



# A CELESTIAL JERUSALEM IN BRUGES

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Noël Geirnaert (ed.)

The Adornes Estate and  
the Jerusalem Chapel

HANNIBAL

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## Foreword

Many articles and books have been written about the Adornes family and the Jerusalem Chapel, a spectacular construction that stands proudly in the Bruges landscape. These will, of course, be referred to frequently in the following pages, but this is the first time that so many experts have been brought together, each shedding light on a specific facet of this captivating family history. This multidisciplinary approach, unprecedented since Noël Geirnaert and André Vandewalle's 1983 work, provides considerable enrichment to the 'science' of the Adornes family.

One might conclude that everything has now been said, but this could not be further from the truth. This book is by no means the end of anything. On the contrary, it raises a host of unanswered questions and paves the way for further research: the uncertainties surrounding the genealogical origins of the Adornes family of Bruges are being cleared up but are far from resolved (the capricious spelling of names in the Middle Ages does not help), and some of Anselm Adornes's travels could be studied further, as could the family's possessions outside Bruges. More could also be said about the wider social environment in which the family evolved – from friends and political associates to tenants and staff. The archive material still offers many opportunities for future research. Not only does this book satisfy our hunger for knowledge, it also whets our appetite.

In this respect, in my view, the publication of this book fulfils one of the main objectives, if not the main objective, of any policy for the conservation of historical and artistic heritage: the compilation and dissemination of scientific knowledge about it. The quality of this knowledge is crucial because it shapes the memory on which our present and future thinking is based. We all know that we have to deal with the past in a rational way, without too much emotion and guided by critical sense. With this book, the authors contribute to making our family memory a more objective and ultimately more human form of knowledge, one that will benefit future generations.

I have the honour and the pleasure of writing the first and last lines of the book you are holding in your hands. They are the least scientific lines, but perhaps the most marvellous ones, not only because of the work accomplished, but also because of the perspectives offered and the openness to a world that never ceases to inspire us in our actions to bring the Adornes Estate to life. On behalf of all the descendants of the Adornes family and all those with a particular interest in this heritage and its history (employees, enthusiasts, guides, etc.), I would like to express my deep gratitude for the exceptional and enormous work that has been accomplished.

