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A Spanish *retablo* in Utrecht: material-technical analysis of the 15th century altarpiece from De Haar castle.

De Haar Castle (Utrecht, the Netherlands) owns an ensemble of eight paintings, showing scenes from the life of Mary, originating from an altarpiece dedicated to the Virgin. The panels are currently attributed to an anonymous master from Catalonia and dated to the first half of the 15th century. They were most likely acquired at the beginning of the 20th century, after the remodelling of De Haar Castle was completed. Apart from this information, nothing is known about the paintings, so far, they are largely overlooked by specialists and the general public alike. This paper will present the results of a material-technical analysis of the panels, focusing on the changes the altarpiece underwent when it was taken out of its original location and ended up in Utrecht.

Introduction.

De Haar Castle, located in Utrecht, is the largest castle of the Netherlands. It was once the luxurious September residence of the family Van Zuylen van Nijevelt. Starting in 1892 Baron Etienne van Zuylen van Nijevelt (1860-1934) was able to fulfil his dream of rebuilding the family estate, which at that point in time consisted only of ruins left from a large castle which dated back to the 12th century. He was able to do so thanks to his marriage in 1887 to the wealthy Baroness Hélène de Rothschild (1863-1947). Etienne hired the most famous architect of his time, Pierre Cuypers (1827-1921), to design both the exterior and interior of the castle. The castle and its extensive grounds can be seen as one *gesamtkunstwerk*, forming a highlight of the neo-Gothic style for which Cuypers was so renowned.

The castle houses an eclectic collection of art, including an important ensemble of 15th century Spanish art. This group of paintings is unique in the Netherlands, since Spanish art of this period is rare in Dutch public collections. It consists of nine paintings in total: a large panel painting showing the enthroned Virgin surrounded by angels, attributed to the Valencian painter Joan Reixach (1431-1482) and eight panel paintings depicting scenes from the life of Mary, presently attributed to an anonymous Catalan master. The painting by Joan Reixach has recently been the subject of an extensive conservation and research project[1]. The other eight paintings have however largely been overlooked by specialists and the general public alike.

The eight paintings were all originally on panel and bear a strong stylistic resemblance, indicating that they once belonged to a single altarpiece. This paper will focus on the shift in appreciation and function of the altarpiece and how this affected the way it was exhibited. What changes did the altarpiece undergo, when it was removed from its original location and how did it end up in a castle near Utrecht? To answer these questions, it is important to know the ensemble's original form and function. Though little is known, the individual paintings themselves form a valuable source of information. A thorough material-technical analysis was carried out – including radiography and infrared reflectography – to gain deeper insight into the making process, aiming to answer questions about the original configuration of the altarpiece. How did these panels fit together before the altarpiece was dismantled? Are there scenes missing? What is the conservation history of the paintings?

The paintings.

The visual features of the paintings suggest that they were all once part of the same altarpiece (see table 1 for an overview of the panels). A detailed discussion of the technical, stylistic and iconographic features will follow, supporting this general observation. There are two similarly sized panels topped with a carved band of quatrefoil tracery (01936 and 04104) and two similarly sized panels with an arched carved tracery with trefoil and leaf motifs (04108 and 04107). The four panels each depict two scenes, divided at the centre of the panel (figg.1-4). Furthermore, there are two similarly sized panels with a gable-shaped top and superimposed carved tracery (01947 and 01951). These panels depict one scene and have an integrated carved frame with squared profiles and a band of carved quatrefoil motif along the lower edge (figg. 5-6). The larger panel showing the *Calvary* (01842) also has carved tracery and is topped with carved leaf motifs, and two carved finials on either side (fig.7). Along the lower edge a band with quatrefoil motifs is present. The largest painting shows the enthroned Virgin with child, surrounded by angels (01838). The scene is topped by the coronation of the Virgin by Christ (fig. 8). It is flanked by two pilasters, each with four smaller depictions of saints.

Title	Object number	Dimensions (cm, h x b x d)
Virgin and child enthroned surrounded by angels, coronation of the Virgin	01838	201 x 144 x 6
Calvary	01842	142 x 72 x 6
Nativity/Flight into Egypt	01936	88,8 x 72,7 x 3
Massacre of the Innocents	01947	100 x 52 x 7
Wedding at Cana/Dormition of the Virgin	04104	91 x 75 x 3.5
Adoration of the Magi/Christ among the Doctors	04107	91 x 75 x 4
Presentation of Mary in the Temple/Annunciation	04108	89,5 x 74.5 x 3,5
Nativity of Mary	01951	105 x 50 x 5

Provenance.

