When Christ became an astronomer:

the contrasting histories of two seventeenth-century Augsburg shrines

By Heike Zech

Fig.1 The Gilbert clock, Augsburg and Friedberg, seventeenth-century and later, ebony and silver, parcel gilt,

Front and back view .

(© The Rosalind and Albert Gilbert Collection on loan to the Victoria and Albert Museum, London Museum number Loan:Gilbert,66-2008)

Lavish silver-mounted architectural wooden structures, such as that encasing a clock in the Rosalinde and Arthur Gilbert Collection [*Figs 1* and *2*], were a particular specialty of Augsburg masters, who created them as shrines and cabinets of curiosity or art. These structures, iconic products of the South German Free Imperial city of early modern times, were highly esteemed by Europe's Baroque princes as well as by later collectors.

Fig.3 above:The Pomeranian kunstschrank, Augsburg, completed 1615,formerly in the Kunstgewerbemuseum, Berlin, destroyed 1945, photograph circa 1900. Below: Fig. 4 Anton Mozart, The delivery of the Pomeranian cabinet, circa 1615

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The recent exhibition, *Wunderwelt. Der Pommersche Kunstschrank*, which focused on the Pomeranian *kunstschrank* or 'art cabinet' in the Kunstgewerbemuseum, Berlin [*Fig 3*] is testimony to this ongoing fascination.[1] Commissioned by Duke Philip II of Pomerania and Stettin (1573-1618) and delivered in 1615, the Pomeranian *kunstschrank* was filled with Augsburg-made curiosities, such as works of art and scientific instruments.[2] Even though its contents, which included many masterpieces in silver, are still in the collections of the Kunstgewerbemuseum, the cabinet itself was destroyed in 1945.[3] The pride of its makers in their achievement can be sensed in a miniature by Anton Mozart [*Fig 4*], made for the *kunstschrank*, that depicts a fictional delivery procession in Stettin in which all the makers who contributed to this marvel appear.[4] The exhibition catalogue, which included new material, broadened existing scholarship on the cabinet and provided new information about the makers, patrons and techniques used to construct these splendid pieces.

Large cabinets, such as the now-lost Pomeranian one, were extraordinary and rare commissions and as such tend to be documented. By contrast, the majority of cabinets created jointly by Augsburg cabinet-makers and silversmiths between the late- sixteenth- and mid-eighteenth centuries are on a smaller, less ambitious scale, and often lack any documentation. Like the piece discussed in this article, they also tend to have been subject to later interventions and restorations that profoundly changed their appearance and meaning. In the case of the Gilbert clock, only fragments of the original silver figures survive which allow a partial

1 Christoph Emmendörffer and Christof Tepesch (eds): *Wunderwelt, Der Pommersche Kunstschrank*, exhibition catalogue, Maximilian Museum, Augsburg, Berlin, 2014

2 A model was created in summer 1611 and work on the actual commission followed immediate afterwards. A table of adjustable height was completed in 1616. Barbara

Mundt:'Der Pommersche Kunstschrank,', ibid, pp.21-31, in particular p 22;based upon her earlier publication: Barbara Mundt:*Der Pommersche Kunstschrank des Augsburger Unternehmers Philip Hainhofer für den gelehrten Herzog PhilippII, von Pommern*, Munich 2009

3 Among the other famous cabinets is the so-called *stipo tedesco*, 1619-1625, now in the

Museo del Argenti, Florence, created for Archduke Leopold V, and one made for Gustavus Adolphus II of Sweden (1594-1632), now in the collections of the Universitets Konstsamlingar, Uppsala, op.cit, see note 1, pp 16, 19, 28

4 Ibid, p 29

reconstruction of the original sculptural silver decoration. As works of art, created by a multitude of masters specializing in different materials, the attribution of such cabinets to a particular maker or workshop remains elusive, when the vital research ingredients of archive material and marks are absent. The Gilbert clock is such a case and can, therefore, serve as a footnote to recent research into seventeenth-century Augsburg cabinets and clocks. The dark wooden structure of the clock, decorated with applied silver elements, is nearly identical to a shrine in Prague bearing the marks of Abraham II Lotter [*Figs 5* and *6*] which has been continuously preserved in the Loreto church since the mid-seventeenth century. The comparison of the two objects in this article highlights how the appearance and function of a work of art can be entirely altered during the long period of its lifetime, not only because of changing markets and tastes, but also as a consequence of shifting world views across historical periods.[5]

The Gilbert clock (H 301/4 in (76.5cm) W 17 in (43.2cm) D 10 in (24.5cm); (museum object number Loan:Gilbert.66-2008) is a marriage of a shrine case and a table clock, both of them masterpieces in their own right. The ebonised shrine, set with a front drawer and applied silver ornament is certainly the work of Augsburg craftsmen and is stylistically comparable to cabinets produced during the first half of the seventeenth century.[6] A late-seventeenth-century silver-gilt and rock crystal table clock [*Fig 10*] bears the signature 'Kreitt Maÿr' on its enamelled and engraved silver dial. The Kreitmayrs were a dynasty of clockmakers based in Friedberg, the famous centre of clock making just a couple of miles east of Augsburg, and thus conveniently close to both the Imperial city of Augsburg and the court of the Electors of Bavaria. The clock is probably the work of Elias I Kreitmayr (1639-1697).[7]

Fig. 5 Shrine, Augsburg, circa 1613-1616, maker's mark of Abraham II Lotter , wood, silver, parcel-gilt, in the Loreto church, Prague

Fig. 6 The Prague shrine(Fig.5) back view

(© The Loreto, Provincie kopucinú v CR)

5 The cooperation between different trades in Augsburg makes the existence of two nearly identical pieces by no means unusual. A number of closely related works, attributed to, or with marks associated with, Matthias Walbaum's workshop are known, ibid pp 416-419, cat. No 81, with further references.

