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Inventories of Movable Assets of Churches in the Late Middle Ages

With some examples from the Alpine Area

Abstract: This essay describes and discusses the laws that required the compilation of inventories of ecclesiastical movable assets in the Late Middle Ages and the early modern period. It also illustrates how such inventories were drafted, where they can be found today (with examples from the Trentino-Tyrol area), and which objects were listed.

Key Words: inventories, Late Middle Ages, liturgical objects, Trentino-Tyrol area Trento

Introduction

An inventory is not just a means to remember what you have. For centuries, especially in the late Middle Ages and the early modern period, inventories were an important tool for defending the properties of sacred places. Canonical laws explicitly required the compilation of these documents, and both bishops and visitatores wanted the inventories to be drawn up correctly and properly preserved. This article analyses data from the Trentino-Tyrolean alpine area in order to understand which medieval inventories were preserved and what their characteristics were.

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Canonical laws in the late Middle Ages and early modern period

The custom of composing lists of sacred and precious objects belonging to a temple is very ancient. We even find a reference to it in the biblical book of Numbers (4:31–32), where there is a list of what was entrusted to the custody of Merari's children: “[the Merarites] are to undertake obligatory tasks in the meeting tent. This is what they shall be responsible for carrying, all the years of their service in the meeting tent: the boards of the Dwelling with its bars, columns and pedestals, and the columns of the surrounding court with their pedestals, pegs and ropes. You shall designate for each man of them all the objects connected with his service, which he shall be responsible for carrying.” Inventories have, so to speak, always existed, but only in the late Middle Ages was their preparation compulsorily requested from the administrators of church property.

This question first appeared at the first Council of Lyon (1245), where debts of ecclesiastical office holders were discussed (II.1). In order to curb the common and ruinous practice of accumulating debt, the Council ordered office holders to compile an inventory of the goods that belonged to the office they had assumed within one month of assumption. The lists had to be comprehensive and had to include the movable and immovable goods, books, charters, legal instruments, privileges, ornaments, or fittings of the church and all things that belonged to the equipment of the ecclesiastical estate. By this means, the superior was informed about the condition of the church, the estate, and the administration at the time of assumption, whether or not the latter was maintained well during incumbency, and about its state when the office holder died or resigned. The inventory had to be properly authenticated with seals and a sealed copy was delivered to the hierarchical supervisor.¹

Similar provisions were mentioned in diocesan synods. For instance, the synod of Novara in 1298 stipulated in § 5 that a copy of a list of all rights and immovable and movable property, particularly valuable objects, was to be delivered to the bishop within a year.² The 1339 synod of Padua decreed that any administrator of ecclesiastical property had to compile an inventory “per publicum instrumentum” (by a public notary) within a month and deliver a copy of it to the bishop in order to preserve the assets of the Church.³

1 Special thanks to Sonia Curzel and Sarah White (translation and revision). *Conciliorum Oecumenicorum Decreta*, 2. ed., Bologna 2002, 293–294.

2 Giuseppe Briacca, *Gli statuti sinodali novaresi di Papiniano Della Rovere* (a. 1298), Milan 1971, 269–270: “de [...] iuribus ac bonis omnibus immobilibus atque mobilibus [...] et maxime pretiosis.”

3 Johannes Dominicus Mansi, *Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio*, vol. 25, Paris 1903, 1135.

In Padua, the papal legate, Cardinal Guy de Boulogne, held an important provincial synod in 1350. Its statutes were valid for a large area, including north-central Italy, Hungary, and Dalmatia. He ordered inventories of movable assets to be drafted within a month per publicum instrumentum and a copy to be delivered to the superior.⁴

In Trento, specifically addressing the chapter of the cathedral, Bishop Henry of Metz ordered the sacristan (1336) to compile an inventory of the main church's thesaurum ecclesiasticum and inventories of the other churches belonging to the chapter to be submitted within fifteen days ("books, crosses, chalices, vestments, and other objects devoted to divine worship, so that their qualities and quantities can be known") (§ 18).⁵

