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## Creation of the Sacred. Notes on the Jerusalem Chapel in Bruges and its relic of the True Cross

As the place of the Passion of Christ and described in the Apocalypse as the eternal City of God, Jerusalem has always been an important subject of Christian devotion. The engagement with Jerusalem experienced a revival in the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> century Europe which is in part noticeable through the large number of newly erected chapels with Holy Sepulchres and other Passion monuments. Within these recreations of certain biblical places in art and architecture, the immediate environment was transformed into a sacred space, able to connect it with the redemptive power of the original sites of Jerusalem. Mostly, these monuments were donated on private impetus, but at the same time they enabled a broad public to immediately feel the power of the Holy Sites. Among those ensembles offering a te contact to the Holy Land, the Jerusalem Chapel in Bruges is an extraordinary example. Built by the Adornes family from 1471 to 1485, the chapel represents Jerusalem in a multifaceted way by creating devotional space through architectural design, liturgical use or the iconography of artworks<sup>1</sup>. In this short paper, I intend to illustrate that the donors furthermore tried to generate the sacred power of Jerusalem by focussing on the materiality of the Holy Sites and through material transfers, particularly relics. Especially regarding the reliquary of the True Cross preserved in the chapel, which can be traced in some newly read sources, some light might be shed on questions

<sup>1</sup> A first Jerusalem Chapel was consecrated in 1429, however, from 1471 on this first chapel was renovated and rebuild, see Exhibition Catalogue: *Adornes en Jeruzalem*, ed. by N. GEIRNAERT & A. VANDEWALLE, Bruges, 1983. For the sources concerning the Adornes and the chapel see N. GEIRNAERT, *Het archief van de familie Adornes en de Jeruzalemstichting te Brugge*, 2 vols, Bruges 1987/1989. For a broader context see Exhibition Catalogue *Geloof en Geluk. Sieraad en Devotie in Middeleeuws Vlaanderen*, ed. by J. KOLDEWEIJ, Arnhem, 2006, p. 187-192.

of its origin as well as the manner in which it enhanced the representation of Golgotha in the chapel<sup>2</sup>.

#### THE HOLY LAND RELICS IN THE BRUGES JERUSALEM

Much is known about the eagerness of medieval pilgrims to own and to transfer pieces of the Holy Land, preferentially of sacred places, objects which had come in contact with them or simple souvenirs<sup>3</sup>. It can be assumed, that in the 15<sup>th</sup> century a respectable collection of Holy Land relics was kept in the Jerusalem Chapel, gathered mostly by Anselm Adornes (c.1424-1483), who renovated the chapel from 1471 on, and his oldest son Jan Adornes (1444-1511), patron of the chapel from 1483-1511, during their pilgrimage to Jerusalem. A first record concerning these relics can be found on a flyleaf within the *Cartularium* of Jan Adornes. In this letter Jan requests that a certain “nux indiana” decorated with silver ornaments be returned to the Jerusalem Chapel to serve as a container for some of the “reliquie sancte quae portavimus d[omi]n[u]s genitor et ego ex terra sancta de Jh[e]r[usa]l[e]m”<sup>4</sup>. The specific type of relics remains, unfortunately, unclear. Only the much later list of relics (1645) may be indicative of the objects and materials in this collection, listing pieces “de porta Samolonis“, “de calumna flagellationis“, “de monte sinai“, “de monte calvarie“, “de locus nazareth“, “de porta aurea“ and “de monte oliveti”<sup>5</sup>. Although Anselm and Jan Adornes wrote a detailed pilgrimage report, they remained silent thus far about their manner of collecting and types of relics. The first precise mention of the relic dates only from

2 In addition to all staff of archives and museums who supported my research, I would like to thank especially Countess de Limburg-Stirum for the fruitful discussions and for allowing me a detailed research *in situ*, N. Geirnaert for sharing his vast knowledge on the Adornes family and J.P. Debels for showing me the astonishing manuscripts of the Bruges Carmelites.

3 The transfer of materials from the Holy Land is examined e.g. in R. OUSTERHOUT (ed.), *The Blessings of Pilgrimage*, Vol. 2: *The souvenirs and blessings of pilgrimage*, Chicago, 1990; B. REUDENBACH, *Loca sancta. Zur materiellen Übertragung der heiligen Stätten*, in: *Ibid: Jerusalem du Schöne* (Vestigia Bibliae 28), Bern, 2008, p. 9-32.

4 “the holy relics my father and I brought from the Holy Land of Jerusalem” (BRUGES, *City Archives* [hence SAB], Adornes en Jeruzalemstichting, inv. 39, flyleaf on fol. 183r). I thank Noel Geirnaert for his advice on the “nux”.

5 SAB, Adornes en Jeruzalemstichting, inv. 986; compare also Cat. *Geloof en Geluk*, p. 187.

1493, thus the same moment Jan added the yet cited flyleaf to his *Cartularium*. It appears in an ‘Addendum’ to his testament, mentioning once again the relics in general, but for the first time also the existence of a “venerabile pecia ligni s[an]cte crucis: q[ui] est et iacet nu[n]c inter Jocalia”<sup>6</sup>.

This piece which was believed to be part of the True Cross of Christ can be considered the most important relic conserved in the chapel<sup>7</sup>. It is a striking coincidence that this Addendum to his testament mentions not only for the first time a piece of the Cross of Christ, but also for the first time explains Jan’s will to donate precious reliquaries made of “argento regis Scotie”<sup>8</sup>, the silver of the Scottish empire, conserved within the family’s treasure<sup>9</sup>. Shortly after Jan’s death, a goldsmith named Jooris Huushoen received payment for repairing three “monstrancien” for which he needed 22 “Inghelschen zelvers”<sup>10</sup>, probably referring to the silver of the Scottish provided by Jan Adornes. Unfortunately, no information about the form, style or content of these silver works is given in the chapel’s accounts. Considering the fact that the testament of Jan Adornes, who donated the silver repositories, was related to ‘all the relics brought from the Holy Land’; a reliquary designed as a Resurrection and still preserved in the chapel’s treasure, could very well be, however, detected as part of that com-

6 “[...] a venerable piece of the wood of the True Cross: which is located now in the treasury” (BRUGES, *State Archives* [hence RAB], Archief Adornes, inv. 52, fol. 9r). Compare also RAB, Fonds Aafgeschäfte Kloosters, inv. 1 where the piece of wood “iacet int(er) Jocalia ipsius capelle”.

