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Silver and Sanctified Bookkeeping: St. Eligius and the Smelting of Sin in the Wittenberg *Heiligtum*[*]

"As soon as the coin in the coffer rings, the soul out of purgatory springs": this rhyming turn of phrase, so controversial in sixteenth-century Wittenberg, is impressed with a value whereby the conversion rate of liquid assets into spiritual capital was established through the sale of indulgences.[1] In effect, this system 'laundered' the money of the area's wealthiest and most influential souls. Of the ruling prince-electors, Saxony's Frederick the Wise, who wielded control over Saxony's silver mines, should have been afforded limitless freedom to leverage material advantage for eternal salvation. The theological dispute over indulgences nevertheless appears to have rendered him vulnerable. He therefore elicited the help of a little-known seventh-century French saint – Eligius – two reliquaries of whom, reputedly bearing his likeness, came to enjoy pride of place in his renowned Wittenberg reliquary collection.

Embodying the symbolic authority of the Church and the metaphorical properties of fine metal, Eligius was aptly positioned to effect the spiritual cleansing sorely needed in an environment corroded by unvarnished earthly greed. Eligius's journey from obscure metalsmith to tutelary presence among the Wittenberg pantheon of saints invites mapping: originating in France, Eligius's reputation as a metal-trade patron capable of exercising a salutary effect migrated to the silver-producing centers of Prague, which, in the Late Middle Ages, was home to a celebrated metalworking community. By the early sixteenth century in Saxony, it was hoped that paying proper tribute to his image might prove uniquely efficacious, refining the popular practice of granting indulgences and at the very least exercising an ameliorative effect relative to the practice's contaminative connotations. This essay will examine St. Eligius's prominence in sixteenth-century Saxony as a powerful saint whose occult intervention Saxony's powerful barons hoped might transmute their material advantages into eternal salvation.

St. Eligius (fr. St. Eloy, ca 588 – 660) is a dual-natured saint: his service both as goldsmith to the French Merovingian kings and as bishop to the congregation of Noyon, a historic diocese located north of Paris, suggests that he moved if not effortlessly then at least successfully between the material and spiritual worlds.[2] The rise of metalworking guilds in the Late Middle Ages, centuries after the canonized metalsmith's death, in turn fueled a renewed interest in his cult as hagiographers reconsidered the admixture of values embodied in Eligius's nature as both artisan and bishop, handworker and saver of souls. *The Life of St. Eligius*, the Merovingian vita authored by St. Ouen, or 'Dado' of Rouen (ca 609 – 686), emphasizes Eligius's performance of "double offices, his hands to the uses of man and his mind bound to divine use".[3] Eligius's ability to engage with material interests without compromising spiritual imperatives – a capacity eulogized by Dado and one that established the saint's easy conversance with two otherwise antithetical domains – explains how his image came to be valorized in the centuries leading up to the Reformation. His observance of an inviolable piety while trafficking in material interests – even, indeed, while *producing* marketable goods from it – proved uniquely suited to a period distinguished by an anxiety concerning the relationship between the

acquisition of wealth and material goods and the struggle to secure salvation.

Analogies emphasizing the *incorruptible* quality of fine metals figure importantly in the vita of St. Eligius, Dado's point being that although he produced beautiful objects, Eligius remained unsullied by material desire, miraculously demonstrating instead both pure motivations and refined conduct. He is represented by Dado, for instance, as refusing to touch relics with unpurified hands. The manner of his dress also reflected his appreciation of the intense power of material wealth: as bishop of Noyon, Eligius was reputed to wear a hair shirt beneath the elaborately decorated, gold-hemmed silk vestments for which he was renowned. In thus mortifying his physical body and by extension mortifying himself of the corruptive influence of worldly riches, he established that he did not 'enjoy' the beautiful ecclesiastical dress, but rather donned his vestments in observance of sanctioned obligation. Stories in which he without hesitation divests himself of the jewels adorning his ecclesiastical garb in order to deliver captives from physical bondage serve as proof that he did not covet the gold and gems that adorned him, and thus establish his freedom from spiritual bondage.[4] Equally occupying the roles of goldsmith and bishop, Eligius was simultaneously the creator of ornament and an ornament incarnate of the Church, manifestly adorned with the ability to bestow salvation.

Eligius's renown originates in a cult that began in Noyon in the Merovingian era shortly after his death and later blossomed in the thirteenth through fifteenth centuries in France, with particularly strong devotion observed in the Picardy region.[5] With the rise in number and popularity of text-based accounts of his story came an attendant proliferation in the 1200s of Eligian artifacts, as evidenced by the production of Paris-region pilgrimage badges, stained-glass programs in the Loire region, and miniatures featured in illuminated manuscripts such as the *Bréviaire de Philippe le Bel* (Bnf, Ms lat 1023).[6] Over the next two centuries Eligius's likeness became firmly entrenched in both French royal and guild-system iconography. The prestige conferred by the adoption of his image is anchored in his dual nature, the inherent values of which easily allowed him to slide between social registers. During the Late Middle Ages, manuscript illuminations depicting Eligius's life began to subordinate his more human actions as a metalworker in favor of the miracles that he enacted as a bishop.[7] Vernacular artists sought to conflate his dual roles into a single, iconographically choate image rather than separate Eligius's work as metalworker and bishop. Popular and trade iconography commonly pictured a clerically garbed Eligius hammering on an anvil (fig. 1) or simply attributively holding one of his tools.[8]

By the fourteenth century, Eligius had emerged as an important role model for high-ranking noblemen of the Holy Roman Empire, including both the emperor himself and the prince-electors. Considered 'pillars' of the state, the prince-electors were, through the 1356 edict of the Golden Bull, granted the rights of kings in their respective territories, paramount among which was the right to choose the emperor.[9] From the enactment of this decree until Martin Luther's ascendancy in Wittenberg, these sovereign leaders patronized the sacred arts as a means of paying homage to the empire with which they were allied.

Established under the Saxon prince-elector Rudolf I (d. 1356), the *Heiligtum*, or sacred relic collection in Wittenberg, would enjoy an unparalleled preeminence during the reign of Frederick the Wise (1463 – 1525), when it was greatly enhanced in breadth and scope.[10] Reliquaries representing saints of historical, genealogical, or metaphorical significance for the empire, which were stored inside of a *scrinium*, or shrine, in the main choir of the Castle Church at Wittenberg, would be carefully curated and strategically assembled for public viewings to better display

1 Master of Bertram, *St. Eligius in his Workshop*, ca 1440 – 1460, engraving. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum

their categorical values and significations.[11] The *Heiligtum* underwent several different reorganizations as Frederick added to the collection.[12] In 1509 the elector would even finance the publication of a *Heiltumsbuch*: a woodcut catalogue that accompanied the collection, explained its arrangement, and advertised the relics' salvific powers. At that time the collection was divided into eight *Gänge*, or sections corresponding with the structure of the Litany of the Saints. This arrangement included the holy relics of young women and widows in the first and second *Gang*, the confessors of the faith (third), holy martyrs (fourth and fifth), the bones of the evangelists and apostles (sixth), as well as relics relating to Christ and saints with a direct relationship to Christ (seventh). Fredericks's ever-expanding collection culminated in the passion relics in the eighth *Gang*, which received the most prominent position on the high altar of the Wittenberg Castle Church's main choir, while the other sections were located in the upper galleries.[13]

The prominent placement of Eligius's image, most notably in the form of two gilt-silver reliquaries within the *Heiligtum* in Pre-Reformation Wittenberg, and in the *Heiltumsbuch*, can be attributed primarily to his ability symbolically to refine, transmute, and therefore purify the income derived from both silver mining and the granting of indulgences. Associated not merely with fine metalsmithing, however, Eligius was, at the time of his reliquaries' introduction into the electoral reliquary collection as a gift from the French King John the Good (1319 – 1364) to Rudolf I and Albert V, Duke of Saxe-Lauenburg (d. 1370), also known for his connections to Merovingian royalty. He was celebrated specifically for his privileged treatment within the French court, where he served as principal metalworker, trace elements of which association

would come in time to figure in representations of his saintly identity.[14]