His successor, Nicholas of Brno, who was equally concerned about the deterioration and misappropriation of church assets, ordered the rectors to draw up two inventories in 1344. The first one contained assets, tithes, and other incomes as well as rights owned in any form. It had to be drafted within two months and composed in front of credible and competent people (the simple change of tenants' names could be annotated in the existing inventories). Another inventory had to be submitted within the tight deadline of twenty days and in the presence of four "good men" of the parish; it contained books, sacred vessels, vestments, and other objects devoted to worship. Both lists were drawn up by a public notary who made two copies, one of which was to be delivered to the bishop (§§ 16–17).⁶ The synod of Ulrich Frundsberg in 1489 repeated this law.⁷

The control of the movable property of the churches was one of the tasks of the visitatores. During their visit, the clergy were asked to account for the situation and to present the lists, or to have them drawn up at once by the public notary who accompanied the visitatores. For example, the Bishop of Ferrara, John Tavelli, ordered to do so (1434, § 25).⁸ It must be noted that both the Bishop of Bressanone,

4 Johannes Dominicus Mansi, *Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio*, vol. 26, Paris 1903, col. 235; Silvio Gilli, *Documenti per la conoscenza dello spirito religioso nella diocesi di Trento prima del Concilio*, in: *Studi Trentini di Scienze Storiche* 37 (1958), 9.

5 Leo Santifaller, *Urkunden und Forschungen zur Geschichte des Trientner Domkapitels im Mittelalter*, vol. 1 (1147–1500), Vienna 1948, 170–171: "libros, cruces, calices, paramenta et alia ornamenta divino cultui deputata [...] ut eius qualitatem et quantitatem scire possit" (this and all the subsequent translations are mine).

6 Gilli, *Documenti*, 1958, 322; Luciana Eccher, *Le costituzioni sinodali di Nicolò da Brno (1344)*, in: *Studi Trentini di Scienze Storiche*. Sezione prima 85 (2006), 299–301.

7 Gilli, *Documenti*, 1958, 17.

8 Angelo Turchini, *Per la storia religiosa del '400 italiano. Visite pastorali e questionari di visita nell'Italia centro-settentrionale*, in: *Rivista di storia e letteratura religiosa* 13 (1977), 280: "[Visitor] will ask if an inventory of things and goods of the church, both mobile and immovable, was made; if not, he will order to take it and present it to the episcopal curia within a month" ("interrogetur si fecit inventarium de rebus et bonis ecclesiae tam mobilibus an immobilibus, et si non fecit praecipiatur

Nicholas of Cusa (1455), and the Bishop of Trento, Bernardo Cles (1537), did not attach particular importance to drafting inventories in the instructions to their visitatores: Cusa merely carried out a check without explicit reference to a written text,⁹ Cles only considered the inventory a possibility.¹⁰

The organizational provisions decreed by the Archbishop of Milan, Charles Borromeo, during the Fourth Milanese Provincial Council (1576) determined Counter-Reformation standards for pastoral visits, which, starting from the ecclesiastical province of Milan, influenced the whole Catholic world. With regard to inventories, Borromeo decreed that, at the time of the visit, four of them should be compiled for movable goods (relics, indulgences, clothes and ornaments, books).¹¹ However, although this law was not followed to the letter, the usage of two types of lists – one containing real estate and property income, the other cataloguing movable property – was maintained. Inventory checks remained a fixed element of pastoral visits.¹²

The fact that inventories were requested by an authority that controlled their editing and contents could lead us to believe that many of these texts actually and physically exist and that it is possible to study them in a comparative way. But, as we shall see, this is true only to some extent.¹³

Inventories of movable assets of churches from the Trentino-Tyrol area

Many inventories of movable ecclesiastical assets that have survived were not drafted according to the above-mentioned norms, but dealt, at least partially, with other needs.

idem quod illum faciat et praesentet curiae episcopali infra terminum unius mensis”). In general see Noël Coulet, *Les visites pastorales*, Turnhout 1977, 39: “Il fait suivre ce compte rendu d’un inventaire détaillé du mobilier de l’église”; it is considered an usual behaviour in England and Italy, not in France and Switzerland.

