

CONTENT

- 7 Preface
The Board of the Böckler-Mare-Balticum-Foundation
- 11 Introduction: Indifferent Things – Really?
Krista Kodres
- 23 Destroy Them! Reuse Them? Church Furnishings
in the Era of Reformation in the Southern Baltic
Sea Area: an Overview
Gerhard Weilandt
- 39 “*Dath wy nycht moghenn byldenstormer synn*” –
Cult Images in the Churches of the Duchy of
Schleswig in the Aftermath of the Reformation
Ulrike Nürnberger
- 57 Emotions and Pragmatism: The Handling of
Catholic Material Heritage in Livonian Cities
after the Reformation
Anu Mänd
- 71 Mitteldinge as Semiophora? Lutheran-inten-
tioned Transformations and the “Schöne Tür”
of St Anne’s Church in Annaberg (Sachsen)
Burkhard Kunkel
- 81 Plunder and Memento. Iconoclashes on the
Itinerary of the Medieval Altarpiece of Rauma
Elina Räsänen
- 93 Conflicting Cults? Uppsala Cathedral and the
Swedish Reformation, c. 1520–1600
Herman Bengtsson
- 105 By the Dead Body of Christ. Representation
and Spectacle
Peter Gillgren
- 117 A Meditation on the Sinful Man. Some Thoughts
on Lutheran Devotional Art and Aesthetics
Illustrated through an Example from 1586
Martin Wangsgaard Jürgensen
- 133 The Tallinn Church Order of 1606 and
Ecclesiastical Objects in Ritual Practices
Merike Kurisoo
- 147 Donations to Finnish Parish Churches in the
1580s. Lutheran Art as a Manifestation of the
Adiaphoric Strategy
Hanna Pirinen
- 157 The Role of Interior Paintings in the Lutheran
Church Inner Space: The Cathedral of Riga in
the 16th–17th Centuries
Vija Strupule
- 167 The Confession and Confessional in the Lutheran
Church of Courland. Thoughts on the Problem
of “adiaphora” in Church Inventory
Ojārs Spārītis
- 187 The Lutheran Church as a Space for the
Representation of Social Standing in Early
Modern Ducal Prussia
Piotr Birecki
- 198 Bibliography
223 Image Credits



DESTROY THEM! REUSE THEM? CHURCH FURNISHINGS IN THE ERA OF REFORMATION IN THE SOUTHERN BALTIC SEA AREA: AN OVERVIEW

GERHARD WEILANDT

In spite of the fundamental upheavals of the Reformation period in Germany, the changes in church construction and furnishings were comparatively small at first.¹ Neither Luther nor Calvin left clear guidelines on the design of Protestant church buildings.² After the abolition of the monasteries there still existed a great number of churches without any function. It was not at all necessary to build new ones. Many of them were still in use, but some were modified, adapting paintings and sculptures to serve the new confession. Luther regarded pictures as didactic tools, useful but not necessary. They were *adiaphora* – things of indifference³ – but useful, which is why he wanted to see his own works and also the Bible illustrated, especially through woodcuts. He also fought the iconoclasts and radical enemies of images. However, he did not see pictures as essential for salvation, and he strictly rejected any form of worship of these objects.

The images of devotion, pilgrimage and indulgence revered by the people were removed and largely destroyed in many places at the beginning of the Reformation.⁴ As an example, the pilgrimage to the Holy Blood of Schwerin, which was very popular in pre-Reformation times is worth mentioning.⁵ On the altar of the chapel in the center of the ambulatory of the Schwerin Cathedral stood a silver, gilded figure of Christ. A jasper was inserted in the place of the heart, under which a relic of the Holy Blood was sealed. The pilgrimage came to an end only in 1542. Ten years later, the relic was removed from its traditional place, the

jasper was broken out and the Holy Blood was burnt.⁶ What fell victim to destruction and what did not depended on the assessment of the function: if images were used for instruction, they could remain. If they were worshiped, they were removed.

The fundamental question was whether the masses of works of art were holy images, i. e. mere representations of worshiped historical figures, or cult images with what was considered miraculous power. Since this assessment was always subjective, it's not possible to determine the reformers' generally accepted attitude towards the images. To this day, the question of the existence of cult images ("Kultbilder") from pre-Reformation times has not been settled. It is not at all clear whether the magic power of images was generally accepted in medieval times. In any case, it is not possible to characterize the Middle Ages as the age of the "Kultbild", as have Hans Belting and other researchers.⁷ A few years ago, Martin Büchsel opposed such a classification with good reasons.⁸ It is still an open question as to whether the "Kultbild" was a medieval phenomenon or an invention of the Reformation movement.

In the early years of the Reformation, dealing with images was unsystematic, often spontaneous,⁹ and iconoclasm was an "urban event".¹⁰ 1521 is the first time in the Baltic Sea region that a storm of destruction of images took place, in Trzebiatów in Eastern Pomerania, followed by destruction in Lübeck and Danzig in 1523, and Königsberg and Szczecin in 1524.¹¹ The same year, iconoclasts became active in

Reval/Tallinn, Riga and Åbo/Turku.¹² As Thomas Kantzow (died 1542), the Pomeranian chronicler, said: *The cities are like monkeys: What one does the others want to imitate.*¹³ There were also individual actions in Lübeck,¹⁴ where in 1523 a woman threw an image of the Virgin Mary into the scene of an abortion as a sign of contempt for the saints.¹⁵ The boundaries between joke and crime were sometimes not quite clear,¹⁶ for example at the end of Carnival, on the morning of Ash Wednesday 1530, a statue of Christ was thrown into a fountain in Lübeck.¹⁷ In Riga, iconoclasts demolished the images in St Peter's Church, stacked them in a remote corner of the church, and called this *ad omnes sanctos*: to all the saints.¹⁸

If a general tendency is discernible, it is at best that the high esteem for the pictorial works, which had been undisputed up to then, no longer applied. The most radical events concerned the Hanseatic city of Stralsund, where the St Nicolas parish church was devastated in April 1525. According to the Old Believers *all paintings and images of our Lord Jesus Christ and of all saints, as well as altars and all kinds of church decoration were torn down [...] beaten, sacked, ruined, destroyed.*¹⁹ The following day, the sculptures from the Dominican church of St Catherine in Stralsund were brought to a pit in the monastery grounds and buried.²⁰ The statue of Mary of the Seven Sorrows from the Franciscan church of St John's was robbed of its ornamentation and destroyed, while two iconoclasts played the organ in mockery.²¹ The torso of the statue was taken into an inn and mocked by the iconoclasts: *Mary would you make miracles now and let us see whether you can burn.* Then the statue was burned there.²² It is not easy to ascertain the extent to which such horror stories actually describe events truthfully.