It is known that the paintings were present in the castle right after the renovation was completed. A photograph from circa 1902 shows the architect posed in the newly finished Knight's Hall with one of the Spanish paintings in the background (fig. 9). This is all we know regarding the paintings' provenance. Unfortunately, an extensive search in the castle archives did not result in the finding of any clear mentions of the acquisition of the panels. An overview of unforeseen expenses dated 1893-1896 lists all expenses in category V: acquisition of antiquities. These include the purchase of «tableaux Vente Guillaume» for an amount of 4224, with a price deduction of 1224 (currency not specified)[2]. However, since no further details are given, it is unclear to which paintings this entry refers. A clear reference to the Spanish paintings is found in an undated inventory of the castle[3]. All Spanish paintings are listed (including the Reixach) under «paintings, drawings, watercolours etc». The description reads «painted panels passages from the life of Our Lord» listed together with dimensions which closely correspond to the present sizes of the paintings. Also, the numbers listed in the inventory are found scratched into the reverse of the paintings, together with the three diamonds from the De Haar coat of arms. Since this inventory is not dated, it remains unclear when exactly the paintings were acquired.

Small clues regarding the paintings' past whereabouts can be found on the paintings themselves. An infrared photograph of the reverse of *The Adoration of the Magi and Christ in the Temple* shows remnants of a label reading «fecha de la expedicion» (date of issue) but unfortunately no date is present as the label is fragmented. On several other panels fragments of French newspapers are present, but these are too small to decipher their content or reveal a date for when they were applied. The fact that the fragments are found underneath added wooden strips and along the edges of the panels, suggests that the newspaper was applied during a restoration treatment. This implies that prior to entering the De Haar Castle collection, the paintings were probably already restored at least once, in France and/or in Belgium. It is possible that the paintings were also acquired either in Paris or Brussels, since Baron van Zuylen van Nijevelt resided in both cities while the castle was being renovated.

Original composition of altarpiece.

Since they were acquired, the paintings have always been shown apart, as separate works in different places in the castle. Yet, as previously mentioned, for stylistic and iconographic reasons it is clear that the paintings once belonged together in the same altarpiece. What did this altarpiece look like, before disassembly? Most of the paintings keep their original support, which offers much information regarding the materials and construction techniques. A thorough technical examination was conducted to gain knowledge of these aspects, and all paintings were photographed, in daylight and UV-induced fluorescence, and x-rayed.

Gothic altarpieces from Spain generally contain certain standard elements. The altarpiece is divided in vertical sections, which are divided into individual scenes. The central vertical section is usually taller than the others and contains the image of the patron saint. It is topped with the calvary. The number of vertical sections may vary, from only one on either side of the central image in smaller altarpieces to three or more in larger examples. The same goes for the number of horizontal parts, which depicted narrative scenes from the life of the titulary saint, ranging from three to six per vertical section. In between the central and lateral vertical sections narrower pilasters with small portraits of saints and/or prophets may be present, as is the case in the De Haar altarpiece. These are called *filloles* in Catalan, or *entrecalles* in Spanish. The individual scenes are divided with carved wooden traceries. A *bancal/banco* or predella forms the lower horizontal section,

placed directly above the altar. This often contains an image of Christ in his tomb, flanked by portraits of saints. Often the entire altarpiece is framed with *polseres* or *guardapolvos*. These are strips of wood that are applied at a forward tilting angle, framing the entire structure. These are typically decorated with floral motifs, but they can also show small roundels with saints, or coats of arms of donors or towns[4].

Studying the reverse of the four similarly sized paintings (01936, 04104 and 04108, 04107) it becomes clear they were originally placed in pairs of two above each other. Not only the corresponding width of the planks, but also their appearance (presence of cracks, toolmarks and planed edges) reveal that the pairs were originally painted on one large panel consisting of three vertical planks joined by crossbars. The individual paintings were created when dismantling the altarpiece, by cutting through the panel and removing the crossbars. The nails originally used to attach the crossbars are still present and protrude from the reverse of the panels. A row of vertically oriented rectangular indentations is present along the original line of nails, probably from the crowbar used to remove the crossbars (most clearly visible in figg. 3-4). After cutting the panels their bottom sides were covered by nailing on thin wooden slats using nails. Only the panel depicting *Wedding at Cana/Dormition of the Virgin* seems to preserve its original moulding along the lower edge of the panel.

X-radiographs also reveal further details of the original construction technique. In the joints between the planks, wooden wedges are found (fig. 10). These wedges are typical for panel construction techniques used in Catalonia and Valencia, and the wider Crown of Aragón[5]. After joining the planks together with crossbars, gaps could occur upon seasoning of the wood. To fill these gaps, wedges would be hammered in from the front. Subsequently the joint and any cracks, knots and irregularities in the front surface of the panel were covered with fabric or fibres[6]. This too is a technique typical for Catalonia, Valencia and the wider Crown of Aragón, called *endrapat*. In the De Haar panels, a strip of fabric is present over all joints (fig. 10). The awkward cropping of important figures in most scenes makes it clear that the size of the panels has been altered. However, the panels depicting *Adoration of the Magi* and *Wedding at Cana* still retain their left edge intact. Since we may assume that the carved tracery was symmetrical, it becomes possible to reconstruct the original size of the panel. Completing the tracery in *Adoration of the Magi* shows that approximately 14cm is missing along the right side. For *Wedding at Cana* this amount is approximately 10cm. The fact that the cut edge (in both panels) shows the presence of canvas, indicates this was probably