9 Wilhelm Baum/Raimund Senoner (eds.), *Nikolaus von Kues, Briefe und Dokumente zum Brixner Streit*, vol. 2: *Nikolaus von Kues als Seelsorger: Briefe, Denkschriften (1453–1458)*, Vienna/Klagenfurt 2000, 122–124. “In addition, ask how many chalices the church has and how many missals and also the number of other books and vestments” (“Item, quot calices habet ecclesia et quot missalia et eiam quaeratur de numero aliorum librorum et vestimentorum”).

10 Giovanni Cristoforetti, *La visita pastorale del Cardinale Bernardo Clesio alla diocesi di Trento 1537–1538*, Bologna 1989, 152: “[Visitatores] can also have the inventory of movable and immovable property taken” (“Poterunt etiam curare quod inventarium fiat relinquorum bonorum mobilium vel semoventium”). *Ibid.*, 67–73, demonstrates that this is only the repetition of fifteenth-century forms.

11 Johannes Dominicus Mansi, *Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio*, vol. 34A, Paris 1902, 281–291 (*De visitatione*), 286 about the four inventories.

12 Georges Baccrabère, *Visite canonique de l’évêque*, in: *Dictionnaire de Droit Canonique*, vol. 7, Paris 1965, 1527–1528.

13 See the reflections of Angelo Turchini, *Una fonte per la storia della cultura materiale nel XV e XVI secolo: le visite pastorali*, in: *Quaderni storici* 11 (1976), no. 31, 299–309.

The oldest inventories can be found in donation documents. The description of the treasures of the Chapel of Saint-Vigil of Castello (Altenburg) and of the parish church of Saint-Mary of Caldaro (Kaltern) are part of the enigmatic *Vigiliusbrief* (a text compiled in the eleventh century based on earlier material and copied in 1191).¹⁴ The document from the donation made by Reginbert, Bishop of Bressanone (Brixen) in 1140 contains information about the furnishings and liturgical books of the Premonstratensian rectory of Wilten (near Innsbruck).¹⁵ The Cathedral Chapter of Trento had jurisdiction over the parish church of Appiano (Eppan). When the canons entrusted it to a vicar in 1241, they compiled a detailed list of chalices, crosses, vestments, liturgical books, and other objects of profane use (beds, pots, barrels, oxen).¹⁶ Sometimes, inventories listed the personal property of priests and bishops; these catalogues of furnishings, clothing, jewellery, silverware, and books, sometimes even liturgical objects, usually served for last wills or other exceptional purposes.¹⁷ This also applies to an inventory compiled in 1465 after the death of Georg Hack, Bishop of Trento.¹⁸ Another similar list was written in 1493 when his successor, Bishop Ulrich Frundsberg, died.¹⁹ It is also worth noting the list of properties which Bishop Georg Liechtenstein asked to have restored in 1410; the treasure had been stolen by Frederick IV, Duke of Austria and Count of Tyrol.²⁰

The furnishings of chapels inside castles were catalogued in inventories drawn up when the fortress was entrusted to a new official. The fifteenth-century inventory of Castel Roncolo (Runkelstein) is interesting because it tells us about the minimum liturgical furnishing of a chapel without pastoral tasks (a missal, a chalice, vestments, a monstrance, and a bull of indulgence).²¹

14 Franz Huter, *Der sogenannte Vigiliusbrief. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des älteren Urkundenwesens der Bischöfe von Trient*, in: *Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung* 50 (1936), 35–72; *Mittelalterliche Schatzverzeichnisse*, vol. 1: *Von der Zeit Karls des Großen bis zur Mitte des 13. Jahrhunderts*, Munich 1967, 13, no. 1.

15 *Mittelalterliche Schatzverzeichnisse*, 108, no. 109.

16 Franz Huter (ed.), *Tiroler Urkundenbuch*, vol. I/3 (1231–1253), Innsbruck 1957, no. 1132; *Mittelalterliche Schatzverzeichnisse*, 31–32, no. 22.

17 Most remarkable are the inventories of the papal treasures of the Avignon era: Hermann Hoberg (ed.), *Die Inventare des päpstlichen Schatzes in Avignon 1314–1376*, Vatican City 1944.