Doubts are justified, as the furnishings of Stralsund's St Nicolas Church are among the best-preserved pre-Reformation church decoration in the entire Baltic Sea region today, containing a great number of surviving altarpieces, sculptures, and images of devotion (Fig. 1).²³ Nevertheless, the news of outrages against old images had considerable effects. The authorities did their best to prevent such crimes in their own cities.²⁴ In Rostock, for example, the city council issued a decree in 1526 demanding that citizens not "quarrel and dispute over the images of the saints".²⁵ That's the reason why spontaneous iconoclastic acts remained exceptions.

Instructions for the religious life, "Kirchenordnungen", regulated the handling of images.²⁶ In particular, the Ham-

burg Church Order of Johannes Bugenhagen of 1529 deserves special mention; it followed the Brunswick Order of 1528 and was adopted almost word for word in Lübeck in 1531.²⁷ It reads: *We admit, of course, that we have many illusionary images and many useless blocks [= altars] in our churches. In order not to become iconoclasts [...] we only want to remove the images – with proper power and authority – in which special worship and idolatry and special veneration by candles and lights take place. All other images which are not disturbing in the church, we leave where they are. But if in the future, such idolatry [...] should arise from some of the images of superstitious people, we also want to eliminate them [...] whenever necessary, for God alone deserves adoration and invocation.*²⁸

In Mecklenburg, the instruction for church visitations enacted in 1552²⁹ provided for the abolition of all side altars as superfluous monuments of private piety;³⁰ their altarpieces were removed and hung on the walls of the church. In the future, they were to be used for instruction, not for worship. Everything reminiscent of the old liturgy was also removed: altar ciboriums, processional flags and processional crosses. Even the old sacramental vessels and niches, which had formerly served to store the consecrated hosts, were removed almost everywhere. As a rule, only the high altar and the few items needed for the new liturgy remained untouched, as provided for in the "Kirchenordnung" of Kurland of 1570.³¹ The precious church furnishings which were at that time classified as superfluous were carefully inventoried and then used either for poor people's welfare in the cities (Hamburg), for the pastor's salary (Rostock) or were used by rulers or city councilors to pay for wars (Lübeck). But not all objects were taken away.

There was no definite decree from Mecklenburg, but from the large number of triumphal crosses that have been preserved³² it can be concluded that these spatially dominant objects, which adorned the transition from the nave to the chancel, were not as a rule removed or destroyed. In Riddagshausen, in Lower Saxony, in 1551 the head of a great crucifix was cut off and the torso was tied to a tree.³³ This atrocity does not seem to have been repeated in Mecklenburg.

The monasteries were mostly abolished, and the town or state rulers became the owners of their vast possessions accumulated over centuries. Sometimes the authorities did not close down the monasteries completely but forbade them to accept new members so that they would die out within a few years. The abandoned buildings were either left unused,

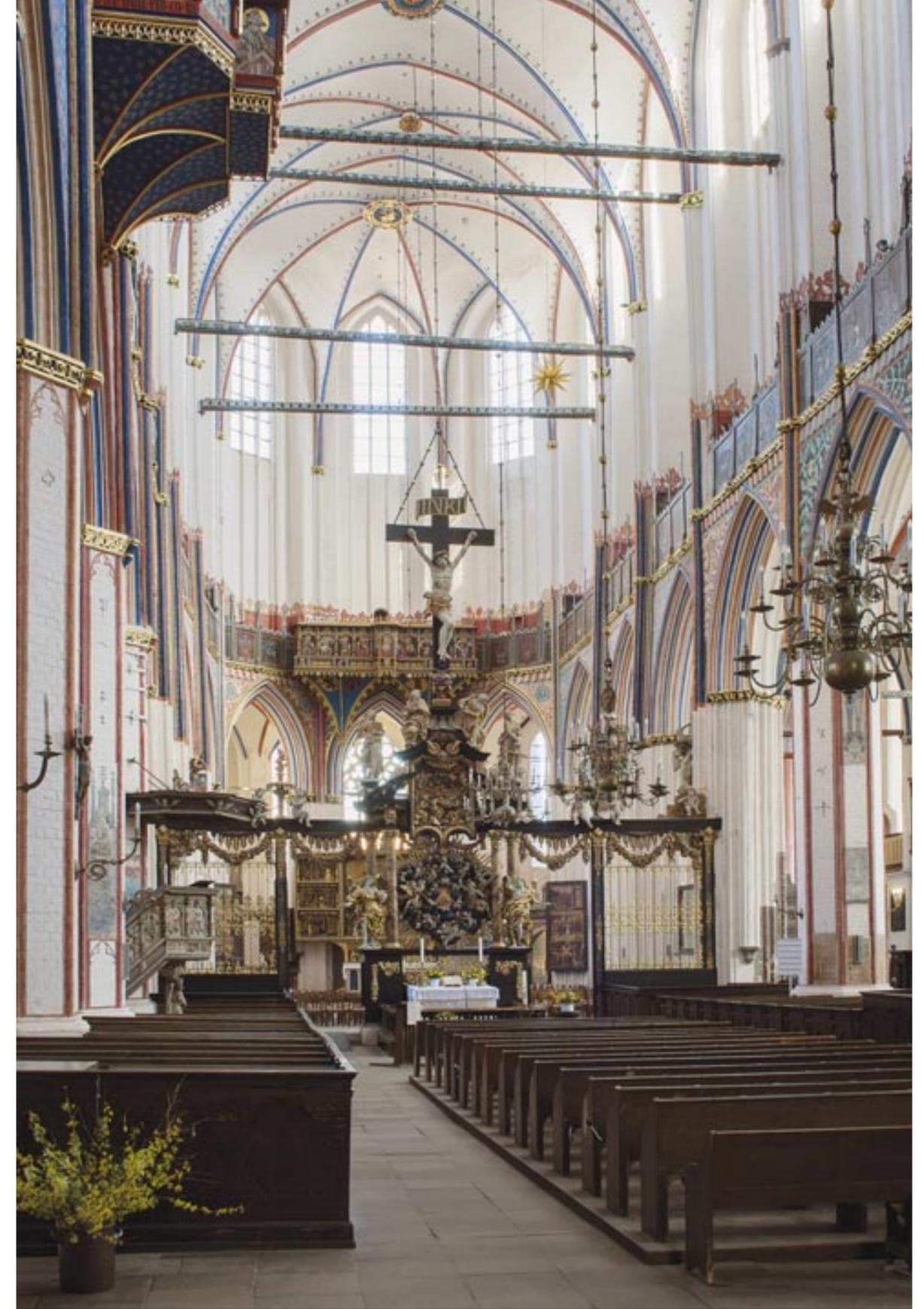


Fig. 1 Stralsund, Interior of St Nicolas parish church

“DATH WY NYCHT MOGHENN BYLDENSTORMER SYNN” – CULT IMAGES IN THE CHURCHES OF THE DUCHY OF SCHLESWIG IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE REFORMATION

ULRIKE NÜRNBERGER

Some 1400 medieval wooden objects, including altarpieces, sculptures, paintings and other carved items, among them choir screens, pews, chests and cabinets, still exist in Schleswig-Holstein. About 70% of these artefacts remain in their original settings, some even *in situ*. The rest of these objects entered local museum collections in the 19th century.¹ This fortunate situation supports a fairly reliable reconstruction of the original inventories of these churches before the Lutheran Reformation, thus offering the opportunity to follow the fate and transformation of these medieval images after the Reformation. It also provides a basis for analysing the objects' new functions in changed settings and for examining how they were treated and perceived within their congregations. Why medieval images in great numbers have survived particularly in this remote region of Germany and why certain types of objects have remained in the churches while others were discarded and, finally, if *adiaphora* – an indifferent or sometimes pragmatic attitude towards those medieval “cult images” (*Kultbilder*) – promoted the protection of those objects will be discussed.