6 Ibid, pp 438-443, cat nos 91-92; see also the respective holdings of the Kunstkammer in Dresden: Anne Veltrup,'Kunstkammerschränke als Spiegel der fürstlichen Ordnung', Dirk

Syndram and Marina Minning (eds), *Die kurfürstliche Kunstkammer in Dresden. Geschichte einer Sammlung*, Dresden, 2012, pp 223-235, in particular, figs.4 and 8

7 Friedberg as center of clock production has been well studied and it has an impressive museum celebrating the town's century-long tradition. I would like to thank Dr. Alice Becker, Direktor of the Museum im Schloss, Friedberg, for kindly suggesting comparisons for the clock in the Gilbert shrine. Elias Kreitmayr created

several similar clocks although none with a comparable precious rock-crystal decoration. The clock may have an additional signature on its base, currently hidden, which would confirm this attribution. See also Adelheid Riolini-Unger, *Die Friedberger Uhren*, exhibition catalogue, Friedberg, 1993, in particular pp 98-99, cat nos 85-87; pp 170-171 (biography)

Fig.7 The Prague shrine [Fig. 5], detail of the marks of Abraham II Lotter above the side door of nativity scene

(© The Loreto, Provincie kapucinú, v CR)

Fig. 9 The Gilbert clock, from Heinrich Frauenberger's N.R. Fränkels Uhrensammlung, 1913

The fact that the Gilbert clock, as it is now, has been cited in a range of studies on different aspects of the decorative arts shows how it is a work created in defiance of the confines of the guild structures typical of early modern craftsmanship.[8] The Augsburg production processes at the time could be said to foreshadow the serial production of later centuries. In 1988 Timothy Schroder first pointed out that the case "was probably made in the early 1600s as a house altar", and that it closely resembles a shrine in the Loreto church in Prague, even though he only had a photograph of a detail of the shrine with which to compare the clock.[9] His perceptive observation inspired me to write this article. A careful comparison with the near-identical shrine preserved in Prague, helps us considerably in understanding the extent of the transformation of the Gilbert piece. It also gives an indication of its appearance before it was turned into a clock, an alteration that must pre-date 1890, when it was first described.[10]

The Gilbert clock

The provenance of the Gilbert clock, acquired from a private collector in Milwaukee in 1988, is only known in part[11] and, unsurprisingly, no information on the separate lives of the objects prior to their marriage has come to light so far. In 1890 the clock was described by Carl Marfels, one of the leading clock scholars of the day. His article was reprinted, with a photograph [*Fig 9*] of the piece in 1913, after the clock had entered the collection of Nathan Ruben Fränkel (1848-1909) in Frankfurt am Main. It was in this publication that the 'Collection Seckel' in Berlin was given as the provenance and, while this collection appears to have been unpublished, more is known about Fränkel and his extensive collection of clocks, gold and silver. A watch-maker by trade,[12] his

8 Carl Marfels,'Eine kunstvolle alte Standuhr', *Deutsche Uhrmacherzeitung,* vol.10, 15 May 1890, Berlin; republished in: Heinrich Frauenberger 9ed) *N.R. Fränkels Uhrensammlung*, Düsseldorf, 1913, cat no 273,pl42: Regina Löwe, *Die Augsburger Goldschmiedewerkstatt des Matthias Walbaum*, Munich 1975, cat no 96A; Timothy Schroder, *The Gilbert Collection of Gold and Silver*, Los Angeles, 1988, pp 24-26, fig 7

9 Timothy Schroder, op cit, see note 8, p 26

10 Carl Marfels, op cit, see note 8.

11 The history of the ownership of the clock is part of an on-going research project for the Rosalind and Arthur Gilbert Collection. The research may also clarify the significance of an illegible stamp in red ink on the base of the front drawer, possibly a customs seal.

12 His watch-making business appears to have been registered as Fränkel &Co in 1870, while the Frauenberger publication gives 1874 as the year of the foundation of Fränkel's own company. Frauenberger 9ed, op cit, see note 8, p.VII. The family business appears to have con-

tinued beyond Fränkel's death with subsequent trade marks registered as late as 1971. See: http://www.mikrolisk.de/show.php?site=280&suchwort-Ruben (retrieved August 2014). Fränkel is also included in the following publication which could not be consulted in preparation of this article: Jürgen Abeler, *Meister der Uhrmacherkunst. Über 14000 Uhrmacher aus dem deutschen Sprachgebiet mit Lebens-und Wirkungsdaten und dem Verzeichnis ihrer Werke*, Wuppertal, 1977

address was given as the second floor of 38 Ziel, a prestigious commercial street, in the Frankfurt directory of 1877.[13] After Fränkel's death in 1909 his children gave the majority of the collection (although not, apparently, the future Gilbert clock[14])to the then Kunstgewerbe Museum in Düsseldorf. They also commissioned the museum's Director Heinrich Frauenberger to compile a catalogue of the horological collection. The Fränkel Collection, however, remained at the Kunstgewerbe Museum for only a couple of years: in 1916 it fell victim to theft and 439 items, including the pieces from Fränkel's collection, most of them watches, disappeared.[15]

Frauenberger's lavish album, celebrating the Fränkel Collection, lists 372 pieces, some of them reproduced in color plates, an extraordinary luxury at the time. It also includes a biographical sketch, written by Fränkel's children, which depicts a Jewish watch-maker, born near Würzburg, who single-handedly built a watch empire based in Frankfurt am Main, with branches in Paris and Switzerland. Fränkel's interest in 'rare old clocks' and watches had been nurtured by Carl Marfels himself:

> durch ihn [Carl Marfels] wurde sein hochentwickelter Kunstsinn auf das Sammeln seltener alter Uhren gelenkt; aber auch seine verwandschaftlichen und freundschaftlichen Beziehungen zu den bedeutenden Antiquitätenhändlern von Frankfurt a. Main und München waren geeignet, sein Interesse an alten Uhren und sein Verständnis für altertümliche Gegenstände zu wecken.[16]

> [He [Carl Marfels] drew the attention of his keen interest in art to rare old clocks and watches; and his family and business ties with important antique dealers in Frankfurt a. Main and Munich helped to fuel his interest in historic clocks and watches and his connoiseurship in antique objects]

His family and professional networks enabled him to build a fantastic collection, but he was compelled to collect because of his commitment to seek out and pursue 'beautiful' objects:

> Kein Weg war ihm zu weit und kein Opfer zu gross, wenn ihm die Gelegenheit geboten wurde, etwas Schönes für seine Sammlung zu erwerben.[17]

The means and the passion, the key traits of a true collector, are universal and this description of Fränkel could apply equally to the collecting habits of Arthur and Rosalinde Gilbert who would own his clock nearly a century later. Fränkel and Arthur Gilbert also had something else in common: they shared their interest in collecting with their spouses and both also lent pieces from their collections to museums and for exhibition. They also differ in that Fränkel, the watchmaker, drew on his historical collection for inspiration for his own creations, while Gilbert earned his wealth in property development.[18]

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13 See http:/www.adressbuecher.net/entry/show/2484151(accessed August 2014

14 The 1913 catalogue speaks of 'die teilweise Überlassung der ganzen Sammlung' (partial gift of the whole collection) which leaves room for some speculation. Heinrich Frauenberger, op cit,see note 8, p VIII.