Eligius's conspicuous position in the *Heiligtum* and its presiding church helped to broadcast Saxony's ties to Charles IV and, by extension, to French royalty. When Rudolf I erected a dynastic memorial chapel named All Saints circa 1338, he dedicated an altar to Eligius, a decision that merits further scrutiny concerning the saint's capital within the Holy Roman Empire.[15] The magnitude of Rudolf I's devotional act is perhaps best gauged comparatively, relative to that of the other dedicatees of the known altars in the original church. Two altars bore the names of Sigismund (d. 524) and Wenceslas (ca 907 – 929 or 935), saints who were the subjects of important cults in Bohemia and who held a special import for Holy Roman Emperor Charles IV (1316 – 1378) and the House of Luxembourg.[16] Political interest no doubt informed Rudolf's decision to include these saints in the chapel, the beleaguered ruler seeking to reinforce close ties with Charles and his father John the Blind, King of Bohemia (1296 – 1346). This alliance, he hoped, could forestall or at least dilute the threat posed to his political future by the House of Wittelsbach's rule.[17] Rudolf I strategically dedicated individual altars to All Saints and All Souls, which, as with the name of the church itself, reinforced his house's connection to that of Charles IV, who had christened his chapel at Prague Castle All Saints.[18] These dedicated altars would boast their patrons' relics on appropriate feast days, which would have been marked by a special votive mass.[19] Although there is a dearth of documentary evidence proving that Charles IV was an enthusiast of Eligius's cult in the first half of the fourteenth century, there is reason to presume his early devotion. Charles's marriage to Blanche of the Valois family (ca 1316 – 1348) afforded him many opportunities to become familiar with Eligius, who was very popular in the Valois region.[20] The emperor's formalized relationship to the French court became an important facet of his imperial persona and would explain the sudden elevation of this French saint's image in electoral Saxony.[21]

After the death of Rudolf I, his successors Rudolf II (1356 – 1370) and Wenceslas I (1370 – 1388) continued to furnish the All Saints Chapel with new holy relics and indulgences. Wenceslas's son Rudolf III (1388 – 1419) was the first elector with aspirations of turning the reliquary collection into a pilgrimage destination. He went so far as to obtain for the chapel major papal indulgences, including the *Portiuncula*.[22] This privilege absolved all repented sin and was only bestowed on All Saints Day. Rudolf III's ambitions for the collection's legacy would remain unmatched during the Wettin and early Ernestine dynasties. It would not be until Frederick the Wise assumed his role as elector that the Ascanian line's goal of establishing Wittenberg as a pilgrimage site for seekers of eternal salvation would be taken up again – to a degree that had been yet unseen.

When Frederick the Wise had built his new Wittenberg Castle Church, also known as the All Saints Collegiate Church, between 1490 and 1511, he did so on the grounds of Rudolf's original All Saints Chapel. The design of Frederick's church reflected its function as the site for the *Heiltumsschau* – a display of relics – that he would bestow upon the public twice a year, on the Monday after *Misericordias domini* and on All Saints Day. On these days indulgences were granted to visitors who venerated the sacred particles and paid a contribution.[23] Frederick's replacement of Rudolf's comparatively diminutive chapel with a substantially larger late Gothic hall church helped to transform the building into one that could accommodate masses of pilgrims and eventually house as many as twenty-six altars.[24] Although the precise locations of those altars have been left to speculation due to many subsequent reconstructions, it is believed that Eligius's altar, much like those of Sigismund and Wenceslas, retained the privileged location near the high altar in the main choir that it held in Rudolf's chapel.[25] Figuring alongside those dedi-

cated to All Saints, and such key Bohemian patrons as Sigismund and Wenceslas, Eligius's altar confirms a significance that dates to the origin of the Wittenberg chapel itself.

The adulation that his cult enjoyed in France, his cult's subsequent migration into Bohemia and Germany, and the indirect influence exercised by the Holy Roman Emperor Charles IV account for the distinction accorded Eligius by the House of Saxe-Wittenberg. Eligius's prestige as patron of metalworking professions no doubt accounts for his cult's entrée into Bohemia, although the precise manner in which his cult originally entered the region remains uncertain.[26] Emulating the example of international chapters, Czech goldsmith guilds regularly adopted Eligius's image.[27] It is to the Holy Roman Emperor Charles IV's ambitions, however, among which figure his vested political interest in promoting the local patron saint of gold- and silversmiths, that we may attribute the expansion of Eligius's cult beyond the confines of the guild-system and metallurgy community in Prague. By the late fourteenth century, Eligius's relationship to Bohemia was made official with the introduction of his life story into Czech versions of *The Golden Legend*, titled *Pasionál čili Knihy o životech svatých*.

Sensitized to the esteem in which Eligius's cult was held, Charles strategically made use of the saint's veneration among Prague metalworkers. As a connoisseur of relics who was well versed in the various popular patron saints throughout Christendom, Charles shrewdly harnessed the power that their remains possessed for his spiritual and stately ambitions. His act of collecting and gifting such precious relics functioned to fulfill his desire to render Prague a renowned sacred center and site of pilgrimage.[28] Charles's patronage of the city's goldsmiths, in the form of elaborate reliquaries for his priceless acquisitions, provides the context for the rationale informing Charles's decision to gift Eligius's miter to their guild in Prague in 1378, for which they crafted a custom reliquary worthy of housing so sacred a relic (fig. 2).[29] The sacredness of the miter relic very likely explains Eligius's sudden appearance in the *Pasionál*, wherein Czech scribes had introduced local legends of saints important to Bohemia. Of particular importance were those saints whose relics were either imported into the region by Charles IV or, as in the cases of Sigismund and Wenceslas, were given an important place in his reconstruction of the St. Vitus Cathedral.[30]

2 Prague School, *Reliquary of the Miter of St. Eligius*, 1378, engraved gilt silver and rock crystal. Prague, Národní Muzeum

Guided by the reputation conferred upon him by international metal trade guilds, Eligius's cult likely entered Germany, just as it had Bohemia, by way of France. It was due to Charles IV's influence, however, that his image ultimately assumed an exalted position in the Electorate of Saxony. The distinction granted by the saint's eponymous altar in Rudolf I's All Saints Chapel

3 Lucas Cranach, *woodcut rendering a silver gilt image "Sancti Eulogii" (of St. Eligius) Statuette Reliquary*, Gallery 3, *Heiltumsbuch*, 1509

4 Swiss School, *Reliquary Arm of St. Valentine*, fourteenth century, silver, partial gilt and sapphire. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art

in Wittenberg provides the first evidence of his lofty status. When Frederick the Wise, the last of the Saxon electors, came into power in 1486, he several-wise expanded the Wittenberg *Heiligtum*, but preserved the prominent place Eligius enjoyed within the collection. Frederick's arrangement of the electoral reliquary collection demonstrates his desire to reinforce his imperial ties by spotlighting saints with connections to royalty. For this reason, in the first decade of the sixteenth century Frederick commissioned his court artist Lucas Cranach to produce a *Heiltumsbuch* so as to document the collection's holdings.[31] In his dissertation on Frederick the Wise's artistic patronage, Paul Bacon notes that in accordance with late-thirteenth-century trends, Frederick held in particularly high repute nobly born saints, a noble lineage in this context signifying a direct relationship either to the Holy Family or to a family of elite social standing.[32] With Frederick's accession to power, some of the older objects whose inclusion in the *Heiligtum* predated his reign were given new and privileged positions within the collection, representing as

they did patron saints entitled to claim a special relationship to royalty. The two St. Eligius reliquaries in the *Heiligtum* (figs. 3 and 8) would fall into this category.[33] Cranach's rendering of these vessels precisely illustrates the complexity of the saint's nature – composed, as it is now clear, of several iterations of duality – and his service to the extended imperial family within the continually evolving context of the Wittenberg *Heiligtum*.

The idiosyncratic character of the woodcut designs in the *Heiltumsbuch* attest to the degree of creative license that Frederick afforded to his court artist in the original commission of the portfolio. Cranach's woodcuts feature subjectively rendered details that starkly distinguish the *Heiltumsbuch* from an earlier extant visual record of the collection, the *Weimar Skizzenbuch*.[34] Livia Cárdenas, commenting on the arrangement of the collection, posits that Cranach animated the figures in his woodcuts using an agitated contour in an effort to approximate how a visitor to the *Heiligtum* would directly have experienced the reliquaries and their contents.[35] The embellishing details that distinguish Cranach's visual interpretation of the reliquaries contained in the *Heiligtum* without question constitute, as Cárdenas maintains, an idealized image of the viewer's spiritual reception, but they also importantly – indeed, perhaps even more critically – reflect the distinctive public image that Frederick the Wise sought to assign to *his* collection of saintly treasures.

Cranach's rendering of the only one of the two pictured Eligius reliquaries definitively labeled as "Sancti Eulogii" in the *Heiltumsbuch* (fig. 3) exhibits a mixture of details from both the saint's vita and local legend.[36] The woodcut features an ornamental cusped motif along the sides of the base, which consists of jagged crisscrossed forms. A base thus adorned was quite common in fourteenth-century reliquary design and in fact can be seen on the reliquary arm of St. Valentine (d. 270) currently housed in the Metropolitan Museum (fig. 4). Its prickly metalwork cusps represented on the sleeve of the arm invoke the prongs of the Flaminian Gate, the site of Valentine's martyrdom. Cranach's woodcut importantly distinguished itself from a sketch of the first Eligius reliquary found in the *Skizzenbuch*. The drawing features a series of circular cutouts along the reliquary's base (fig. 5), thus revealing that the cusped motif uniquely featured in the *Heiltumsbuch* woodcut is Cranach's embellishment.