The focus of this article is the fate of religious objects in the churches of the former Duchy of Schleswig, today on

the northern border of Germany, encompassing parts of today's Federal State of Schleswig-Holstein and southern Denmark's Sønderjylland / Südjütland. This area is bordered by the River Eider in the south, Kongeå in the north (without Kolding), the west coast, including North Sea peninsulas and islands and in the east Sundeved and the island Als. In the Medieval period, this region formed a political and cultural unit under the reign of the Dukes Knud Laward and Waldemar I, beginning in 1157 King of Denmark. The clerical centre was the bishopric city of Schleswig (founded in 947), dominated by a cathedral finished in 1134. Small parish churches were founded around Schleswig and other larger cities at that time, such as Åbenrå, Flensburg, Haderslev, Sønderborg, Tønder and Ribe (the Ribe bishopric) and on the prosperous island of Als (the Odense bishopric). Between 1150 and 1250 these early churches, very likely originally built of wood, were later replaced by solid stone buildings (fieldstone or brick or both) in surprisingly great numbers.² As many as 570 medieval churches still can be found in this region (Fig. 1). The majority of them – *Land-* or *Hardenkirchen* – were situated throughout the open countryside, since in early times the Duchy of Schleswig was lightly populated, mostly with small gatherings of farm buildings and hamlets rather than villages. Therefore, smaller churches were built in great number over the country side and within walking



Fig. 1 Distribution map of country churches in Schleswig-Holstein (with the Duchy of Schleswig) and medieval works of art in the area



Fig. 2 Rieseby, so-called Antependium

distance of these tiny communities to enable everyone to attend Sunday Mass.

Granite baptismal fonts testify to these early times of Christianisation, when they were placed at the churches' entrances (nowadays mostly near the high altar) as baptism was the first sacrament which introduced a child to the Christian congregation. The oldest examples in Schleswig-Holstein date from around 1200 and are mostly of stone; some are embellished with figures and display scenes from the "Passion of Christ" as a reminder of Original Sin (*Erbsünde*) through the death of Christ. Sometimes they show the Evangelists combined with passages from the Bible and appropriate sayings. The majority of these fonts, however, are decorated with ornamental patterns or are plain. Only those better off congregations had them cast in bronze, beautifully adorned with figural scenes, e.g. in Büsum, Lübeck and Kiel (13th and 14th centuries) and later throughout Holstein, e.g. Gettorf, Bad Segeberg, Mölln and Rendsburg (15th and early 16th centuries).³

The largest group of medieval sculptures consists of 400 Triumphal Crucifixes and smaller crucifixes often of unclear function. These might have once been placed on the altar's *mensa* or were integrated into former high altars showing the "Crucifixion". Among those works are also around 240 high altarpieces (excluding those in Lübeck), of which about 190 are still in their original settings. Assuming that there were at least three altars in every church, one finds that those

reredos or carved figures on the smaller side altars have mostly disappeared. Only some 50 side altars adorned with images have survived, in many cases, however, just the sculpted individual figures remain, while the original shrines have been destroyed.⁴

A considerable number of liturgical objects originated from the 13th century when the churches were rebuilt in stone. The majority consists of wooden crucifixes. Some of them are of remarkable quality and size, the larger examples reaching life-size and ranging from approx. 150 to 180 cm, depending on the dimensions of the church. Those sculptures were placed on wooden beams within the arches of the choirs, often forming, together with the figures of the Virgin Mary and St John, impressive triumphal groups concisely marking the division of the churches' secular and clerical areas. The crucifixes seem to belong to a group of the earliest wooden objects which entered the stone churches in the Duchy of Schleswig in the 13th century.

Among the second major group of liturgical objects in the former Duchy of Schleswig are altarpieces. One of the earliest examples from the 13th century, mistakenly identified as an *Antependium*, still remains in the church of Rieseby, on the peninsula of Schwansen at the river Schlei close to Eckernförde (Fig. 2).⁵ This large single panel without wings bears carved ornaments and painted representations of the Apostles and Christ as *majestas domini* in a mandorla. Today, the panel is positioned in front of the *mensa* of the church's

high altar, but in the 13th century it must have been placed on top of it.⁶

The overall small number of objects from the 14th century indicates that the churches underwent no major modernisations in this period, due to the fact that most of all liturgical requirements were covered for the time being.⁷ In the early 15th century, however, the Duchy seems to have again undergone a wave of modernisation. Now, altarpieces with two or even more wings appeared in the churches, fulfilling the needs for a more complex liturgy, and probably replacing single panels, like that in Rieseby. At the back of the “Altarpiece of the Virgin Mary” in the church of Haddeby (c. 1430–35), there is still a wooden support of the previous altarpiece (Fig. 3),⁸ which does not exist anymore, but might have looked like the one in Rieseby.

As congregations grew, the churches were enlarged and additional objects found their way into them, such as choir stalls for the clergy and side altars with figures of patron saints placed in a tabernacle shrine at the south wall next to the choir (while the figure of Mary was often placed *en pendent* on the opposite side).⁹ From the mid-15th century onward, high altars with crowded Calvary scenes were favoured, with increasing iconographic programmes.

THE LÜBECK CHURCH ORDER OF 1531

During the Reformation, Johannes Bugenhagen (1485–1558) settled in the city of Lübeck and published the Lübeck Church Order, the *Lübecker Kirchenordnung*, in 1531.¹⁰ Bugenhagen belonged to a moderate circle of reformers around Martin Luther. In contrast to such hardliners as Andreas Bodenstein von Karlstadt and Ulrich Zwingli, who demanded images and most of the liturgical equipment be completely removed from churches because of their close connection with the debauched veneration of saints, Bugenhagen tolerated images if they related to passages in the Bible. Like Luther, he opposed the radical tendencies of the iconoclasts, which had led to brutal riots and iconoclasm. In his *Kirchenordnung* of 1531 he wrote: *wy bekennen vrilick / dath wy yn vnnßenn karckenn / vele loghenbylde vnnd vele vnutte klotze hebbenn / Doch dath wy nycht moghenn byldenstormer synn / [...]*.¹¹ In contrast to the iconoclasts, Bugenhagen did not regard images generally as “evil”, since in his view they were *adiaphora*: incidental, irrelevant or without any meaning for Salvation. This reason-

able and pragmatic attitude certainly became an important factor in the survival of many medieval art objects in Schleswig-Holstein. He allowed medieval “cult images”, *Kultbilder*, to remain in churches, especially for didactic reasons. His priority clearly was charity and education, as well as public order. Riots, such as those of the iconoclasts, *Bilderstürmer*, to him and many other moderate Reformers meant danger to the public order.¹²

Outside Lübeck, the centre of the Reformation, the effects seemed to have been rather limited, at least for a while. The Church Order of Schleswig-Holstein – *Christelyke Kercken Ordeninge* by Johannes Bugenhagen – was published considerably later: in 1542.¹³ It was only at the end of the 16th century that the first large assignments for Lutheran church inventory were given to artists. For example, between 1595 and 1598 Heinrich Ringerink created the Lutheran high altar for St Mary’s in Flensburg, which had developed into one of the most prosperous cities in northern Germany at that time.