7 The dispersal and veneration of relics of the True Cross described e. g. in A. FROLOW, *La relique de la Vraie Croix. Recherches sur le développement d’un culte*, Paris, 1961; H.A. KLEIN, *Byzanz, der Westen und das “wahre” Kreuz. Die Geschichte einer Reliquie und ihrer künstlerischen Fassung in Byzanz und im Abendland*. Wiesbaden, 2004; G. TOUSSAINT, *Die Kreuzreliquie und die Konstruktion von Heiligkeit*, in: H. BLEUMER, H.-W. GOETZ, S. PATZOLD & B. REUDENBACH (eds.), *Zwischen Wort und Bild. Wahrnehmungen und Deutungen im Mittelalter*, Köln-Weimar-Berlin, 2010, p. 33-77.

8 “[...] all relics of the chapel as well as the relics we brought from the Holy Land” (RAB, Archief Adornes, inv. 52, fol. 9r).

9 For the connection of Anselm Adornes to the Scottish King James III, see A. MACQUARRIE, ‘Anselm Adornes of Bruges. Traveller in the East and friend of James III’, in: *The Innes Review*, 33 (1982), p. 15-22.

10 SAB, Adornes en Jeruzalemstichting, inv. 781, fol. 17r.



Ill. 1 Reliquary of the Ascension, Bruges c. 1511, private collection (foto Studio Formanoir)

mission (ill. 1)<sup>11</sup>. It is also listed within the first detailed inventory of the chapel made in 1521<sup>12</sup>. The sarcophagus in the centre of this amazing reliquary displays at its front two small stones, certainly pulled away from the Holy Sepulchre Church in Jerusalem<sup>13</sup>. Like many others, this reliquary connects Passion legend and Passion place through the incorporation of authentic material and thus combines biblical narrative, Holy Sites of Jerusalem, and the as-

11 Cat. *Adornes en Jeruzalem*, cat. no. 14.

12 SAB, *Adornes en Jeruzalemstichting*, inv. 969, fol. 2r.

13 The use of pulling away little stones of the Holy Sites was most common among pilgrims and is described colourfully e.g. by the pilgrim and priest Felix Fabri in 1483. *Fratris Felicis Fabri Evagatorium in Terræ Sanctæ, Arabiæ et Egypti peregrinationem*, ed. by K.D. HASSLER, Stuttgart, 1843, p. 95f.



Ill. 2 Reliquary of the Holy Cross, gilt silver, Bruges c. 1511, Jerusalem Chapel, Bruges (foto Studio Formanoir)

pect of pilgrimage within a single devotional object<sup>14</sup>. Stylistically datable to the beginning of 16<sup>th</sup> century, it was most probably part of the commission connected to the Scottish silver fulfilling Jan's testamentary wish in 1511, although the lack of a personal inscription or coat of arms might be unusual. Another object within the chapel's treasury clearly refers to Jan Adornes as the donator, the gilt cross containing the True Cross of Christ (ill. 2).<sup>15</sup> At the foot

- 14 An important example is the casket of Sancta Sanctorum in Rome from the 6th century, see REUDENBACH, *Loca sancta*, p. 21ff.; for other forms of reliquiaries of the Holy Land see G. TOUSSAINT, 'Jerusalem - Imagination und Transfer eines Ortes', in: B. REUDENBACH (ed.), *Jerusalem du Schöne* (Vestigia Bibliae 28), Bern 2008, p. 33-59.
- 15 Cat. *Adornes en Jeruzalem*, cat. no. 55. While this gilt cross was formerly exhibited

on the front and backside, the coat of arms of the Adornes appears, as well as a banderole with the word TANDEM next to a skull and a dagger, the devices of Jan Adornes. In its centre, the large (55 cm x 33 cm) gilt cross holds the oblong piece of wood fixed within a golden rectangular frame and decorated with seven little gems. In all probability the piece of wood can be identified as the ‘*pecia ligni sancte crucis*’ which Jan mentions in his testament. The precious silverwork characterizing the cross is in absence of any biblical scenes or representations of saints. The only reference to the Passion of Christ may be noted on the upper side of the crystal or glass bar which is surrounded by a crown of thorns fitting exactly the central part. The ends of the cross are shaped as fleur-de-lis corresponding with the filigree foliate tendrils visible on the cross arms as well as with the large pedestal, which also alludes to the floral form<sup>16</sup>. Indicating the organic nature of the wood, these decorative issues might visualise the crucifix as *lignum vitae* referring to the centrality of the True Cross within salvation history<sup>17</sup>. Each of the four cross arms shows an ornamental cloud traversed by rays which can be identified as the device of the Adornes family, introduced by Anselm Adornes<sup>18</sup>. The family’s clouds are followed by a locket with the Cross of Jerusalem also marking the ‘fleur de lis’ shape endings. This symbol represents the far eastern “*Terram Sanctam*” as historical place of the Passion on the one hand, but on the other refers to the pilgrimage which was undertaken by Anselm Adornes and his son Jan in 1470-1471<sup>19</sup>. Combining the device of the radiating clouds with the Holy City’s emblem, the reliquary does preferentially point to the long tradi-

on the main altar in the upper choir, dedicated to St Catherine, it has been preserved in a niche in the northern wall of the crypt since 1713.