5 Drawing from the *Weimarer Skizzenbuch*, ThHStA Reg. O 20/21, Bl. 37r. Weimar, Ernestinisches Gesamtarchiv

Unlike the *Skizzenbuch* drawing, Cranach's design connotes fortification and thereby makes

6 French School, *St. Eloy pinches the devil's nose with his tongs*, thirteenth century, stained glass. Angers Cathedral

implicit reference to an event from chapter thirty in book one of the Eligius vita: the theft of relics from St. Columba's Basilica. In this episode, which was reiterated in a 1488 version of *Der Heiligen Leben*, a German equivalent of *The Golden Legend*,[37] Eligius responded to this ransacking of the tabernacle at St. Columba's by threatening to stitch thorny plants over the church entrance should the patron saint fail to ensure swift return of the stolen treasures.[38] Thus, the spiny appearance of the cusped motif symbolizes Eligius's custodial qualities. Not only the craftsman of sacred vessels, Eligius also served as a guardian of precious relics and in this sense he functions *as* a reliquary. Indeed, this concept is echoed in the Eligius reliquary itself, which contains a mixture of relics attributed to saints of aristocratic lineage or affiliation – identities that parallel the individuals whose remains Eligius was charged with tending during his lifetime. Topping the inventory of sacred particles listed on the woodcut page, Eligius's own bones comingle with the relics of Sts. Lucian (d. 290), Radegund (d. 587), Remi (d. 533), Rupert (d. 718), Prokop (d. 1053), and Roch (d. 1327).[39] The geographical peregrinations cited in these saints' vitae trace the migration of Eligius's cult from France into Germany and Bohemia. Cranach's interpretation of this reliquary, and the allusion to defense that it implies, not only references Eligius's role as relic guardian, but importantly cites Frederick the Wise's enormous collection itself, the scale and prestige of which necessitated a protector.

The hooved animal legs supporting the reliquary base featured in the woodcut distinguish themselves from those depicted on other vessels represented in the Wittenberg *Heiligtum* and correspond with the purely vernacular versions of Eligius's life story. They are, like the base motif, an embellishment derived from Cranach's imagination. The *Skizzenbuch* indicates that the original mounting featured a type of support very common in the fourteenth century whereby the depicted animal's forelimbs terminate in paws sporting individuated toes. The fact that hooved forelimbs figure in the base supports featured in Cranach's woodcut version of the reliquary might, upon first inspection, recall a Germanic tale of Eligius and an obstinate horse in need of a new shoe – a subject which consistently appeared in late-fifteenth-century versions of *Der Heiligen Leben*.[40] According to the account, when all attempts to quell the beast's savage insolence had failed, Eligius resorted to a supernatural solution. He amputated the horse's foreleg and deftly fastened an iron shoe to the severed appendage.[41] Terminating as they do in a cleft as opposed to a hoof, however, the legs that figure in Cranach's depiction of the reliquary cannot belong to a horse. The cloven hoof is to the contrary associated with the Devil, whose lower half was conventionally depicted in the medieval period as that of a goat. A popular Eligius legend from northern France provides a source for this iconographic representation, one which had already been immortalized in the stained glass program at Angers Cathedral (fig. 6). According to the story, Satan, disguised as a woman, visits Eligius in his workshop and thus disguised tempts the

pious metalworker to succumb to the sins of the flesh. Immediately recognizing the trap, Eligius responds by twisting the Devil's nose with glowing red pincers, throwing him onto his anvil, and over the course of several days hammering him flat.[42] By the heat of his forge, Eligius purifies and eventually dissipates the evil sent before him, illustrating Dado's allusion to the virtuous craftsman not only as artisan of the world but also as one of the elect whose virtue is tested in a 'trial by fire'. The aforementioned is a subset of a trial by ordeal under *judicium Dei*, in which the accused submitted to carrying hot iron bars or walking on red-hot ploughshares for a predetermined distance in order to prove his or her innocence. God would miraculously intervene to protect the innocent from injury.[43]

This Eligian legend, according to Jean-Christophe Masmonteil, can be traced to precursor pagan myths wherein metalworkers encounter the Devil, the myths themselves dating back to an oral tradition popular in foundries and workshops.[44] Although the legend of St. Eligius and the camouflaged Devil likely originated in France, it had made its way to Italy, Austria, Switzerland, and Germany by the early sixteenth century. Cranach would no doubt have become familiar with the legend's iconography either through contact with the goldsmiths assisting in his Wittenberg workshop or in the course of the diplomatic visits Frederick the Wise on occasion commissioned him to undertake.[45] Narratives from Eligius's popular legends in which the horse and Devil storylines are conflated had antecedents in the saint's iconography and can be seen in transalpine devotional commissions, such as a late-fifteenth-century predella for Sandro Botticelli's *Altarpiece of St. Mark* at the Uffizi Gallery and a 1495 triptych featuring Sts. Eligius, Sebastian, and Anthony the Hermit by the Zürich painter Hans Leu the Elder at the Swiss National Museum. The reach of the combined legends – featuring Eligius in his workshop with the severed horse's leg and the Devil disguised as a woman – even pervaded German vernacular art, such as a fifteenth-century single-sheet print discovered in Jena (fig. 7).[46] Cranach's version, however, is much more conceptual than are the aforementioned examples. Working within both the license and the limitations of the *Heiltumsbuch* commission, Cranach conveyed the essence of these two Eligian legends by blending within his woodcut recognizable elements from each story: that of the unshod horse and that of the disguised Devil. The peculiar addition of cloven hooves, which despite the prevalence of claw feet and animal paws within reliquary iconography were nevertheless an uncommon sight for reliquary supports, indicates that Cranach's embellishment was intentionally included. As the only such detail figuring in the *Heiltumsbuch*, the hooves' appearance in Cranach's depiction of the first Eligius reliquary references the saint's ability as a sanctified metalsmith to manipulate the powers of evil, undertaking God's work and accomplishing His ends with the tools of his trade.[47]

7 *St. Eligius in his Workshop*, fifteenth century. Thüringer Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek Jena, ehemaliger Vorderspiegel der Inkunabel 2 Theol. XXIV

Cranach's representation of this Eligius statuette revises or even baldly deviates from the standard late medieval iconography. Divested of his requisite hammer and thus bereft of a signifying attribute, for example, Eligius is nonde-

8 Lucas Cranach, *woodcut rendering of silver gilt "Bishop" (St. Eligius) Statuette Reliquary*, Gallery 7, *Heiltumsbuch*, 1509

script and thus unidentifiable save for the label the reliquary bears in the Wittenberg *Heiligtum*. Cranach's specific rendering of the sculpted reliquary and its base foregrounds the twin responsibilities coded into the functional and metaphorical characteristics of a reliquary: viz, guardianship and spiritual redemption. Cranach's treatment of ornamentation draws its uniquely interpretive values from the artist's blending of hagiography with local legend. In his metalsmithing workshop, Eligius's otherworldly manipulation of the Devil illustrates the more-than-human strength inhering in a moral fortitude that renders the saint impervious to temptation. Rather than privileging Eligius's occupation as a metalsmith, Cranach combines the distinction the saint enjoyed as a goldsmith to royalty with the powers he possessed as a bishop.