18 Oswald von Zingerle (ed.), *Mittelalterliche Inventare aus Tirol und Vorarlberg mit Sacherklärungen*, Innsbruck 1909, 194–200, no. 78; see also Wolfram Koeppel/Michelangelo Lupo, *Ori argenti e reliquie della Chiesa tridentina nei documenti antichi*, in: Enrico Castelnuovo (ed.), *Ori e argenti dei santi. Il tesoro del duomo di Trento*, Trento 1991, 239–282; Emanuele Curzel, *Il vescovo di Trento Giorgio Hack a Castel Roncolo*, in: *Castel Roncolo. Il maniero illustrato*, Bolzano 2000, 449.

19 Zingerle (ed.), *Mittelalterliche Inventare*, 1909, 200–204, no. 79; Koeppel/Lupo, *Ori argenti e reliquie*, 1991, 253–254.

20 Koeppel/Lupo, *Ori argenti e reliquie*, 1991, 250; Diane E. Booton, *Bona ablata. An inventory of property stolen from George of Liechtenstein, prince-bishop of Trent (1390–1419)*, in: *Viator* 26 (1995), 241–264.

21 Zingerle (ed.), *Mittelalterliche Inventare*, 1909, 90, no. 40.

Finally, there are ecclesiastical inventories that seem to follow legislation more closely. The cathedral of Bressanone (Brixen) holds one from 1379, drawn up when the treasure was entrusted to Priest Matthew after the death of Priest Zechariah. Another one was written in 1548.²² The Cathedral of Trento stores no inventories written before the sixteenth century.²³ Saint Nikolaus of Merano/Meran – an urban sanctuary within a city of merchants – has an inventory, produced by the kirchpraust (lay administrator of the church's assets) in 1423. It lists 13 vestments, nine chalices, and five monstrances.²⁴

Outside the city, the oldest existing inventories only describe real estate: it seems as if the drafting (and conservation) of this information was considered more important. Such an inventory was compiled in 1354 in Cles (Non valley) by the new rector. It lists 118 items (500 fields which paid the rent to the parish church).²⁵ Later inventories catalogued the real estate of the parish church of Tassullo (1427) and the chapels of Cellentino (1429), Ala (1474), and Sacco (1486). These were drawn up – according to the circumstances – by the vice-parish priest at the request of the parish priest, by the parish priest at the request of the vicar general, by the civil authorities with confirmation of the parish priest, and by the lay administrator designated by the community.²⁶ In the documentation of Saint-Mary of Campiglio – a rich hospital with a reputation far beyond the local area – there are several inventories of its real estate and furniture starting from 1471; they allow us to examine the hospital premises (the chapel, with a large number of liturgical books, vestments, reliquaries/monstrances; the refectory, a large dormitory, the kitchen, the warehouses, the pantry, the stable; and the buildings that Campiglio owned in various places within the diocese). Above all, in a particularly troubled period (both because of some difficult changes in the position of the prior and because of the quarrels that arose between

22 Leo Santifaller, *Fonti inedite per la storia della chiesa di Bressanone. Un inventario del tesoro della cattedrale di Bressanone dell'anno 1379*, in: *Archivio per l'Alto Adige* 17 (1922), 109–111 (with particular attention to reliquaries and chalices, less to books and vestments); Leo Andergassen, *Capolavori di oreficeria nel tesoro del duomo di Bressanone*, in: id. (ed.), *Ori e argenti. Tesori sacri nel Sudtirolo dal medioevo alla secolarizzazione*, Bressanone 2003, 31.

23 Koeppe/Lupo, *Ori argenti e reliquie*, 1991.

24 Otto Stolz, *Die Ausbreitung des Deutschtums in Südtirol im Lichte der Urkunden*, vol. 3, Munich/Berlin 1927, 310, n. 87; Leo Andergassen, *Die Ausstattung der Stadtpfarrkirche St. Nikolaus in Meran*, in: *Stadtpfarrkirche St. Nikolaus Meran. Ein Gotteshaus im Wandel der Zeit*, Meran 2003, 61; Emanuele Curzel, *Tra indulgenze e libri di conti. San Nicolò e le altre chiese della città di Merano*, in: Gustav Pfeifer (ed.), *1317 – Eine Stadt und ihr Recht. Meran im Mittelalter = Una città e il suo diritto. Merano nel Medioevo*, Bolzano 2018, 303.