a joint with another plank which has been removed (fig. 11). Consistent with this idea, is the fact that no fabric is present down the intact edges of both panels. Examining the carved tracery of the other two panels (*Annunciation* and *Nativity*), it becomes clear that they are cut on both the left and right sides. Assuming the tracery is similar to that of the other two panels, one can estimate how much is missing. For the *Annunciation* this would have been approximately 6cm on the left side and approximately 1cm on the right side. The panel showing the *Nativity* similarly misses approximately 6cm along the left edge and approximately 2,5cm along the right edge.

The central panel depicting the Virgin no longer has its original support since it has been transferred to a canvas support using wax-resin adhesive (fig. 8). Archival documents reveal that this treatment took place in 1958[7]. Photos taken before treatment show the original panel support which consisted of five planks (fig. 12). These five planks would have been held together by a number of crossbars. The crossbars are no longer present, but as mentioned above the nails used to attach them can still be seen in the photograph, protruding from the reverse of the panel. With the dismantling of the altarpiece the crossbars were removed, and a lattice of wooden slats was attached to the reverse of the panel. The vertical slats cover the joints between the individual planks. Smaller strips of wood are added in the upper right corner of the panel (as seen from the reverse), probably to strengthen a weakened part in the panel. Presently the ground and paint layers are attached to a canvas which is secured onto a wooden stretcher. The carved tracery and pilasters with saints and prophets (the *filloles/entrecalles*) are attached to a wooden frame surrounding the stretcher.

The two smaller gable-shaped panels are separately made. Each consists of one central vertical plank with narrower planks added on either side to make up the frame. As with the other paintings, these were originally held together by crossbars which have since been removed. Both the squared frames and the tracery are carved from separate pieces of wood that were applied with nails prior to painting. For both paintings, the x-radiograph reveals the presence of filling material along the upper edge of the panels (fig. 13). This indicates that the panels may have been cut along the upper edge of the carved tracery. Comparison with other contemporary examples reinforces this idea: most panels seem to be rectangular in shape, with the gable-shaped tracery superimposed onto the rectangular base panel. A similar construction is preserved in the panel depicting the *Calvary*. Here the panel consists of two planks, originally joined by three cross bars.

The carved tracery and frame are applied to the panel. The gable-shaped tracery is topped with carved leaves and a central ornament. The frame is topped with carved finials. It can be assumed that these carved elements were originally also present in the *Nativity of Mary* and the *Massacre of the Innocents* panels but were removed when the altarpiece was dismantled.

From this study of the supports it becomes clear that the altarpiece originally consisted of a central vertical section with the *Virgin and child enthroned surrounded by angels, coronation of the Virgin* as a central panel, topped with the scene of the *Calvary*. The two lateral vertical sections are formed by the panels depicting the *Annunciation/Presentation of Mary in the Temple* and *Nativity/Flight into Egypt* on the left and the *Adoration of the Magi/Christ among the Doctors* and *Wedding at Cana/Dormition of the Virgin* on the right (fig. 14). This placement of the scenes makes sense as the narrative is often read from top to bottom, starting on the upper left and ending on the lower right. The *Nativity of Mary* would top the left vertical section as this can be seen as the first scene in the narrative, while the *Massacre of the Innocents* would top the right vertical section. As such, the De Haar ensemble seems to contain an almost complete altarpiece. The largest missing part is the *bancal/banco*. As this was typically a separately constructed panel made of horizontal boards, the extant panels of the De Haar altarpiece do not provide clues for the dimension or build-up of the *bancal/banco*[8]. Besides this, the *polseres/guardapolvos* and decorative surfaces in between the scenes are missing. It is unclear whether the lateral vertical sections were framed by pilasters with prophets/saints like the central panel. In total, the altarpiece must have been approximately 360cm tall and 340cm wide.

Iconography and original function of the altarpiece.

In general, Spanish altarpieces showed a combination of symbolic and illustrative depictions. Usually, the central vertical section was reserved for symbolic depictions, while the lateral sections provided space for illustrative depictions. The scene of the crucifixion, crowning the central vertical section, embodies this duality: it functions as the end of the narrative sequence but also symbolises the devotional theme[9]. The strongest references to the Eucharist were often present in the *bancal/banco*, the horizontal section of the altarpiece closest to the altar table. Here scenes symbolising the eucharist such as the last supper or Christ as a man of sorrows were often depicted in the central scene. Together with the narrative scenes that were meant to invoke devotion the altarpiece functioned as a place where mass took place but also as a place for personal devotion[10].

