 16 (pp. 198–201), cap. 29 (pp. 230–233).

sary building work.[22] The abbey is given relics and precious gold and silver items by princely donors, which are usually melted down and used to produce crosses and reliquaries.[23] In every case, the donors are recorded alongside the pieces they gave, obviously for use in the convent's memorial work. Again, several items are listed with the altar they are assigned to.[24]

A particular level of detail is offered by the chronicle of the abbey of Petershausen near Konstanz, which lists the donations and endowments to the abbey church by its founder, Bishop Gebhard of Konstanz (979–995), who was buried in a richly decorated monument in his church (I.52–55).[25] Gebhard gave a ciborium and silver panels for all sides of the high altar, though the Mary panel was melted down to pay for urgently needed grain during a famine period in 1126 (IV.21), the eastern panel sold off in 1159 to purchase new lands (V.41), and the silver lining of the pillars in 1148 also converted to cash (V.33). The chronicle also records a St. Gregory reliquary given by Gebhard (I.26), which was later opened, moved from St. Peter's to St. Mary's altar and, later again, traded to Mimmenhausen near Salem for the construction of the new chapel. Two silver chandeliers donated by Gerhard were broken up by a later abbot for cash for simoniacal purposes (I.47). Other gold and silver donations of Gebhard (II.3) were squandered by his successor, Lampert.

The treasure and *ornatus* of a church served to remember the act of its foundation and its revered founders; they were history made material. Their (commercial) value was a boon, but also a threat at the same time. The chronicle of Petershausen records the need to turn these treasures into cash in a time of need with regret and directly censures any waste and squander. In the end, church treasures were only removed from the market for a temporary period. Their memorial function soon moved from the material to the quasi-immaterial by being consigned to writing and memory. This could also happen by force of nature, as the continuation of the chronicle records after the disastrous fire at the abbey in 1159:[26] the high altar had an arm reliquary of St. Philipp and others that were burned; other losses include a golden pyx, a container of relics, and a reliquary cross suspended from the ciborium. The paraments and treasures in the sacristy also burned, whereas the archive was saved from the flames.

The chronicles of the twelfth century distinguish between permanent *ornatus* and special mobile treasure that was only taken from the sacristy for use in special masses or processions. This includes, in particular, (reliquary) crosses, flags, candelabra, and highly decorated gospels as well as some reliquaries.[27] The high altar was the usual location for the

22 Ibid., Berthold, cap. 10 (pp. 172–179), cap. 29 (pp. 230–233).

23 Ibid., Ortlieb, Lib. II cap. 2 (pp. 110–123); Berthold, cap. 10 (pp. 172–179).

24 Ibid., Ortlieb, Lib. II cap. 2 (pp. 116–119); Berthold, cap. 16 (pp. 198–201).

25 Otto Feger (ed.), *Die Chronik des Klosters Petershausen – Casus monasterii Petrihusensis* (Schwäbische Chroniken der Stauferzeit 3), Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1978², Lib. I cap. 46–48 (pp. 78–81). Cf. Bischoff 1967 (as fn. 3), pp. 119–131, 140–153 for donations of treasure objects, pp.132–135 for medieval lists of melted, destroyed or lost objects.

26 Ibid., Liber V, cap. 42–48 (pp. 232–239).

27 Wallach, König, Müller 1978 (as fn. 20), Ortlieb, Lib. II cap. 2 (p. 113), Berthold, cap. 40 (pp. 267–269); cf. Honorius Augustodunensis, *Gemma Animae*, cap. LXIX *Significatio processionum* (Migne, Patrologia

permanent or temporary display of these items; it was decorated with pieces of the treasure selected for each occasion. Placed on the altar and present in the liturgy, the community could see and experience the treasures as their shared possessions.[28]

Altar, Sacristy, and Treasury as Depots

The chronicles of Petershausen inform us that the abbey's reliquaries and other precious objects were kept at the high altar. As the church was later destroyed in a blaze, the exact circumstances cannot be reconstructed, although the high altar of St. Elisabeth's in Marburg offers a possible model: constructed in 1290, a special chamber for the purpose can be accessed from behind the altar (fig. 2).[29] More common practice was to store the altar treasures in a dedicated recess in the choir located near the ambry and piscina, as it can still be seen in the Premonstratensian abbey at Altenberg on the Lahn.[30] The Cistercian abbey church of Doberan had two decorated cabinets, originally fitted into the choir screen in around 1300 and later moved to the ambulatory wall when a dedicated tabernacle was added in the late fourteenth century (fig. 3). The Eucharistic iconography on one of the cabinets suggests a usage for storing patens, chalices, and the host, while its less ornate peer presumably held other liturgical implements or relics.[31] The most common place to store church treasures until the later Middle Ages, however, was the sacristy. Located next to the sanctuary, the typical sacristy would include a piscina as well as a number of lockable recessed or freestanding cabinets and chests to hold all liturgical implements, vestments,

latina 172, pp. 541–743, p. 565); Susanne Wittekind, Zur Bedeutung von Reliquiaren in der frühmittelalterlichen Liturgie, in: Patrizia Carmassi, Christoph Winterer (eds.), *Text, Bild und Ritual in der mittelalterlichen Gesellschaft (8.–11. Jahrhundert)* (Millennio medievale 102, Strumenti e studi n. s. 39), Florenz: Sismel, 2014, pp. 233–262, pp. 257–260; Anne Kurtze, *Durchsichtig oder durchlässig. Zur Sichtbarkeit der Reliquien und Reliquiare des Essener Stiftsschatzes im Mittelalter*, Petersberg: Michael Imhof Verlag, 2017, pp. 37–58.