25 Francesco Negri, *Serie dei pievani di Cles*, Cles 1907, 2, 152–164.

26 Francesco Negri, *Memorie della parrocchia e dei parroci di Tassullo*, Trento 1910, 51–58; Giovanni Ciccolini, *Inventari e registi degli archivi parrocchiali della Val di Sole*, vol. 1: *La Pieve di Ossana*, Trento 1936, 281–283; *Le antiche pergamene, Ala* 2012, 36–47; Remo Albertini/Elena Albertini, *Mille anni della storia di Sacco*, Lavis 2008, 205.

priors and confreres), the inventories not only guaranteed episcopal control but also the rights of the parties involved against any embezzlement.²⁷

All existing inventories of movable assets of churches with pastoral care are from the sixteenth century. In 1512 Sacco, a list was drawn up by the chaplain;²⁸ in 1525 Daone, an inventory was compiled by the churchwarden (the pope had just granted the *ius patronatus* to the village);²⁹ in Vallarsa, in the same year, the churchwarden acted on the bishop's mandate.³⁰ In later periods, numerous similar cases are documented even in the minutes of the pastoral visits (for example the inventory of the chapel of Corné, parish of Brentonico and diocese of Verona, drawn up in 1530).³¹

This broadening perspective leads to our first conclusion: the inventory is a historical source, not primarily due to its contents but to the circumstances of its drafting, and these circumstances did not always follow legislation. The existence of these documents is a kind of barometer that indicates the increase in pressure on a person or institution. However, this pressure was not always caused by a bishop who wanted to apply the norm. Therefore, in each instance, it is necessary to understand who wrote the inventory (a person directly involved or an external official, a cleric or layperson) and, above all, the motivation for its drafting (it could have been a priest who was concerned about obeying a superior or saving sacred objects; or a layperson interested in the preservation of the property of the village church; the text may have been written after a donation or in a handover; it may have been an attempt to claim stolen property after a theft, or it may have been written quickly in fear of a requisition). Readers interested in the history of pastoral care can find the names of the actors involved in the drafting; such information tells us something about the presence of stable clergy in the chapels, the role of the parish priests, the presence of the holder or a substitute at the church, and the role of the laymen. In the next step it is important to examine the structure of the list, its language and vocabulary that were used. Finally, it should be investigated how the text – as a pragmatic writing – survived and reached us.

We must also bear in mind that an inventory tends to become obsolete, useless, and even dangerous when a new one is drawn up; thus, the subsequent inventory

27 Gli inventari quattrocenteschi del monastero-ospedale di Santa Maria di Campiglio, ed. by Emanuele Curzel, in: *Studi trentini, Storia* 99 (2020), 353–372; Emanuele Curzel, *L'ultimo secolo di vita della fondazione ospedaliera di Santa Maria di Campiglio*, in: *Ospedali e montagne. Paesaggi, funzioni, poteri in età medievale*, ed. by Marina Gazzini, Thomas Frank, Milano 2021, to be published.

28 Albertini/Albertini, *Mille anni*, 2008, 361.

29 Franco Bianchini, *Le più antiche pergamene di Daone (dal 1303 al 1564)*, in: Maddalena Pellizzari (ed.), *Daone: la storia, la gente, la valle*, Daone 2009, 129–131.

30 Cristoforetti, *La visita pastorale*, 1989, 378–381 (a few years later this text was transcribed, perhaps because of its exemplary nature, in the “Book of the investitures” of the diocese).

31 Antonio Fasani (ed.), *Riforma pretridentina della diocesi di Verona. Visite pastorali del vescovo G.M. Giberti 1525–1542*, Vicenza 1989, 578–579.

'kills' the previous ones. For this reason, despite relevant legislation, there are no sets of consecutive inventories (at least with reference to the time considered).³² The survival of late medieval or early modern inventories is the exception to a rule that required their destruction.

What is written in inventories?