- 16 The shape of the cross is typical for late medieval Reliquaries of the True Cross in that region. See A. FROLOW, *Les reliquaires de la vraie croix*, Paris, 1965, p. 141-151.
- 17 See B. BAERT, *A Heritage of Holy Wood. The Legend of the True Cross in Text and Image*. Leiden-Boston, 2004, p. 58f, 98f, 381f., 424f.
- 18 In his testaments he referred to his insignia as “*meyne wolken*”. See the transcription of the testament in: A. DE POORTER, ‘Testament van Anselmus Adornes, 10. Febr. 1470’, in: *Biekorf*, 37 (1931), p. 235.
- 19 For the Pilgrimage of the Adornes, see J. HEERS & G. DE GROER (eds.), *Itinéraire d’Anselme Adorno en terre sainte (1470-1471)/Itinerarium terrae sanctae*, Paris, 1978; Cat. *Geloof en Geluk*, p. 83f; W. VAN HAM, ‘Het Jeruzalemskruis een bijzonder embleem - 3. Het teken van ridders, paters, pelgrims en prelaten’, in: *Heraldicum Disputationes. Kwartaalblad voor Heraldiek*, 133 (2008), p. 65f.

tion of Jerusalem devotion by the Adornes family culminating most notably in the donation of the chapel<sup>20</sup>.

Although the True Cross reliquary might be connected to the accounts of the three silver reliquaries, until now nothing specific is known about the provenience of this relic and its meaning for the chapel itself. Indeed, the Adornes' relic of the True Cross cannot be traced in the sources before 1493 when Jan prepared the 'Addendum' to his testament. A first detailed hint concerning the True Cross relic, its provenience history and usage cannot be found until 14<sup>th</sup> April 1519, a good twenty years later<sup>21</sup>. It is related to a charter of the Bishop of Tournai, which names the piece as part of a relic of the Holy Cross brought by the famous pilgrim Nicolaas Schoudete to Bruges in 1431<sup>22</sup>. The charter declares that Schoudetes' relic was divided, whereby one piece was given to the Adornes, one to Dordrecht, another to the chapel donated by Pieter Bladelin in Middelburg, and one piece to the Our-Ladies-church of Bruges. In fact, the common history of this well-known relic describes, however, only the last three pieces with no mention of a part of the wood owned by the Adornes<sup>23</sup>. Thus, we might ask how this connection was made possible and why it is not part of the local tradition?

The True Cross pieces of Middelburg and Our-Ladies of Bruges were in fact not presented by the pilgrim Nicolaas Schoudete, but delivered by Wouter Utenhove, who married the widow of Schoudete, Margareta Tristram, in 1433<sup>24</sup>. Interestingly, this fam-

20 A description of the affection for Jerusalem by the Adornes family was recorded in a letter by Maarten Adornes (SAB, Adornes en Jeruzalemstichting, inv. 39, fol. 194ff).

21 SAB, Adornes en Jeruzalemstichting, inv. 1247.

22 See Cat. *Adornes en Jeruzalem*, cat. no. 56.

23 See J.M.L.V. VAN CALOEN, *Triumphe van het Heilige Kruise Christi Jesu, dat is de geschiedenis van de vier kruisreliquien die worden ofte die eertijds vereerd wierden te Dordrecht ... door een lid van de Sint Thomas- ende Lucasgilde, Brugge, 1871*. For the veneration of Schoudete's relic see G. VERHOEVEN, 'De cultus van het heilig Hout te Dordrecht. Het ontstaan van een bedevaart in de late middeleeuwen', in: N. LETTINGCK, J.J. VAN MOOLENBROEK & A.H. BREDERO (eds.), *In de schaduw van de eeuwigheid. Tien studies over religie en samenleving in laatmiddeleeuws Nederland aangeboden aan Prof. Dr. A.H. Bredero*, Utrecht, 1986, p. 200-223; A. BROWN, *Civic Ceremony and Religion in Medieval Bruges c.1300-1520*, New Haven, 2011, p. 122f.

24 For biographical information to Scoudete see VERHOEVEN, *De cultus*.

ily was closely connected to the Adornes family; for instance, Utenhoves wife became godmother of Anselms' son Pieter IV in 1460 who later was even married to a Catharina Utenhove of Gent<sup>25</sup>. Since both families were intertwined over many generations, Utenhove certainly was aware of the Adornes' veneration of the Holy Sites. Thus, although no further source can be traced connecting the Schoudete relic and the Adornes, it cannot be excluded that the relic was in fact a gift from Wouter Utenhove himself or of his heirs to the Jerusalem Chapel<sup>26</sup>.

Of equal importance is, after all, another question: Why do we hear about this piece of the True Cross only in 1493? To answer this, I would like to point to a so far unnoticed source, the *Antiquus liber fundatorum*, a manuscript conserved at the Carmelite archive in Bruges. This calendar for the liturgical events is of particular interest for the history of the Jerusalem Chapel. The Carmelite order owned one of the most popular convents in its surrounding, was connected to the Holy Land and was mainly involved in the liturgy of the chapel especially on Palm Sunday, Good Friday, and Corpus Christi<sup>27</sup>. On September 18<sup>th</sup>, the Carmelites also participated at the chapel's liturgy on the feast of the *Exaltatio Crucis*. Regarding this feast the manuscript states that: "In sacello hierosolymitano solet hac tempestate solemniter a n[ost]ris fratribus cantari missa quia illic collocata e[st] particula ligni sanct[a]e crucis superioribus a[n]nis e[x] domo carthusianorum allata"<sup>28</sup>. The entry which can be dated to the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century suggests that a piece

25 For the connection of the Adornes with Utenhove see M. BOONE, M. DANNEEL & N. GEIRNAERT, 'Pieter IV Adornes 1460-ca. 1496. Een Brugs patriciër in Gent', in: *Handelingen der maatschappij voor geschiedenis en oudheidkunde te Gent. Nieuwe reeks*, 39 (1985), p. 124f.