Due to the demands of the Reformation, the seating of the congregation eventually became a major issue. While the Catholic Church had always considered sitting a privilege reserved strictly for the clergy, after the Reformation seats and pews for the laity were erected in churches’ naves, while land owners built their own reserved pews (*Herrschaftsstühle*). To meet the needs of growing communities, balcony galleries, sometimes embellished with Lutheran iconography, had to be fitted into small country churches. Moreover, pulpits, often with carved figures of the Evangelists, were put up at the wall north of the choir to preach the gospel. As a consequence, quite a number of smaller tabernacle shrines from the 13th century and side altars from the 15th century¹⁴ had to be removed from churches to create space for this new Lutheran inventory. This development continued during the following centuries.

However, a significant part of the medieval inventory remained in the churches and was still in use after the Reformation, especially when items proved to be useful for the evangelical liturgy, such as baptismal fonts. While Luther recommended the body to be immersed completely (*Ganztaufe, immersio*), baptism was handled more practically in the Duchy of Schleswig and in Holstein, considering the cold climate. The *Christelyke Kercken Ordeninge* of Schleswig-Holstein suggested pouring water only three times over the body and in the winter season warm water should be placed in the font: *zum Heile und nicht Verderben der Kinder*.¹⁵



Fig. 3 Haddeby, Altarpiece of the Virgin Mary, c. 1430–35. At the back the support construction of the former altarpiece



Fig. 4a Esgrus, Altarpiece of the high altar with Crucifixion and architectural construction of 1750



Fig. 4b Detail of the inscription which documents the renovation: *Gott zu Ehren und der Kircken zur Zierde Hat dieses Altar renoviren Lassen Margareta Cordzen Witwe in Stobderup 1750*

In addition, Bugenhagen considered representations of the crucified Christ to be in keeping with Lutheran views, since Christ had sacrificed himself for Mankind. Finally, he emphasised the importance of the Apostles as helpful instruments for instructing the congregation. One could learn useful aspects, *Nutzbringendes*, from their lives, which certainly explains why these figures – usually present in the wings of the high altar – survived the changes of the Reformation.

MODIFICATION OF ALTARPIECES

Since iconoclastic riots (*Bilderstürme*) seem not to have occurred in the former Duchy of Schleswig and in Holstein – except for in Dithmarschen¹⁶ – most of the medieval altarpieces on high altars remained *in situ* after the Reformation. Moreover, they were generally well treated by the congregation, as indicated by numerous inscriptions recording their “renovation” and their “modification” (Fig. 4a, b). All in all, this demonstrates an awareness of these artefacts which often went hand in hand with adaption to the new Lutheran belief and liturgy. These adjustments have three variations: 1. Repainting of wings, 2. Modification of the construction, 3. Re-use of medieval sculptures and integration into new, modern altar constructions.

Repainting of wings

Opening and closing the wings of an altarpiece was an integral part of the Catholic Mass during the Middle Ages.¹⁷ Although this liturgical practice continued for some time after the Reformation¹⁸ – Lutheran practice was by no means uniform – its meaning eventually was lost.¹⁹ After all, Luther’s main concern with regard to worship was to place preaching and the Word of God at the centre of the religion. His *Deutsche Messe*, the German Mass, was clearly directed against the sacrifice liturgy of the Roman Church, to which transubstantiation and the ritual raising of consecrated elements, e.g. the elevation of the host, belonged. Luther and his circle believed this practice was idolisation of the sacramental bread.²⁰ In consequence, sacramental niches were emptied of reliquaries and predellas were demolished or over-painted with new subjects, e.g. the “Last Supper”, or inscriptions instead of the *Vera icon* or saint figures (Fig. 4c).

By the 16th century most of the painted representations on the reverses of wings were badly damaged and therefore often removed, as the opening and closing of the altarpieces was no longer common in Lutheran worship. The wings had either been permanently closed or simply left open. In some occasions, however, the reverses were repainted.²¹ One significant example of such practices in Schleswig-Holstein is the Landkirchner altarpiece of c. 1370 from the small



Fig. 4c Former medieval predella of the altarpiece of the high altar in Esgrus, removed in 1904. Museum Schloss Gottorf, Schleswig

CONFLICTING CULTS? UPPSALA CATHEDRAL AND THE SWEDISH REFORMATION, c. 1520–1600

HERMAN BENGTTSSON

The Swedish Reformation has a more complex history than may appear at the first glance. When it comes to politics and economy, the Reformation was implemented rather quickly. At a parliament in Västerås in 1527, King Gustav Vasa was successful in seizing the land, the castles and the goods belonging to the bishops and the Catholic Church. He also confiscated large quantities of gold, silver and other valuable items from churches, arguing that this was needed to pay off the huge debts of the state after the liberation war against the Danish King Christian II.¹

As a result of this, the Catholic Church lost all of its economic and political power. The last Catholic archbishop of Uppsala, Johannes Magnus, had left Sweden in 1526 never to return. In his absence, the Cathedral chapter ceased to function, and it was soon dissolved. Needless to say, this also led to a breakdown in communication with the papacy.² Another effect of the Västerås parliament was the shutting down of most of the Swedish monasteries and convents, whose belongings were also seized by the state. In some cases, these buildings were turned into hospitals, but many of them were immediately torn down and the material was reused to strengthen the king's castles and mansions.³ There were, however, regional differences. Some Swedish provinces, e. g. Östergötland and Småland, were initially openly hostile to the Reformation, and there, monasteries and convents were tolerated a little longer.⁴ Also, there was a great difference between the towns and the countryside. Swedish towns usually had very small populations, so when the Catholic economy collapsed around 1527 there was no way of maintaining all the church buildings and many of them were either torn

down or left to decay. The remaining ones were adapted to Lutheran services rather quickly and the interiors were often altered at an early stage. There are also reports of occasional iconoclasm, e. g. in Stockholm in the 1520s, when several churches were raided. As evidence of these attacks, the noses of some of the figures on the famous St George monument in St Nicholas Church were cut off.⁵