28 Reliquary shrines were often displayed on the high altar (or matutine altar) in the high Middle Ages, cf. St. Severin in Cologne (cf. Clemens Kosch, *Kölns romanische Kirchen. Architektur und Liturgie im Hochmittelalter,* Regensburg: Schnell & Steiner, 2000, pp. 51–57); St. Ursula in Cologne (ibid., pp. 73–80), St. Viktor in Xanten (cf. Susanne Wittekind, Hinter dem Hochaltar. Nutzungskonzepte vor und nach der Einführung von Altarretabeln, in: Jochen Sander, Stefanie Seeberg (eds.), *Aus der Nähe betrachtet. Bilder am Hochaltar und ihre Funktionen im Mittelalter*, Berlin et al.: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2016, pp. 23–37); St. Remaklus in Stablo (cf. Susanne Wittekind, *Altar – Reliquiar – Retabel. Kunst und Liturgie bei Wibald von Stablo*, Cologne: Böhlau, 2004, pp. 241–247).

29 The high altar of St. Elisabeth in Marburg includes locking recesses at the back and steps leading into a lower chamber, which might have been the store of liturgical implements and relics, cf. Andreas Köstler, Paradigmenwechsel auf dem Reißbrett. Der Hochaltar der Marburger Elisabethkirche, in: Hartmut Krohm, Klaus Krüger (eds.), *Entstehung und Frühgeschichte des Flügelaltarschreins*, Wiesbaden: Reichert, 2001, pp. 51–59.

30 Stefanie Seeberg, *Textile Bildwerke im Kirchenraum. Leinenstickereien im Kontext mittelalterlicher Raumausstattungen aus dem Kloster Altenberg/Lahn* (Studien zur internationalen Architektur- und Kunstgeschichte 114), Petersberg: Imhof, 2014, p. 102.

31 Norbert Wolf, *Deutsche Schnitzretabel des 14. Jahrhunderts*, Berlin: Deutscher Verein für Kunstwissenschaft, 2002, p. 37–38.

2 Marburg, St. Elisabeth, eastern panel of the 1290 high altar.

3 Bad Doberan, former Cistercian abbey, cabinet of ca. 1300, originally integrated in the choir screen on the level of the altar.

reliquaries, or other items of value (fig. 4).[32] Access to the sacristy was usually only possible from the already screened-off choir and often restricted further by double doors, locked and bolted, and reserved to select officials.[33]

32 Anne Schaich, *Mittelalterliche Sakristeien im deutschsprachigen Gebiet. Architektur und Funktion eines liturgischen Raumes* (Bau und Kunst 17), Kiel: Ludwig, 2008, pp. 37–40. A sacristy cabinet from 1270–1290 survives from the collegiate church of St. Cornelius and Cyprianus in Metelen in the Westfälischen Landesmuseum/Münster; Brandenburg Cathedral has a three-part sacristy cabinet from the late thirteenth century; several decorated chests from the mid-thirteenth century are preserved in the Musée d'histoire du Valois in Sion/Wallis; cf. Wolf 2002 (as fn. 31), p. 358, fig. 233.

33 Schaich 2008 (as fn. 32), p. 69 on St. Godehard in Hildesheim, p. 95 on the double doors of the sacristy of St. Elisabeth in Marburg.

4 Marburg, St. Elisabeth, sacristy of ca. 1265–1283.

The later twelfth century saw the first appearances of dedicated treasuries,[34] be it in response to the influx of new relics with the Crusades, for simple security reasons, or through the evolution of more differentiated functions. In exceptional cases, prominent visitors were allowed to visit and view these treasures, as reported in John of Glastonbury's chronicle for 1331. On the occasion of the visit by King Edward III (r.1327–1377) and his queen consort Philippa of Hainault (r.1327–1369), the entire convent gathered to receive the royal visit, pray in the abbey church, and make a tour of the treasury, where the abbot explained the collection.[35] These treasury vaults were indeed typically vaulted for reasons of fire protection, and located in the upper stories of buildings with separate and secure access. In Bamberg Cathedral, the treasury is additionally guarded with its own wardroom and accessible only

34 Franz Joseph Ronig, Die Schatz- und Heiltumskammern. Zur ursprünglichen Aufbewahrung von Reliquien und Kostbarkeiten, in: Anton Legner (ed.), *Rhein und Maas. Kunst und Kultur 800–1400*, Cologne: Schnütgen Museum, 1972, pp. 134–141; Andreas Bräm, Schatz und Schatzkammer – zur Interdependenz um 1200, in: Lucas Burkart, Philippe Cordez, Pierre-Alain Mariaux (eds.), *Le trésor au moyen âge – discours, pratiques et objets* (micrologus' library 32), Florence: Sismel, 2010, pp. 345–365. The treasury was often architecturally related to the sacristy, as in Bamberg Cathedral, cf. Clemens Kosch, Bamberg, Dom SS. Peter und Georg. Schematische Rekonstruktionspläne seiner Sakraltopographie im mittleren 13. Jahrhundert, in: Stephan Albrecht (ed.), *Der Bamberger Dom im europäischen Kontext,* Bamberg: Univ. of Bamberg Press, 2015, pp. 291–295.

35 Albrecht 2003 (as fn. 16), p. 255; Aelred Watkin (ed.), *The Great Chartulary of Glastonbury*, Frome: Butler & Tanner, 1943, pp. 194–195.

5 Cologne, St. Kunibert, view from the high altar to the hidden treasury (marked by the oculus) in the northern sanctuary wall, ca.1220.

through several locked doors from the sacristy, all windows being barred.[36] In St. Cunibert in Cologne (c. 1220), access is only possible by ladder (fig. 5). As at nearby St. Pantaleon, a small oculus allows the glory of the relics to radiate out to visitors of the churches.[37]

These high medieval treasuries shield and shelter the church riches. Visibility is not the prime concern, but their redemptive presence, which is visibly or architecturally alluded to.