Véronique de Limburg Stirum

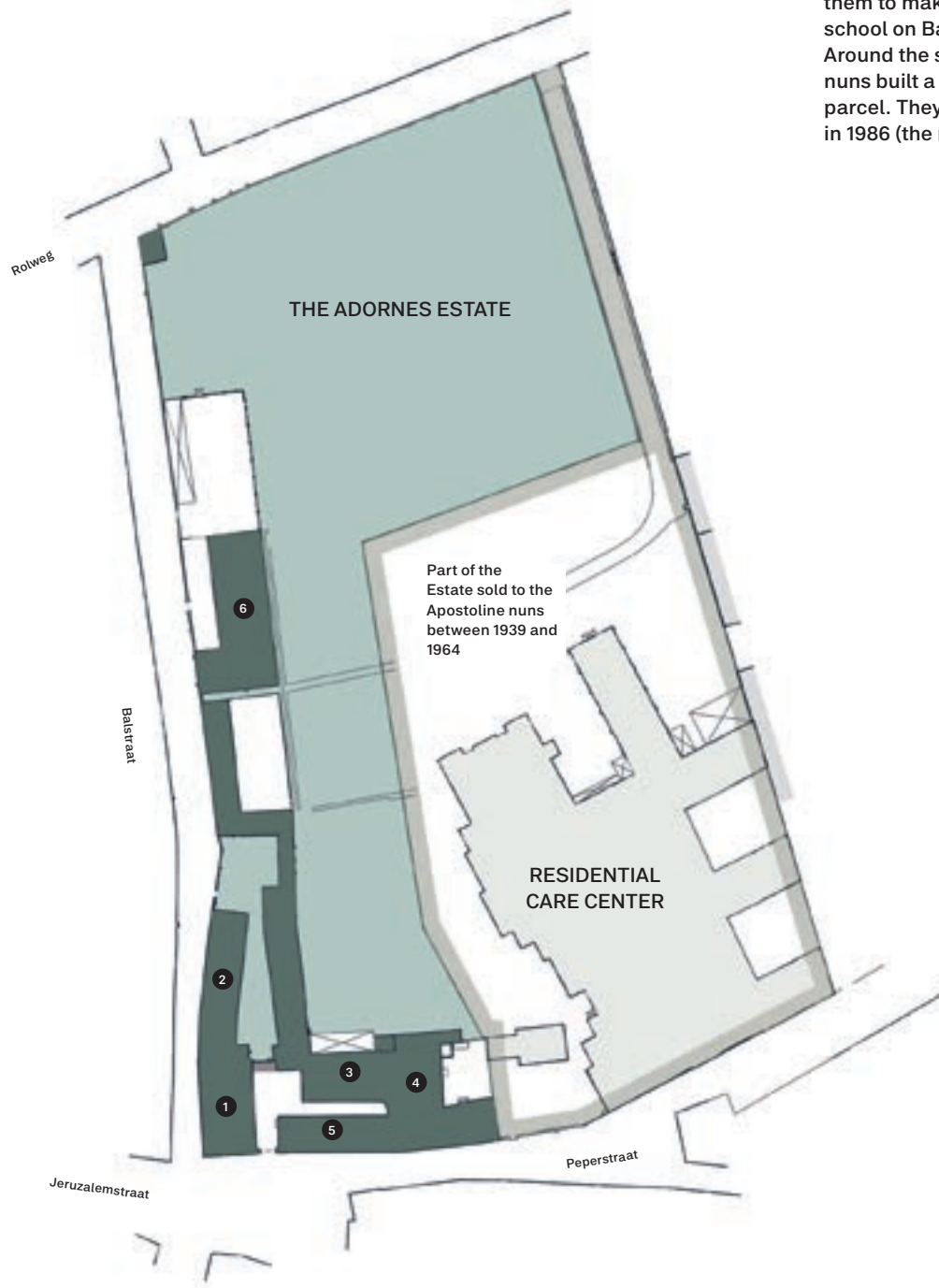




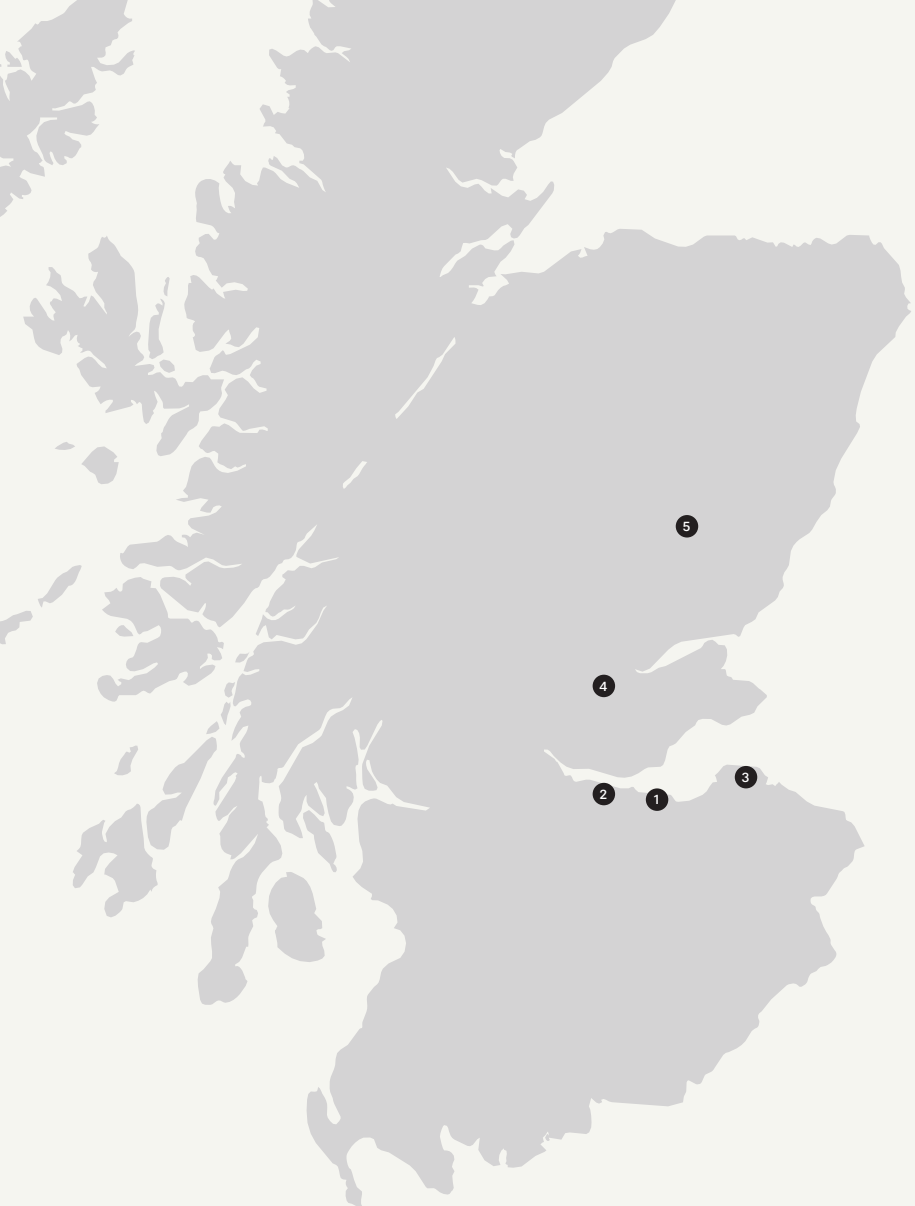


## PLAN OF THE ADORNES ESTATE, 2024

The Apostoline nuns, a congregation founded by Agnes Baliques in Antwerp in 1680, moved to Bruges in 1717 and, after many wanderings, arrived at the Adornes Estate in 1835. They signed a lease with François de Thiennes, built a new, tall brick wing along Peperstraat, and established a lace school. From the outset their aim was to provide education, particularly for destitute girls, and this included teaching them to make lace. In 1899, they built a new school on Balstraat, in the Estate's garden. Around the same time, in 1955, the Apostoline nuns built a nursing home on part of the parcel. They left the Adornes Estate for good in 1986 (the nursing home closed in 2016).

