



QUARTZ RELIQUARY

Abbasid, 9–10th century (quartz)

Western Germany, 13th century (housing)

Cut quartz, cast, embossed and gilded silver

INV. 17

This small bottle, made of cut quartz, belongs to a group of quartz vessels made in the Abbasid Empire in the 9th and 10th centuries, which were brought to Europe through trade, the Crusades or as diplomatic gifts.

The quartz has been bored, allowing it to retain its distinctively large size. It has been decorated with stone-cut volute tendrils.

The object bears a great similarity to objects now held at Gandersheim and Quedlinburg, suggesting they all came from the same Ottonian holdings.

In the 13th century, the vessel was reworked, producing the version we see today. Within the clear vessel, a red bundle of relics can be seen.

Another quartz vessel has been preserved at the foot of the **Theophanu Cross**.

This object was likely donated at some time during the terms of office of the abbesses Mathilde, Sophia and Theophanu, and later repurposed as a reliquary.