36 Kosch 2015 (as fn. 34). Matthias Exner (ed.), *Die Kunstdenkmäler von Oberfranken IV, Stadt Bamberg Bd. 2: Domberg, 1. Drittelband: Das Domstift. Teil 1: Baugeschichte*, Bamberg: Bayerische Verlags-Anstalt, 2015, pp. 568–573; ibid. *Teil 2: Ausstattung, Kapitelsbauten, Domschatz*, Bamberg: Bayerische Verlags-Anstalt, 2015, p. 372.

37 In St. Kunibert, wall paintings indicate the sacred objects hidden inside; cf. Kosch 2000 (as fn. 28), pp. 87–98, pp. 44–50. The head reliquary of Empress Kunigunde (sainted in 1200), kept at the far end of the George choir in Bamberg Cathedral, could extend its grace to the city via an opening in the wall, while all other relics were kept in the treasury; cf. Wittekind 2016 (as fn. 28), pp. 24–27. Further examples cf. Anne Kurtze, Transparenz und Unsichtbarkeit. Reliquiare und Architektur im mittelalterlichen Frauenstift Essen, in: Wilfried E. Keil, Sarah Kiyanrad, Christoffer Theis, Laura Willer (eds.), *Zeichentragende Artefakte im sakralen Raum: Zwischen Präsenz und UnSichtbarkeit*, Berlin: De Gruyter 2018, pp. 309–328.

Access to them is restricted far more by layout, physical barriers, or other means of control, than is the case with the much more accessible sacristies, whose first purpose is to allow celebrants to prepare for divine offices. The treasuries are indeed more strong rooms for the storing of assets than locations for their display.

The physical separation of treasury and sacristy might imply a change in the perception of treasures and their order in the high Middle Ages. The sacristy is reserved for liturgical *vasa sacra* and paraments; it becomes the celebrants' changing room. The treasury now includes reliquaries and other valuables in the stricter sense.[38] Late medieval inventories from Konstanz und Basel support this hypothesis: When John of Ladenberg was appointed to the custody in Konstanz in 1343, canon Otto of Rheinegg produced an inventory of the minster church's treasury. It includes the older shrines and other reliquaries, monstrances and crosses, pyxes, other previous metal or ivory containers, ostrich eggs and crystal vessels, but no chalices, patens, candlesticks or thuribles, plenaria or paraments.[39] This suggests that this liturgical equipment was kept elsewhere in the church, e.g. in the sacristy or at the altar, and that the other treasures were presumably stored in the treasury on the upper level of the northern annex. When the treasures were moved to the former chapel of St. Nicholas in the northern transept in 1500, notary Johannes Will de Schäre prepared another inventory, which lists the individual items by their location in the chests or compartments of the new treasury's large wall cabinets.[40]

A similar development can be seen in the inventories of the treasures of the Basel Minster in 1477.[41] It starts with the famous Golden Antependium, gifted by Emperor Henry II († 1022) or his successors in the eleventh century and contained in a special chest, followed by reliquaries, monstrances, ceremonial crosses, and statuettes. These were kept in a large cabinet given to the church by its curate Johann Hanffstengel († 1452) (Basel, Historisches Museum, 356 × 268 cm, inv. no. 1904.375). Many pieces from the Basel treasury of the fifteenth century are donations and gifts from canons, Basel's town counsellors, or noble donors.[42] The donors' arms and their naming in the inventory make each object a carrier of memory of the donors and their families. When formally exhibited on the high altar on special occasions, they represent less the church's union with Christ and his saints and more the simple wealth of the institution and the prestige of individual members of the community.

38 On Basel cf. Hans-Rudolf Meier, Schatzkammer und Sakristeien des Basler Münsters, in: Brigitte Meles (ed.), *Der Basler Münsterschatz,* Basel: Christoph-Merian, 2001, pp. 252–257.

39 Inventory of Konstanz Minster Church of 1343 (Stuttgart, Württembergische Landesbibliothek, Cod. Don. 618), cf. Melanie Prange, *Der Konstanzer Domschatz. Quellentexte zu einem verlorenen Schatzensemble des Mittelalters und der Frühen Neuzeit,* Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2012, p. XXXIX, p. XLIII.

40 Inventory of Konstanz Minster Church of 1500 (Konstanz, Stadtarchiv, GII 111, II), see Prange 2012 (as fn. 40), pp. XLVIII–XLIX, pp. 30–41.

41 Rudolf F. Burckhardt, *Der Basler Münsterschatz* (Die Kunstdenkmäler des Kantons Basel-Stadt 2), Basel: Birkhäuser, 1933, ND 1982, pp. 359–361. Meles 2001 (as fn. 38).