15 The museum has since become part of the Stiftung Museum Kunstpalast in Düsseldorf. Richard Stettiner, Einbruchsdiebstahl im Kunstgewerbemuseum zu Düsseldorf, Hamburg,

Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe, 20 August 1916. I am very grateful to Dr. Barbara Til, Stiftung Museum Kunstpalast, for providing me with a copy of this illustrated list of stolen items and for sharing further information on the background of the gift.

16 Heinrich Freudenberger (ed), op cit, see note 8, p VII

17 "no journey was too far, no sacrifice too big, if it afforded the opportunity to acquire something beautiful for his collection', ibid, p VIII

18 Ibid, p VIII

Fig.10 above: The Gilbert clock [Fig.1], detail of the clock dial signed by Kreitt Maÿer, Friedberg, late seventeeth century

Below: Fig. 11 The Gilbert clock , detail of the table clock, cabochons around drum of clock, hardly visible in the current set-up

(©The Rosalind and Arthur Gilbert Collection on loan to the Victoria and Albert Museum, London)

Since the image was first published the clock has undergone further structural changes, such as the position of the columns and the arrangement of the silver flowers. Most noticeably two, apparently original, columns not on the piece in the earliest picture are now back in place. A mirror, itself a later addition, behind the figure in the central arch has been removed.[19] In its present incarnation the piece is a table clock with a statuette of a classical warrior [*Fig 14*] below and the possibly unique feature of parcel-gilt silver figure of a man looking through a telescope [*Fig 17*] in the baldachin above. I will discuss this particular figure in more detail later on.

Carl Marfels described the clock in 1890 as

> eine Standuhr allerersten Ranges, die es vollauf rechtfertigt, wenn wir sie den Lesern dieses Blattes in Wort und Bild anschaulich zu machen suchen. Das betreffende Stück, dem 17. Jahrhundert entstammend, ist, wie aus der Abbildung zu ersehen, eine Tischuhr, deren Gehäuse sich als eine Goldschmiedearbeit kunstvollster Ausführung erweist, neben welcher das Uhrwerk selbst [...] weit zurücktritt [...][20]

In fact, the clock [*Figs 10* and *11*] is a parcel-gilt circular table clock turned on its side and fitted into the existing niche of the earlier shrine. The side, only partly visible in this context, is set with cabochon-shaped pieces of rock-crystal. The casing which now surrounds the clock is a wooden structure adorned with intricate silver mounts, finials, columns and figures. It takes the form of a façade with a central semi-circular arch, flanked by two pairs of silver columns, which in turn is surmounted by a small tripartite triumphal arch. The central arch is prominent because of its dimensions and the use of silver Corinthian columns in front of the wooden pilasters. Three steps inlaid with ebony and ivory marquetry lead up to the central niche and give the overall structure the feel of a miniature stage, a small theatrum mundi. The whole piece rests on an ebonised wooden base with a drawer lined with red silk.[21]Only the columns appear to be made entirely of silver but they are hollow, made from silver sheets, rolled and soldered, and are enriched with silver-gilt

19 When Regina Löwe described the piece for her 1975 monograph on the Augsburg goldsmith Matthias Walbaum it was already in its current form. Regina Löwe,op cit,see note 8, p 103

20 'a table clock of the utmost quality that justifies presenting it to the readers of this publication in word and image. The piece in question, originating from the seventeenth century is, as can be seen in the picture, a table clock with a carcass that is shown to be goldsmith's work of extremely artful construction, in contrast to which the clockwork itself [...] is insignificant'. Marfels in Heinrich Frauenberger, op cit, see note 8, p.40

21 The drawer of the shrine in Prague is also lined with red silk but no scientific comparative analysis has yet been made; hence it is unclear whether the lining is original.

22 Lorenz Seelig, 'Einführung', Reinhold Baumstark and Lorenz Seelig (eds) *Silber und Gold, Augsburger Goldschmiedekunst für die Höfe Europas,* exhibition catalogue, Munich, Bayrisches Nationalmuseum, Munich 1994,

p 20.
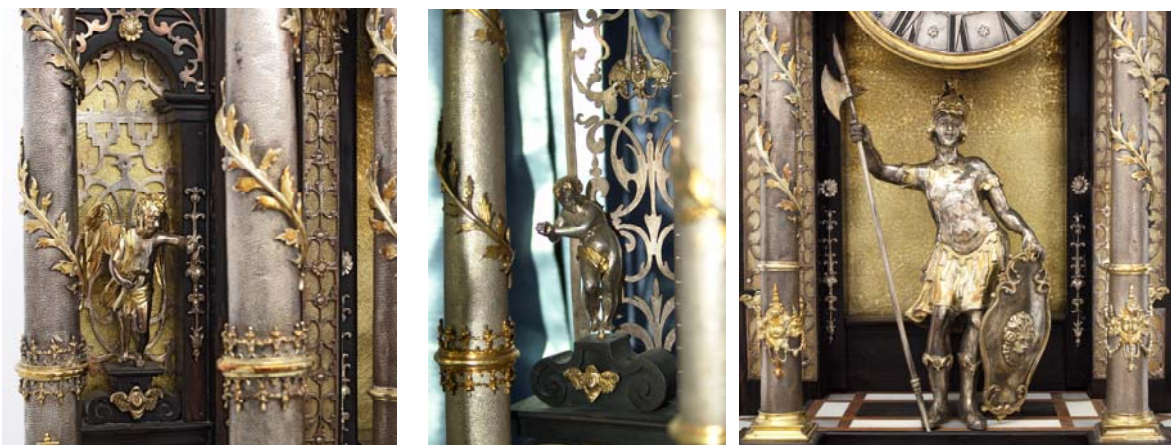
bases, capitals and spiralling leaves running up and down the length of each column. All the wooden, ebonised surfaces are enriched with silver or parcel-gilt silver mounts and silver cherubim. While most of the silver ornament comprises typical Augsburg strapwork, the gilded silver decoration applied to the central arch is an elegant example of the auricular style. The sophisticated overall organisation of the piece is reminiscent of contemporary church facades and architectural altarpieces, for which the most important source of inspiration is arguably the ancient Roman triumphal arch which persisted as a motif in architecture and related arts. As Lorenz Seelig has observed elsewhere, cabinet-makers in Augsburg were fully aware of architectural traditions, innovations and proportions: they had studied the relevant literature, such as Vitruvius Teutsch, of 1548.[22]