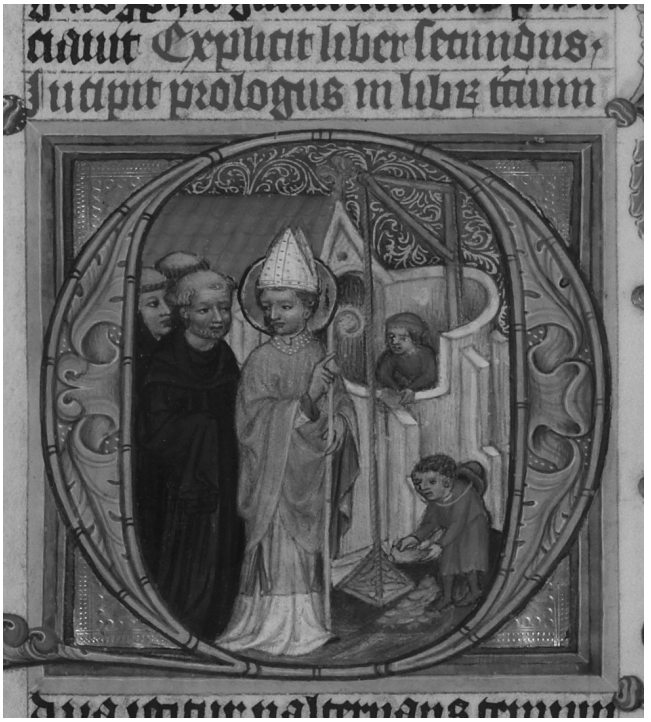
Far from being coupled in a single display, the two Eligius reliquaries in the *Heiligtum* figured in distinct *Gänge* (sections), a separation that speaks to the saint's now fully established tendency to occupy twin offices. The first reliquary, labeled in the collection simply as "Sancti Eulogii" was located, since the time of the earliest records, in the third *Gang*, dedicated to "Confessors": saints who through virtuous acts demonstrated their love for Christ. Many of the saints included in the "Confessors" *Gang* were of noble birth, such as Leopold (1075 – 1136), Henry (973 – 1024), and Wolfgang (972 – 994).[48] In some cases the saint in question is identified with treasure itself, as in the case of St. Anne, the Virgin Mary's mother and the patron saint of miners, whose womb is within the Christian canon represented as the source of silver – a metal associated with Mary – and gold, with which purest of metals medieval theologians associated Christ.[49] The third *Gang* also featured saints known for their penitential acts: for example, St. Anthony Abbott (ca 251 – 356), who renounced earthly treasures, the better to secure spiritual riches in Heaven, or St. Jerome (ca 341 – 420), who atoned for his sins by visiting the catacombs. As presented in the *Heiltumsbuch*, this section's arrangement positioned Eligius as a fulcrum between the Holy Roman Imperial family and saintly figures identified with repentance, his placement aptly echoing the degree to which he was obligated to balance his relationship with the Merovingian court with his life as a pious bishop.

Located in the seventh *Gang* and thus separated from the more clearly denominated of the two reliquaries, the second Eligius reliquary bears only the ambiguous label of "Bishop" (fig. 8).[50] The reliquaries housed in the seventh

Gang, in which the bishop in question was located, are collectively denominated "Christ Relics", which included those saints bearing a direct and indirect relationship with the savior: for example, Sts. John the Baptist, Anne, and Mary. Bearing as they do upon the life of Christ, the fragments contained within the Eligius reliquary composed a portion of the prized passion relics constituting the seventh, or "Christ's Relics" *Gang*.

In the sculptural program on the second reliquary, the kneeling bishop holds up a monstrance in the form of a church. In foregrounding his episcopal manifestation – Eligius as builder of churches and monastic communities – the image in its rendering is distinguished from more common bishop/metalworker hybrid depictions in Eligius's iconography. In fact, representations of Eligius as a bishop bereft of his metalworking identifiers gained traction in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, as can be seen in a historiated initial from a manuscript at the Bibliothèque Historique de la Ville de Paris (fig. 9). Masmonteil attributes the rise in prominence of Eligius's clerical role to a newfound view of his character as the embodiment of a model bishop.[51] Rather than disappearing entirely, his metalworking identity was subsumed into that of a church leader possessing powers of transformation. As Cynthia Hahn notes, much has been made of Eligius's hands in relationship to production and purification, both of which are necessary steps in the process of making any "vessel consecrated to God".[52] The rendering of a vessel is analogous to the building of both the physical and the social body of the Church, and so his metalwork, rather than being accorded an ancillary status, clearly was understood to be integral to his identity as a bishop. In his ecclesiastical role Eligius had to negotiate the slippery spiritual terrain whereupon his duties as both shrewd leader and moral paradigm were transacted.

As a bishop holding office in the early 600s, Eligius would have been exposed to corrupt-



9 Bohemian artist in Paris, *St. Eligius Supervising the Building of a Church* (detail), in *The Life and Office of Saint Eligius*, fol. 26v, ca 1390, tempera and gold on parchment. Bibliothèque Historique de la Ville de Paris, Ms réserve 104

tive influences typically exercised in relation to those managerial responsibilities appertaining to a sixth-century Gallic bishopric. In *Through the Eye of a Needle*, Peter Brown notes that the Church's wealth came during this period to be viewed as public property, a shift in attitude that Brown traces to the teachings of Julianus Pomerius and Augustine of Hippo. These two fifth-century theologians argued that by virtue of the intrinsic separation between publicly performed deeds of office and privately observed acts of devotion, virtuous managers could not help but avoid becoming corrupted by their control of Church funds.[53] The bishops deemed exceptional were those who, in organizing estates, disputing with city councilors over taxation, and participating in the physical construction and upkeep of churches, diligently protected the diocese's material advantages.[54] Because they remained unknown until after the sixteenth century, Dado

could not have drawn directly from the texts of Julianus and Augustine; even so, he clearly subscribed to tenets that informed his contemporaries' teachings and so in his vita ascribes to Eligius behaviors that collectively embody the model trait of virtue. The compunction with which Eligius is represented in his vita as having executed his administrative tasks exemplifies the seventh-century ideal that would increasingly figure in later transcriptions of the saint's life story. Even in the vernacular literature, such as Gérard de Montreuil's poem in Picardy patois from the thirteenth century, Jean Golein's *Festes nouvelles* – a supplement to the French translation of Jacobus de Voragine's *The Golden Legend* from ca 1415, and *Der Heiligen Leben* from late-fifteenth-century Germany, Eligius's incorruptibility and the steadfastness with which he protected the Church's riches, as witnessed in the episode at St. Columba, remained as constants.[55]

The better to bolster the Church's material and institutional wealth, fund-raising became paramount to the practice of church-building. The majority of Eligius's own sermons (copies of which date from the seventh to the ninth centuries) take as their theme the importance of almsgiving.[56] The excerpted passages from the sermons that are transcribed in the vita are not those that document instances of the saint's express generosity, Dado choosing instead to proffer examples thereof which members of the Merovingian court could more plausibly emulate.[57] In their turn, the French vernacular texts perpetuated the emphasis on Eligius's charitable nature, spinning it as a defining characteristic of his sainthood.

Although the late medieval literate public would not have had direct access to Eligius's sermons, a closer examination of his own words elucidates the saint's convictions about the transformative power of munificence. In his reflection upon the line from Matthew, "He will receive a hundredfold and inherit eternal life" (19:29), Eligius identifies the giving of alms as a means of securing salvation, and therefore as an investment, stating, "he gives a coin, I say, and unites with the celestial kingdom; he spends a little money and purchases eternal life".[58] Throughout his sermon Eligius invokes concepts relating to trade and debts; for example, in passage nineteen, the saint encourages the faithful to offer God, in exchange for eternal glory, "our souls as compensation".[59] In encouraging the faithful to ensure through penance the financial health of the Church, Eligius adopts what would later emerge as a defining medieval Christian attitude whereby accounting was considered a religious activity, a concept that allies 'accounting' with spiritual reckoning, dating back to the *Book of Life*, in which God is said to keep two records: one for the righteous and one for the wicked.[60]

The depiction of Eligius on the seventh-*Gang* reliquary (fig. 8) reiterates the complexity of a bishop's responsibilities as a money manager and a redeemer. Charged with preserving the delicate balance between the Church's fiscal demands and the congregation's spiritual needs, Eligius could easily have become compromised by the delicacy of his situation as intermediary. In the seventh century, when Eligius was bishop, an individualized penitential system had been put into place whereby the faithful were assigned a fixed fee for their sins. Philippe Cordez cites this instance of what amounts to the establishment of an 'exchange rate' for sin as the origins of what by the eleventh century became the system of payment for indulgences.[61] This tension accentuates the morally ambiguous and sometimes paradoxical status of institutional wealth from the Early to the Late Middle Ages, the circumstances of which may be at the heart of Eligius's insistence on almsgiving in his sermons.

It is significant that both of the Eligius reliquaries in the *Heiligtum* emphasize the saint's clerical manifestation following his consecration to the bishopric. Whereas the "Sancti Eulogii" reliquary alludes to the saint's capacity to enact

spiritual deliverance, that denominated "Bishop" underscores the weight of his ecclesiastical duties. In either of these representations, Eligius's ability to dispel the baser elements from souls – a transformative power that he acquired during his days as a metalworker – remains integral to his saintly identity.[62] The Eligius reliquaries performed this symbolic function in the context of Frederick the Wise's campaign at a crucial time in Wittenberg history. Sanitizing his treasury with their presence, these objects perfectly complemented the new symbolic values assigned to silver and gold in the early sixteenth century.