In the parish churches in the countryside, the situation was somewhat different. There the Catholic interiors were often preserved more or less intact for a very long time, although the side altars and the sacrament houses were removed. Around 1540 there was also a second wave of royal confiscations, concentrating on monstrances and other precious objects that were incompatible with Lutheran worship.⁶ Pulpits and pews were of course gradually introduced, but it was not until the middle of the 18th century that it was considered important to create more unified Lutheran interiors with whitewashed walls, large windows and Evangelical ornaments on the altars instead of the medieval reredos. Throughout the 17th century, there are actual reports of lingering Catholic practices in the countryside, which were not appreciated by the church authorities. The cult of saints had been officially prohibited at a parliament in 1544, along with holy water, incense, masses for the dead and pilgrimages. This did not, however, lead to the actual destruction of the medieval images. In 1531, Laurentius Petri had been elected the first Lutheran archbishop of Sweden and he had a very tolerant approach to church furnishings. As long as the images were not openly worshipped or touched, they could remain within the churches, although stripped of their

ornaments of gold, silver and precious stones.⁷ In some cases, they were put in separate chambers in order to prevent direct worship, but they were generally not destroyed.

From this you may draw the conclusion that when it came to material culture, there was a large difference between Sweden and other Protestant countries, such as the Netherlands, Switzerland and England. Also, in comparison with Denmark and Norway, the Swedish Reformation seems to have been slightly more tolerant to Catholic images and practices.⁸

UPPSALA CATHEDRAL AND THE REFORMATION

Not surprisingly, the history of the Reformation in Sweden is in many ways associated with Uppsala and its cathedral. After all, the cathedral was the national shrine of Sweden, where the archbishops resided. Also, it was there that the relics of the sacred King Erik († 1160) were kept.

In the late Middle Ages, Uppsala Cathedral was the wealthiest institution in the country, with vast domains of arable land at its disposal. At the beginning of the 16th century, the Cathedral area was almost like a prosperous town of its own, with the Archbishop's Palace, the spacious dwellings of the canons, the huge chapter house and several separate chapels (Fig. 1).⁹ This situation was drastically changed after the parliament in Västerås in 1527, when the goods and the treasures belonging to the archbishop and the cathedral were seized by King Gustav Vasa. As a manifestation of this change, the king took up the habit of residing in the former Archbishop's Palace when he visited Uppsala. According to the royal accounts, the building was at that time also furnished with objects that had been confiscated from various churches. From the 1530s and 1540s there are even reports of liturgical vestments being reused as clothing by the royal family.¹⁰

This paper examines the transformation of the interior of Uppsala Cathedral from Catholic to Lutheran worship during the 16th century, with special attention paid to the use of space and material objects. A crucial question here is why some of these objects were regarded as matters of indifference, while others turned out to be controversial. Overall, the transformation of the cathedral was a rather complex affair that included iconoclasm, a Catholic revival and a lot of heated discussions, until finally in 1593 an assembly in Uppsala proclaimed that Sweden was an Evangelic country



Fig. 1 Uppsala Cathedral with surroundings. Copper engraving in Johan Peringskiöld's "Monumenta Ullerakerensia", 1719

in accordance with the *Confessio Augustana* of 1530. Despite the decision, the religious disputes continued throughout the 1590s. It was not until 1598, when the Catholic King Sigismund was deposed by his uncle Duke Karl, that Lutheranism became unchallenged in Sweden. As a grim manifestation of this, some of Sigismund's loyal servants were publicly executed in March 1600.

Thanks to extant written sources, it is possible to approximately reconstruct what actually happened within the walls of Uppsala Cathedral during the early years of the Reformation.¹¹ After the parliament in Västerås in 1527, the Catholic economy collapsed completely. From then on, the king saw to it that the cathedral was given a yearly sum for its maintenance, but it was not at all sufficient. The various chapels and altars had been deprived of their gold, silver and other valuables around 1527–1528, but the altarpieces and sculptures seem to have been left. Catholic practices did not stop immediately either. From the accounts it is known that the reliquary of St Erik was still carried around in processions in the late 1520s. In 1527, 10 marks were paid for a new bier to be used on such occasions. In 1531 the reliquary is reported to have been repaired and furnished with new decorative elements.¹² Masses to St Mary and St Anne are also

mentioned in the documents in the early 1530s, but after that they disappeared altogether. Instead, the Swedish Mass, compiled by the reformer Olaus Petri, was introduced. Furthermore, in 1537 a copy of the New Testament translated into Swedish was purchased. In retrospect, this seems like a symbolic action to herald the new era.¹³

During the Middle Ages, Uppsala Cathedral had no congregation. Instead the burghers attended mass in the churches of St Mary and St Peter in the east part of the town. After a fire in 1543, however, these were torn down and the building material was used in the construction of the royal castle at Uppsala. To compensate for this, the nave of the cathedral was turned into a parish church. Although the information from the 1540s is rather limited, it seems as if a pulpit and a series of pews were then installed, along with a new organ.¹⁴ By that time, a number of medieval tombstones had also been transported from the demolished parish churches in Uppsala to the cathedral nave. Obviously, this was a manifestation of the burghers' newly procured right to be buried there. During services, the altar of the holy cross outside the choir proper seems to have been used. Similar arrangements are known to have existed in other Scandinavian cathedrals, e. g. in Lund in the province of Scania.¹⁵

The choir proper, on the other hand, was apparently not subject to any changes at all during the 1540s. It was surrounded by a medieval wall and seems to have been regarded as a separate entity, with a pulpit of its own. Even the reliquary of St Erik retained its former position behind the high altar. It was placed within a 15th century stone construction that was generally known as the "tomb of St Erik". Most likely the choir proper was used as a kind of royal chapel when King Gustav Vasa was staying in Uppsala, as he often did in the 1530s and 1540s. From the written sources it is known that the king and the queen had chairs of their own close to the choir pulpit.¹⁶

TOLERANCE AND ICONOCLASM

As mentioned above, there was a great tolerance to Catholic images in 16th century Sweden, as long as they were not subject to direct worship. According to Archbishop Laurentius Petri's treatise *Om Kyrkio Stadgar och Ceremonier* (1566) and the church order of 1571, paintings and sculptures were in fact considered rather useful to instruct the congregation.¹⁷ There are, however, records of outright iconoclasm even in Uppsala Cathedral. In the west portal there was a medieval



Fig. 2 St Lawrence from the south portal of Uppsala Cathedral, c. 1300. The head was obviously cut off during the Reformation

trumeau sculpture of the patron saint King Erik that seems to have been particularly popular among the laity. Since it was placed at the west front, it was easily accessible to everyone. According to 17th and 18th century descriptions, disabled people rubbed themselves and their clothes against the saintly image in order to cure themselves. As this custom still continued in the second half of the 16th century, the

sculpture was removed and apparently destroyed in order to avoid such a Catholic extravaganza. Most likely this action was undertaken on behalf of the archbishop and the Protestant chapter.¹⁸