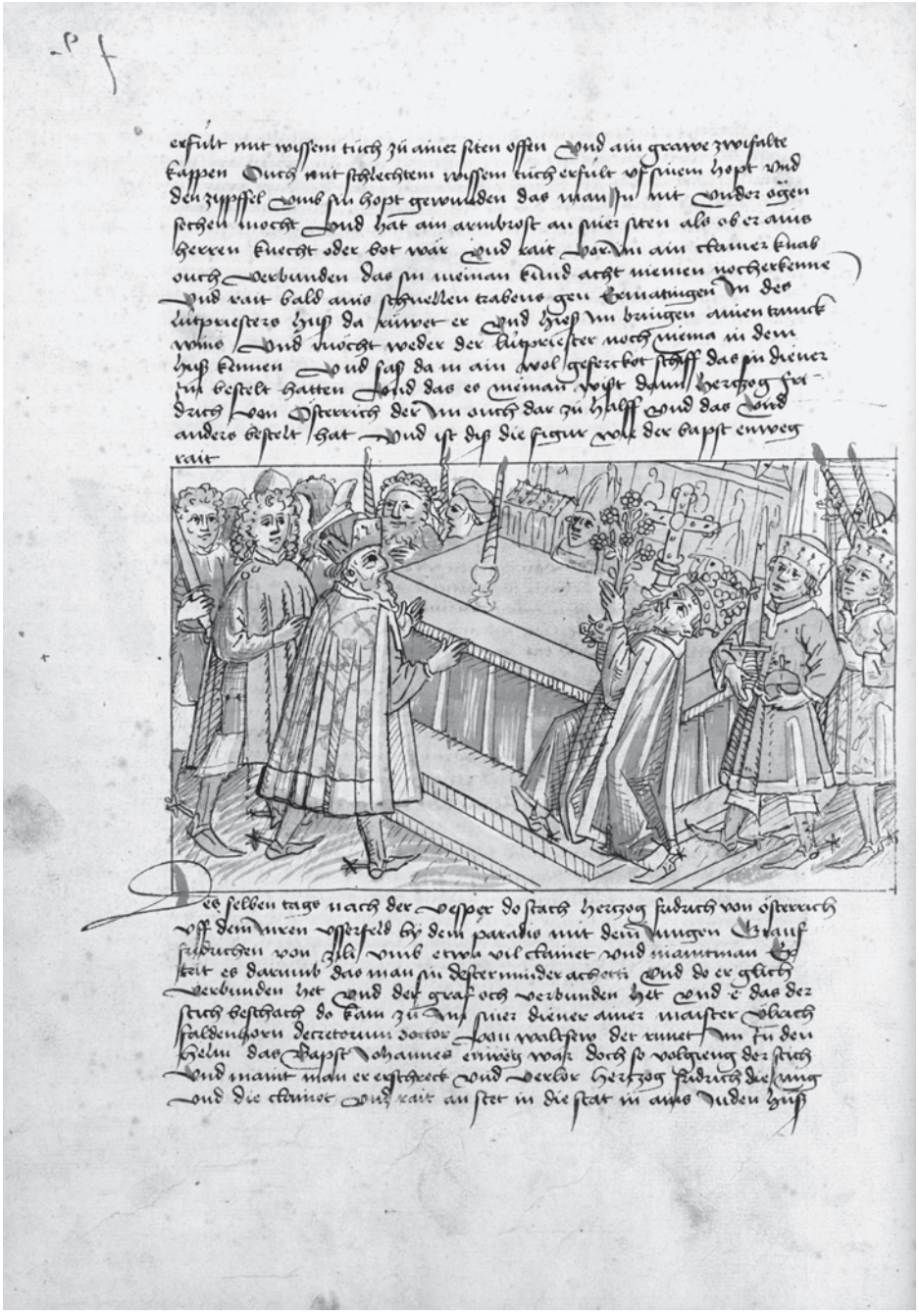
42 Lukas Burkart, Politische Investitionen. Die Geschichte des Basler Münsterschatzes vom 11. Jahrhundert bis zur Reformation, in: Meles 2001 (as fn. 38), pp. 230–241; Valentin Groebner, Schätze schätzen, Schätze schenken, ibid., pp. 242–251.

Again kept separate from this treasures, the sacristy holds silver crosses, chalices, corporalia, plenaria, thuribles etc. for liturgical use, with some reserved specifically for offices at the high altar.

One reason for this physical separation of the liturgical *vasa sacra* and paraments in sacristies from the reliquaries and other treasures, as can be seen in the inventories of the fifteenth century, might lie in the intensification of relic cults and their periodic showing. With the support of papal indulgences, these events regularly drew major crowds of pilgrims and were distinctive events for the believing public, with the clergy literally staging the relics' display.[43] Recorded first in Aachen in 1312, ceremonial exhibitions of relics spread in the troubled reign of Louis of Bavaria, 1315 in Basel and 1323 in Nuremberg. Charles IV introduced the practice in Prague in 1350.

The *vasa sacra* and paraments had formed the very core of portable church treasures in the early and high Middle Ages, but they were now relegated to a more pragmatic place. Reliquaries, exhibited only for special occasions or feast days or carried in procession, took over their central role, which also affected their staging and their intended audience: while the display and use of treasures on the altar for high feasts was directed at the ecclesiastical community, the public display of relics and their precious containers outside of liturgical use was specifically meant for secular consumption. This is not only the case for such famous locations as Aachen or Regensburg, where the imperial regalia were displayed, but many special occasions elsewhere.

43 Hartmut Kühne, *Ostensio reliquiarum: Untersuchungen über Entstehung, Ausbreitung, Gestalt und Funktion der Heiltumsweisungen im römisch-deutschen Regnum* (Arbeiten zur Kirchengeschichte 75), Berlin: De Gruyter, 2000, p. 79, sees the inventorization of relics in treasury or reliquary chambers as a precondition for their periodical displays (*ostensiones reliquiarum*) in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Kühne (p. 538) sees the precursor of all later such displays in the presentation of the relics of the Passion in the Sainte Chapelle (cf. Barbara Schellewald, Konstantinopel-Paris. Ein Schatz im neuen Gewand, in: *Das Heilige sichtbar machen* [Arbeitsberichte des Landesamts für Denkmalpflege und Archäologie Sachsen-Anhalt 9], Regensburg: Schnell & Steiner, 2010, pp. 161–180). The first display at Aachener, for which the St. Mary shrine was opened by a goldsmith in the presence of the chapter and the relics translated in procession to the dedicated chapel in the tower, shown to the mayor and then displayed to the population, is attested for 1312 (Kühne 2000, as above, pp. 157–159, pp. 171–172). This is soon followed by the politically motivated displays of the imperial insignia and relics at Basel in 1315 at the court of Friedrichs des Schönen (pp. 82–84) and, after his defeat, for Louis of Bavaria in 1323/1324 in Regensburg and Nuremberg (pp. 88–90), using a specially built stage. Prague hosted such displays regularly after 1350/1354 (pp. 111–113). Dean Arnold Heymerick of Xantes relates how the *Viktorstracht*, i.e. a formal procession of the shrine of St. Victor from the high altar to the convent of Fürstenberg outside the, was conducted on the occasion of the peaceful agreement about Xanten's lordship between the Dukes of Cleves and the Archbishop of Cologne. Cf. Udo Grote, *Der Schatz von St. Viktor. Mittelalterliche Kostbarkeiten aus dem Xantener Dom,* Regensburg: Schnell & Steiner, 1998, pp. 29–30: "On 18 August, the feast of St. Helena, the other patron of our church, the celebrations reached a first climax: all 23 relics of the church were displayed formally. This happened as follows: The people had assembled in the market square. The canons each took one reliquary from the sacristy and walked in procession to the back of the canon's house at the side of the market, which had been decorated with colorful cloth and tapestries. After one canon gave a sermon from the top window and the music had concluded, another priest stepped up to announce each relic held aloft by the dean to the call of a trumpet."