26 Within the sources of the Adornes family one can find "Nikolai Scouteetius" as owner of a house next to a house from which money was taken to fund the new chapel of Jerusalem in 1428. See SAB, Adornes en Jeruzalemstichting, inv. 712, fol. 196-197.

27 The Carmelites were paid by the Chapel for these services, which is proven in the accounts from the year 1483 on. See SAB, Adornes en Jeruzalemstichting, inv. 769-785.

28 "Usually, in this period the chapel of Jerusalem is solemnly visited by our friars to say mass, since there is located a piece of the Holy Cross which was brought here some years ago from the house of the Carthusians" (BRUGES, Archives of the Carmelites, *Antiquus Liber Foundationum*, inv. Eo005, fol. 34r).



of the True Cross was recently brought to the Jerusalem Chapel from the house of the Carthusians, referring most probably to the Carthusian convent Genadedal near Bruges. Aside from the Carmelite calendar's entry on the transfer of a piece of the True Cross from the Carthusian monastery, another written hint arguing for the same provenience can be found in the Episcopal charter of 1519 noting that "Praefato Johanni Adornes supplicanti ac referis dicte capelle de Jherusalem rectoribus et gubernatoribusque predictam restantem partem ligni sive lig[nu]m ipsum restans diu in capella"<sup>29</sup>. The chosen verb "referre" indicates also, that the relic was originally considered to be property of the Jerusalem Chapel itself. In addition, the charter brings us to the notion that the relic could have been venerated within the chapel for some years, thus perhaps from 1493 on<sup>30</sup>.

The connection of the relic of the True Cross to the Carthusians is an exciting matter since the relation of the convent Genadedal and the Jerusalem Chapel was indeed very close and went back to the early 1450s. When Pieter II. Adornes who first founded the Jerusalem Chapel in 1429 moved to the convent as *clericus redditus*<sup>31</sup>, the Carthusian monks officially began to administrate the chapel. The Carthusians were instructed to care for the chapel and its related donations, properties, treasures and the family's *memoria*. Within the ten years of Pieter's entry in Genadedal which ended with his death in 1464, many objects of his private possession also moved with him. In addition to books which, although originally projected for a library at the Jerusalem Chapel, were admitted to the monastery after his death, there could have been church ornaments and relics as well<sup>32</sup>. Although he once wanted to

29 "[...] the said Johan Adornes was suppliantly asking the earlier mentioned superintendents and governors of the chapel to bring back the resting piece of the wood which is currently located in the chapel" (SAB, Adornes en Jeruzalemstichting, inv. 1247).

30 Also J.P. Esther presumes that the relic was conserved within the chapel much earlier, see Cat. *Adornes en Jeruzalem*, cat. no. 55.

31 (note of the editor) Pieter II. Adornes was *clericus redditus* (a lay person following the Divine Office with the monks) of this convent since 1454 (J. DE GRAUWE, *Prosopographia Cartusiana Belgica (1314-1796)* (Analecta Cartusiana 28), Gent, 1976, p. 267).

32 The testament of Pieter II. in SAB, Adornes en Jeruzalemstichting, inv. 16. About

be buried in the Jerusalem Chapel, his tomb was finally situated within the Carthusian convent<sup>33</sup>. The close connection is also mentioned in a letter dating from 1493 written by Maarten Adornes who was prior of Genadedal and refers to his grandfather Pieter II as the donor of a “monstranciam preciosa cum una spina corone JHU salvatoris[...]”<sup>34</sup>. When Anselm Adornes inherited the entire area of the chapel in 1469, he maintained the useful agreement with the Carthusians by overtaking all related duties and earlier donations in favour of Genadedal<sup>35</sup>. Later on, Jan Adornes and also Arnoud Adornes, who were in charge of the Jerusalem Chapel from 1483-1511 and from 1511-1517, supported the Carthusian convent with donations and tried to confirm the alliance distinctly. In 1491 their brother Maarten Adornes (1450-1507), became prior of the Carthusian monastery, which apparently gave a noticeable new impetus to the alliance between Genadedal and the chapel<sup>36</sup>. Many surviving documents and letters from the early 90s of the 15<sup>th</sup> century demonstrate how the bond between the Carthusians and the Adornes grew stronger through the fraternal interaction<sup>37</sup>. Apparently, the familiar connection between Jan and Maarten also stimulated a deeper relation in material regards. The convent also functioned as a kind of treasury, keeping documents, jewelry and money of the Adornes family<sup>38</sup>. Soon after, a huge sum

Pieter Adornes and the convent see also H.J.J. SCHOLTENS, ‘Het Kartuizerklooster dal van gracien buiten Brugge’, in: *Handelingen van het Genootschap voor Geschiedenis gesticht onder de benaming Société d’Emulation te Brugge*, 83 (1940-46), Brugge 1947, p. 140f.

33 See SAB, Adornes en Jeruzalemstichting, inv. 39, fol. 194r.

34 “a precious reliquary containing a thorn of the crown of Jesus the Saviour” (SAB, Adornes en Jeruzalemstichting, inv. 39, fol. 194r).

35 See the contract made in 1469, see SAB, Adornes en Jeruzalemstichting, inv. 39, fol. 90-95. For other donations, see RAB, Fonds Afgeschafte Kloosters, *Copia acta fondatione par anselm adornes* (1482).

36 SCHOLTENS, *Het Kartuizerklooster*, p. 185f. (note of the editor) See also: DE GRAUWE, *Prosopographia Cartusiana*, p. 243.