The various arches and niches of the façade lend themselves to the display of miniature sculpture and indeed, two original small silver figures of angels are still in situ in the lateral niches of the main façade. One of them [*Fig 12*] still holds a hammer and nails, instruments of the Passion of Christ, while the other has lost his instruments. These two figures are the only original silver sculptures left unaltered on the object, and they hint at the original, sacred, function of the work. The central niche meanwhile is occupied by a figure in Roman military dress with lance and shield [*Fig 14*], a type of figure more likely to be found on wall or long-case clocks dating from the late seventeenth to early eighteenth centuries [*Figs 15* and *16*].[23]

Fig. 15 inset The Drayton House clock, detail of warrior figure

Fig.16 The Drayton House clock, London, circa 1694, by Thomas Tompion

(by kind permission of the Trustees of the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum museum no M 22-1947)

23 Thomas Tompion's Drayton House clock, circa 1695, the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, museum no M.22-1947, is such an example: Tom Robinson,'An examination of the case of two Tompion year equation clocks', *Antiquarian Horology,* Summer 1994, pp 342-349, in particular p 342, fig. 1. For Dutch examples for such figures see: Peter Heuer and Klaus Maurice, *European Pendulum Clocks. Decorative Instruments of Measuring Time,* Atglen, PA, 1988, pp 238-239, cat nos 479-483, in part 483. Another clock by Tompion, crowned with a figure of Minerva, is part of the collections at Colonial Williamsburg: Graham Hood, 'Time for the Royals, Tompion's clock', *Colonial Williamsburg Journal*, Summer 2004, online: http://www.history.org/Foundation/journal/Summer04/clock.cfm.

From left to right:

Fig.9 The Gilbert clock, detail of man with telescope

(©The Rosalind and Arthur Gilbert Collection on Loan to the Victoria and Albert Museum, London)

Fig.18 Prague shrine [Fig.5] detail of the figure of Christ as Savior

(© The Loreto, Provincie kopucinú v CR)

From left to right:

Fig. 19 Raphael Custos (publisher) monogrammist H.I.B. Triumphus Jesu Christi Redemptoris, print Augsburg, second quarter of seventeenth century

(Herzog Anton-Ulrich-Bibliothek, Brunswick, inv no Graph Res C 214)

Fig. 20 The Gilbert Clock, detail of solder points to the back of the figure with a telescope

(©The Rosalind and Arthur Gilbert Collection on Loan to the Victoria and Albert Museum, London)

Above: Fig.21 Monstrance, diamond-set,

Below: Fig. 22 Monstrance pearl-set, both in the treasury of the Loreto shrine, Prague

(© The Loreto, Provincie kopucinú v CR)

The central niche is an exception to the overall decoration of the object; the interior of the space is not covered with intricate silver mounts but instead is clad in a rather crudely-made silver-gilt or gilt-metal foil. The early photograph [*Fig 9*] shows a mirror in this position, either covering or in place of the foil. This space, filled by the clock and the outsized, classical, figure, is an odd, empty, un-designed section of the piece, in stark contrast to the carefully balanced distribution of ornament on the remainder of it. This area as well as the figure of the man with a telescope, next to a globe, under the baldachin, requires further exploration and explanation. Analysis of the figure is a challenge to connoisseurship: while his face, dimensions and parts of the gilding 'feel right', his crudely made tunic, with its outsized belt, simply does not. As I will argue below, the tunic was attached to the figure at a later date, and covers only the front of the body. The globe, too, is a later addition. Thankfully, the shrine in Prague offers additional evidence that can aid the interpretation of the figure in its current appearance.

**The shrine at the Loreto church in Prague**

The Prague shrine, originally made for private devotion, was given to the Loreto church before 1640 and has remained there, virtually unchanged, ever since.[24] It is part of an extraordinary collection of religious silver, most of it produced either in Augsburg, Vienna or Prague between 1600 and 1800. Among the highlights of the treasury are a magnificent diamond-set Augsburg monstrance [*Fig 21*] and a smaller, but equally masterly, pearl-set monstrance [*Fig 22*].

The silver groups on the Augsburg shrine in Prague bear the marks [*Fig 7*] of the Augsburg goldsmith Abraham II Lotter (circa 1580-1626, master around 1613) and an Augsburg hallmark documented between 1612 and 1616, [25]thus allowing us to date the silver parts of the shrine to between 1613 and 1616. The shrine was first discussed by Theodor Müller, who

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24 Theodor Müller,'Ein Augsburger Silberaltärchen in Prag', *Opuscula in honorem C. Hernmarck* 27.12.1966, Nationalmuseum Stockholm, 1966, pp 159-66.