The De Haar altarpiece conforms to this typical iconography: the central vertical section depicts the enthroned Virgin surrounded by Angels and is topped by the *Calvary*. The lateral sections show narrative scenes from the life of Mary. The narrative cycle starts with Mary's birth and ends with her dormition, followed by her coronation by Christ in the central panel. The veneration of Mary was very common and popular across the entire Iberian Peninsula in the 15th century. More specifically, in Catalonia and the Crown of Aragón, the seven joys of the Virgin were a favourite theme. In these altarpieces, seven scenes from Mary's life were depicted, typically the coronation, annunciation, birth at Bethlehem, epiphany, resurrection, ascension and pentecost[11]. Extant contracts and retablos however reveal that there was quite some flexibility in the scenes that were chosen, even when opting for a common theme like the seven joys of the Virgin[12]. The De Haar altarpiece reflects this as it does not show these specific seven scenes from Mary's life; rather some are omitted and others added, resulting in a total of ten episodes. Generally, altarpieces dedicated to individual saints reflected the patronage of the entire church, or the specific chapel for which the altarpiece was intended. Specific saints could be chosen because of their local popularity. The donor of the altarpiece, brotherhoods or individual patrons, could also be a determining factor[13]. However, in the case of the De Haar altarpiece, as the popularity of the Virgin Mary was not confined to a certain location and there are no distinctive features such as a portrait of a donor or coat of arms, the iconography provides no clues about its specific provenance.

Since the provenance of the De Haar altarpiece is unknown, comparison with contemporary altarpieces may provide clues to its original function as either a main altarpiece or the altarpiece in a side chapel. Stylistically the altarpiece can be attributed to the Lleida school. A comparable contemporary altarpiece is the *Retablo del Salvador*, presently housed in the Museu de Lleida: diocesà i comarcal (fig. 15). This altarpiece is dedicated to Jesus as a saviour and though it is only partially preserved, it displays a similar layout to the De Haar altarpiece. The central panel – which is lost but known through photographs – depicts Christ as a saviour sitting in a mandorla surrounded by angels and is topped with a calvary. The two lateral vertical sections present scenes from the life of Christ, starting with the nativity in the upper left and ending with the communion of saints in the lower right. *Filloles/entrecalles* are present between the central and lateral sections[14]. The stylistic similarities between the *Retablo del Salvador* and the De Haar altarpiece are striking, especially when comparing the scenes of the

nativity and calvary. Besides stylistic similarities there are also many similarities in the decorative carved traceries and finials.

The *Retablo del Salvador* was first described by Chandler R. Post as the *Retablo de Albatàrrec*, named after the small town near Lleida that housed the altarpiece until the beginning of the 20th century[15]. Gudiol and Alcolea i Blanch write in their overview of Gothic painting in Catalonia that although it was preserved in Albatàrrec it was originally painted for the cathedral Seu Vella in Lleida[16]. These authors attribute the work to the Lleida painter Jaume Ferrer, adding to his oeuvre several paintings that were assigned to masters with notnames by Post, such as the Master of the Solsona Last Supper. An important factor in the identification of Jaume Ferrer is the signature present on a fragment of an altarpiece kept at the Museu de Lleida: diocesà i comarcal (inv. MLDC 7), reading «Jacobus Ferrari m». The signed fragment with the epiphany shows the same composition as the scene of the epiphany in the *Altarpiece of Verdú* (Museu Episcopal Vic, inv. 1772-1783). This altarpiece can securely be attributed to an artist called Jaume Ferrer due to the existence of archival documents. The fact that these paintings share the same composition but are executed in strongly different styles has led authors to formulate the idea that there were two Jaume Ferrers active in Lleida, father and son. Jaume Ferrer I would have been the author of the fragment of the epiphany, whereas Jaume Ferrer II would be the author the *Altarpiece of Verdú*[17]. Other authors have doubted this theory, posing instead the hypothesis that the works by Ferrer I should be attributed to Pere Teixidor. Teixidor was active in Lleida, where he is documented from 1419 to 1447[18]. Though there are many archival documents related to his presence in Lleida, none can be securely connected to an extant painting. According to scholars defending this hypothesis there was only one Jaume Ferrer, the author of the *Altarpiece of Verdú*. The signed fragment is seen as a collaboration between Ferrer and Teixidor[19].

Though the exact attribution of the De Haar altarpiece remains unclear at this point, it is obvious that it belongs to the same group of paintings that are attributed to Jaume Ferrer by some and Pere Teixidor by others. The Museu de Lleida: diocesà i comarcal attributes the *Retablo del Salvador* to Jaume Ferrer. What was the original provenance and function of this altarpiece? A pastoral visit in 1535 mentions three altarpieces that were present in the chapel of the fraternity of Sant Salvador in the cathedral Seu Vella of Lleida, one dedicated to Sant Salvador, one dedicated to the Virgin Mary and the last one to Saint George.