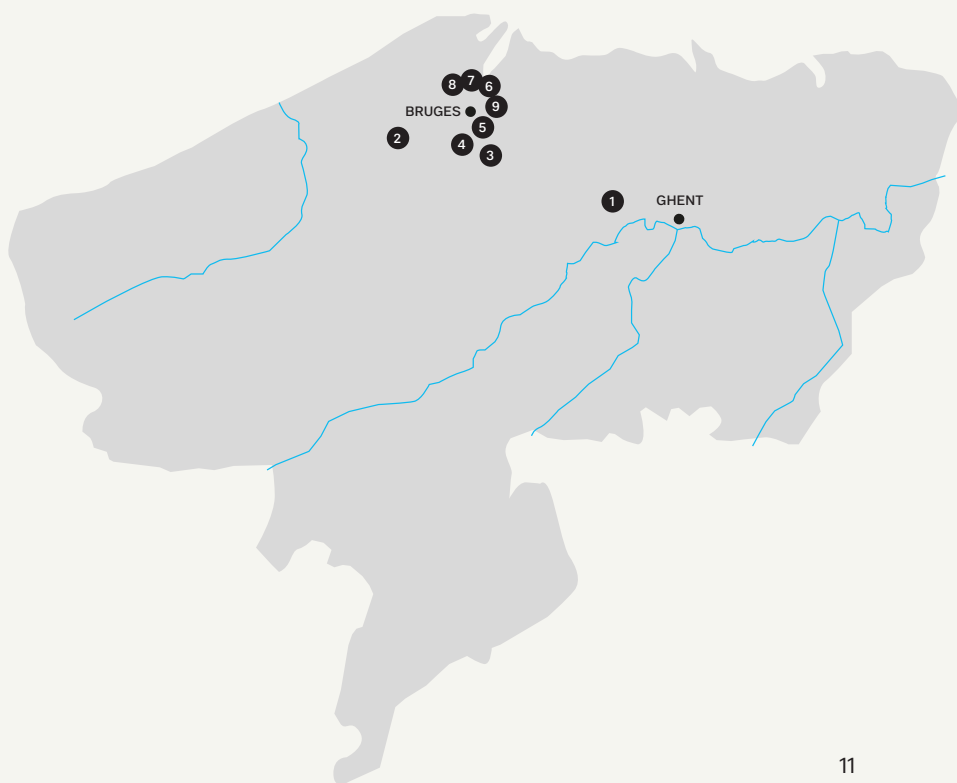


1. Chapel
2. Almshouses
3. House of Pieter II Adornes
4. Adornes House
5. Nineteenth-century wing
6. Lace school (1899)



## SCOTLAND

1. Edinburgh
2. Blackness
3. North Berwick
4. Perth
5. Cortachy



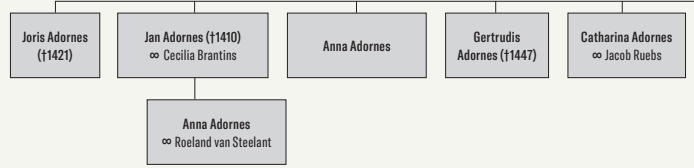
## COUNTY OF FLANDERS (fiefdoms and seigniories of Anselm Adornes c. 1483)

1. Ronsele (Zomergem)
2. Slansheerenwalle (Koekelare)
3. Ghendbrugge (Hertsberge)
4. Ruddervoorde (Oostkamp)
5. Nieuwburg (Oostkamp)
6. Moerkerke (Damme)
7. Oostkerke
8. Dudzele
9. Viven

# ADORNES FAMILY TREE

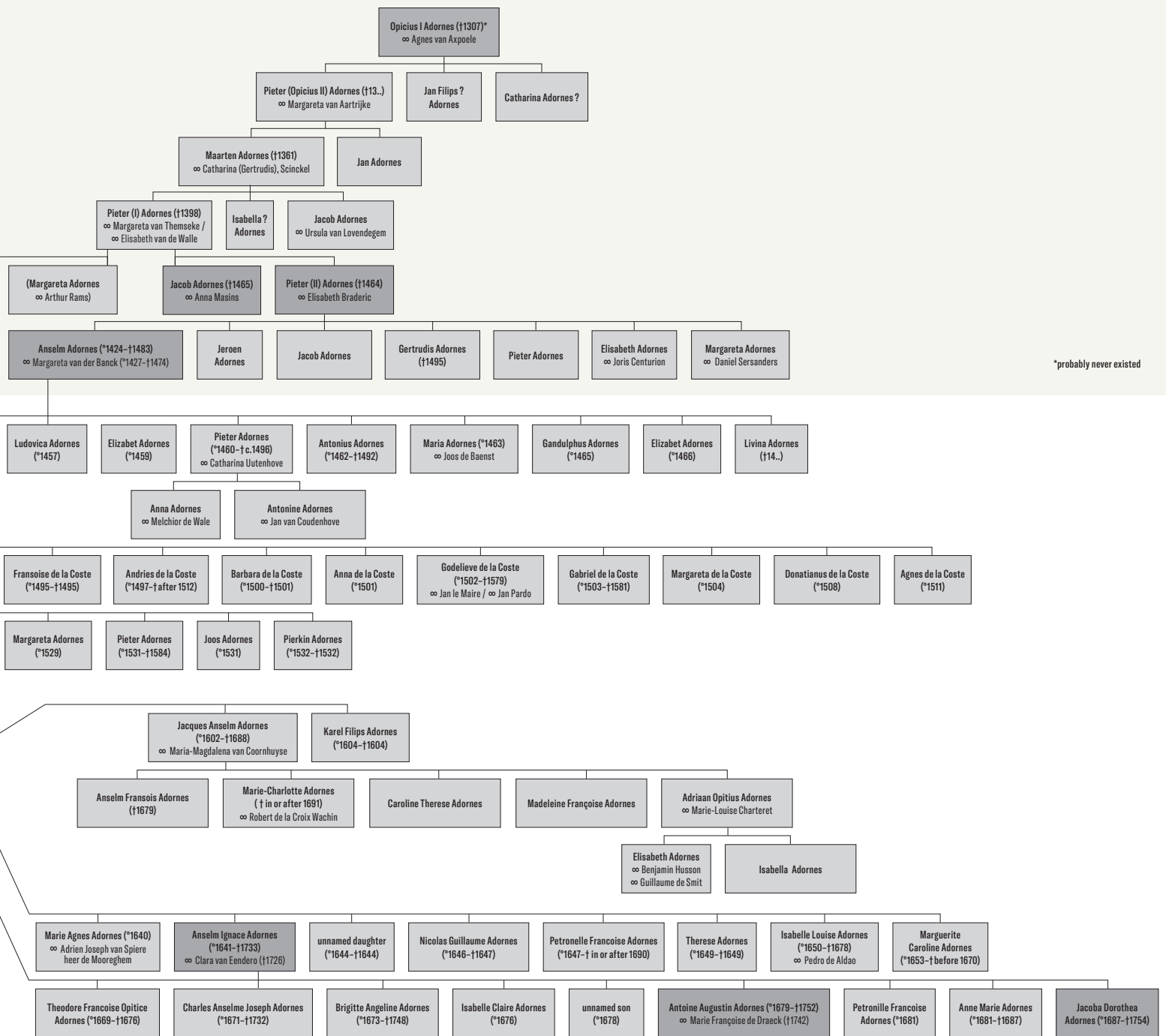
and descendants of the current stewards  
of The Adornes Estate and The Jerusalem Chapel