Around the same time, the head of the limestone sculpture of St Lawrence in the south portal was chopped off, but the torso was left and is still preserved in the cathedral (Fig. 2). Also, the image of St Erik in the medieval chapter house then lost its head, as may be seen in a couple of woodcuts published in the late 17th and early 18th centuries (Fig. 3).¹⁹ There are no written records of these acts of iconoclasm, but

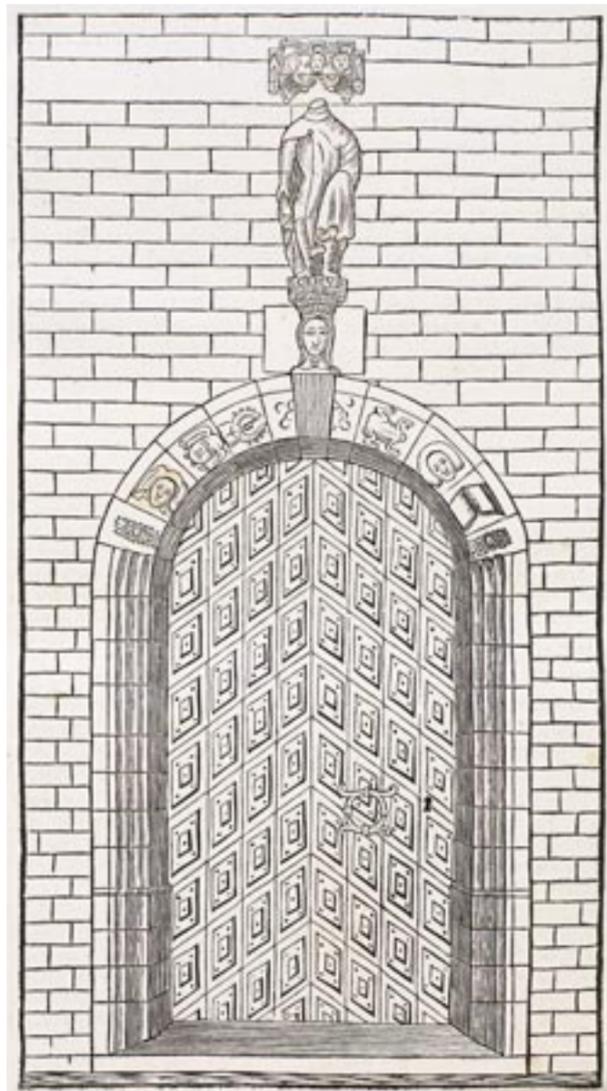


Fig. 3 The portal of the now demolished Chapter House in Uppsala, 1430s. Note St Erik's missing head! Woodcut in Johan Peringskiöld's *Monumenta Ullerakerensia*, 1719



Fig. 4 Male saint. 15th century wooden sculpture from Uppsala Cathedral. This image seems to have been destroyed during an outburst of iconoclasm in the early 1580s

they probably occurred in the second half of the 16th century. Another iconoclastic action was undertaken in the 1580s, when the burial chapel of Queen Katarina Jagellonica († 1583) was furnished. Apparently, the destruction was carried out by the Flemish sculptors working on her funerary monument.²⁰ They were Calvinists, and this is why they had immigrated to tolerant Sweden. The chapel was contained in the old chapter room, which seems to have been used to store Catholic images in accordance with the ideas of Archbishop Laurentius Petri. According to a 17th century description, the Calvinist artisans were provoked by these images and began to destroy them.

One of these fragments has survived. This is in fact the only surviving piece of medieval wooden sculpture from Uppsala Cathedral (Fig. 4).²¹ All the other sculptures and altarpieces were unfortunately lost in a great fire in 1702, but the fragment was by then kept in the vestry, so it was not further

Fig. 5 Funerary monument of King Gustav Vasa and his queens, Katarina of Sachsen-Lauenburg and Margareta Leijonhufvud, in Uppsala Cathedral. Willem Boy, 1562–83



damaged. The reason why it was preserved was that it was erroneously identified with the image of the Æsir god Thor from the legendary heathen temple at Old Uppsala mentioned in some medieval sources. Consequently, the fragment was regularly described and even depicted in 17th and 18th century antiquarian literature.²² The iconography has proved to be quite puzzling even to modern scholars. According to a 15th century document, Uppsala Cathedral was then in possession of a sculpture of the entombed Christ that was worshipped during Easter. Although the extant fragment bears some resemblance to this category of images, it is notably lacking the clear-cut features usually associated with Christ.²³ Furthermore, the now lost left arm seems to have been stretched out in such a fashion that the figure was not likely to have been placed within a coffin. Rather, this may

be seen as a representation of a saint, perhaps St Bartholomew, who had an altar of his own in the cathedral in the 15th century, and whose medieval iconography is rather obscure. Another suggestion is that it may have been Job, whose cult became popular at the end of the Middle Ages, although there are no actual signs of this in Uppsala.

A CATHOLIC REVIVAL

So, remodeled as a parish church and with occasional outbursts of iconoclasm, Uppsala Cathedral seems to have been well on its way to becoming a Lutheran church by the middle of the 16th century. To manifest this, the initiator of the Swedish Reformation, King Gustav Vasa, chose to be buried



THE TALLINN CHURCH ORDER OF 1606 AND ECCLESIASTICAL OBJECTS IN RITUAL PRACTICES

MERIKE KURISOO

The article focuses on the Tallinn Church Order of 1606 and the uses of ecclesiastical objects, as well as space, stipulated by it. The research also views how the Church Order addresses the concept of “indifferent things” (ceremonies and rituals), more specifically church furnishings and images. The text examines the provisions and injunctions of the Church Order and how these reflected and/or organised a particular occasion. It analyzes the injunctions of the Church Order, as well as concrete objects, i.e. church furnishings and images that were in use in the Tallinn churches during the first decade of the 17th century. It refers to the local pastors, i.e. the people who compiled the Church Order by writing the texts and later followed it and actually used the objects located in the churches.