The presence of two donors dressed as mendicant monks on either side of the calvary in the *Retablo del Salvador* would fit well with an altarpiece ordered by a fraternity, making it plausible that the *Retablo del Salvador* is in fact this altarpiece mentioned in 1535[20]. The *Retablo del Salvador* was later moved to the parish church of Albatàrrec when the cathedral Seu Vella of Lleida became an army barrack in 1749[21]. Possibly the De Haar altarpiece suffered a similar fate.

Current function.

Ever since their acquisition the De Haar paintings have been on display in the castle. Though they were no longer appreciated for their liturgical function, they do form an important part of the castle's interior, as they perfectly fit into the (neo-)medieval aesthetic that the architect Pierre Cuypers had envisioned. Cuypers was a renowned architect when starting the project in 1890. Apart from having designed important commissions like Amsterdam's Central Station and the Rijksmuseum, he built a large number of churches in neo-Gothic style. For the De Haar project, Cuypers worked together with his son Joseph. A design was made based on the extant 16th-century ruins of the castle. Cuypers' vision on restoration was heavily influenced by the French architect and colleague Eugène Viollet-le-Duc (1814-1879). As such, his goal was not only to conserve or restore what was still present, but to bring the building to an ideal state. Whether the building had ever existed in that state was of lesser importance. For De Haar, Cuypers mentioned that it had to be as if the castle had always been inhabited, as if it had never fallen into ruins[22]. The castle should resemble a pinnacle of medieval craftsmanship, but at the same time be updated with the latest technological advancements, such as modern plumbing. Also, the Baron and Baroness wished for the highest level of comfort possible at the time.

The architects were responsible for both the exterior and interior, and their vision on the Gothic style was applied down to the smallest details. This sometimes clashed with the tastes of the Baron and Baroness. For this reason, the private quarters on the first and second floor were furnished in a more modern eclectic style. A point of contention between the architects and Baron van Zuylen was the appearance of the Main Hall. Van Zuylen wanted it to have the appearance and feeling of a grand Gothic cathedral, whereas Cuypers strove for a more rational and sober application of his principles. It took several designs to reach a compromise[23]. Van Zuylen explained his preferences in a letter to Victor de Stuers, writing that he had had to defend his vision[24]: «Toutes les sculptures de

pierre c'est moi qui les ai reclamées à corps et à cris, espérant que mon Hall aurait l'aspect poétique d'une vieille église gothique Espagnole [comme à] Toledo qui m'a laissé un impressionant souvenir»[25] This is a particularly interesting comment, as a number of the Spanish paintings have always been shown in the Main Hall (fig. 16). The Spanish paintings therefore formed an important part of the castle's decorations.

Conclusion.

The ensemble of Spanish paintings from De Haar Castle forms a rare example of 15th-century Spanish art in the Netherlands. Since the panels were largely overlooked by both the general public and art historians, not much was known about them. An in-depth analysis of the materials and techniques used to create the paintings has been carried out, leading to important insights. The panels originally formed an altarpiece dedicated to the Virgin. The altarpiece contains common iconographic features such as a central panel with the dedicatory saint and a calvary. These are flanked by ten narrative scenes showing episodes from Mary's life. When the altarpiece was disassembled all panels were cut into individual paintings, and they have been shown as such in the castle since their acquisition. Almost the complete altarpiece is preserved at De Haar, missing only the *bancal/banco* and framing elements.

Though the exact provenance of the altarpiece is unclear, stylistically it can be attributed to the Lleida school. Comparison with the *Retablo del Salvador* attributed to Jaume Ferrer reveals strong similarities between the two altarpieces. It is therefore possible that the De Haar altarpiece once served a similar function as the *Retablo del Salvador*. Since its acquisition at De Haar Castle, it serves an important role in the decoration of the neo-Gothic interior envisioned by architect Pierre Cuypers and Baron Etienne van Zuylen.

1   M. Albrecht, M. Daugherty, G. van Gerven, *A Valencian masterpiece in Utrecht: Technical analysis of a painting by Joan Reixach*, in *Working Towards a Sustainable Past. ICOM-CC 20th Triennial Conference Preprints*, conference proceedings (Valencia, 18-22 September 2023), edited by J. Bridgland, Paris, 2023, pp. 1-10.

2   De Haar Archives, D48, cahier OIII. Overview of unforeseen expenses 1893-1896, section V: acquisition of antiquities. Het Nieuwe Instituut Rotterdam.

3   De Haar Archives, D42. Inventaris van het Kasteel van Haarzuylens, undated. Het Nieuwe Instituut Rotterdam.

4   J. Berg Sobré, *Behind the Altar Table. The Development of the Painted Retable in Spain, 1350-1500*, Columbia, 1989, pp. 6-7. Entry for «altarpiece» in the glossary of the Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya, https://www.museunacional.cat/en/altarpiece (last accessed 14 August 2024).