Part of the Adornes genealogy that was critically examined by Jan Dumolyn, Mathijs Speecke, and Paul Trio in this book.



Part of the Adornes genealogy, as established in previous research.





\*probably never existed



INTRODUCTION

# THE RELEVANCE OF THE JERUSALEM CHAPEL

The Adornes family's material  
and symbolic legacy

Jan Dumolyn and Noël Geirnaert

The Jerusalem Chapel, which many locals still call *de Jeruzalemkerke*, or Jerusalem Church because of its imposing appearance, is perhaps one of the most fascinating buildings in the beautiful city on the Reie river. Being the tourist attraction that it is, Bruges is home to many other late-medieval monumental relics. There is no denying, however, that the Jerusalem Chapel, erected by the Adornes family in the fifteenth century, stands out in its shape and style as an architectural pastiche of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. There is something truly exceptional about this building, making it a unique structure in Bruges's cityscape. As the editors of this publication, we feel there is no point denying our admiration and fascination for this superb architectural heritage (fig. 1-3), although we may not be the most objective critics given that we both hail from Bruges and are medievalists.

So why the need for yet another book on the Jerusalem Chapel? This structure has hardly gone unnoticed in architectural history.<sup>1</sup> The enigmatic building also received some early attention in popularising writings. In 1843, Jean Jacques Gailliard published his *Recherches sur l'Église de Jérusalem à Bruges. Suivies de données historiques sur la Famille du Fondateur*, a lavishly illustrated brochure aimed at an elite audience in Bruges and beyond.<sup>2</sup> Less than a century later, in 1935, working- and middle-class Flemish tourists learnt about the chapel thanks to Bruges state architect Joseph De Smet's article in the Flemish Tourist Federation's very popular magazine.<sup>3</sup>

From the 1980s, the chapel was increasingly brought to the attention of the wider Bruges public. In 1983, the *Kulturele Kring Sinte Anna* (a local cultural heritage society) organised an Adornes evening walk on the occasion of *Adornes en Jerusalem. Internationaal leven in het 15de- en 16de-eeuwse Brugge* [Adornes and Jerusalem. International life in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Bruges], an exhibition to mark the 500th anniversary of the death of Anselm Adornes (1424–1483), to which one of the authors of this publication contributed.<sup>4</sup>

Much less attention, however, has been paid to the secular building adjacent to the chapel, the largely fifteenth-century residence of the Adornes family (fig. 4-5). This city palace and garden was literally in the shadow of the chapel until quite recently, even though it is a very important piece of architectural heritage in its own right. Indeed, although fifteenth-century remnants have been preserved for posterity in several extant residences of the city's elite, only a handful of city palaces or patrician residences from the Burgundian period remain in modern-day Bruges.

The Hof van Gruuthuse was almost completely rebuilt in the neo-Gothic style. Currently, the Hof van Watervliet in Oude Burg and the Hof Bladelin on Naaldenstraat (fig. 7) are among the best-preserved buildings in the city. The Jerusalem complex of buildings, however, has been better preserved than its counterparts, and more of it has been retained. The ensemble of the city palace, garden and chapel – and the almshouses in Balstraat – is one of the most striking relics in the already rich Bruges cityscape. Together, they constitute the legacy of a remarkable late-medieval Bruges family and its descendants.

A primary reason for compiling this book was the exemplary way in which the current private owners, the de Limburg Stirum family, direct descendants of the Adornes family, manage this historic property. Countess Véronique de Limburg Stirum is very much the current driving force and has been the instigator of a unique dynamic at the Adornes-Jerusalem site for the last ten years, focusing on the maintenance and renovation of the buildings on the one hand and the organisation of artistic and cultural events on the other. This has often been achieved using a successful combination of the site's medieval architectural background and contemporary art. We can only hope that such initiatives will continue into the future. In the last chapter of this book, Véronique de Limburg Stirum elaborates on the challenges involved in the private management of a medieval site such as the Adornes-Jerusalem.

In a sense, it is strange that the residence has not been subjected to the same level of historical and architectural research as the chapel. Many (art) historians have researched the Adornes family and its most famous scion, Anselm (born six hundred years ago, and a further reason for publishing this book).