The article examines the objects and images which were used in administering sacraments and that enjoyed a special status (altar decorations, e.g. altarpieces, sculptures, Eucharistic vessels and baptismal fonts), as well as other church furnishings that were used in religious practices (pulpits, pews and congregation balconies) and objects pertaining to commemoration and personal reverence (tomb monuments, epitaphs, coat-of-arms epitaphs, chandeliers, paintings, etc.).¹

PROLOGUE

Beginning in the second quarter of the 16th century, Tallinn developed into a Lutheran town. The evangelical teachings reached the town at the beginning of the 1520s. In the three largest towns of Estonia and Livonia – Riga, Tallinn and

Tartu – iconoclasm took place in 1524–1525: in Riga in three waves in March and April in 1524, in Tallinn on 14 September of the same year, and in January 1525 in Tartu.² The prompt and straightforward intervention by the Tallinn municipal authorities shows that it was an event initiated by the lower classes and was relatively quickly brought under control by the authorities. The extent of the iconoclasm in Tallinn is unknown. In 1603, the warden of St Nicholas’ Church, Jobst Dunte, wrote an entry in the account book of the church describing the events that took place in September of 1524. According to the book, crowds plundered the churches on the day of the Feast of the Holy Cross: first the Dominican monastery, followed by St Olaf’s Church and the Church of the Holy Spirit. They plundered and vandalised the treasure chests, offertory boxes, sacred statues and altars. Two days later they attempted to invade St Nicholas’ Church; however, thanks to the church warden pouring molten lead into the door locks, the plunderers were unable to get in.³

The Tallinn municipal authorities were quick to react to the devastation that had occurred. A Town Council decree was issued on 15 September demanding the return of the chalices, patens, church silver, chandeliers, candelabra, ecclesiastical textiles and other church furnishings stolen from the Holy Spirit and St Olaf’s Churches, as well as from the church of the Dominican monastery, during the destruction of statues of idols and altars. There is a separate reference to the furnishings of St Nicholas’ Church that escaped plunder, demanding that all of the people who owned paintings and carvings in the church should remove them in the next two

days. Anyone planning to plunder the church of the Cistercian St Michael's nunnery, the Cathedral, St Nicholas' Church or St Anthony's Chapel was threatened with severe punishment.⁴ It is evident from the Town Council's decree that the assets donated to the churches were considered both the property of the church and private property. The looted objects either had to be returned to the churches or the owners had to remove them.

Viewing the events in Tallinn in the context of the waves of iconoclasm, it is clear that, at least for a while, it was likely that the majority of the property of the town's churches survived. The surviving late medieval altarpieces from the Tallinn churches show that beyond doubt, as do their inventory lists from the 16th and 17th centuries.⁵

The religious life in Tallinn in the first half of the 16th century was regulated by the 1524–1525 ecclesiastical acts and the Church Order of 1530, compiled by Johann Briesmann, which applied in the three largest towns of Estonia and Livonia (Riga, Tallinn and Tartu) beginning in 1533. The texts that regulated the ecclesiastical life in towns in the first half of the 16th century appear extremely laconic pertaining to church furnishings.⁶ *Kurze Ordnung des Kirchendienstes, samt einer Vorrede von Ceremonien, an den Erbaren Rath der löblichen Stadt Riga in Liefland* by Briesmann, the chief evangelical pastor of Riga, was published in 1530.⁷ Briesmann's Church Order emphasised that ecclesiastical ceremonies were external accounts of the Gospel and faith, referring to the images, church furnishings and ceremonies as external parts of the church service, and subject to personal free choice, according to the view of Martin Luther. These were considered appropriate for Christians and prohibiting them would be a misuse of the Word of God.⁸ The Order briefly touched upon the issue of church furnishings, e.g. the use of Eucharistic vessels and pastors' vestments.

By the middle of the 16th century, the ecclesiastical life in the lower town of Tallinn was controlled by the Town Council and a number of decrees regulating it had been issued. None of them, however, directly concerned the use of church furnishings. The upper town, i.e. Toompea, where the Cathedral was located, remained officially Catholic until 1561, when Tallinn and northern Estonia became a part of the kingdom of Sweden. The upper and the lower town remained separated on the legal and church governance level; the Cathedral served as the main church of the Swedish province, but was not under the jurisdiction of the Town Council.

The reorganisation of the ecclesiastical space in town took place gradually throughout the 16th century. The bulk of the

Catholic church furnishings initially remained in their original locations, but new items were also commissioned. In the 1530s and 1540s chandeliers were donated to the churches. In the 1540s and 1550s the first epitaphs reached the churches. In the entire Baltic Sea area, the pews of the Tallinn St Nicholas' Church (1556–1557) were considered to be ahead of their time. While the chandeliers and epitaphs served as the self-representations of individuals, families and associations and referred to their support of the new faith, the pews of St Nicholas' Church served as a manifestation of both the congregation and the Town Council.⁹ The mid- and late 16th century were marked in Tallinn by the Livonian War (1558–1583) and a political situation which slowed down and complicated the transition processes.

At the end of the 16th century a need emerged for a new Tallinn Church Order and a provisional framework of rules was written down in 1598.¹⁰ The famine in 1601 and the great plague in 1603 disrupted the compilation of the new Order.¹¹ A considerable number of citizens died during the famine and plague, and almost all of the churches needed new pastors. The state of church affairs in town was disorderly. The situation in Tallinn is illustrated by a text hewn in stone in 1602 on the “plague epitaph”, a memorial plaque of the great famine (Fig. 1):

ANNO SECHSZEHNHUNDERT VND ZWEI
IN LIEFLAND WAR EIN GROSS GESCHREI,
DER KRIECK, HUNGER UND SCHEDLICHE PEST
DEN LEUTEN GAR GEFEHR GEWEST.
FÜR HUNGER EIN DEM ANDERN FRASS
DIE KATZEN, HUNDI HR WILTPRET WAS
AUCH GROSS VERHERUNG LEVT UND LANT
GESCHEHEN IST DURCH GOTTES HANT.
SO THUT ER DER SUNDERN WEHREN,
WENN MAN SICH NIT BALD WIL BEKEREN,
OHN UNTERLAS DARUMB THUT HEUT
VON HERTZEN BUS, O LIEBEN LEUT
GEDENKET OFFT AN DIS GESCHICHT,
UND HALTET SOLCHS FOR KEIN GETICHT.
ARNOLT PASSER.¹²

THE TALLINN CHURCH ORDER OF 1606

In 1606, commissioned by the Tallinn Town Council, the town's clergy presented the *Christliche Kirchenordnung der Stadt Reval* (The Christian Church Order of Tallinn).¹³

The Order, comprised of 21 chapters, presented the regulations and decrees adopted in the town in the course of the 16th century and contained, among many other things, the guidelines for conducting sermons, baptisms and burials. It was, apparently, the first time that the procedures for communion and communal prayer were written down in Tallinn. The text of the Church Order was supported by theological explanations, with references to the Bible, Martin Luther and Johannes Bugenhagen. Good Christian practices were also referred to.¹⁴ From the beginning, the Church Order stated that it was based on “pure” teachings, proceeding from the Augsburg Confession and the *Formula Concordiae* (Formula of Concord). For the sections pertaining to the ecclesiastical ceremonies, the Saxon Church Order of 1580 served as a model.¹⁵ In the case of ecclesiastical rites, the Church Order stressed that adiaphoristic (*Adiaphorismus*) aspects – things “that the word of God neither mandates nor forbids” – should not be overemphasised “in the manner of Calvinists and Papists”.¹⁶

The Tallinn Church Order was signed by the seven clerics from all of the churches of the lower town. Among the undersigned were the pastor of St Olaf's Church, Paulus Kuhn (Khuen), the pastor of St Nicholas' Church, Franziscus Illyricus, the deacon of St Olaf's Church, Heinrich Vestring, the minister of St Olaf's Church, Georg Fiant (Feint), the pastor of the Church of the Holy Spirit, Arend von Husen, the deacon of the Church of the Holy Spirit, Georg Müller, and the pastor of the Swedish congregation, Johannes Olai.¹⁷ All of the signing clerics had assumed their positions either during or after the Great Plague and the famine. It is known where most of these clerics received their education: Paulus Kuhn studied in Wittenberg, Franziscus Illyricus and Georg Fiant in Königsberg, and Heinrich Vestring obtained his master's degree (possibly also a doctoral degree) in Rostock.¹⁸ Of the seven men, at least four had, therefore, received religious education in prominent German Lutheran universities.