37 In Maarten’s letter from 1493 the Carthusians are still called “sup[er]i[n]tende[n]tes ta[m] ad bona t[em]p[or]alia localia et clenodia quibus dotata est ipsa capella et ad co[n]servationem et manutene[n]tia[m] edificioru[m] eiusdem sacri[s] cultus d[omi]ni et fu[n]datio[n]is ip[s]arum pauperu[m] viduaru[m] sup[er]rad[i]c[t]aru[m] imp[er]petuu[m]” ([...] superintendents and responsible persons for the jewels and treasures donated to the chapel and to conserve and maintain the building as well as holy liturgy and the foundation regarding the mentioned poor widows continuously) (SAB, Adornes en Jeruzalemstichting, 39, fol. 194r).

38 A note by Jan Adornes lists the property he had deposited at the convent: “pro

for masses within the chapel was donated by Jan Adornes and in that circumstance a new contract was set up, determining the entire memorial cult of the family<sup>39</sup>. In this regard, one can observe a total reorganisation of donations, treasures, documents and rights of the Jerusalem Chapel reaching its peak in the year 1493. It is certainly not incidental that within this period the relic of the Holy Cross is mentioned for the first time and that the testament of Jan refers to it as “nunc inter Jocalia”. The arrival of the True Cross might rather be seen as the conductive result of this collaboration.

For the Jerusalem Chapel these sources tracing the True Cross relic provide new perspectives. So far, the history of the relic began with the striving for a permanent exhibition of the gemmed cross in 1519 related to the new heir, Jan De la Coste Adornes, who intended to establish a more public veneration. The founding of a Confraternity of Jerusalem in the chapel around 1521, and the enlargement of the procession held on Palm Sunday can be related to this effort as well<sup>40</sup>. In every regard, also the legend of Nicolaas Schoudete, whether truly related to the Adornes relic or not, enhanced the authenticity and prominence of the relic<sup>41</sup>. The instal-

me depositis in Carthusia vallis gr[at]ie iux[ta] Brugis in cista mea ferrea que est in coris deposito” ([...] for me deposited within the convent Genadedal near Bruges in my iron cist deposited here in the sanctuary) (RAB, Fonds Afgeschafte Kloosters, inv. 1, Declaratio (1502) fol. 3r). For other deposits of Jan Adornes within the Cartusian convent see e. g. RAB, Aanwinsten (INV 121), inv. 6, fol. 52-54; another not conserved in SAB, Adornes en Jeruzalemstichting, inv. 40.

39 See SAB, Adornes en Jeruzalemstichting, inv. 9 and RAB, Fonds Afgeschafte Kloosters, *Copia acta fondatione par anselm adornes* (1482), fol. 2r; see a *nota bene*, that the donation was shifted to other dates by Jan Adornes and the prior Maarten Adornes. See also RAB, Aanwinsten, inv. 6, fol. 55v.

40 The Confraternity was founded within the chapel and had certain privileges. See Cat. *Adornes en Jeruzalem*, cat. no. 57-59. See B. VAN DE WALLE, ‘Sur les traces des pèlerins flamands, hennuyers et liégeois au monastère Sainte-Catherine du Sinaï’, in: *Handelingen van het Genootschap voor Geschiedenis gesticht onder de benaming Société d’Emulation te Brugge*, 101 (1964), p. 119-147; W. SCHNEIDER, Wolfgang, *Peregrinatio hierosolymitana. Studien zum spätmittelalterlichen Jerusalembrauchtum und zu den aus der Heiliglandfahrt hervorgegangenen nordwesteuropäischen Jerusalembruderschaften*, Münster 1982, p. 152f. The *Liber antiquus fundatorum* refers to the Palm Sunday procession as held henceforward with “magna pompa”. See BRUGES, Archives of the Carmelites, *Antiquus Liber Fundationum*, inv. E0005, fol. 11r.

41 The inventory of 1521 mentions two other “iuweelkins vande helegen cruce om mede te zemelen” conserved within the office of Jan de la Coste Adornes (SAB, Adornes en Jeruzalemstichting, inv. 969, fol. 2r). Thus, linking the gilt cross to a more known relic of the cross could be a method to distinguish the piece, too.

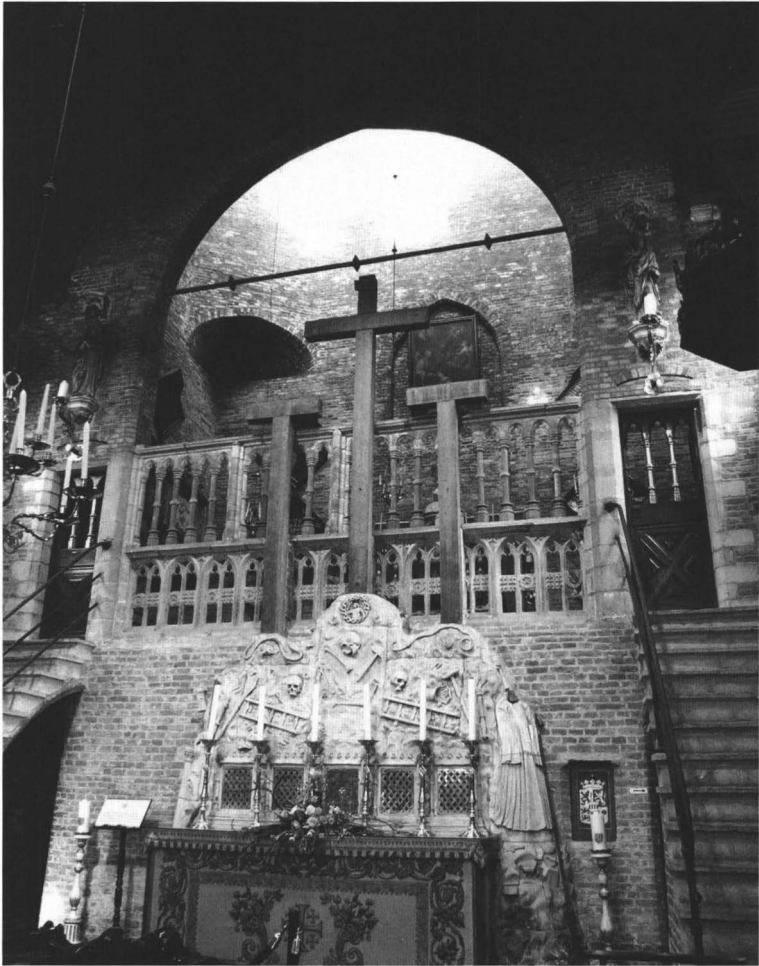
lation of the True Cross in the chapel must, however, be more closely connected to Jan and to Maarten Adornes, who had tried earlier to attract more attention to their father's chapel.