25 The piece is marked on the front of the step, the back of the manger and above the door on the right side of the structure with both the

Augsburg town mark and Abraham II Lotter's mark. The hallmarks are hardly legible, in Seling they are marked as 'v' for 'verschlagen', closest to no 0210 (1612-1616), the maker's mark no 1278, Helmut Seling, *Die Augsburger Gold und Silberschmiede, 1529-1868, Meister, Marken, Werke*, Munich, 2007, p.41 (hallmark) and p 216 (Lotter)
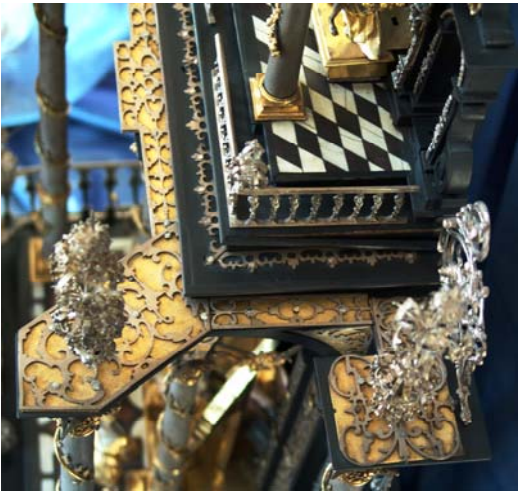
Above: Fig.23 The Prague shrine [Fig.5] detail of construction

Below: Fig. 24 The Prague shrine, detail of Nativity
(© The Loreto, Provincie kopucinú v CR)

26 Ibid

27 Helmut Seling, op cit, see note 25, vol.2 fig.23

28 Theodor Müller, op cit, see note 24, p 162

focussed particularly on its iconography, [26] and a detail of it was subsequently used as an example of Lotter's work in Helmut Seling's *Augsburger Goldschmiede*. [27]

The wooden carcass and applied silver decoration of the Prague shrine display minor differences to the Gilbert clock in their construction. The overall dimensions (h 35 in (89cm), w 17 in (43cm), d 93/4 in (24.5cm) are virtually identical; the shrine rests on ball feet which, in addition to the figural finial, explain the difference in height. On the Prague shrine the front columns are connected to the main body by wooden miniature architraves set at an angle [*Fig 23*], rather than at ninety degrees as on the Gilbert piece. As on the Gilbert piece different parts of the shrine, such as the central arch, are gilded but the areas of gilding on both pieces mirror each other: what is gilt on the Prague shrine is plain silver on the Gilbert clock and vice versa. The most obvious and most significant difference is, however, the iconographic programme. The Prague Loreto shrine shows three subjects from the life of Christ as miniature silver sculptures: on the base a parcel-gilt nativity scene in silver, a Pietà in the minuscule aedicule and, above this, the figure of Christ as a triumphant Salvator Mundi.

While the exact date of the donation of the shrine to the Loreto monastery is uncertain, two silver armorials allow the identification of the donors and thereby place the donation firmly in the first half of the century:

SCFBVS [Seyfried Christoph Freiherr Breuner Herr von Staaz]

MFBBEFVSGHVM – Margarete Freiin Breuner Edle Frau von

Staaz Geborene Herrin von Mollart) [28]

These patrons, Seyfried Christoph von Breuner (1593-1651) and his second wife, Margarete, née von Mollart, were related to the patron of the Loreto shrine itself, Baroness Benigna Catharina von Lobkowitz (1594-1653). Her family were fierce supporters of the Catholic church in Bohemia before and during the Thirty-Years' War. The context of religious conflict, the Counter Reformation and decrees of the Council of Trent in particular, are crucial to understanding the Loreto church itself. Founded in 1626 it became a

center of Catholic worship, missionary work and, thanks to a miraculous figure of the Virgin Mary in Prague, a center of pilgrimage.

The Prague shrine's iconographic scheme and vertical arrangement, with its three elements representing three stages of the Life of Christ, are typical of the period, and can be seen on other Augsburg shrines of the period.[29] Christ's birth is represented with a Nativity scene [*Fig 24*], his Passion by the Pietà group [*Fig 27*] while the Resurrection is symbolised by the figure of Christ as Saviour [*Fig 18*]. This type of tripartite composition along a vertical axis has a long tradition in Christian art. An Augsburg design for an altarpiece, circa 1530, in the Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Nuremberg, also depicts the triumphant Christ at the top of the altar, with scenes of the Crucifixion and an empty niche on two separate registers below.[30] Equally, contemporary monumental altarpieces display a comparable vertical division, albeit frequently in a more unified overall design.

One example is Philipp Dirr's high altar (1623-25) [*Fig 30*] for Freising Cathedral which was made to accommodate the painting by Peter Paul Rubens, The Woman of the Apocalypse (now in Munich, Alte Pinakothek) of 1624. The altarpiece is designed in such a way that beneath the painting there is a sculptural tabernacle for the Host. Willibald Sauerländer argued that the painting is a prime example of post-Tridentine Catholic propaganda, an observation which can be extended to include the form of the altar more generally. For Sauerländer, Rubens created the triumphant symbol of the Victory of the Catholic League over the Protestants at the battle of the White Mountain four years earlier, which put a bloody end to religious freedom in Bohemia.[31]

Fig. 25 Silver Nativity, Augsburg, circa 1610-1613, maker's mark of Abraham II Lotter, formerly in the Bayrische Nationalmuseum, Munich

(© Bayrisches Nationalmuseum, Munich, inv no 30/207)

Fig.26 The Prague shrine, detail of figures of the nativity scene, Fig. 27 The Prague shrine, detail of the Pietà

(© The Loreto, Provincie kopucinú v CR)

30 The design is based upon an etching by Daniel Hopfer, Germanisches Nationalmuseum Nuremberg, mus no Hz2998. Illustrated in *Welt im Umbruch Augsburg zwischen Renaissance und Barock,* vol.II, Rathaus, exhibition catalogue, Stadt Augsburg, Augsburg, 1980, cat no 599.