In the period leading up to the Reformation, German theologians intensified their emphasis on God's guarantee of salvation. In the fifteenth century, Father Sigmund (the Franciscan follower of Marquard von Lindau) relied upon metaphors of treasure in addressing the notion that the faithful need bring only a yearning for healing and heavenly riches to their observance of the sacraments.[63] Although the relationship between articles of wealth and spiritual salvation might seem paradoxical, a symbolically loaded language permitted those such as Frederick the Wise to imagine themselves exonerated from the sins appertaining to both the sale of indulgences and the benefits resulting therefrom. Constituting more than merely a proud display of Frederick's personal wealth, the *Heiligtum* also served as a site for the salvation afforded by feast days, on which the faithful venerated the associated saint's relics for the promise of indulgences.[64] In short, in its sixteenth-century incarnation, Frederick's *Heiligtum* assigned a *material* value to salvation.

Frederick's attempts to help the faithful achieve salvation were a notable and no doubt a strategically marketed aspect of his public life. His territory realized a healthy income after revived Roman technologies spurred a mining boom in late-fifteenth-century Saxony, affecting mines under his control in Erzgebirge.[65] With the profits generated by the mines, Frederick founded his university at Wittenberg, a gesture benefitting the entire community.[66] His piety also led him to support Johann von Paltz, an Augustinian theologian who administered indulgences in Thuringia, Meißen, Saxony, and Brandenburg in 1490.[67] Frederick cosponsored von Paltz's publication of a booklet entitled *Die himmlische Fundgrube* (The Heavenly Goldmine), a series of sermons on penance and indulgences first published in Middle German in 1490 and expanded and translated in 1502 into a Latin version entitled *Coelifodina*.[68] In the text, von Paltz compared the salvific profits to be realized through the granting of indulgences to the riches that would come from the mining of silver from the Erzgebirge at Schneeberg in Saxony, which he witnessed in 1490, even going so far as to equate Christ's wounds with shafts of a goldmine: "for just as gold can be extracted from a gold mine and silver from a silver mine", he marveled, "so can divine grace be extracted from the mine of heaven".[69]

Considered in light of this context, the power of transformation Eligius realized in his twin capacities as both bishop and metalworker rendered his prominent placement within the *Heiligtum* as an extremely worthwhile investment with the potential for considerable returns. Late medieval definitions of his episcopal duties, which did not fail to associate the skills of the artisan with the powers of a man of the cloth, emphasized the metalworking saint's ability to burnish a somewhat tarnished history of indulgences – an ability recalled by his image. It was not until the 1250s that bishops became endowed with the "treasury of grace" when St. Bonaventure (1221 – 1274), recognizing their marriage to Christ, placed the power to disseminate indulgences squarely in their hands.[70] However, as Philippe Cordez has argued, the concept behind the practice actually originated much earlier in late antique theology, specifically with the writings of the bishop St. Cesarius of Arles (470 – 543), who in promoting almsgiving circumvented the

10 Syrian (assumed), *Hedwig Beaker*, twelfth century, rock crystal. Coburg, Kunstsammlungen der Veste

New Testament's prohibition on contracts between man and God. In confounding piety and self-interest, and by extension bringing to light important questions regarding material possession, the Christian custom of almsgiving generated a certain theological ambiguity. The Church could never own the treasures that it housed: after all, they were understood to belong to God. Moreover, as an agent for benediction, treasures could only redistribute grace rather than be used to accumulate or sell it.[71] By borrowing heavily from Caesarius's text for his sermon on almsgiving,[72] Eligius played a direct role in rehabilitating the Christian position on the exchange of money for salvation. His actions facilitated the translation of almsgiving and its redemptive power into the sale of indulgences, a revisionist intervention long known to scholars.[73] Consequently, in the context of the sixteenth-century Wittenberg *Heiligtum*, Eligius's twin reliquaries became palimpsests of connotative meaning, richly alluding to his legacy, which, dependent as it is on his metalworking background, included the transformation of almsgiving into indulgences and bishops into administrators. As a maker of sacred treasures, Eligius uniquely possessed the inviolable capacity to invest the *Heiligtum*'s collection with a sacred value.

Although originating in the early medieval period in the relatively benign practice of almsgiving, the granting of indulgences as well as the corruption associated therewith famously came under fire in sixteenth-century Wittenberg. Only a few years after receiving his doctorate in theology and subsequently a position as professor of the Bible at the very University of Wittenberg that Frederick the Wise had founded, Martin Luther indirectly disparaged the elector's devotion to the cult of relics and practices of indulgences, complaining that the salvation that can be gained *only* through personal reflection performed in the service of God had in such a context been debased, reduced to discrete acts of piety undertaken in honor of individual saints.[74] At the urging of his private secretary and chaplain George Spalatin,[75] Frederick would remain a devotee of Luther's radical polemics even in the wake of the theologian's famed 1517 posting of the Ninety-Five Theses on the Power and Efficacy of Indulgences on the door of the Wittenberg Collegiate Church and, the year following, his public condemnation of the electoral reliquary collection.[76] The practice, Luther argued, amounted to idolatry, and in the case of Frederick's collection, promoted worship of the cult of the Holy Roman Imperial family.

In 1523, Luther dubbed the All Saints Church "the church of All Devils", regarding the treatment of saints in the Church as detached in essence from a devotion rightly owed to Christ and his salvific mysteries.[77] The Eligius reliquaries and the entire *Heiligtum*, in his estimation, had become sullied through their association with indulgences. When Wittenberg became the epicenter of the Reformation, Frederick's alliance

with Martin Luther resulted in the proscription of the prince's beloved collection and the attendant divestment of its fundamental power.[78] After Frederick's death, the reliquaries were melted down at the behest of his successors – for, of all things, financial gain – thus purifying Wittenberg of its indulgence-rich associations.[79] This act of iconoclasm might be said to have rendered materially Luther's reconceptualization of Christ's suffering as the ultimate relic, which no monstrance or other sacred vessel could contain.[80] Paradoxically, the only relic that remained in the *Heiligtum* after its near total liquidation is a cut-glass beaker that Luther once owned (fig. 10).[81]

Critically figuring in the *Heiligtum* collection, the two Eligius reliquaries embodied the saint's spiritual significance in all of its iterations: symbolically documenting the events described in his vita and vernacular legends, the relevance of which is coded in both the installation of his sacred likenesses in the electoral collection during the reign of Charles IV and – however ironically – their fiery destruction during the tumultuous years during which Wittenberg underwent its own reformation. Made of gilt silver, they bespoke the source of Frederick's riches, drawn from the Erzgebirge mines and minted in the coins lining the treasury coffers. The metal was twice-over precious, its redeeming value acquiring a symbolic character in the writings of theologians, whose speculations reflected the will of their sponsors. As a metaphorical metalworker, Eligius galvanized this process by emphasizing silver's malleable properties and exploiting thereby its relationship to sin. The financial and spiritual benefits to Frederick were considerable, with remittance and spiritual deliverance operating in what at one point seemed an inalterable cycle. Integrally involved in these various dynamics, Eligius would of course figure importantly in sixteenth-century Saxon culture, his likenesses in the electoral collection symbolizing the transfiguration of material wealth into divine grace, a value more generally recognized by the congregation, who had grown accustomed to paying for the privilege of venerating the saints' idols, as well as by the royal family, who had amassed the relics uniquely composing the *Heiligtum*. Dado's comparison of Eligius to God as artisan of the world notwithstanding, it is perhaps more accurate to see the metalworking saint who revealed the redemptive quality of sumptuous materials and their associated expense as the artisan of salvation for the House of Saxony.

* The author would like to acknowledge the invaluable suggestions of Dr. Cynthia Hahn and thank her for her generous support and assistance throughout the publication process. Thanks also to Dr. Susan Navarette, whose advice and linguistic expertise contributed immeasurably to the written prose of this article. I would also like to express my gratitude to the reviewers of the *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* for their helpful comments.

1 The quoted couplet is attributed to Dominican friar and indulgence salesman Johann Tetzel. See Nikolaus Paulus, *Johann Tetzel der Ablassprediger*, Mainz 1899, 142. Tetzel sold indulgences at the behest of Albrecht of Brandenburg (1490 – 1545), who needed funds to realize his ambitions as archbishop of both Magdeburg and Mainz. His manipulative tactics disgusted many, including Frederick the Wise, who forbade Tetzel from preaching in Saxony.

2 For the life of St. Eligius, see Dado, Vita Eligii Episcopi Noviomagensis, in: Bruno Krusch (ed.), *Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Scriptores Rerum Merovingicarum*, vol. 4, Hannover 1902, 634 – 761.

3 "Sic igitur duplum gerens officium, manus usibus hominum, mentem usui mancipabat divino." Ibidem, 676.

4 Ibidem, 673, 677, and 678. See also Cynthia Hahn, The Reliquary and Its Maker, in: idem, *Strange Beauty. Issues in the Making and Meaning of Reliquaries,* University Park, Pa. 2012, 31 – 44, here 34.