Interest in this family arose in the nineteenth century. The first exploit to attract people's attention was Anselm Adornes's pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Jules de Saint-Genois discussed this trip in the 1850s, in a feature about *les voyageurs belges* [Belgian travellers].<sup>5</sup> Travel stories appealed to scholars early on and would continue to do so. The eminent French medievalist Jacques Heers and the philologist Georgette de Groër published Anselm's travel journal, and contemporary Flemish historians, such as Peter Stabel and Paul Trio, have also published articles on this pilgrimage.<sup>6</sup> The sacred geography of Jerusalem and pilgrims' manuals were also briefly discussed in these publications.<sup>7</sup> Thanks to his travels, Anselm was even considered important enough to have his own lemma in the *Lexikon des Mittelalters*, a rare privilege for medieval characters.<sup>8</sup>

Scholars' attention initially focused on the religious dimensions of this pilgrimage and the more picturesque or, as the Palestinian literary critic Edward Said called it, 'orientalist' aspects of the Western, colonially inspired depiction of the East.<sup>9</sup> In recent decades, this subject has been studied in a less Eurocentric way, with the focus shifting to cultural and economic contacts and exchanges with the Muslim world. In any event, the most dominant line of research regarding the Adornes family and its central hero, Anselm, has always centred on this trip to Jerusalem.

After the initial focus on Anselm's pilgrimage, a second milestone in Adornes-related research was the publication, by city librarian and priest Alphonse De Poorter, of several documents from the Adornes archive on the family's book collection in and around the Jerusalem Chapel.<sup>10</sup> These texts highlight the intellectual interests of several family members, creating the starting point for subsequent research by Jan Vandamme and others, particularly Albert Derolez and Noël Geirnaert.<sup>11</sup> This revealed that the Adornes family can be compared to Italian humanists of the Quattrocento or fifteenth century due to its cultural initiatives and literary interests. In 2020, however, Sabrina Corbellini and Margriet Hoogvliet nuanced this assertion, situating the Adornes's creation of a library in the Jerusalem Chapel in the context of other late-medieval endowments in northern Europe.<sup>12</sup>

In 1931, De Poorter's continuing interest in the culture and mindset of the Adornes family led to the publication of a text edition of Anselm Adornes's will, which he drew up shortly before he departed for the Holy Land in 1470. We have added a critical edition of this important text to the end of this book. Unfortunately, this draws solely on the restituted copy, as the original remains lost. One passage in particular in Anselm's will is worth mentioning, namely the reference to two panels by Jan van Eyck depicting Saint Francis. This excerpt was not unknown: it had already been published by the Lille archivist Alexandre Pinchart as early as 1860.<sup>13</sup> As a result, researchers specialising in the Flemish Primitives continue to take a keen interest in the Adornes family.

An important approach to the Adornes family and the Jerusalem Chapel is, therefore, art-historical. Several scholars have conducted valuable research in this field on, for example: the panels by Van Eyck that probably belonged to the family; the portraits of Pieter Adornes and his wife, which were probably painted by Petrus Christus; the chapel's stained-glass windows; the remarkably contemporary pen-and-ink drawings of Anselm Adornes and Margareta van der Banck; or other possible connections between existing artworks and

the fifteenth- and sixteenth-century members of the Adornes family.<sup>14</sup>

Recent publications by Kirkland-Ives and Mai focus on the Jerusalem Chapel as an 'artistic ensemble', including the funerary monument. Part of Mai's work was translated into Dutch and English for this book.<sup>15</sup> Also new in this book is Jos Koldeweij's systematic contribution on the chapel's interior, consisting of the first-ever inventory of all the artworks and religious objects in the chapel in elaborate detail. This chapter will undoubtedly give rise to further research.

There was, however, another, simpler reason for studying the Adornes family, namely as a case study in noble history and family history in general. The purely genealogical interest in this family continued during the early modern period, with various manuscripts and family trees being published, and in specific reference works on the nobility. In the 1840s, Gailliard (see above) also included their genealogy in his somewhat unreliable study of Bruges families. The family is also mentioned in other genealogical compilations, *nobilitaires*, and other volumes that require a more critical approach.<sup>16</sup>

Meanwhile, the Adornes family was also featured indirectly in several studies on other topics. Bruges state archivist Baron Albert van Zuylen van Nyevelt had already taken a keen interest in the family in the context of life at the Burgundian court as early as 1929.<sup>17</sup> The Adornes family also surface regularly on the sidelines of the socio-political history of Flanders during the Burgundian period.<sup>18</sup> Economic historians, particularly specialists in foreign trade and the Italian presence in Bruges, have also mentioned them in their publications.<sup>19</sup> Specialists in the history of diplomatic relations, and relations with Scotland in particular, also showed great interest because of Anselm Adornes's role in Burgundian relations with that kingdom.<sup>20</sup> A scholar recently also studied Anselm's diplomatic trip to Poland.<sup>21</sup>

In short, the Adornes family, and Anselm in particular, have already attracted a great deal of attention from scholars but, to date, nobody has published a synthesis of their work. Much work remains to be done after this book. In 1987 and 1989, one of the authors of this introduction published an introduction to the archives of the Adornes family and the Jerusalem Foundation, consisting of an inventory of the entire archive and a 'regest' list of the charters (a 'regest' is an abstract, usually a brief summary, of a charter) and letters until 1500. The records show that the Adornes family had established a separate 'Jerusalem Foundation' for the management of the Jerusalem Chapel, the adjoining townhouse and almshouses since the time of