What is written in late medieval and early modern inventories? Obviously, they provide information on individual objects: useful data for art historians, especially if they contain information about the commissioning of artworks and the taste of donors. Using a comparative method, we can discover interesting accounts of the wealth of a church. However, one could also ask why certain categories of objects are included in the inventories. It is important to underline not the singularities, but rather the uniformity – a typological uniformity that reveals which elements were, at the time, considered essential to the cult,³³ and which differed from other eras and other contexts (variability will be assessed in the light of this basic uniformity). This basic uniformity can then be accentuated – not introduced – by the post-conciliar and Counter-Reformatory provisions of Pius V, Cardinal Borromeo, and the Congregation of Rites (formed in 1588).

To begin with, Abbot Suger (1080–1151) wrote: “Everything that is precious to you, everything that is most precious to you, must serve primarily for the administration of the Eucharist.”³⁴ The Council of Vienne (1311–1312), in canon 22, deplored the inadequacy of the furnishing of many churches where “the vessels, vestments, and other articles necessary for divine worship are unworthy, considering the churches’ means.”³⁵ These words refer to what, in the high Middle Ages, was felt as an absolute necessity: to give the greatest honour to worship in general and to the sacraments in particular (the rituals in which Christ was really present, as the

32 The Capsa 27 (Inventaria = Inventories) of the Archives of the Prince-Bishop of Trento (now in the Archivio di Stato of Trento), established between 1532 and 1539, preserves only about twenty units of various kinds and cannot be considered even an attempt to collect the texts that should have been sent to the curia.

33 See in general John Bossy, *L'Occidente cristiano 1400–1700*, Turin 1990, 76–86; Jean-Claude Schmitt, *Riti*, in: *Dizionario dell'Occidente medievale*, ed. it. Turin 2003, 972–973; Arnd Reitemeyer, *Pfarrkirchen in der Stadt des späten Mittelalters. Politik, Wirtschaft und Verwaltung*, Stuttgart 2005, 230–261.

34 Quoted in Marco Collareta, *Forma Fidei. Il significato dello stile negli arredi liturgici*, in: Enrico Castelnovo (ed.), *Ori e argenti dei santi. Il tesoro del duomo di Trento*, Trento 1991, 22: “Ut quaecumque cariora, quaecumque carissima, sacrosanctae eucharistiae administrationi super omnia deservire debeant.”

35 *Conciliorum Oecumenicorum Decreta*, 2002, 378.

fourth Lateran Council had dogmatically defined after centuries of discussions). The inventories show that there was no shortage of golden and silver chalices and patens to contain the bread and the wine, which had to be consecrated and preserved.³⁶

Another group of objects served precisely to showcase the sacred. The monstrance displayed the consecrated bread to the faithful in an era in which the viewing was required and practised much more than sacramental communion as such. The devotion to relics was well known from the fourth century, but later, in a society wishing to have direct contact with the sacred, it became an important part of Christian worship and experience. The relic, however, needed a reliquary that would contain and protect it and – at the same time – allow its display. This is one of the typical furnishings of the late medieval churches, called *Monstranz* in German or *monstrance* in English. The desire to show the relics while keeping them safe at the same time led to the construction of wardrobes with painted doors, showing images of their content.³⁷

Other items were needed for worship: inventories often mention little crosses that stood on the altar and processional crosses; the use of incense required special tools (*thurible* and *navicula*). The oils used for the sacraments had their own vessels. Candelabra and lamps of various shapes and sizes illuminated the altar, especially during the nocturnal prayers. Tablecloths, napkins, and handkerchiefs were used for the purification rites before and after the celebrations.

Inventories also describe the liturgical clothes, which, from the fourth century, were distinguished from common clothing and characterized by their richness (both because of the increased social standing of the clergy and the influence of the shape of the sacred clothes described in the Old Testament). Furthermore, in the High Middle Ages, the use of vestments of different colours was defined accord-