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8   S. Hodge, M. Spring, R. Marchant, *The construction and painting of a large Castilian retable: a study of techniques and workshop practices*, in «Studies in Conservation», 43, supp. 1, 1998, pp. 70-76, ref. p. 73; N. Herman, *Nicolás Solana. The arrest of Christ, Christ before Pilate, and the Flagellation, c. 1420-30,* in *Late Medieval Panel Paintings II. Material Methods Meanings*, edited by S. Nash, London, 2015, pp. 22-39, ref. pp. 22-25.

9   J.E.A Kroesen, *Staging the liturgy. The medieval altarpiece in the Iberian Peninsula.* Leuven, 2009, p. 294.

10   *Ivi*, pp. 301-302.

11   *Ivi*, pp. 310-311.

12   Berg Sobré, *Behind the Altar Table*, cit., pp. 187-190.

13   Berg Sobré, *Behind the Altar Table*, cit., pp. 202-204.

14   I. Puig Sanchis, *Los Ferrer, una familia de pintores Leridanos vinculados con la Seu Vella de Lleida* in *La pintura gòtica dels Ferrer i altres aspectes (in)coneguts al voltant de la Seu Vella de Lleida, s. XIII-XVIII*, edited by X. Company, I. Puig, Lleida, 1998, pp. 65-244, ref. pp. 208-209.

15   C.R. Post, *A History of Spanish Painting. Vol. II*, Cambridge, 1930, pp. 290-292.

16   J. Gudiol, S. Alcolea I Blanch, *Pintura Gótica Catalana,* Barcelona, 1986, pp. 111-114.

17   *Ivi*, p. 112; Puig Sanchis, *Los Ferrer, una familia de pintores*, cit. pp. 67-138.

18   G. Macías, R. Cornudella, *Compartiments d'un retaule del Salvador*, in *Catalunya 1400. El Gòtic Internacional*, exhibition catalogue, Barcelona 2012, edited by R. Cornudella, G. Macías, C. Fava, Barcelona, 2012, pp. 182-183, ref. p. 182.

19   R. Cornudella, *Naixement i Epifania*, in *Catalunya 1400*, cit., pp. 220-221, ref. p. 220.

20   A. Velasco, *Memòria dels altars, pintures i retaules de la Seu Vella de Lleida en els segles del gòtic: una història de les desaparicions*, in *Arrels cristianes: presència i significació* del *cristianisme en la història i la societat de Lleida, Vol. II, Part V. Temps de consolidació. La baixa edat mitjana (segles XIII-XV)*, edited by P. Bertran i Roigé, F. Fité i Llevot, Lleida, 2008, pp. 457-490, ref. pp. 484-486.

21   Gudiol, Alcolea i Blanch, *Pintura Gótica Catalana*, cit., p. 112

22   W. van Leeuwen *'Cette splendide restauration' De plannen voor de restauratie en herbouw van het Kasteel*, in *Tien eeuwen Kasteel de Haar*, edited by J. Heijenbrok, G. Steenmeijer, K. Timmers, Zwolle, 2022, pp. 167-213, ref. p. 173.

23   *Ivi*, pp. 195-206.

24   Victor de Stuers (1843-1916) was an influential politician and a strong advocate for the conservation of monuments and national heritage in the Netherlands. He was also a close friend of architect Pierre Cuypers.

25   Nationaal Archief, 2.21.355 werkarchief V.E.L. de Stuers 1859-1916, inv. nr. 351, letter dated 29 October 1900.

Fig. 1: Anonymous Catalan master, *Nativity/Flight into Egypt*, front and reverse, 1400-1425, tempera on panel. Utrecht, Kasteel de Haar, inv. 01936.
Photo: René Gerritsen Kunst en Onderzoeksfotografie.

Fig. 2: Anonymous Catalan master, *Wedding at Cana/Dormition of the Virgin*, front and reverse, 1400-1425, tempera on panel. Utrecht, Kasteel de Haar, inv. 04104. Photo: René Gerritsen Kunst en Onderzoeksfotografie.

Fig. 3: Anonymous Catalan master, *Presentation of Mary in the Temple/Annunciation*, front and reverse, 1400-1425, tempera on panel. Utrecht, Kasteel de Haar, inv. 04108. Photo: René Gerritsen Kunst en Onderzoeksfotografie.

Fig. 4: Anonymous Catalan master, *Adoration of the Magi/Christ among the Doctors,*
front and reverse, 1400-1425, tempera on panel. Utrecht, Kasteel de Haar, inv. 04107.
Photo: René Gerritsen Kunst en Onderzoeksfotografie.

Fig. 5: Anonymous Catalan master, *Massacre of the Innocents*, front and reverse,
1400-1425, tempera on panel. Utrecht, Kasteel de Haar, inv. 01947.
Photo: René Gerritsen Kunst en Onderzoeksfotografie.

Fig. 6: Anonymous Catalan master, *Nativity of Mary*, front and reverse, 1400-1425, tempera on panel. Utrecht, Kasteel de Haar, inv. 01951. Photo: René Gerritsen Kunst en Onderzoeksfotografie.