- 1 Among the most recent scientific publications, we have chosen to limit ourselves to Nadine Mai's published dissertation: Mai (2021).
- 2 Gailliard (1843).
- 3 De Smet (1935), pp. 361–364.
- 4 Geirnaert (1983).
- 5 De Saint-Genois (1846); Feys (1891); De Smet (1974); Storme (1981); E. de La Coste (1855); Th. de Limburg Stirum (1881).
- 6 Heers & De Groer (1978); Trio (2021); Stabel, in print.
- 7 Viaene (1982), among others.
- 8 Heers (1977).
- 9 Said (1978).
- 10 De Poorter (1909).
- 11 Vandamme (1971); Derolez (1972, 1966, 1997); Geirnaert (1989).
- 12 Corbellini & Hoogvliet (2020).
- 13 De Poorter (1931); Pinchart (1860).
- 14 Rischel (1997); Gellman (1994); Geirnaert (2000); Périer-D'Ieteren (2012); Zdanov (2015)a, (2015)b, among others.
- 15 Kirkland-Ives (2008, 2010), Mai (2016)a, (2021).
- 16 E.g. De Vegiano & De Herckenrode (1862–1876), I, pp. 10–11.
- 17 Van Zuylen van Nyevelt (1929).
- 18 Members of the family are mentioned in the context of political developments in 1436–1437/8 and 1477–1488: see Dumolyn (1997) and Haemers (2009), among others.
- 19 E.g. in Lambert (2006).
- 20 MacQuarrie (1982).
- 21 Mozejko (2012).
- 22 Buylaert, De Clercq & Dumolyn (2011).
- 23 Douxchamps (2014).







# 1 FROM GENOESE EXPATS TO BRUGES NOBILITY

An identity oriented towards Jerusalem

Jan Dumolyn and Mathijs Speecke

The Adornes family was one of the most prominent families in late-medieval Bruges. A typical merchant family, they would eventually ascend into the nobility at the end of the Middle Ages. Their fascinating family history takes us on a journey through the socio-economic, political and cultural developments in fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Bruges.<sup>1</sup> The family's power and prestige saw its apogee with Anselm Adornes (sometimes also called Anselmus in professional literature), under whose supervision the Jerusalem Chapel, of which he is said to have laid the foundation stone as a toddler, was completed.

Anselm Adornes, whose 600th birthday we are celebrating with this book, lived from 1424 to 1483, a period that more or less coincides with the last great boom of the commercial metropolis of Bruges and, simultaneously, with the cultural influence of the court of the dukes of Burgundy, the then rulers of Flanders. The magnificent Jerusalem Chapel which, as already mentioned, is a unique building in the medieval cityscape, is the most spectacular outcome of a gradual but deliberate family strategy of social distinction since the second quarter of the fourteenth century and the development of a family identity around the Holy Land during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

## THE PREQUEL: MONEY CHANGERS, HOSTELLERS AND POLITICIANS IN BRUGES

According to all historians who have published articles or books on the Adornes family to date (although the wisest have often tended to do so in the conditional tense), Anselm was a scion of the fifth generation of the branch of the powerful Genoese Adorno family which had arrived in Flanders in the thirteenth century. The presumed progenitor of the Bruges Adornes (as their name was most often spelt in Flemish sources) was a man named Opicino Adorno (also called Opitius or Opicius). This Opicino is said to have accompanied Guy of Dampierre, Count of Flanders on the crusade of Saint Louis (Louis IX of France) against Tunis in 1269–1270. This obscure figure, however, is solely referenced in a sixteenth-century genealogy, of which Paul Trio provides an extensive historical critique in his contribution to this book. Opicino does not feature in the count's detailed account of this expedition, which was fortunately preserved, nor in any other contemporary text.<sup>2</sup>

So, it is safe to say that this first Opicino never existed. That the Adornes family was, as they later claimed themselves, actually of Genoese descent has now actually been proven for the first time thanks to new archive material. In 1277, the first galleys from Genoa moored in Sluis, the outport of Bruges. By the end of the thirteenth century, Italian merchants and financiers were a frequent sight on the streets of Flemish cities, particularly in Bruges, which was emerging as the most important commercial and financial hub of north-western Europe at the time.

During the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, some Genoese members of the Adorno family – a lineage that had yet to climb the social ladder in its home base of Genoa – were already conducting business with the Netherlands as merchants and bankers. This is clearly documented in the available sources.<sup>3</sup> We found no trace, however, of a specific *Bruges* branch of the Adornes family in the already abundant Bruges archives of the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries. We can thus conclude that the Adornes family had not settled in Bruges before 1300.

According to the family's standard genealogy, a second Opicino Adornes, the presumed son of the first Opicino Adornes, married Margareta van Aartrijke, daughter of Jan.<sup>4</sup> The Van Aartrijkes were a prominent Bruges family of hostellers, making this a perfectly logical alliance for a recently arrived Genoese merchant or financier. Opicino II was supposedly buried in the convent of the Poor Clares in Bruges, as asserted by his descendant Jan Adornes in his account of the pilgrimage to Jerusalem, which he committed to paper in 1471 or in the years that followed (and to which we will return later).<sup>5</sup> Jan Adornes

is said to have seen Opicino's grave there with his own eyes. All this seems infinitely more credible than the tale of the crusade starring Opicino I, a history to which Jan Adornes does not refer at any stage.

To date, no reference to Opicino II has been found in any contemporary document either. We can more or less assume, however, that Jan would not have lied about a grave, the existence of which could be verified by his contemporaries. Moreover, the Van Aartrijke family, which still held a very prominent position in Bruges society in Jan's time, could have disputed this alleged lineage. Did Jan Adornes perhaps hope to link this equally fictional ancestor to one of the most influential families of Bruges, a family that would even be elevated to the nobility during the fifteenth century, to highlight his status in the process?<sup>6</sup> Moreover, the first name Opicino is both intriguing and infrequent. We know of an Opicinus de Canistris, a fourteenth-century Italian mystic who drew allegorical maps. It is tempting but also highly speculative to link his cartographic activities with the family's wanderlust and cosmological interest as a justification for any subsequent choice of a name assigned to an ancestor.<sup>7</sup>

Preliminary conclusion: Opicino II may very well have lived, possibly in the early fourteenth century, but he too remains shrouded in mystery and is not referenced in any original contemporary document. Opicino I, as we will argue in more detail later, is undoubtedly a fictional character who was made up because the family wanted to be descended from a 'Crusader' (which explains why he may have been given the name of the oldest known relative who was the son of a father of the same name).