31 Willibald Sauerländer: *The Catholic Rubens, Saints and Martyrs*, Los Angeles, 2014, p.31. This publication is a translation of the German original: *Willibald Sauerländer; Der katholische Rubens, Heilige und Märtyrer*, Munich, 2011

32 The tradition of sculptural representation of the Nativity as a fixed element in sacred space goes back much further. During the late Gothic period, nativity scenes were influenced by the visions of Saint Brigitta, leading to the more codified mode of depiction familiar today. Nativity altar pieces are among the first three-dimensional representations of the subject, and include the Brixen altar piece by Hans Klocker, circa 1485. The earliest miniature nativity scenes in South Germany were created in the late sixteenth century and from the early seventeenth century onwards became a means of education by the way of visual reconstruction for the Jesuit order. See Nina Gockerell, *Krippen im Bayerischen Nationalmuseum*, Munich, 2005, pp 21-25

33 'This order in particular had recognised the pedagogic value of the Nativity as much as that of religious drama and used their effect as a realist and dramatic, and, therefore, particularly memorable means of religious education.' Ibid, p 24

34 Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, Munich, inv no 30/207, Helmut Seling, 1980, op cit, see note 27, fig. 53. According to the entry in the Archiv for Augsburger Goldschmiedekunst at the Bayerische Nationalmuseum (BNM) in Munich, the marks are the following: Helmut Seling, 1980, vol.III, p 148 ,town mark 38; maker's mark 1278A. The 2007 edition of Seling's work on Augsburg marks also lists the objects and indicates the hallmarks as no 180, documented between 1610 and 1632. Helmut Seling, 2007, op cit, see note 25, p 216. Given that Abraham II Lotter is thought to have become a Master only in the following year, this might indicate a later use of the hallmark. I am hugely grateful to Dr. Anette Schommers of the BNM, for her help in obtaining information from the archive.

35 Heinrich Frauenberger (ed), op cit, see note 8, p 40

Catholic propaganda was not limited to monumental works such as altarpieces, or to the context of public worship. The sculptural nativity scene on the shrine in Prague is particularly interesting in this regard. Three-dimensional staged representations of the Adoration or Nativity of Christ became increasingly popular throughout Catholic areas of central Europe, and particularly in the Alpine regions of Bavaria and Bohemia. The Jesuits, for example, installed a crib in their Prague college in 1562.[32] Gockerell explains the Jesuits' aims in her recent volume on nativity cribs:

> Gerade dieser Orden hatte die pädagogischen Möglichkeiten der Krippe genauso erkannt wie diejenigen des religiösen Schauspiels und nutzte alle Wirkungen der realistischen, theatralischen und daher besonders einprägsamen Darstellung zur religiösen Unterweisung der Gläubigen.[33]

On the Prague shrine the choice of the Nativity, as a subject for private devotion, has to be seen in this context and its significance, as an example of the Catholic sympathies of its patron, are intensified by the use of silver for the sculpture. Nonetheless, the Prague silver Nativity is not a unique piece: a very similar version [*Fig 25*] was acquired by the Bayerisches Nationalmuseum in Munich in 1914. This can be dated to between circa 1610 and 1613, based upon hallmarks and maker's marks documented prior to its disappearance. [34] While the dramatis personae and their arrangement are identical, the stage is wider and is symmetrical in its arrangement. Sadly the group was stolen while on loan to the World Exhibition in Montreal in 1967, but measurements taken prior to its disappearance confirm that it would be too large for the Gilbert clock and was, therefore, probably part of a third shrine.

The Pietà's overall composition is inspired by Michelangelo's Pietà of 1498-99, which in turn drew upon German Andachtsbilder of the late Gothic period. Several Augsburg prints from the early seventeenth century show comparable Pietà groups, sometimes labelled as depictions of Michelangelo's masterpiece [*Figs 28* and *29*]. The figure of Christ on the top of the shrine also recalls Counter-Reformation prints [*Fig 19*] produced in Augsburg in the first and second decades of the century.

All in all the iconography of the Prague shrine exhibits iconography typical of a Catholic shrine intended for private devotion, and echoes, in miniature and in precious material, the iconography found in other media and on another scale elsewhere. That this iconographical template also applied originally, in some shape and form, to the Gilbert clock, is evident from a comparison of the angels on the sides of the Gilbert clock with those of the Prague shrine, despite the fact that the Prague figures have lost their attributes and wings, with one exception, and only stubs remain where their wings were once fixed to their bodies.

The metamorphosis of the Gilbert shrine to a clock: mode and meaning

Having established the relationship between the Gilbert piece and the iconography and meaning of the Loreto Nativity, the nature of the metamorphosis of the shrine-clock after the seventeenth century is most obvious when going through the changes one at a time.

The vertical arrangement is preserved but the meaning of every tier of iconography has been transformed by physical alterations. Instead of a single religious scene, the central arch now holds the Friedberg clock and the figure of a warrior which is oversized for this context and almost certainly appropriated from a late seventeenth-century long-case clock. The figure's shield and pike are probably even later additions. The incongruous appearance of this warrior in the context of a devotional shrine did not trouble Carl Marfels. In his 1890 description, he interpreted the figure as the God of War, a figure that might refer to the violent time of war during which the clock was made: that is, the Thirty Years' War:

> Auf der untersten […] Plattform erhebt sich der von Säulen getragene Bogen des Baues, unter welchem in getriebener Arbeit ein Kriegsgott steht, vielleicht als Anklang an die kriegerische Zeit, in welcher diese Uhr verfertigt wurde.[35]

Fig. 28 Kilian Lucas (after Michelangelo) Pietà, print, Augsburg, 1604

(Herzog Anton-Ulrich-Museum, Brunswick, inv no LKilian AB3.17)

Fig. 29 Antonio Salamanca, Pietà, print, 1547, 'MICHAELANGELVS.BONBAROTVS.FLORENT.DIVI.PETRI.INVATICANO.EXVNO./ LAPIDE.MATREM.AC.FILIVM.DIVINE.FECIT'(inscribed)

(Biblioteca Hertziana, inv no D50128)