36 On the furnishings, see the classical works of Joseph Braun, among which *Das Christliche Altargerät in seinem Sein und in seiner Entwicklung*, Munich 1932. See also Anton von Euw, *Liturgische Handschriften, Gewänder und Geräte*, in: Anton Legner (ed.), *Ornamenta Ecclesiae: Kunst und Künstler der Romanik*, Cologne 1985, vol. 1, 385–414; Benedetta Montevicchi/Sandra Vasco Rocca (eds.), *Suppellettile ecclesiastica*, Florence 1988 (inside: Sandra Vasco Rocca, *Premessa ad una catalogazione della suppellettile ecclesiastica*, 11–19); Lucas Burkart, *Das Blut der Märtyrer. Genese, Bedeutung und Funktion mittelalterlicher Schätze*, Cologne/Weimar/Vienna 2009. Among the many volumes about treasures: Castelnuovo (ed.), *Ori e argenti dei santi*, 1991 (about the cathedral of Trento: *Collareta, Forma Fidei*, 1991, 21–33) and Evi Wierer, *Manufatti d'oro e d'argento nella pittura medioevale del Tirolo meridionale*, in: Leo Andergassen (ed.), *Ori e argenti*, 2003, 17–30; see also Manlio Leo Mezzacasa, *Una fonte inedita per lo studio dell'oreficeria liturgica medioevale. La raccolta degli inventari delle chiese della diocesi di Castello compilata durante l'episcopato di Francesco Bembo (1411–1414)*, in: *Archivio veneto* 148 (2017), no. 13, 23–60.

37 In addition to the works mentioned in the previous note, see the other repertoire of Joseph Braun, *Die Reliquiare des christlichen Kultes und ihre Entwicklung*, Freiburg im Breisgau 1940; on painted wardrobes see in particular Wolfram Koeppel/Michelangelo Lupo, *Lo "Heiltumsaltar" nella sacrestia della cattedrale di Trento*, in: Castelnuovo (ed.), *Ori e argenti*, 1991, 35–56 (with pictures of the wardrobe of the Bavarian monastery of Andechs from 1494: 37–38).

ing to the liturgical calendar, and churches tried to equip themselves with a complete set to cover every rite.³⁸

As far as liturgical books are concerned,³⁹ the drive towards uniformity had already begun in the Carolingian era (even more so in the case for furnishings and vestments). Authorities (not only religious ones) tried to guarantee the correctness and orthodoxy of the texts, a precondition for the validity of the sacrament (before the movable type press, the problem was not easy to resolve).

Inventories (especially those of the High Middle Ages) reveal a shift from the situation in which a rite was characterized by a sort of 'plurality' with several role-books (lectionary, antiphony, gradual, hymnal, sacramental, ritual, sequential, benedictional, and, for the prayer outside Mass, the psalter, the matutinal, etc.) to the era of missals and breviaries, which were widespread from the twelfth century on.⁴⁰ These collections were not only practical and cheap but also reflected a different kind of liturgy, one which focused on the priest. Between the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, another shift occurred: from parchment to paper and from manuscript to printing. During Catholic reform and the Counter-Reform, control over the nature and quality of liturgical books was even more careful. Finally, the presence of biblical and evangelical texts as such is not frequent – the faithful, therefore, accessed these through the mediation of liturgical books.

Conclusions

Inventories, as we have seen, are pragmatic texts: despite the canonical laws, neither their writing nor their conservation was systematic. Both depended mainly on the political or economic conditions that required them. Their importance lies, therefore, not only in the content: the very existence of an inventory testifies that a certain person or institution was 'under pressure'. Thus, the circumstances of drafting are just as remarkable as the objects listed.

38 A useful compendium is *Paramente der christlichen Kirchen: systematisches Fachwörterbuch = Paraments des églises chrétiennes: dictionnaire spécialisé et systématique = Paraments of the christian churches: specialized and systematic dictionary*, 3. edn., Munich 2002; see also *Die liturgischen Gewänder. 11. bis 19. Jahrhundert*, Cologne 2001; Alessandra Geromel Pauletti, *Il tesoro tessile del Duomo di Castelfranco Veneto*, Castelfranco Veneto 2014 (in particular: Paolo Peri, *Allegorie e sacralità: paramenti sacri e il loro ruolo nei riti liturgici*, 25–32).

39 You can refer to Eric Palazzo, *Histoire des livres liturgiques. Le Moyen Age*, Paris 1993.

40 The presence of six *missalia* in the *Vigiliusbrief* (see above, note 14) (Huter, *Der sogenannte Vigiliusbrief*, [1936], 71; see also 63) suggests that, at least in that passage, that text cannot date prior to the twelfth century.