5 Jean-Christophe Masmonteil, *Iconographie et culte de Saint* Éloi *dans l'Occident medieval,* Orléans 2012, 10; Hana Pátková, Le culte de Saint Éloi en Bohême

médiévale, in: idem (ed.), *De Noyon à Prague. Le culte de Saint* Éloi *en Bohême médiévale*, Prague 2006, 49 – 65, here 51.

6 Masmonteil 2012 (as note 5), 150.

7 Ibidem, 50.

8 Ibidem, 171.

9 The terms of membership to the electorate were clarified in the publication of the Golden Bull. The document proclaimed that electors were not subject to imperial jurisdiction and could maintain their respective mining and coining rights. Wolfgang Fritz (ed.), *Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Constitutiones et acta publica imperatorum et regum*, vol. 11, Weimar 1992, 596, nos. 1 – 7, 590, nos. 12 – 31, and 592, nos. 1 – 15.

10 Paul Kalkoff, *Ablass und Reliquienverehrung an der Schlosskirche zu Wittenberg*, Gotha 1907, 64f.

11 Andreas Meinhardi wrote the earliest surviving record of the Wittenberg *Heiligtum*. See Andreas Meinhardi, *Dialogus of Andreas Meinhardi: A Utopian Description of Wittenberg and its University, 1508,* Ann Arbor 1976, 240.

12 As the collection expanded, galleries were added. When Meinhardi wrote his Dialogus in 1507, there were six "Gänge". Meinhardi 1976 (as note 11), 33. This was expanded to eight in 1509, and then nine in 1513 and twelve in 1518. See Livia Cárdenas, *Friedrich der Weise und das Wittenberger Heiltumsbuch. Mediale Repräsentation zwischen Mittelalter und Neuzeit,* Berlin 2002, 45.

13 Cárdenas 2002 (as note 12), 45.

14 St. Eligius's status as an esteemed courtier is described in his impressive Merovingian vita. As a young man, the saint came to prominence when the Merovingian royal treasurer, Bobo, recommended him to the notice of King Clothar II (584 – 629), who could find no craftsman sufficiently skilled to execute his elaborate design for a throne. Exceeding expectations, Eligius produced – miraculously, so it seemed – two thrones from an amount of gold sufficient for only one such ornately designed royal seat. Dado 1902 (as note 2), 672f.

15 See Gottfried Wentz, Das Kollegiatstift Allerheiligen in Wittenberg, in: Fritz Bünger and Gottfried Wentz (eds.), *Germania Sacra*. Erste Abteilung: Die Bistümer der Kirchenprovinz Magdeburg, vol. 3: Das Bistum Brandenburg, part 2, Berlin 1941, 75 – 164, here 150f.

16 Wenceslas, a patron saint of Bohemia, was celebrated for protecting the motherland from external forces. His tomb is located at St. Vitus, the Cathedral of Prague, where his remains held a prominent position in the two buildings that preceded Charles's reconstruction of the church. The emperor intended his new structure to serve as Bohemia's independent national church. Charles IV authorized the translation of Sigismund's remains to Prague, to emphasize the royal lineage of the saint who would become patron saint of Bohemia. Sigismund had been a Burgundian king of the Franks, which in fact explains another motivation for Charles's desire to link his kingdom with that of the French courts (Charles IV's connection to France also stems from the fact that he was crowned the King of Burgundy in Arles). See Paul Crossley and Zoë Opačić, Prague as a New Capital, in: *Prague. The Crown of Bohemia, 1347 – 1437* (exh. cat. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art), ed. by Barbara Drake Boehm and Jiří Fajt, New York 2005, 59 – 73, here 61f.; cat. no. 60 (Dana Stehliková), in: ibidem, 131 – 327, here 196.

17 In 1327, seven years after the Ascanian Margraves' line died out with the death of Henry II of Cologne, Louis the Bavarian of the House of Wittelsbach came to power as Holy Roman Emperor and promptly denied Rudolf the right to his title as Ascanian fief. In response, Rudolf allied his House with the House of Luxembourg. See Lorenz Friedrich Beck, *Herrschaft und Territorium der Herzöge von Sachsen-Wittenberg (1212 – 1422)*, Potsdam 2000, 190f.

18 Paul Bacon, *Mirror of a Christian Prince: Frederick the Wise and Art Patronage in Electoral Saxony 1486 – 1525*, Ph.D. diss., University of Wisconsin, 2004, 23.

19 See ibidem, 31f.; Friedrich Israël, Das Wittenberger Universitätsarchiv, seine Geschichte und seine Bestände. Nebst den Regesten der Urkunden des Allerheiligenstiftes und den Fundationsurkunde der Universität Wittenberg, in: *Forschungen zur Thüringisch-Sächsischen Geschichte* 4, 1913, 24 – 95, here 28 – 30, and note 14. On 19 July 1398, during the reign of Elector and Duke of Saxe-Wittenberg Rudolf III (d. 1419), Pope Boniface IX conferred upon Rudolf I's chapel the *Portiuncula* indulgence, which granted the church the privilege of hosting the All Saints Day mass at which repented sins were absolved, the All Saints altar being that on which this critically important service would be conducted. Although the Portiuncula indulgence was originally bestowed on Franciscan churches, the Wittenberg Chapel benefitted from Pope Boniface IX's decision to seek financial gain by extending the privilege to non-Franciscan institutions. See Jonathan Sumption, *Pilgrimage. An Image of Mediaeval Religion*, London 1975, 291f.

20 Louis de Nussac, Saint Éloi – Sa Légende et Son Culte, in: *Bulletin de la Société Scientifique, Historique et Archéologique de la Corrèze* 17, 1894, 529 – 652, here 642.

21 Paul Crossley and Zoë Opačić note the ways in which Charles IV attempted to draw connections between his patronage and the French court, as, for example, in his French-style crown, the quasi-*rayonnante* style

of St. Vitus (by French architect Matthias of Arras), and the particle of the crown of thorns that he gave in 1339 to the All Saints Chapel in Prague Castle. They claim that the thorn associated the chapel with a group of "Saintes-Chapelles". See Crossley and Opačić 2005 (as note 16), 61. See also František Kavka, Politics and Culture Under Charles IV, in: Mikulas Teich (ed.), *Bohemia in History*, New York 1998, 59 – 78, here 60, and 73.

22 Kalkoff 1907 (as note 10), 7.

23 Ibidem, 10.

24 Wentz 1941 (as note 15), 99.

25 Bacon 2004 (as note 18), 118.

26 Hana Pátková notes that there were few churches and guilds dedicated to Eligius in Bohemia and that the earliest altar dates to 1390, located in the Church of St. Martin in the Wall in the Old Town of Prague. Pátková suggests the possibility that Eligius's cult may have entered Bohemia via vernacular texts such as the later versions of *The Golden Legend*. See Pátková 2006 (as note 5), 65.

27 Dana Stehlíková cites Eligius's popularity in Germany, Italy, Austria, and Flanders as possible influences. Dana Stehlíková, Le trésor de Saint Éloi de la corporation des orfèvres de Prague, in: Pátková 2006 (as note 5), 215 – 257, here 217f.

28 See David Charles Mengel, *Bones, Stones, and Brothels: Religion and Topography in Prague Under Emperor Charles IV (1346 – 78)*, Ph.D. diss., University of Notre Dame, 2003, 276.

29 Hana Pátková claims that there are discrepancies in the documentation regarding the precise date that Charles obtained the miter relic from France and donated it to the guild in Prague. The *Grandes chroniques* de France dates Charles's visit to France at the end of 1377 and the beginning of 1378, but the text does not mention the relics. A note from the end of the fifteenth century identifies the year as 1355, whereas another manuscript and the inscription on the reliquary cite the date of 1378. See Pátková 2006 (as note 5), 52 – 58. Whether Charles IV donated the miter in 1355 or 1378 would not likely indicate different motives for giving the gift.

30 Anezka Vidmanová, La Branche Tchèque de la Légende Dorée, in: Brenda Dunn-Lardeau (ed.), *Legenda Aurea. Sept Siècles de Diffusion*. Actes du colloque international sur la Legenda Aurea, texte latin et branches vernaculaires à l'Université du Québec à Montréal, 11 – 12 mai 1983, Montréal 1986, 291 – 298, here 291 – 293.

31 Though most *Heiltumsbücher* were created for pilgrims, the expense of Cranach's catalogue has led scholars to conclude that it was a luxury item that Frederick the Wise most likely gave to close friends and family. Cranach printed approximately 100 paper copies and a dozen parchment prototypes. See Bertold Hinz, *Lucas Cranach d. Ä.,* Hamburg 1993, 35f., and Armin Kunz, *Druckgraphiken Lucas Cranachs d. Ä., Im Dienst von Macht und Glauben,* Wittenberg 1998, 78.

