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### **Retable from Góra, the work, its context and history**

My thesis project „Retable from Góra, the work, its context and history” is a case study of the late gothic pentaptych from St. Catherine’s Church in Góra (Guhrau). The altarpiece, which dates to circa 1512, is currently located at the main altar of the Poznań Cathedral. It most likely comes from the workshop of the Breslau woodcraver Jakob Beinhardt, and the paintings were created by an anonymous artist, referred to as Master of the Góra Passion. My dissertation project is concerned both with the analysis of the retable in its historical context, and with the study of its Nachleben.

My project can be roughly divided in three parts corresponding to important periods in the retable’s history.

The first part consist of research on the retable in its original, late medieval context. My main objectives are to reconstruct the relationship between the altarpiece and the church interior alongside its other furnishings (especially other retables), and to analyse the projected relationship between the viewer and the object. These will be complemented by an examination of the representation strategies used in the altarpiece and hypotheses regarding the level of ambition and points of reference of the retable’s donors. This, in turn, in turn requires research into the circumstance of the pentaptych’s commission, and a re-evaluation of its iconography.

The second segment of the project concerns the retable’s Nachleben in the period of confessionalization and in the aftermath of the Thirty Years War. The aims for this segment include describing the changes of the retable’s function during the confessional and liturgical transformations. It must be noted that the dynamics of confessional situation in the town have not been fully explained, and analysing documented transformations in the church space can bring new information to light. This part of my dissertation ties in with recent research on reception and adaptation of medieval artworks in early modern era, a subject which has been gaining popularity in the last two decades.

The third segment is dedicated to the 20th Century, with emphasis on the post-World War period and the retable's transfer to the newly rebuilt Poznań Cathedral. This aspect of my research connects with the subject of post-war transfers of objects of cultural heritage, in particular the relocation of historic church furnishings from Silesia, Pomerania and other regions previously under German jurisdiction. This phenomenon is only just beginning to fall under the scrutiny of Polish art historians. And yet, the situation of the Góra altarpiece was different from the majority of artworks moved from the so called Recovered Territories to Central Poland. The decision to transfer it to Poznań was a matter of church administration and relates more closely to the rebuilding of the cathedrals at Gniezno and Poznań, which have not been studied in detail. Aside from analysing these restoration campaigns, this segment will require a study of the procedures of transferring art objects between different institutions of the State and the Church. It will be based on documentation from different institutions such as the Archive of the Archdiocese of Poznań, the Catholic University of Lublin and the National Museum of Warsaw.

The methods of media studies and reception aesthetics form the methodological backbone of the project. Yet, each of the three segments requires some adjustments of methodology. The medieval segment will use elements of iconology, and of contextual analysis in the tradition of Michael Baxandall. The two other segments will refer to the Warburgian school of art history, especially the concept of *Nachleben*. The part of the project which will concern the 20th Century will also employ the methodology of memory studies.