Fig. 30, Philipp Dirr, main altar of Freising Cathedral, 1623-25, created for Peter Paul Rubens' The Woman of the Apoclapyse (the original now in the Alte Pinakothek, Munich)
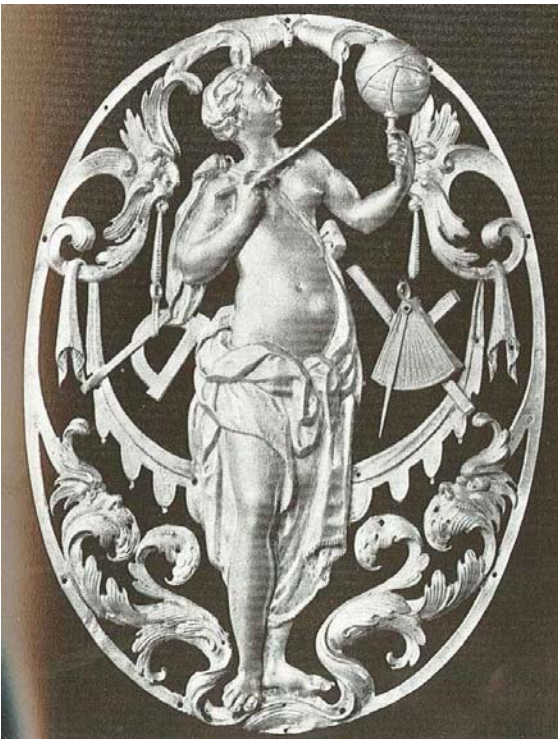

Fig.31 Electrotype of the allegory of Astonomy on the Pomeranian kunstschrank;the original (destroyed in 1945), Augsburg, circa 1611, maker's mark of David Altstetter

Even though seventeenth-century poets such as Andreas Gryphius (1616-1664) did indeed refer to the period in which they lived as a particularly violent one, it is significant that Marfels linked his interpretation of the figure to his perception of the period as a whole: a modern judgment made within a framework of modern historiographical values. This particular alteration to the iconography of the Gilbert shrine is one of a series of changes that were not prompted purely by changes in aesthetic taste, but instead point to the perspective of those who 'remade' it and their perception of the seventeenth century. The same prejudices influenced the decision to add a clock: it represents another facet of the achievements of the seventeenth century that were most revered in the nineteenth century, that is as an age of a scientific revolution.

As the published evidence shows, the man with a telescope was already part of the clock by 1890. Carl Marfels described him as a symbol of Astronomy: depicted as a scholar holding a spyglass in his right hand and a pair of compasses in his left:

> In dem oberen Aufbau, welcher, wie aus der Abbildung ersichtlich, gleichfalls auf schön ornamentierten Pilastern ruht, ist eine weitere Statue angebracht: das Symbol der Astronomie, in Gestalt eines Gelehrten, in der Rechten ein Fernrohr, in der Linken einen Zirkel, neben sich die Erdkugel.[36]

Marfels's description is at odds with the early modern convention whereby allegories of the liberal arts were more commonly depicted as female figures with attributes. The allegory of Astronomy was no exception as the Pomeranian kunstschrank shows: its decoration included a cycle of silver allegories of the arts designed by Johann Matthias Kager (1575-1634)[37], including Astronomy [*Fig 31*] as a young woman, surrounded by the tools of her trade:[38] she holds a stick-like instrument which might be a telescope. In contrast the allegorical figure of Astronomia in Cesare Ripa's Iconologia [39]of 1624-25 does not have a telescope as an attribute which is not surprising considering that it was a very recent technological innovation when the Pomeranian cycle and Ripa's book appeared. The telescope itself was invented and patented in 1608-9 by Hans Lipperhey (1570-1619) whose invention spread rapidly across Eu-

rope. Within a year several new, improved versions had been developed and telescopes were made by some of the most important inventors and scientists of the age: Galileo Galilei (1564-1642), Johannes Hevelius (1611-1687) and Johannes Kepler (1575-1630). Thanks to this invention the view of the universe, and the position of the earth within it, was to undergo a fundamental change just a couple of decades later.

One of the earliest representations of a telescope in monumental form is the figure of a man holding a telescope [*Fig 32*] on the ceiling fresco, The Triumph of Alexander the Great, of 1639, by Angelo Michele Colonna and Agostino Mitelli at the Palazzo Pitti in Florence. Such representations are otherwise rare until the nineteenth century and even then they were scarce.[40] Virtually without exception, these depictions of telescopes appear in a narrative context or in portraits; they do not appear in allegories. This makes it likely that the figure on the shrine was dressed up in comparatively recent times as part of a campaign to reinvent the shrine as a clock, effectively turning it into a temple of science rather than a shrine to the Christian faith.

The Friedberg clock is part of this transformation, but the figure of the man with a telescope is more significant in this respect. On closer inspection it becomes apparent that the figure at its core is in fact cast, probably from the same mould as the figure of Christ still on the shrine in Prague, and certainly after the same model. The resurrected Christ of the Gilbert piece was, however, dressed and stripped of his banner. His finger was broken off to remove any hint of a Sol Invictus gesture, (even though this would

Fig. 32 Detail of a man with a telescope on the ceiling fresco The Triumph of Alexander the Great, Angelo Michele Colonna and Agostino Mitelli, 1639, Palazzo Pitti, Florence

(©Photo Museale Fiorentino, Florence, image no 628561)

36 Carl Marfels, op cit, see note 8, p 40

37 The original applied silver elements do not survive, but electrotype copies are still part of the collections of the Maximillianmuseum, Augsburg, inv nos 4827-4831. The allegory of Astronomy bears David Altenstetter's mark, Christoph Emmendörffer and Christof Tepesch (eds), op cit, see note 1, pp 260-261, cat. No 37

38 A sketch of an allegory of Astronomy associated with the cabinet also survives and shows a reduced number of attributes, ibid, pp 250-259, cat no 36

39 The first illustrated version of this iconic publication appeared in 1603, and includes only an allegory of Astrologia. A revised volume appeared in 1608, when the Pomerian cabinet would have been under construction. Its content is comparable to the 1624-1625 edition which shows Astronomia as young woman with an astrolabe and a "tavola ove siano diverse figure astronomiche [a map with various stellar configurations]". Cesare Ripa, *La Novissima Iconologia*, Padua, Pietro Paolo Tozzi, p 55

40 Several eighteenth century allegories of Astronomy are narrative scenes such as an overdoor painting at the Heidecksburg Residenz, Rudolfstadt, Germany. Galileo became key subject of a cycle of the *Tribuna di Galileo* at the La Specola Museum in Florence, completed in 1841.