6 Anon., *Donation of the Golden Rose to the Minster Church by Emperor Sigismund in 1415*, in: Ulrich Richental, *Chronicle of the Council of Konstanz*, ca. 1465, Konstanz, Rosgartenmuseum, fol. 41v.

High Altars as Places of Exhibition

From the later Middle Ages, we have more detailed accounts of whether and when objects were brought from the treasury for display on the high altar or during procession. The illustrated chronicle of the Council of Konstanz of around 1465 by Ulrich Richental (Konstanz, Rosgartenmuseum) presents two bust reliquaries and the Pelagius shrine on the high altar on the occasion of various offices and feast days. These include the pope's donation of the Golden Rose to Emperor Sigismund and his donation to the minster church in 1415, and the consecration of Martin V and Christmas 1417 (fig. 6).[44] The Konstanz processional of 1517/1519 also mentions the inclusion of shrines and bust reliquaries in various processions.[45] The Basel ceremonial of cathedral chaplain Hieronymus Brilinger of 1517 describes how all parish churches and convents brought their relics to the cathedral on the occasion of the Corpus Christi procession.[46] Beyond this, the reliquaries of SS. Henry and Kunigunde were only carried on the occasion of the feast of Henry (13 July) and his translation (4 November); relics were displayed on the altar on the church's consecration feast.[47] When the renewal of the confederation between the city of Basel and the Swiss confederacy was celebrated in 1520, the Golden Panel of the city's patron saint Henry II and other relics decorated the high altar.[48] The minster's central altar became a stage and backdrop for the political event. The prominent place given to the panel and the relics recalls the long history and prominence of the city and its imperial patron. The assembled treasures of the minster church underline the dignity of the chapter, the city, and its council (closely intertwined with the chapter on a personal level). The treasures are not just *ornatus* or objects of grace; they are historical testimony, a demonstration of power, and rich *décor* for the event at the same time.

A plan for the display of treasures on the high altar at Basel produced around 1500 gives an inkling of what this display might have looked like to contemporaries (Basel, Stadtarchiv, Bauakten J J 3: fig. 7). The central piece was the Golden Panel, framed by a succession of bust

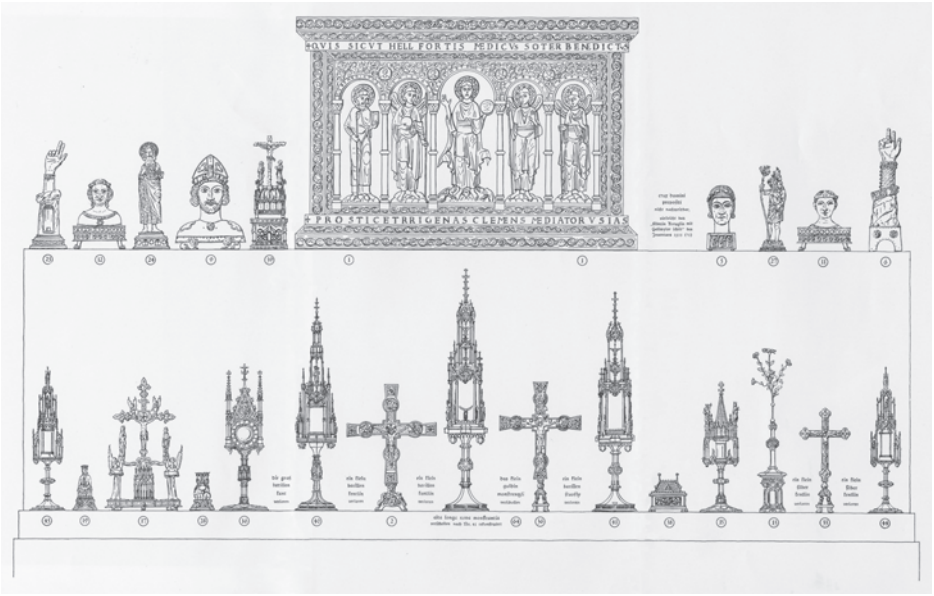
44 Melanie Prange, *Thesaurus ecclesiae Constantiensis. Der mittelalterliche Domschatz von Konstanz. Rekonstruktion eines verlorenen Schatzensembles*, Aachen: Shaker, 2012, pp. 80–85 on the images in the Richental chronicle, pp. 116–118 on the Pelagius shrine, p. 194 on the crosses, pp. 258–260 on the bust reliquaries (Conrad, Pelagius, and Cyprian). Ulrich Richental, *Chronik des Konzils zu Konstanz 1414–1418*, Faksimile der Konstanzer Handschrift, Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2013; idem, *Augenzeuge des Konstanzer Konzils: Die Chronik des Ulrich Richental*, translated by Monika Küble, with an afterword by Henry Gerlach, Darmstadt: Theiss, 2014.