To risk a conclusion about the history of the relic of the Holy Cross within the Bruges Jerusalem Chapel a trace can be determined as follows: A relic of the Holy Cross is mentioned in the writings of Jan Adornes from around 1493 on and might be identical with the precious gilt cross today conserved in the chapel. Although the origin of the piece is not mentioned by Jan, the sources indicate that this piece had been formerly kept within the Carthusian convent Genadedal outside Bruges and was transferred from there to the chapel, maybe on behalf of Maarten Adornes, who, in 1491, became the newly elected prior. Regarding the administrative exchange between Carthusian convent and chapel, also in earlier times, one might argue, that the relic was always closely related to and presumably originally possessed by the Adornes family. Regarding this, the family Utenhove might have been involved and perhaps had presented a fragment of their True Cross relic to the Bruges 'Jerusalem' as they had done earlier to Pieter Bladelin and his privately founded church in Middelburg.

#### MATERIALIZING JERUSALEM - CREATING THE SACRED

These observations suggest that the material presence of Passion relics was considered as a central theme within the Bruges Jerusalem Chapel. Nevertheless, the role of these relics, and especially of the True Cross, was not yet scholarly discussed in a broad context. The existence of 'holy matter' within the Bruges chapel surely not only established a true material connection to Jerusalem and an instant presence of the Passion sites. It also opens up new modes for interpreting its architectural and pictorial program, its spatial organization and iconography. Although detailed written sources are missing, having a piece of Christ's cross and other Holy Sites here was, without a doubt, central to the chapel's meaning as an authentic simulation and reproduction of Jerusalem's true power of salvation.

An extraordinary characteristic of the chapel is, in either case,



Ill. 3 Interior of the Jerusalem Chapel, Bruges

the captivating interplay of sorrow and salvation represented through architecture, sculpture and spatial relations. In addition, the chapel's structure mirrors the experiences of pilgrimage made by the donors on their trip to the *Terra Sancta*<sup>42</sup>. As research has

42 See M. KIRKLAND-IVES, 'Capell nuncupato Jherusalem noviter Brugis: The Adornes Family of Bruges and Holy Land Devotion', in: *The Sixteenth Century Journal. The Journal of Early Modern Studies*, 39, 4 (2008), p. 1061f; L.D. GELFAND, 'Illusionism and Interactivity: Medieval Installation Art, Architecture and

pointed out, the interior of the chapel contains many architectural and spatial features particularly related to the Holy Sepulchre Church<sup>43</sup>. While the exterior view, amongst other things, alludes to its architecture composed of the Crusaders' choir and the Anastasis rotunda, the interior contrast of a flat crypt and a high choir reveals the architectural frame of the original mount Golgotha also constructed by two separated chapels<sup>44</sup>. The installation of a monumental Calvary relief in Bruges refers to the setting of the actual rock of Golgotha in Jerusalem, which was also assembled between an upper and a lower chapel. With the centrally displayed monumental Calvary, the Jerusalem Chapel refers particularly to the place of the Crucifixion, characterizing the relic of the True Cross as a logical and efficacious supplement for this representation of the Holy Sites, as were the other relics brought from the Holy Land.

Especially with regard to the Bruges Calvary, it becomes clear, that the silver reliquaries were not the first and only way of storing and presenting relics of the Holy Sites here. Apparently, the relief of Calvary itself was also considered to be a 'reliquary'. Until today, the monumental sculpture contains five rectangular niches above the altar, grated and large enough to hold stones, *ampullae* and other sacred objects. In addition, the iconographic program of this relief points to a presentation of relics. Designed as a natural rock and overlaid with the *Arma Christi* this Calvary was meant as a monumental shrine for the Holy Land<sup>45</sup>. Apparently no effort was

Devotional Response', in: S. BLICK, L.D. GELFAND & M.L. GOEHRING, *Push me, pull you. Physical and Spatial Interaction in Late Medieval and Renaissance Art*, Vol. II, Leiden-Boston 2011, p. 87-116. For the experiences of Jerusalem in this area see J. VAN HERWAARDEN, 'Geloof en geloofsuitingen in de late middeleeuwen in de Nederlanden: jerusalembedevoarten, lijdensdevotie en kruiswegverering', in: *Bijdragen en mededelingen betreffende de geschiedenis der Nederlanden*, 98 (1983), p. 413f; Cat. *Gelooften Geluk*, p. 68f.

43 See J. PIEPER, A. NAUJOKAT & A. KAPPLER, *Jerusalemkirchen*, Aachen, 2003, p. 17f and 45f.

44 See G. KUEHNEL, 'Architectural Mise-En-Scène and pictorial Turns in Jerusalem', in: A. HOFFMANN & G. WOLF, *Jerusalem as narrative space. Erzählraum Jerusalem*, Leiden, 2012, p. 21-31; J. KRUEGER, *Die Grabeskirche zu Jerusalem: Geschichte - Gestalt - Bedeutung*, Regensburg, 2000, p. 123f, 140f.