Fig. 7: Anonymous Catalan master, *Calvary*, front and reverse,
1400-1425, tempera on panel. Utrecht, Kasteel de Haar, inv. 01842.
Photo: René Gerritsen Kunst en Onderzoeksfotografie.

Fig. 8: Anonymous Catalan master, *Virgin and child enthroned surrounded by angels, coronation of the Virgin*, front and reverse, 1400-1425, tempera on canvas. Utrecht, Kasteel de Haar, inv. 01838. Photo: René Gerritsen Kunst en Onderzoeksfotografie.

Fig. 9: Interior of the Knight's Hall with Cuypers posing. The panel showing the *Calvary* is present in the background, circa 1902. Rotterdam, Archive De Haar castle, Nieuwe Instituut Rotterdam, HAARph632. Photo: E.A. van Blitz.
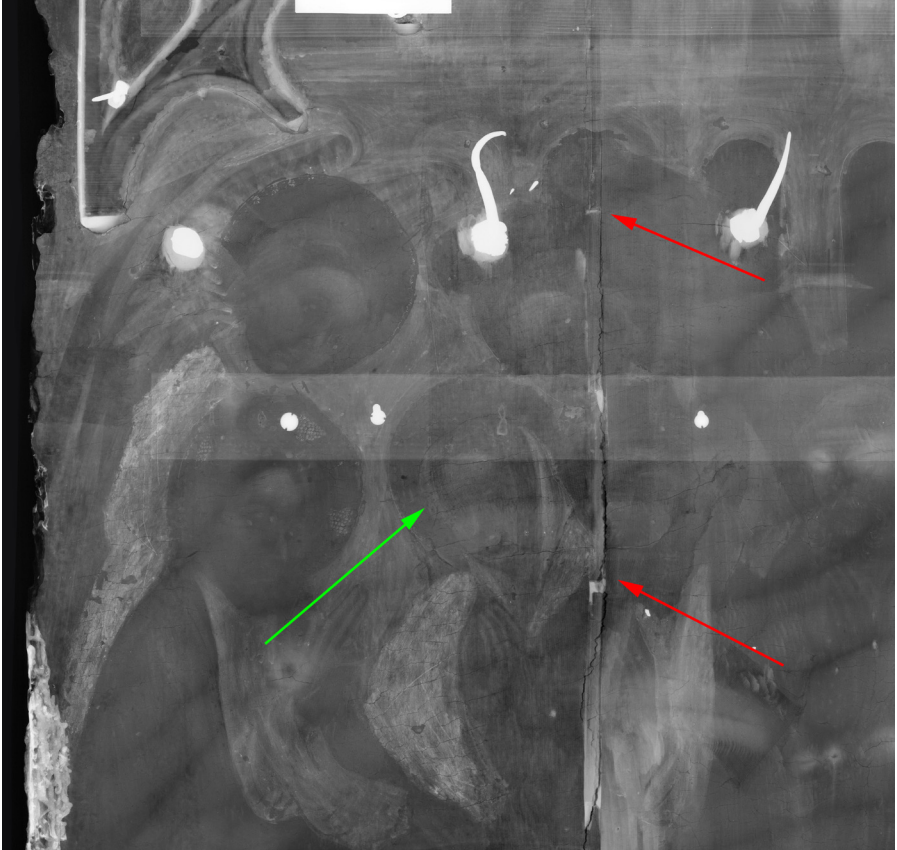
Fig. 10: Detail of x-radiograph of *Wedding at Cana/Dormition of the Virgin* showing the
presence of wooden wedges in the joint (indicated with red arrows)
and a strip of canvas added over the joint (indicated with a green arrow).
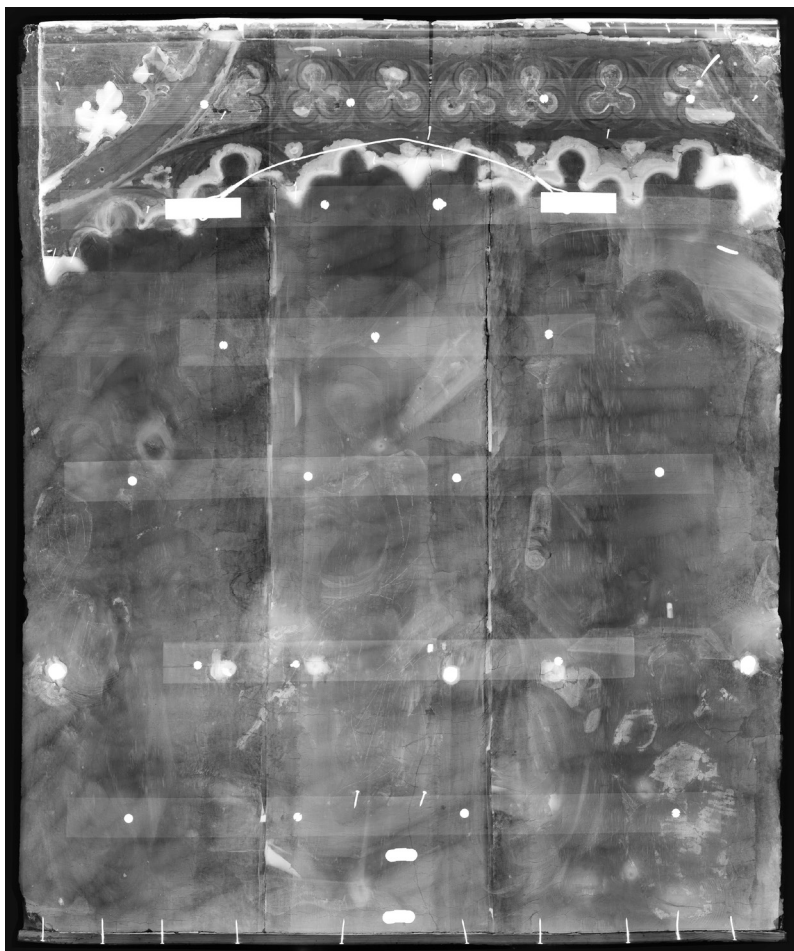Photo: René Gerritsen Kunst en Onderzoeksfotografie.