45 Prange 2012 (as fn. 44), pp. 86–89.

46 Konrad W. Hieronimus, *Das Hochstift Basel im ausgehenden Mittelalter,* Basel: Verlag der Historischen und Antiquarischen Gesellschaft, 1938, pp. 111–316, Corpus Christi pp. 218–225.

47 Ibid., on the feast of Henry, pp. 228–230, p. 242; on the church feast day pp. 236–238.

48 Ibid., p. 296. On the political role of Henry as patron of the city cf. Burkart 2001 (as fn. 42), pp. 235–237; Andreas Schuler, Der Heinrichskult in Basel im politischen Kontext, in: Marc Fehlmann, Michael Matzke, Sabine Söll-Tauchert (eds.), *Gold & Ruhm. Kunst und Macht unter Kaiser Heinrich II*, München: Hirmer, 2019, pp. 312–317; Stefan Hess, *Die Suche nach dem Stadtgründer. Spätmittelalterliche Ursprungsmythen in Basel und ihre neuzeitlichen Nachfolger*, Basel: Schwabe Verlag, 2020, pp. 80–84.



7 Basel, Treasury display on the high altar around 1500, reconstruction by Rudolf F. Burckhardt (1933).

reliquaries and statuettes, with the two arm reliquaries forming the wings. Monstrances and crosses as well as other smaller objects were arranged in front.[49] This arrangement recalls the similarly symmetrical depiction of reliquaries in *Heiltumsblatt* woodcuts of around 1500[50] and, with the central placement of the Golden Table, the splendid retables of the fifteenth century like the Luneburg Golden Table.[51]

49 Burckhardt 1933 (as fn. 41), pp. 355–357, fig. 263; Marie-Claire Berkemeier-Favre, Reliquien und Reliquiare im Leben der Bischofsstadt, in: Meles (as fn. 38), pp. 329–336, p. 334.

50 Christian Kiening, Martina Stercken (eds.), *SchriftRäume. Dimensionen von Schrift zwischen Mittelalter und Moderne.* (Medienwandel—Medienwechsel—Medienwissen 4), Zurich: Chronos, 2008, pp. 338–341 (Constanze Rendtel) on the Aachen Heiltumsblatt print (Munich, Staatliche Graphische Sammlung, inv. no. 118308) and the Andechser print of 1496 (Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Res. 4 H.eccl. 851).

51 Ferdinand Stuttmann, *Der Reliquienschatz der Goldenen Tafel des St. Michaelisklosters in Lüneburg*, Berlin: Verlag für Kunstwissenschaft, 1937; Regine Marth, *Der Schatz der Goldenen Tafel* (Museum Kestnerianum 2), Hannover: Kestner-Museum, 1994; Peter Steckhan, Die Goldene Tafel des Benediktinerklosters St. Michaelis zu Lüneburg im historischen Kontext, in: Cornelis Bol (ed.), *Eine Heiligenfigur der Goldenen Tafel aus St. Michael zu Lüneburg* (Patrimonia 324), Hannover: Niedersächsische Landesmuseum, 2007, pp. 8–21; Thorsten Henke, Die Reliquien der Lüneburger Goldenen Tafel, in: Hedwig Röckelein (ed.), *Der Gandersheimer Schatz im Vergleich* (Studien zum Frauenstift Gandersheim und seinen Eigenklöstern 4), Regensburg: Schnell & Steiner, 2013, pp. 47–64; Wolf 2002 (as fn. 31), pp. 220–226.