32 Bacon suggests that Bartholomew is the only Apostle shown wearing slippers, which indicates his noble status. See Bacon 2004 (as note 18), 158; Paul Bacon, Art Patronage and Piety in Electoral Saxony. Frederick the Wise Promotes the Veneration of His Patron St. Bartholomew, in: *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 39, 2008, 973 – 1001, here 983.

33 An account of the provenance of the reliquaries can be found in Andreas Meinhardi's *Dialogus* 1976 (as note 11), 244; see also Kalkoff 1967 (as note 10).

34 The *Skizzenbuch* is dated to before 1509 and attributed to various anonymous artists. See Fritz Bellmann, Marie-Luise Harksen, and Roland Werner (eds.), *Die Denkmale der Lutherstadt Wittenberg*, Weimar 1979, 257.

35 Cárdenas 2002 (as note 12), 75 – 89 and 117.

36 The inscription "Sancti Eulogii", which appears on the woodcut, could be misidentified as the martyr St. Eulogius of Cordoba (d. 859), however, such a designation would be erroneous. Since the Spanish martyr-priest was killed before his destined consecration as Archbishop of Toledo, his image does not match with that of a mitered, kneeling bishop, which is absent from his iconography. In Germany, "Eulogius" sometimes appears as a variation of the name Eligius, which can be seen in sixteenth-century Latin texts. For example, German Renaissance theologian and dramatist Thomas Naogeorgus (also known as Kirchmair) used the name Eulogius when writing about Eligius's work as both a farrier and a goldsmith: "Curat equos faber Eulogius, tutatur et omnes. Fabros, seu ferrum tractent, seu pulchrius aurum." See Adolf Ebert, *Allgemeine Geschichte der Literatur des Mittelalters im Abendlande*, vol. 2, Leipzig 1880, 299 – 305, here 302, and Thomas Naogeorgus, *Regnum Papisticum. Nunc postremò recognitum et auctum*, Basel 1559, 116.

37 See Anton Koberger, *Der Heiligen Leben: Winterteil,* Nuremberg, 5 December 1488, fol. CCLXIv – CCLXIIIr.

38 Dado 1902 (as note 2), 149.

39 The noble-born martyr Saint Lucian was a bishop of Beauvais, whose relics, according to Dado, were disinterred by Eligius (see *Gallia Christiana*, vol. 9, Paris 1751, 694). Saint Radegund was a Frankish queen and founder of an Abbey in Poitiers who collected important holy relics from Jerusalem and Constantinople (see Venantius Fortunatus and Baudonivia, *Vita Radegundis*, in: Bruno Krusch [ed.], *Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Scriptores Rerum Merovingicarum*, vol. 2, Hannover 1888, 364 – 395). Saint Remi was the bishop of Reims who

performed the baptism of the Frankish King Clovis (see Hincmar, *Vita Remigii*, in: Bruno Krusch [ed.], *Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Scriptores Rerum Merovingicarum*, vol. 3, Hannover 1896, 239 – 341). Saint Rupert was the bishop of Worms and then Salzburg and was descended from Frankish Merovingian royalty (Helmut Beumann, Zur Textgeschichte der Vita Ruperti, in: *Festschrift für Hermann Heimpel* [Veröffentlichungen des Max-Planck-Instituts für Geschichte, vol. 36], vol. 3, Göttingen 1972, 166 – 192). Saint Prokop was a Czech nobleman who became the first abbot of the Sázava Monastery (See Václav Chaloupecký and Bohumil Ryba, *Středověké legendy prokopské. Jejich historický rozbor a texty*, Prague 1953, 121 – 161). Saint Roch of Montpellier was a confessor and healer of plague victims who was born into a noble family (See Joannes Bollandus, *Acta Sanctorum*, vol. 37, Paris/Rome 1867, 380 – 415).

40 See Koberger 1488 (as note 37), fol. CCLXIv – CCLXIIIr; idem, *Der Heiligen Leben, Passional: Winterteil*, Nuremberg 1488, LXXXIIIv – LXXXIVr; and idem, *Der Heiligen Leben: Winterteil und Sommerteil*, Augsburg 1489, CCCLXXXVIIIv – CCCLXXXIXr.

41 This legend, which gained a currency in Germany, Scandinavia, and Slavic cultures, as well as in Italy, likely originated in Germanic adaptations of pagan mythology. Such adaptations, which blended Eligius's vita and local legend, were not uncommon and were likely driven by his popularity as a patron saint of the various gold-, silver-, blacksmithing, and miners trades with which he could plausibly be associated. Versions of the Eligius horse legend likely spread to Italy through blacksmith guilds. De Nussac 1894 (as note 20), 536. See also Sabine Griese, Ein neuer Eligius. Die disparate Parallelität von Heiligenvita und Heiligenbild im 15. Jahrhundert, in: Berndt Hamm (ed.), *Frömmigkeit – Theologie – Frömmigeitstheologie. Contributions to European Church History*, Leiden 2005, 195 – 210, and Masmonteil 2012 (as note 5), 72, 74, and 76.

42 De Nussac 1894 (as note 20), 625.

43 Herbert Kessler, *Seeing Medieval Art,* Ontario 2004, 24.

44 Masmonteil 2012 (as note 5), 68.

45 In 1508 Frederick the Wise sent Cranach on a diplomatic mission to visit Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian I (1459 – 1519) in the Netherlands, where he would have had the opportunity to study the work of the Netherlandish Masters. Although there is no documentary evidence that Cranach had ever set foot in Italy, Mark Evans suggests that Cranach would have had the time to make a trip to Venice or Bologna in early 1509. See Werner Schade, Cranach's Contact with the Netherlands. Pointers from a Journey Observed, in: *Cranach* (exh. cat. London, Royal Academy of Arts), ed. by Bodo Brinkmann, London/New York 2007, 91 – 98, here 91; Mark Evans, The Italians, who usually pursue fame, proffer their hand to you. Lucas Cranach and the Art of Humanism, in: ibidem, 49 – 62, here 57.

46 See Griese 2005 (as note 41), 195 – 206.

47 In a collection of his sermons published as *Monita Eligii*, Eligius stresses the themes of redemption from sin and evokes the fearful image of the Devil as seducer, separating the faithful from the company they keep with the saints and drawing them thereby into hell. See St. Eligius, *Monita Eligii*, passage 12, in: Krusch 1902 (as note 2), 757.

48 In 1125, Saint Leopold the Good of Austria of the House of Babenberg was also a candidate to become the Kaiser of the Holy Roman Empire, but he declined to contend for the position. See Richard von Kralik, *Der hl. Leopold, Markgraf von Österreich*, Munich 1904, 70 – 76. Saint Henry became Kaiser Heinrich, otherwise known as the Holy Roman Emperor Henry II, and was known for consolidating political power in Germany. See Heinrich Günther, *Kaiser Heinrich II., der Heilige*, Munich 1904, 9 – 18. Saint Wolfgang had a close relationship to Henry, Duke of Bavaria (ca 919 – 955) and father of Henry II, as well as Holy Roman Emperors Otto (912 – 973) and Otto II (955 – 983). See Johannes Baptist Mehler, *Der heilige Wolfgang, Bischof von Regensburg*, Regensburg 1894, 3 – 5, and 22.

49 In Song of Songs 8:9, the Virgin is compared to the ideal woman, who is characterized as a fortress or protector: "If she be a wall we will build upon her a palace of silver". In Malachi 3:3, Christ is described as a spiritual purifier of the precious metal: "He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver."

50 It is possible that Cranach – possibly even Frederick the Wise himself – did not recognize the saint's likeness at the time of the *Heiltumsbuch*'s creation. The fact that none of the relic fragments are catalogued under Eligius's name could only have contributed to its uncertain designation. It was Bacon who in his 2004 unpublished dissertation identified the otherwise generically named "Bishop" as the second Eligius reliquary noted in Andreas Meinhardi's 1508 inventory of the *Heiligtum* collection (see Bacon 2004 [as note 18], 32). Eligius's close identification with the bishopric in fourteenth-century France (when these two reliquaries were made), as well as the resemblance between the kneeling bishop and the figurative sculpture on the Eligius reliquary located in the gallery there, suggest the accuracy of Bacon's speculation.

51 Masmonteil 2012 (as note 5), 53.

52 Hahn 2012 (as note 4), 33.

53 Peter Brown, *Through the Eye of a Needle. Wealth, the Fall of Rome, and the Making of Christianity in the West, 350 – 550 AD,* Princeton, NJ 2012, 484f.

54 Ibidem, 497. Brown cites Gregory of Tours's writings on his uncle Nicetius, bishop of Lyon, as well as a letter appreciating Mactaric, the archdeacon of Metz. The Church's strategy for tight fiscal management included the deployment of labor to work the land. While the Council of Mâcon in 585 protected slaves on the estates of churches from becoming reenslaved, bishops could still obligate them to perform labor in service of the Church. Brown claims that this level of control and organization on the part of Gaul's bishopric brought great wealth to Frankish landowners in the seventh century. See Ibidem, 499f.