Fig. 33 Aristodemo Costoli, figure of Galileo in the Tribuna di Galileo, La Specola Museum, Florence, opened 1841

(© Museo La Specola, Florence)

presumably have been quite fitting as an allusion to the scientific discovery of the heliocentric system). Finally, a telescope was placed in his hand and a globe fixed to the shrine at his feet. The result is that this is still a triumphant figure, but the triumph he represents is the triumph of science following the elimination of religion (quite literally, in this case). The seventeenth-century man with a telescope that the modern restorers might have had in mind is Johannes Kepler, the court astrologer and astronomer, who lived in Prague around the time that the Loreto Church was founded and the two shrines were made. Kepler and Galileo corresponded about their improved telescopes and the discoveries that both were able to make thanks to its invention.

While religious conflict raged around him, the very conflicts that would eventually prompt the commission of Rubens' altarpiece in Freising, Kepler proved that the planets moved on elliptical orbits and he tried, and sometimes failed, to solve the riddles sent to him from Florence, by Galileo. Both used methodologies that can be considered scientific in a modern sense. Nowadays Kepler is considered to be the father of modern astronomy, but in 1619 his works were placed on the Vatican Index of prohibited books. From our perspective he is as distant from the superstition of religion as the Gilbert clock is from the shrine in Prague. Kepler himself was a deeply devout, protestant Christian, and was at one time a student of theology. His biography exemplifies the changing view of the world at the time, which oscillated between modern science, religious struggle and superstition. Kepler's own mother had to stand trial in Prague accused of witchcraft while Kepler himself had to move to avoid religious persecution.

The fourth centenary of both Galileo's and Kepler's births in the second half of the nineteenth century (1864 and 1875 respectively) prompted international celebrations of their achievements. Galileo became the key subject of a series of rooms called the 'Tribuna di Galileo' at the La Specola Museum in Florence, which were opened in 1841 and included Luigi Sabatelli's (1772-1850) *Galileo presenting the telescope to the Senate of Venice.*[41] The focal point of the galleries at the museum, which has its origins in the eighteenth century, is a larger than life figure of Galileo [*Fig 33*] by Aristodemo Costoli (1803-1871) which, incidentally, shows the scientist standing against a plinth on which rest a telescope and a globe. The parallels to the man holding a telescope on the Gilbert clock are evident.[42]

During this period a host of publications on these men of science appeared;[43] among them was Franz Dvoršk's *Neues über J. Kepler*, a short pamphlet published in Prague in 1880 which recounts the life of Kepler for a general audience. Dvoršk described Kepler's time in Prague as the happiest of his life where his scientific mind discovered the secrets of the skies.

> In der Metropole Böhmens entdeckte sein forschendes Auge die Geheimnisse des Himmels, in Böhmen lächelte dem grossen Astronomen auch das irdische Glück.[44]

Religion does not feature in this volume, and Kepler's work as an astrologer was brushed aside as only his attempts to meet his employers' expectations.

To Dvoršk, Kepler was one of the men who elevated the human spirit to the skies, (rather than up to God's heaven, even though the German word 'Himmel' applies to both), and 'lit up the world through their genius':

> Zu den Männern, die den menschlichen Geist zum Himmel emporgehoben und mit ihrem Genius die Welt erleuchtet haben, gehört Kepler.[45]

Given this, a clock surmounted by the figure of Galileo or Kepler must have been considered a highly desirable piece at the time and the enthusiastic report by Carl Marfels shows this was indeed the case. A seventeenth-century shrine, as demonstrated by the number which still survive, would hardly have been a novelty but the earliest figure of an astronomer, even an allegory of an astronomer, would represent an extraordinary find. The general tendency during the nineteenth century, to celebrate the seventeenth century as period of war and discovery, makes it likely that the transformation of the Gilbert shrine happened shortly before it was first published. Not much is known about the Seckel Collection in Berlin, which Marfels cited in 1890 as the provenance of the piece. It was apparently a collection of decorative arts which also included silver and majolica. In any event, it seems clear that the Gilbert clock was created in its current form to appeal specifically to the tastes of a nineteenth-century collector, proud of the technological innovations of his era, and more interested in science and technology than religion. The back of the Gilbert clock [*Fig 2*] is boarded up and shows repairs and additional supports that are not present on the Prague shrine.

They suggest that the Gilbert piece had suffered significant damage and, as a result, was in such poor condition that its restoration was inevitable. Its reinvention in this particular fashion is testimony to the dynamics

41 Alessandro Gambuti, *La Tribuna di Galileo*, Florence, 1990.

42 Aristodemo Costoli also created another figure of Galileo holding a telescope, installed outside the Uffizi. See Frederico Tognoni,"*Galileo nel terzo centario della nascita. Eroe italic e santo laico*", *Galilaeana*, Florence, 2004, pp 211-231

43 Others could be cited on both authors and across genres, including Mathilde Raven, *Galileo Galilei, Ein geschichtlicher Roman*, s 1, 1860 [no copy of this volume could be consulted when preparing this article]

44 Franz Dvoršk, *Neues über J. Kepler mit 21 Beilagen,* Prague, 1880, p 5

45 Ibid, p 2

of the time and the preferences of collectors in the late nineteenth century.

The replacement of the triumphant Christ with a scientist or, in other words, the outright rejection of religion in favour of science as a subject in the arts, is a concept which Kepler and his contemporaries, in spite of all their differences when it came to religion, would not have understood. This makes the Gilbert clock all the more fascinating as an example of the transformations of complex works of art over time. The shrine at the Loreto in Prague remains, a virtually unaltered masterpiece, which speaks of the continued preservation of objects in treasuries that have survived intact through the centuries. Many questions, however, remain unanswered. Who first commissioned the Gilbert shrine? How does it relate to the shrine in Prague and the silver nativity scene formerly in the collection of the Bayerisches Nationalmuseum? What exactly were the silver figures cast in Augsburg and how many versions originally existed? When was the shrine now in the Loreto church in Prague donated to the sanctuary? Did Carl Marfels advise nineteenth-century dealers as well as collectors and what might his role have been in the transformation of the clock? The Gilbert piece highlights the role of a nineteenth-century networks of dealers, specialists and restorers in responding to, and promoting, certain perceptions of historic style and periods by improving existing pieces and generating new masterpieces using the bones of existing pieces. Augsburg cabinets lend themselves to such reinterpretation by virtue of their nature as hybrid pieces created by many hands.

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