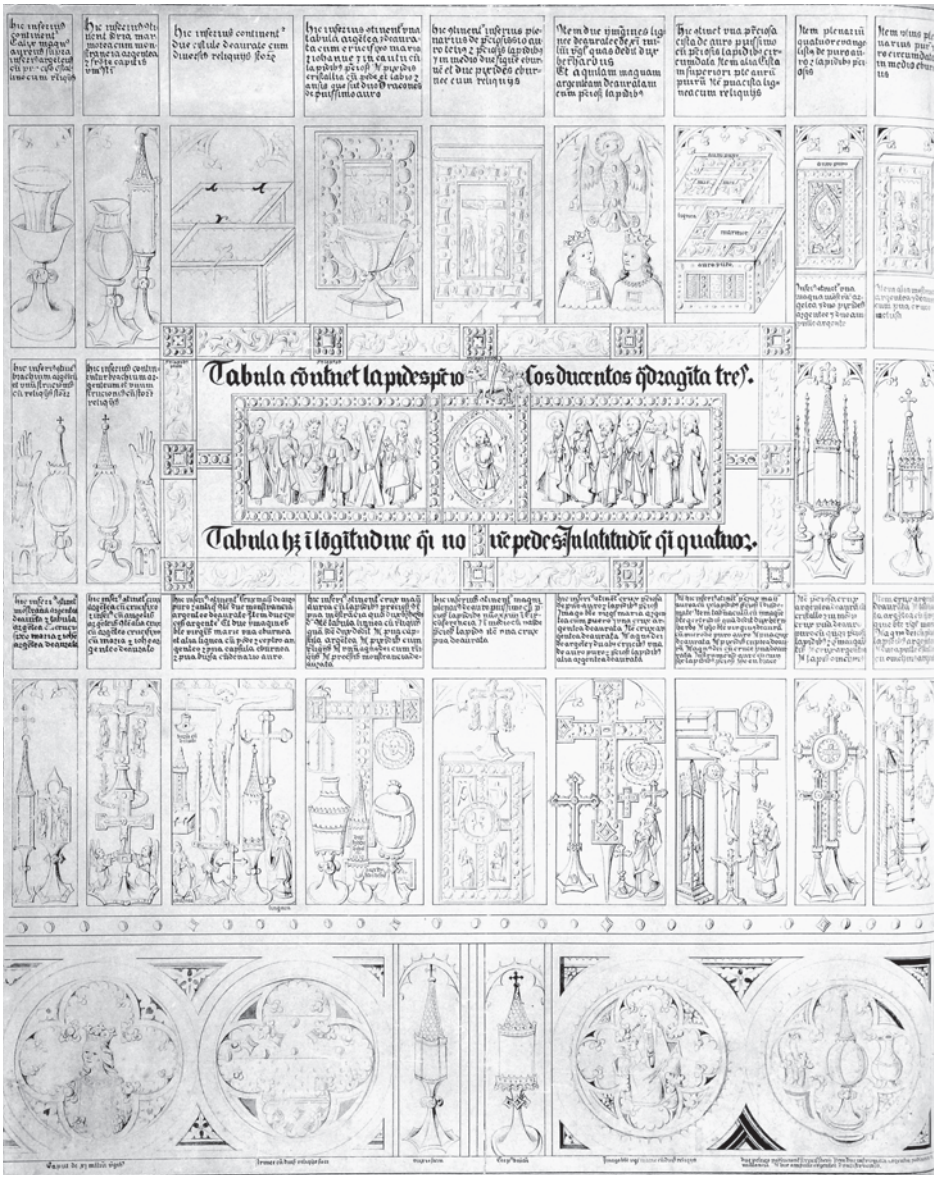
This intricate altarpiece was produced in the 1400s for the Benedictine abbey church of St. Michael in Luneburg on the occasion of the abbey's relocation from its original site of 956, near the Kalkberg castle of the Dukes of Saxony, into the city. The city had won its long conflict with the Dukes of Brunswick-Luneburg as lords of the city in 1371, relocated the abbey, and torn down the castle and church on the Kalkberg. The Saxon dukes had been liberal donors to their family monastery and burial place, giving relics and works of art. The monks took these treasures and their altars with them to the new Gothic church in the city, where they arranged them at the new high altar (consecrated in 1408). The new winged retable was produced to stage these treasures. Its outside panels contrast the *Crucifixion* with its Old Testament counterpart, the *Brazen Serpent*. They open to a first staging of 36 scenes from the life, passion, and resurrection of Christ; the inside is formed by the inner shrine, which arranges the church treasures around the Golden Panel, flanked by ten carved gilt saints on two tiers on each side.[52] The treasures in this inner shrine were looted in 1644 and 1699, with several pieces sold in 1792. The remaining pieces are kept in the Kestner Museum of Hannover. An inventory drawing of the fifteenth century, now surviving only as a nineteenth-century copy, gives a detailed account of the contents of the shrine (Landesmuseum Hannover, inv. no. WM XXVIII, 122: fig. 8):[53] The centre is formed by the Golden Table, a jewel-encrusted former antependium with an embossed *Maiestas Domini* and the *Lamb of God between the Twelve Apostles*. It is surrounded by 22 recesses, smaller on the sides and larger at the top and bottom. It is flanked by two crowned ostrich eggs, given in 1432 by Duke Bernhard (and carrying his arms) and the two arm reliquaries of SS. Valerius and Pancratius (second half of the twelfth century) and two monstrances on the right. Above the Golden Table, the collection includes chalices, processional altars, and smaller boxes, precious (gospel) covers or book-shaped reliquaries, and an eagle lectern and two (relic) busts. The bottom tier includes mostly crosses and monstrances as well as several figurines. Two other monstrances are placed between the four quatrefoils in the predella, which serve as oculi to other objects: one female bust reliquary, a *Seated Mary and Child*, and another ostrich egg vessel.

Unlike Basel, this is a case of the permanent, albeit not always visible, presentation of the entire treasure in the church itself,[54] including liturgical objects like chalices, gospels, crosses, and monstrances. It can be assumed that they could be accessed through doors at the back of the (lost) corpus, as is the case with the retable at the Cistercian abbey church

52 As part of the refurbishment of St. Michael's in 1794, the retable was given to the Knight Academy; its wings reached the Welfenmuseum in Hannover (today's Niedersächsisches Landesmuseum) in 1854. Cf. Antje-Fee Köllermann, Christine Unsinn (eds.), *Zeitenwende 1400. Die Goldene Tafel als europäisches Meisterwerk*, Petersberg: Imhof Verlag, 2019.

53 Stuttmann 1937 (as fn. 51), pp. 108–110, pls. 4–5.

54 The wings remained closed since the introduction of the Reformation in Luneburg; the treasure was only displayed to individual visitors, as Antje-Fee Köllermann explained in her talk on "Schatzerhebung. Die Goldene Tafel aus St. Michael in Lüneburg" at the Cologne Conference "Reframing – Umarbeitung, Ergänzung und Neurahmung von Kunstwerken liturgischen Gebrauchs in Mittelalter und früher Neuzeit" on 1 October 2015.



8 *Inner shrine of the 15th-century retable of the Benedictine abbey church of St. Michael in Luneburg (Golden Panel of Luneburg)*, nineteenth-century copy of a fifteenth-century drawing, Hannover, Niedersächsisches Landesmuseum, inv. no. WM XXVIII, 122.

at Bad Doberan (ca. 1300) and the Premonstratensian convent at Altenberg (ca. 1320), where relics could be accessed in this manner.[55] These altars have attracted attention in the discussion about the origins of the winged retable type, as Harald Keller assumes that the characteristic wings were meant to protect the treasures inside like the doors of sacristy cabinets. The early carved retables could then be considered "relic safes" while also playing to a new visual form of piety.[56] Thorsten Henke, on the other hand, sees the unique presentation of the treasure of St. Michael in Luneburg as an expression of the attempt to capture and maintain the dignity and history of St. Michael's abbey at its new location and with its new dedication.[57] The treasures, which would presumably have been allocated to a number of different altars at the original Kalkberg church, are now brought together in one prominent place, serving both as evidence of long history and as material guarantee of the community's continuity.