55 See Achille Peigné-Delacourt, *Les Miracles de Saint Éloi. Poème du XIIIe siècle*, Beauvais 1860, 54f., Paris, Bibliothèque nacionale de France, Ms. Fr. 243 (Eb), 362v–363v, and Koberger 1488 (as note 37), CCLXIv.

56 Bruno Krusch discovered the original sermons of Eligius in the Codex Sangallensis, no. 194, dating from the eighth century, and also in the Codex Parisiensis (Nouvelles Acquisitions Latines), no. 447, dating from the ninth century; Krusch believes the sermons to be authentic Eligian texts. The sermons were integrated into chapter sixteen, book two of the vita when Dado's original text was reworked (most likely during the Carolingian era). Over the years Eligius's sermons had been retranscribed several times independently from the vita. See Dado 1902 (as note 2), 652f. and 749f.; Léon Van der Essen, *Étude critique et littéraire sur les vitae des saints Mérovingiens de l'ancienne Belgique*, Louvain 1907, 333; and Jean-Pierre Armand de la Porte des Vaulx, *Un Artiste du VIIe siècle, Eligius Aurifaber, Saint* Éloi, Lille/Paris 1866, 105.

57 See book 1, chapters 10, 14, 21, and 27, and book 2, chapters 15, 34, 38, 41, 55, and 77, of Eligius's vita in Dado 1902 (as note 2).

58 St. Eligius, *Monita Eligii*, passage 8, in: Krusch 1902 (as note 2), 754.

59 Ibidem, passage 19, 760. "Ita postremo in exiliu mundi istius agamus, ut ad futurum iudicium cum secura consciencia bonis operibus ornate veniamus, ibique gratissimum Deo munus nostras animas offeramus, ut pro hoc ab eo commertio eternitates beatitudinem accipere et in seculum seculi gloriari possimus".

60 Historian Jacob Soll notes that the concept of spiritual accounting became over the course of the early Christian period more tightly linked to metaphors of repayment, as when, for example, Augustine is said to have called, in the early fifth century, for humanity to settle the debt it owed for Christ's sacrifice. See Jacob Soll, For God and Profit, in: idem, *The Reckoning. Financial Accountability and the Rise and Fall of Nations,* New York 2014, 15 – 28, here 22 – 24.

61 See Philippe Cordez, Les usages du trésor des graces. L'économie idéelle et materielle des indulgences au Moyen Age, in: Lucas Burkart, Philippe Cordez, and Pierre-Alain Mariaux (eds.), *Le trésor au Moyen* Âge. *Questions de perspectives de recherches*, Neuchâtel 2005, 55 – 88, here 60f.

62 Hahn 2012 (as note 4), 37.

63 Berndt Hamm, *Reformation of Faith in the Context of Late Medieval Theology and Piety. Essays by Berndt Hamm,* Leiden/Boston 2004, 110f.

64 The exchange established remission of sin as payment for penitential acts, which payment could take the literal form of a cash donation. Frederick marketed this practice with the annual Wittenberg *Heiltumsschau*, a traveling exhibition of the collection originally instituted by Elector Rudolf III. Even Frederick's *Heiltumsbuch* cites a calculation of the indulgences earned through donation. Cárdenas 2002 (as note 12), 23 and 28; Bacon 2004 (as note 18), 201 – 203.

65 Ingetraut Ludolphy, *Friedrich der Weise. Kurfürst von Sachsen 1463 – 1525*, Göttingen 1984, 69f.

66 Ibidem, 315 – 319.

67 Von Paltz was a defender of the Papal Jubilee indulgence. Both he and Martin Luther were Augustinian monks at a monastery in Erfurt. See Hamm 2004 (as note 63), 92, and 100.

68 Cordelia Hess, *Social Imagery in Middle Low German. Didactical Literature and Metaphorical Representation (1470 – 1517),* Boston 2013, 62.

69 Johann von Paltz, *Coelifodina* (1502), fol. A, v. 2 in: idem, Werke, vol. 1: Coelifodina, ed. by Christoph Burger and Friedhelm Stasch, Berlin 1983, 3. See also Berndt Hamm, *Frömmigkeitstheologie am Anfang des 16. Jahrhunderts. Studien zu Johannes von Paltz und seinem Umkreis,* Tübingen 1982, 89, note 343.

70 Bonaventure compares the bishops' 'marriage' to Christ to a levirate marriage: as a man may take his deceased brother's wife as a means of continuing the family line, so bishops have the power to bring forth sons and daughters of the Church. See Cordez 2005 (as note 61), 58f.

71 Ibidem, 76f.

72 Elphège Vacandard, Mélanges. Les Homélies attribuées à Saint Éloi, in: *Revue des questions historiques* 64, 1898, 471 – 480, here 471.

73 Indulgences developed as a result of the reduction of severe canonical penances into lesser penitential acts, including almsgiving. See Henry Charles Lea, *A History of Auricular Confession and Indulgences in the Latin Church*, vol. 1, Philadelphia 1896, 78 – 80. Cardinal Alexis Henri Marie Lépicier, *Indulgences, Their Origin, Nature, and Development*, London 1895, 165 – 178.

74 The most prominent example of Luther's disdain for the cult of the saints dates to his sermon criticizing Frederick's patron Bartholomew on the saint's feast day (24 August 1516). See Martin Luther, Sermo

in Festo Bartholomaei Apostoli, in: Joachim Karl Friedrich Knaake et al. (eds.), *D. Martin Luthers Werke. Kritische Gesamtaustgabe*, vol. 1, Weimar 1883, 79 – 81; Ludolphy 1984 (as note 65), 388f.

75 Frederick the Wise's support for Martin Luther stemmed from his desire to uphold the reputation of his university, to continue his correspondence with respected theologians such as Erasmus, and to maintain control over his territory. He refused to take a stand against Luther despite pressure from the curia. By sending letters to authorities throughout the Empire, Frederick sought to protect Luther against the condemnation of the Pope Leo X, who declared the reformer a heretic. The elector was responsible for Luther's abduction after the Diet of Worms, hiding him in the safety of the Wartburg Castle. See Björn Schmalz, Georg Spalatin am kursächsischen Hof, in: Dirk Syndram, Yvonne Fritz, and Doreen Zerbe (eds.), *Kurfürst Friedrich der Weise von Sachsen (1463 – 1525)*, Dresden 2014, 92 – 103, here 97 – 99.

76 Luther condemned the collection as an example of the abuse of indulgences, citing in particular the *Heiltumsbuch*'s promise of up to 1,443 years of freedom from purgatory in exchange for the study of the reliquaries depicted within. Roland Herbert Bainton, *Here I Stand. A Life of Martin Luther*, Nashville 2013, 57.

77 Martin Luther, Formula Missae et Communionis, 1523, in: Joachim Karl Friedrich Knaake et al. (eds.), *D. Martin Luthers Werke, Kritische Gesamtaustgabe*, vol. 12, Weimar 1891, 220, lines 13 – 17.

78 In remorseful response to Luther's teachings, Frederick prohibited any reference to indulgences during his 1521 *Heiltumsschau*, which gesture of necessity carried in its wake the retreat of the electoral collection from public notice, and by extension its distancing from a public sphere of influence. See Ludolphy 1984 (as note 65), 454f.

79 Two separate theories explain who authorized the melting of the reliquaries, and why: one theory has it that John the Steadfast needed the money the silver would generate to pay down debts, whereas the other has it that John Frederick the Magnanimous required funds for the Schmalkaldic War. See Andreas Meinhardi, *Über die Lage, die Schönheit und den Ruhm der hochberühmten, herrlichen Stadt Albioris, gemeinhin Wittenberg genannt,* Leipzig 1986, 12; Ernst Müller, Die Entlassung des ernestinischen Kämmerers Johann Rietsel im Jahre 1532 und die Auflösung des Wittenberger Heiligtums, in: *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 80, 1989, 213 – 239.

80 In a Lenten sermon delivered in 1518, Luther explicates his ambivalent view toward relics. He does not condemn devotion to relics and admits that they should be encased in gold and silver. However, he encourages followers to seek an "inward relic", which is immaterial and which corresponds with Christ's suffering. Martin Luther, Zwei deutsche Fastenpredigten von 1518, in: Knaake 1883 (as note 74), 270f.

81 Holger A. Klein, Sacred Things and Holy Bodies: Collecting Relics from Late Antiquity to the Early Renaissance, in: Martina Bagnoli (ed.), *Treasures of Heaven. Saints, Relics, and Devotion in Medieval Europe*, Baltimore/Cleveland 2010, 55 – 67, here 64.

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