45 On the origin of the *Arma Christi* and their development in medieval art, see R. BERLINER, 'Arma Christi', in: *Münchener Jahrbuch der Bildenden Kunst*, III, 4 (1955), p. 35-152. Recent research concerning the 'materiality' of the *Arma Christi* combines

spared to arrange the massive blocks of local sandstone to resemble one rock. With its undulant surface, stones strewn about, and protruding grass and tree stumps, the sculpture takes on a compelling resemblance to a natural surface. Also the life-sized *Arma*, shifting between object and image, presence and representation, generate a naturalistic, tangible physicality, visually compensating for Christ's torment and likewise drawing a connection to the pieces and materials within the Calvary niches. The passion tools also propose the ideas of material translations of the sacred; for example, the veneration of measures, such as the length of the side wound based on the size of the Holy Lance, or the 'true length' of Christ which was measured from the marble sarcophagus within the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem<sup>46</sup>. Indeed the Golgotha as a reservoir of relics was not fictional, but rather was rooted in the very beginning of the veneration of Holy Sites. In the wake of the discovery of the True Cross in late antiquity, it was thought that the original *Arma* had been found close to the site of the Crucifixion<sup>47</sup>. Reproducing, thus, a geographical impact and relating this fictive topography to true relics, the Calvary transferred the Passion monuments of Jerusalem with the requested authenticity to a great extent. With the later donation of silver reliquaries, however, Jan must have had a more flexible presentation of these materials in mind, for example within liturgical performances. From the sources we know that reliquaries should be displayed, to the twelve widows of Jerusalem on feast days to enhance their de-

C.W. BYNUM, *Christian Materiality. An essay on religion in late medieval Europe*, New York, 2011, p. 88-101.

46 D.S. AREFORD, *The Passion Measured. A Late-Medieval Diagram of the Body of Christ*, in: A.A. MACDONALD, B. RIDDERBOS & R. SCHLUSEMANN (eds.), *The Broken Body: Passion Devotion in Late-Medieval Culture*, Groningen, 1998, p. 211-238. For a closer connection of measures to the reproduction of Jerusalem see RUDY, *Jerusalem*, p. 97-107.

47 See T. TOBLER, *Golgotha. Seine Kirchen und Klöster nach Quellen und Anschau*, St. Gallen, 1851, p. 71-73; BAERT, *A heritage*, p. 42ff. Anselm and Jan Adornes refer to its topography in the subterranean chapel of St. Helena in Jerusalem: "[...] loco ubi corona, lancea atque clavi invente fuerunt est sub monte Calvarie et in ipso concavatus" (the place where the crown, the lance, and the nails were invented is situated below Mount Calvary and carved into it) (HEERS & GROER, *Itinéraire*, p. 265).

votion, but also to create a powerful presence of Jerusalem at this place<sup>48</sup>.

In contrast to the many cases of private donations of Jerusalem, mostly accentuating the Holy Sepulchre of Christ, in Bruges the Crucifixion occupies a large part of the spatial construct provided within the chapel. Also the pilgrimage record written by the Adornes leads to the conclusion of their intense veneration of the place of the Crucifixion. Most notably a deeply felt devotion to Golgotha comes to light, when the report refers to it as the “[...] locus hic nostre est redemptionis et tocius antique scripture consummationis. Quis religionis christiane hunc locum videre posset sine planctu et lacrimis, sine tremore cordis et sine compassione mentis, ubi redemptor ac creator innocenter traditus est morti. In eo loco latroni sero penitenti omnis culpa dimittitur [...] Locus inquam, mire est devotionis, cujus devotio apud bonos passionem Domini contemplantes inextinguibilis est”<sup>49</sup>. On the occasion of the *Exaltatio Crucis* Anselm and Jan were also allowed to enter the Holy Sepulchre Church for an entire day and to attain the liturgical services including a presentation of the relics of the True Cross<sup>50</sup>. Regarding this, the donor’s tomb in front of the Calvary may be reminiscent of that experience and expresses the wish of following Christ in his sorrow and being close to him for his resurrection. In

48 See a record on a flyleaf in the Cartularium of Jan Adornes who mentions that the relics and treasures were shown to the poor widows when they celebrate Maundy Thursday: “ut mulierule inibi illo v[o]cantur in cena d[omi]ni n[ostri] J[hesu] XPI” ([...] that the women living here can adore it while celebrating the meal of our lord Jesus Christ) (SAB, Adornes en Jeruzalemstichting, inv. 39, flyleaf on fol. 183r). To teach and to focus on the ‘women of Jerusalem’ was a main function of the chapel’s structure and its monumental artworks, as my forthcoming PhD will show. For Jerusalem as topic in late medieval female Beguinages see e.g. K. RUDY, *Virtual Pilgrimages in the Convent. Imagining Jerusalem in the late Middle Ages*, Turnhout, 2011; J.L. MECHAM, *Sacred Communities, Shared Devotions. Gender, Material Culture, and Monasticism in Late Medieval Germany*, Turnhout, 2014.

49 “This is the place of redemption and consummation of the ancient scripture. Which Christian can see this place without cries and tears, without a trembling heart and without a compassionate soul, where, according to tradition, the innocent creator was killed? In this place all sins of penitents and sinners were forgiven [...]. This place where the devotion of the Passion of Christ for the good men is inextinguishable” (see HEERS & GROER, *Itinéraire*, p. 265-267).