The first Bruges Adornes whose existence we can confirm with absolute certainty is a man named *Pierres de Hardorne van Geneven* [Genoa] (fig. 8), who is mentioned in an account of *heervaarden* [military expeditions] that took place in 1327 as part of the uprising of Coastal Flanders (1323–1328). A special poll or head tax (*pointinghe* or capitation) was imposed on at least 288 burghers or *poorters* of Bruges to finance the city militia. This Pierres contributed 27 shillings (Flemish groats) to this tax, almost seven times the four-shilling median.<sup>8</sup>

Judging by the amount paid, he was one of the wealthiest citizens in Bruges. Only Willem Reyfin was even richer, having paid 38 shillings 9 pennies (Flemish groats).<sup>9</sup> Moreover, the entry in the tax listing tells us that Pieter Adornes had already acquired the status of burgher of Bruges in 1327 but that he must have arrived in the city from Genoa fairly recently as the tax collectors thought it prudent to specify that he was from 'Geneven'. As such, he was among the very first Genoese to settle in Bruges permanently.

“Pieter I revealed himself to be a shrewd businessman with connections in the highest political circles during this period.”

Around 1290, a master Symoen van Geneven ('Simon of Genoa') had settled in the city, working as a blacksmith and becoming one of the main builders of the Waterhalle (a monumental port warehouse).<sup>10</sup> In 1318/1319, two men, Daniel de Ghohaen and Amiet de Locre, who both hailed from Genoa, as well as at least four other people of Italian origin, acquired Bruges burghership according to the city's accounts. Did Pierres de Hardorne follow shortly afterwards? Or did he request his inclusion on the lists of burghers in 1313/1314, 1314/1315 or 1317/1318, years for which the city accounts are unfortunately missing?

Either way, this Pierres de Hardorne is likely to be one and the same person as Pieter Dadourre/Dadour, a burgher living in the Carmerszestendeel, listed as a member of the city's army in 1338/1340.<sup>11</sup> He is also *sire* Pieres dAdornes, referenced in a charter dating from 1353. This *sire* Pieres had two children, Martin dAdorne and Jan dAdorne. Martin was married to *jonfrouwe* Trude, the daughter of *ser* Jacob Scinckel (the Scinckels were another Bruges family of brokers and hostellers). That year, the two brothers donated a house in Genthof to Jacob Braderic, another scion of a family of hostellers. The document that contains this information, which was recently discovered and acquired by the Bruges City Archives, is one of the oldest charters in the Adornes family archives.<sup>12</sup>

In 1353, the two brothers were adults, i.e. at least 25 years old, which implies that their father, Pieter Adornes, had arrived in Bruges in the 1320s–1330s. This conclusion corresponds with the mention of Pierres de Hardorne in a source from 1327. Establishing a connection with a '*Jan Pieres Dourdoene thuus es at Clais Bonijns*', i.e. a merchant who resides at the inn run by Clais, a member of the well-known patrician Bonin

Even if the antecedents of the Adornes family (presumably reconstructed by canon Pieter Adornes in the sixteenth century) may not be correct, however, the story continues to be particularly interesting as an illustration of their fifteenth- and sixteenth-century 'genealogical awareness'. Such an attachment to Holy Places overseas as part of an effort to construct an identity is rather rare during this period for the Bruges elite, or Flemish nobility in general. This observation naturally ties in directly with the uniqueness of the Jerusalem Chapel as part of the Adornes family's drive to position themselves in the world. So, it seems as if the family established a very specific identity for itself during these four generations: the Bruges mercantile capitalist, politician and ducal financier Pieter I; his sons Pieter II and Jacob, who roughly had the same profile; Anselm (who combined a merchant career with a vocation as a chivalrous diplomat and adventurer); and finally, the rather intellectual humanist Jan. Subsequently, the 'new' Adornes family of the De la Coste branch would have given this family identity a new impetus.

**“The story is teeming with typical sixteenth-century genealogical confusion and/or manipulations.”**

The story was embellished and improved over time, with new elements to the family's Jerusalem ideology. According to later genealogical sources, Pieter II and his brother Jacob Adornes had also visited the Holy Places. Moreover, the latter had become a knight of the Holy Sepulchre there. Many later authors also adopted these myths, later debunked by Geirnaert.<sup>76</sup> The story of the Adornes family may thus be a little less spectacular than it actually was, thanks to the genealogical creativity they demonstrated during the sixteenth century. Paul Trio discusses this in more detail in the next chapter. At the same time, it becomes all the more interesting as a unique late-medieval family history that is associated with one of Bruges's most extraordinary buildings.