Fig. 11: X-radiograph of *Adoration of the Magi/Christ among the Doctors*.
Note the presence of canvas along the right edge of the panel.
Photo: René Gerritsen Kunst en Onderzoeksfotografie.

Fig. 12: Photo of the original support of *Virgin and child enthroned surrounded by Angels, Coronation of the Virgin*, taken before conservation in 1958. Photo: Kasteel de Haar.
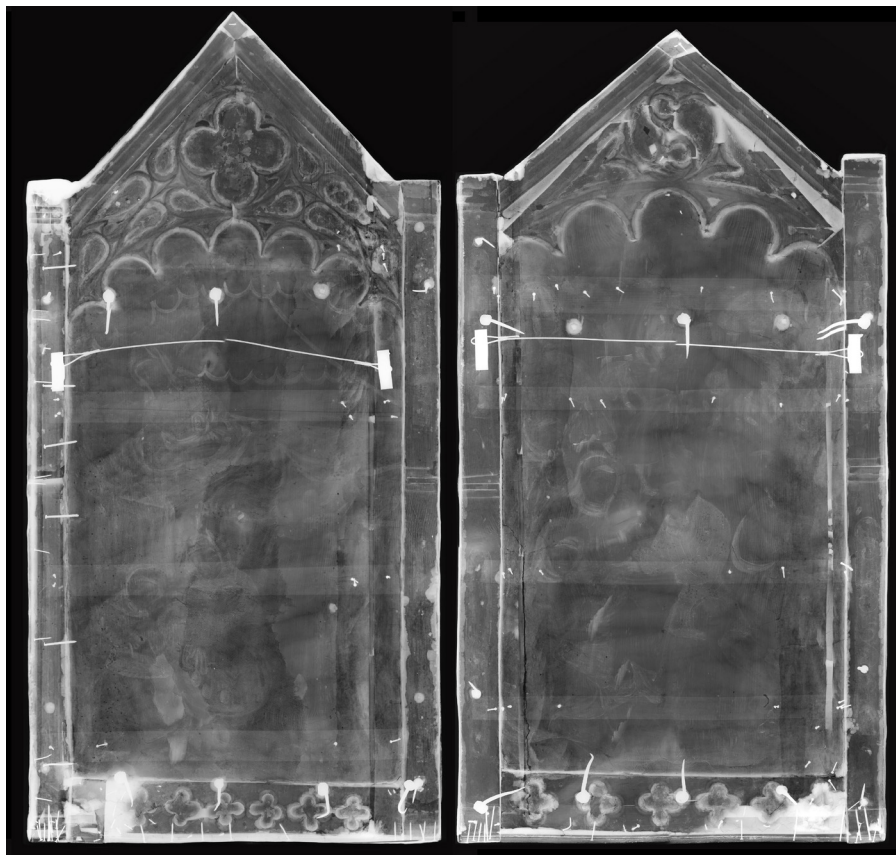
Fig. 13: X-radiographs of *Nativity of Mary* (left) and *Massacre of the Innocents* (right).
Note the presence of filling material along the upper edge of the panel.
Photo: René Gerritsen Kunst en Onderzoeksfotografie.

Fig. 14: Reconstruction of the original composition of the De Haar Altarpiece. Reconstruction made by the author with photos by René Gerritsen Kunst en Onderzoeksfotografie.

Fig. 15: Jaume Ferrer, *Retablo del Salvador*, 1400-1425, tempera on panel. Lleida, Museu de Lleida: diocesà i comarcal. Photo: Museu de Lleida: diocesà i comarcal (Jordi V. Pou).

Fig. 16: Interior of the Main Hall, with the Spanish paintings on display.
Photo: Kasteel de Haar.