When the high altar of the new Gothic-style St. Victor at Xanten (begun 1263) was consecrated in 1311, the old, golden antependium donated by the Cologne Archbishops Brun († 965) and Folkmar († 969) was also raised up onto the altar and integrated into a modern winged retable.[58] The shrine's central golden panel, melted down in 1793, was flanked by the gilded bust reliquaries with the skulls of the martyrs discovered during the construction of the church; placed above, the shrine of St. Victor of the mid-twelfth century found a new home. This arrangement reminds us of the Golden Panel of Luneburg, with the difference that Xanten draws attention to the newly found relics, while Luneburg showcases the historical treasure of St. Michael's. Luneburg formed a permanent assembly of works of art and allowed them to be viewed, at least temporarily. With objects of diverse origins, materials, and styles, it does hint at the nature of early modern and modern collections, as does the apparent wish to use the treasure to underline the rank of the institution owning it. Still, the context and moment of presentation sets it apart. At Luneburg, the retable was opened on high feast days, revealing Christ in Judgment, sat between his apostles and saints (and their relics), clothed in gold and jewels underneath the tall lancet windows at the far end of the choir, fully visible only to the monks in service and integral part of the liturgy. This context

55 Wolf 2002 (as fn. 31), on the retable at Bad Doberan pp. 22–39, for Altenberg pp. 122–129; cf. Seeberg 2014 (as fn. 30), pp. 150–167; Seeberg, Sander 2016 (as fn. 29).

56 Harald Keller, Der Flügelaltar als Reliquienschrein, in: Kurt Martin (ed.), *Studien zur Geschichte der europäischen Plastik. Festschrift für Theodor Müller zum 19. April 1965*, Munich: Hirmer, 1965, pp. 125–144. The current state of research in Wolf 2002 (as fn. 31), pp. 12–19, who tends to emphasize the theological role of the images accompanying the relics.

57 Henke 2013 (as fn. 51), p. 57. Cf. Arweg Arnulf, Funktionsverlust, Inszenierung und repräsentative Inanspruchnahme—Zum Bedeutungswandel der Goldenen Tafel von St. Michaelis nach der Reformation, in: Köllermann 2019 (as fn. 52), pp. 189–202.

58 The Xanten *Liber ruber* of chapter notary Johan of Bemel (ca. 1400) and the *Historia Xanctensis* (ca. 1420) describe the high altar's retable, but believe it to be twelfth century– cf. the edition by Friedrich Wilhelm Oediger, Bau und Ausstattung des Xantener Domes nach der ‚Historia Xantensis' von 1420, in: *Annalen des Historischen Vereins für den Niederrhein* 177 (1975), pp. 263–289, p. 275, and Dietrich Kötzsche, *Der Schrein des heiligen Viktor im Dom zu Xanten*, Diss. Bonn 1978, pp. 237–239. Cf. Wittekind 2016 (as fn. 28), pp. 27–33.

determines the perception of the piece: its audience was the monastic community that could view its treasure, and not the 'public'. When the Reformation arrived in Luneburg, the treasure was kept, but no longer displayed.

Conclusion

When applying Pomian's criteria, the nature and forms of storage and display of high and late medieval church treasures reveals their essential difference from modern or early modern collections. Medieval treasures were not collected with any such sense of purpose; instead, the accident and time seem to govern their formation. Many were lost to theft or fire; others were destroyed deliberately by their owners. The locations they were kept in were typically well guarded, hard to access, and restricted to specific functionaries. However, there is evidence of an evolution in the make-up, storage, and display of church treasures over the medieval period: from liturgical objects and paraments as their backbone, the focus shifted towards reliquaries and, later, to other precious objects, often linked to specific donors or donors' families (by inscription or coats of arms). The allocation of specific treasures to specific altars is increasingly given up in favor of keeping all objects of value in one dedicated place. This can be considered a development towards a collection in the narrower sense of the term. It also leads to a functional distinction between sacristies as the place where priests prepared for mass and where the *vasa sacra* and paraments were kept, and the treasury as the specially protected depot of particularly valuable objects. Access is restricted in both cases, typically for clergy and holders of special offices only. Only few objects from these treasuries are used regularly; most are only displayed on the high altar on the occasion of special feasts. From the later Middle Ages, the high altar could become an expensively decorated stage for important (political) occasions, as the reports from Konstanz and Basel show. An exhibition of church treasures to the lay public is far less common and only attested in the late medieval period; this would typically apply to reliquaries and relics in ritual display or processions (specifically for Corpus Christi). The presentation of individual objects or reliquaries in the context of specific feasts, in which it is experienced and perceived as the property of the clerical community, is replaced by the presentation of multiple objects, even the entire (relic) treasure. This late medieval public ritual display, which Schlosser had seen as a precursor to the viewing of cabinets of curiosities in his 1908 work, is, however, a definite exception, limited to few places and few churches and taking place only on special (political) occasions. These displays and public processions are the only times the simple layman would be able to catch the slightest glimpse of church treasures, usually in the form of reliquaries. In any case, even the late cases of ritual display in around 1500 are distinctly integrated in liturgical performance – setting them apart from the private nature of the early modern collection.

Medieval church treasures cannot be considered collections in any modern sense of the term. Forcing a teleological purpose on them in the sense of an evolution of the contemporary museum or gallery or applying a determinist backward-looking historical perspective, as

has been common since Schlosser, presents the danger of missing important aspects of such medieval treasures and the practices relating to them in their specific historical context. This would hide from us the sheer diversity of treasures, their forms of presentation, and their performative presence. Far more rewarding is a look at the rich variety of church treasures, their function as historical witnesses of the institutions and communities that held them, and their role in personal and familial *memoria* and representation.