50 The feast of the *Exaltatio crucis* was one of the most important feast days for the chapel of Jerusalem and was celebrated with help of the Carmelites.



addition, the empty large scaled cross standing in the very centre of the chapel was not only meant as a reference to the Holy Site of Golgotha, but also as a metaphor for the transformative character of 'Jerusalem' as material place on earth and the heavenly realm of God. This idea finally culminates in the impressive lighting of the upper choir induced by the tower (ill. 3)<sup>51</sup>. The three crosses standing between the Calvary and this bright zone, emerging out of the light, do not only serve as a memorial for Christ's martyrdom but also as signs of triumph. Being the symbol of life, the cross refers to the conquest of death and to the salvation of mankind through the Grace of God. Adoring the cross, one will go further, entering the bright city of God<sup>52</sup>. For Anselm Adornes and his wife shown on the tomb in devotional prayer in front this impressive construction, the cross provides a symbolic transfer from earthly to heavenly spheres, which means from the relics and places of the Passion to the mystical light of the heavenly Jerusalem. For this centralization of Golgotha and the Crucifixion it is of a certain importance, that a relic of the True Cross be installed here. Either the relic was part of Anselm Adornes' plan, or it was only brought later to the chapel. Considering that the piece of the True Cross was brought there in 1493, the chapel materialized this opportunity of salvation given by the Crucifixion even more.

51 See PIEPER, NAUJOKAT & KAPPLER, *Jerusalemkirchen*, p. 17f. See also N. MAI, 'Leid und Licht. Strategien der Imagination in der Jerusalemkapelle zu Brügge', in: H. SCHLIE & E. KOCH (eds.), *Orte der Imagination - Räume des Affekts: die mediale Formierung des Sakralen (1100-1600)*, Göttingen, 2016, p. 163-194.

52 For the evolution of the veneration of the True Cross in Jerusalem as symbol of martyrdom and triumph see S. HEID, *Kreuz, Jerusalem, Kosmos. Aspekte frühchristlicher Staurologie (Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum. Ergänzungsband 31)*, Münster, 2001. For its perception in medieval art see BAERT, *A heritage. The iconography of sorrow and triumph is characteristic for monumental crosses erected above rood screens in medieval churches*. See M. BEER, *Triumphkreuze des Mittelalters. Ein Beitrag zu Typus und Genese im 12. und 13. Jahrhundert. Mit einem Katalog der erhaltenen Denkmäler*, Regensburg, 2005, p. 255ff.

## CONCLUSION

The Bruges Jerusalem Chapel must be regarded as a very powerful place to commemorate the Holy Sites combining different modes of representing Jerusalem and evoking Christ's presence. While the architectural organization and iconographic program centralizes the Crucifixion and its place Golgotha, the salvific power of the installation was much enhanced due to the presence of a True Cross particle. Jan Adornes, who travelled with his father to Jerusalem and who was engaged in finishing the father's chapel, provided the rich presentation of relics by his testamentary will. However, especially the gemmed cross bears witness to his evocative veneration of the Site of the Crucifixion as the most important location of salvific power in Jerusalem, too. In addition, some sources indicate that the True Cross relic of the Jerusalem Chapel was brought there by the Carthusians of Genadedal in Bruges in 1493 and maybe was a gift by Wouter Utenhove given earlier to the Adornes family. Together with the importance of their personal experiences in Jerusalem, the ownership of this important relic could have been decisive for centralizing the Crucifixion within the chapel during its renovation and expansion in the 1470s.

## SAMENVATTING

De stad Jeruzalem is in het Christendom steeds vereerd als de plaats waar Jezus Christus heeft geleden, is gestorven en verzezen, en als voorafbeelding, in het boek Openbaring, van de eeuwige stad van God. In het 15<sup>de</sup>- en 16<sup>de</sup>-eeuwse Europa kreeg deze verering vorm door de oprichting van kapellen toegewijd aan Jeruzalem, met afbeeldingen van het Heilig Graf en andere verwijzingen naar het Lijden van Christus. De Brugse Jeruzalemkapel, een initiatief van de familie Adornes en in zijn huidige toestand gebouwd van 1471 tot 1485, is daar één van mooiste voorbeelden van.

De relieken in deze kapel, in het bijzonder de reliek van het Heilig Kruis, zijn door de stichters uitdrukkelijk bedoeld als verwijzing naar Golgotha. Jan Adornes vermeldt zelf voor het eerst in 1493 een reliek van het Heilig Kruis bij de schatten van de kapel, nu nog bewaard in een reliekhouder uit die tijd. De nog bestaande

Verrijzenisreliëkhouders dateert wellicht van kort na de dood van Jan Adornes (1511).

De Kruisreliëkhouders verwijst op allerlei manieren naar de speciale devotie van de familie Adornes voor de Heilige Plaatsen. Een charter uit 1519 vermeldt voor de herkomst van de relik een zekere pelgrim Nicolaas Scoudet (1431), via diens weduwe, die in 1433 trouwde met Wouter Utenhove. De familie Utenhove onderhield goede betrekkingen met de Adornes. Een bron uit het Brugse karmelietenklooster vermeldt echter dat de relik via het Brugse kartuizerklooster in de Jeruzalemkapel terecht kwam, wat ook niet onwaarschijnlijk is, gezien de goede en zeer nauwe relaties van de kartuizers met de Adornes.

Daarom kan hier worden gesteld dat de relik van het Heilig Kruis die vermeld wordt in 1493 en nu nog wordt bewaard in de kapel, daarvoor bewaard werd in het kartuizerklooster en in of kort voor 1493 teruggebracht werd in de Jeruzalemkapel. Oorspronkelijk kan ze aan de kapel zijn geschonken door de familie Utenhove.

De relieken van het Heilig Kruis en de overige Heilige Plaatsen spelen een essentiële rol in de devotie in de Jeruzalemkapel, die als zodanig al herinnert aan de bedevaart van de opdrachtgevers en de betekenis van Jeruzalem, Golgotha en het Heilig Land in de Verlossing. De Calvarieberg centraal in de kapel is een monumentaal schrijn dat verwijst naar het Lijdensverhaal. Jan Adornes heeft door de bestemming van de relieken voor de kapel aan het gebouw een nog grotere waarde willen geven voor de devotie tot en de verwijzing naar de heilige Plaatsen.

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