The Tallinn Church Order of 1606 summed up the developments that had taken place in Tallinn throughout the 16th century and the regulations therein refer to the agreements and precepts pertaining to the use of ecclesiastical space and church furnishings. Tallinn's new Church Order applied in the lower town, which functioned on the basis of the Law of Lübeck; the upper town, Toompea, was legally separate, and the residence of the royal Swedish vice-regent was also located there. I will,



Fig. 1 Epitaph of the Great Famine from the Swedish St Michael's Church. Arent Passer (stone tablet), 1602. Wooden frame, 1697. Tallinn City Museum

therefore, only deal with the objects and practices used in the parish churches of the lower town: St Nicholas' Church, St Olaf's Church and the Church of the Holy Spirit.

The Tallinn Church Order refers to the use of the objects existing in the churches in the context of “indifferent things”. The chapter on the adornment states that the objects in churches, such as candles, organs, altars, pulpits and Christian paintings and images, could remain there and adorn the church if used with no idolatry involved. However, it remarks admonishingly that a church should not be adorned in the same manner as a guild hall. It also empha-

sises that the hearts of the faithful are the best kind of adornment:

*Nemblichen Zierath der Kirchen ohne iennigen Aberglauben behalten wir, dar zue denn auch gehören Lichter, Orgeln, Altare, Canzeln, wie auch Christliche gemälder vnd bilde. Zieret man doch woll ein Gildthauß. Soltte man denn nicht zieren das Betehausß. Doch wissen wir wol, das der beste Zierath in diesem hause sey ein andechtiges glaubiges hertze.*¹⁹

In relation to images, the Tallinn Church Order also refers to the concept of “indifferent things”, stressing that the pictures and paintings could stay as long as they were not misused:

*Bildere vnnd gemälnüße, welche nicht Abgöttisch sindt für sich, noch zur Abgötterey mißbrauchett werden, so lange halten wir sie für freye mitteldinge, darüber vnñß kheiner gewissen machen soll, Sollen demnach nirgends anders zue dienen, nur das die einfeltigen eine historien oder geschichte darinnen sehen mügen, Vnndt das die Kirche eußerlich damitt gezierett werde. Woltte man sie aber mißbrauchen, so sollen Lehrer solche bilder durchs wortt erstlich auß dem Hertzen reißen, hernach durch ordenttlichen gewaltt der Obrigkheitt abgeschaffet werden.*²⁰

The text of the Tallinn Church Order refers here, in a broader sense, to the meaning of the images depicted, but also accounts for the existence, maintenance and proper use of the Catholic heritage, following Martin Luther’s ideas. In the 1525 text *Wider die himmlischen Propheten* (Against the Heavenly Prophets), Luther denounced the misuse of images and idolatry; however, he considered the removal of images from churches necessary only in the case of continuous misuse and even then the decision should be left to the authorities.²¹ Luther also pointed out that removing images from people’s sight did not remove them from their hearts. First, the wrong images needed to be removed from people’s hearts with the help of words. Images, as such, were neither good nor bad. They were for remembrance, recollection and guidance. Similar ideas are found in Martin Luther’s 1528 *Vom Abendmahl. Bekenntnis* (Confession Concerning Christ’s Supper), where he stated that images and church furnishings could remain at people’s discretion, and that the biblical images and those in good stories were very beneficial.²² The same is stated, though more vaguely and without directly mentioning the images, in the Formula of Concord, which describes adiaphora as “ceremonies or ecclesiastical practices that are neither commanded nor forbidden in God’s Word but that were introduced in the churches for the sake of good order and decorum”.²³

OBJECTS IN ECCLESIASTICAL PRACTICES AND IN THE CHURCH ORDER

On a number of occasions, the Tallinn Church Order refers to church furnishings and their use. The topic is primarily focused on in the chapters pertaining to the adornment of churches, pews and bells. Chapter 16 “Of adornment of churches, organs, candles etc.” and Chapter 18 “Of church pews and bells” focus on the adornment and furnishing of churches. Practical precepts regarding objects and their use can also be found in the sections describing rituals and services, e.g. baptism, sermons and communion.

Regarding the *altar and the pulpit*, the Order states that the word of God should be preached at a specific location in the church and Communion celebrated at a certain table, or at the altar. It is also emphasised that the pulpit and the altar are elements of Christian freedom. Their adornment should, however, be done without any idolatry.²⁴ The side altars gradually disappeared from Lutheran churches and this was also true in Tallinn. The reasons for that were frequently practical and related to the need to make room for pews and other church furnishings. In Tallinn, the retables on the high altars apparently remained in their original locations and the existing pulpits were probably also used.²⁵ In Tallinn, the retables of the high altars, which in many places remained in their original locations, show the continuing use of such objects. This is certainly the case in St Nicholas’ and the Holy Spirit Churches, but it cannot be ruled out that a similar practice occurred in other churches (Fig. 2). The high altar was the only altar in the Lutheran ecclesiastical space and the adornments on it were also needed in the future. The continuing existence of the altarpieces is certainly linked to the concept of continuity: creating a link between the old and the new. Moreover, these were expensive, aesthetically high-level works which had reached the churches as collective efforts of the community and were, therefore, considered common heritage. Why the altarpieces in St Nicholas’ and the Holy Spirit Churches (possibly also other town churches) were not replaced by new ones in the 17th century is a question for further research. Most of the rural churches on the Estonian territory, for example, received new altarpieces in the 17th century.²⁶

The Church Orders of the neighbouring regions show a somewhat dissimilar attitude to the removal of side altars, as well as differences in practices pertaining to the adornment of altars and their further use. According to the Church Order of Courland of 1570, there could only be one altar in a



Fig. 2 The Retable of the High Altar of St Nicholas’ Church. Workshop of the Lübeck Master Hermen Rode, 1478–81. Art Museum of Estonia, Tallinn

church, and it was particularly emphasised that the side altars had to be demolished and cleared of idolatrous images.²⁷ The Swedish Church Ordinance of 1571 also stipulated the removal of side altars, but it tolerated them in greater town churches.²⁸

The removal of side altars in the churches of the lower town of Tallinn probably started in the mid-16th century. The latest known example is the Tallinn Cistercian nunnery, which existed in a reformed state until 1630. In the church, given to the Swedish congregation, four side altars were demolished



Fig. 3 Antependium of St Olaf’s Church. Brussels workshop. 1550s. Tallinn City Museum