- 1 Thanks to Peter Stabel and Frederik Buylaert for their remarks and additions. In 2018, Véronique Lambert wrote her popularising book *Het Adornesdomein en de Jeruzalemkapel*, based on an earlier, unpublished version of this text, which included the major issues Jan Dumolyn raised about the conventional view about the oldest generations and the family's progenitor Opicino. Since then, Mathijs Speecke has discovered the two oldest mentions of the Adornes family in Bruges and evidence that they were of Genoese origin (a crucial find, which is why he is listed as co-author of this chapter), and an important new original charter has also been found in a segment of the Adornes family archives that has resurfaced. The main biographical data about the Adornes family were previously compiled by Geirnaert (1983), pp. 11–49 and in the notes to Geirnaert (1987)a, b, c and d on Pieter I, Pieter II, Jacob and Anselm Adornes in the *Nationaal Biografisch Woordenboek*. Unless explicitly stated otherwise in the notes, all biographical data to which no separate reference has been added were taken from these 'standard' publications, i.e. the family history as reconstructed by Noël Geirnaert in the 1980s, but which has since had to be revised in certain respects as far as the oldest generations are concerned. One should remain wary, however, of the many errors found in genealogies and biographies in even older literature, which are often repeated without being subjected to a critical review (and which often draw on the notoriously unreliable work by Gailliard (1857), pp. 103–104. We recommend reading this chapter alongside Paul Trio's contribution to this book, as they are complementary.
- 2 Buntinx (1944).
- 3 Doehaerd (1941), I, pp. 219–221, II, pp. 516–517, III, pp. 976–974.
- 4 For the marriage alliances of the Adornes family, see the chapter by Paul Trio in this book.
- 5 The latest update on this travel journal, including the question of its date, can be found in Trio (2021).
- 6 Buylaert (2011), pp. 22–23.
- 7 Whittington (2014); Gourevitch (1993).
- 8 Bruges City Archives, Oud Archief, 272. Confiscaties en gijzelaars, Rekening van heervarden 1327, f. 4 r. Here, the *porters pointinghe* was presumably a head or poll tax imposed on the richest burghers of Bruges, in particular those who did not participate in these military expeditions. The tax rate is not known.
- 9 *Ibid.*, f. 2 r. Note: Pierres de Hardorne, *van Geneven*, is 'only' ranked in fourth place in the 288-item listing. The *hagheporters* (out-burghers or burghers who lived outside the city) of Koolkerke with a total tax of 3 pounds 16 shillings 6 pennies *parisis* held first place, with second place going to *Douchemaniers kinderen*, who contributed 3 pounds (and whom we were unable to identify). In both cases, a tax paid by several people is listed as one single amount, which is why we have elected not to include this revenue in our calculations.
- 10 Gilliodts-Van Severen (1871–1885), *Introduction*, 47, no. 1.
- 11 Verbruggen (1962), p. 99.
- 12 Bruges City Archives, Aanwinsten Adornes 2020: Charter of 9 March 1352 O.S., 1353 N.S.
- 13 De Smet, Vandewalle & Wyffels (1965–1977), II/2, 1519.
- 14 Assmann (1995).
- 15 As Paul Trio also argues in this book.
- 16 Geirnaert (1987), p. 12.
- 17 This would then be consistent with the family tree as drawn up in Geirnaert (1987), p. 167.
- 18 Murray (2002), pp. 185–186. Moreover, this author did not seem to give credence to the existence of the Opicinos.
- 19 De Meester (2018), pp. 24–22. See also Episcopal Archives of Bruges, Sint-Salvators, S291 (item 1373), f. 16 r. and SAB [Bruges City Archives], OCMW [Public social welfare centre], Potteriehospitaal, R25 (item 1398), f. 18.
- 20 Bruges City Archives, Oud Archief, 96. Stads cartularia, Oude Wittenboek, f. 160 r.
- 21 Gilliodts-Van Severen (1871–1885), III, p. 275; Maréchal (1955), p. 121.
- 22 State Archives of Belgium, Rekenkamers, Delen en banden (registers), no. 13677, f° 25v°. 25 v.
- 23 Gilliodts-Van Severen (1871–1885), III, pp. 90–95, p. 120, p. 212, p. 258, IV, p. 167.
- 24 De Roover (1948), p. 16; Gilliodts (1904–1906), I, p. 342; Marechal (1949), Joseph, p. 34; Vandewalle 1983.
- 25 See, among others, the recent synthesis on Genoa by Epstein (2001).
- 26 Buylaert, De Clercq & Dumolyn (2011).
- 27 Buylaert (2011), p. 214, p. 244.
- 28 Gilliodts-Van Severen (1871–1885), IV, p. 529.
- 29 Dumolyn (2007).
- 30 Gilliodts-Van Severen (1904–1906), I, p. 683.
- 31 Dumolyn & Lambert (2018).
- 32 Vanden Haute (1913), p. 8.
- 33 Buylaert (2011). The papal bull issued by Eugene IV on 13 July 1435 also refers to them as *nobiles viri* (Geirnaert 1987, regest 60, inv. no. 716).
- 34 We have based ourselves, for purposes of convenience, on the family tree in Geirnaert (1987), p. 167.
- 35 Haemers (2007).
- 36 De Busscher (2016), p. 141.
- 37 Gilliodts-Van Severen (1871–1885), IV, p. 479; Van den Abeele (2000), pp. 75–77, p. 93, p. 113; Brown (2011), p. 141, p. 179, p. 209; Crombie (2016), p. 53, p. 73, p. 91.
- 38 Context for Haemers (2009).
- 39 Haemers (2009), p. 184, p. 197.
- 40 The Genoese merchant Mornel Damar or Damas granted a loan of 20 pounds to the City of Bruges in 1381, see Gilliodts-Van Severen (1904–1906), I, p. 326 and p. 399. See also *ibid.*, I, p. 278, p. 430 and p. 507 for members of the De Vinaldi family and p. 450 for the Sigalle family. Members of the Genoese Spinola merchant family had been present in Bruges since 1277, see Doehaerd (1938), p. 10 and Gilliodts-Van Severen (1904–1906), *passim*. In 1399, mention is made of a Lasare de Vinande, a merchant from Genoa, see Gilliodts-Van Severen (1904–1906), p. 409.
- 41 A source from 1378 identifies a Willaume Sigales as a Catalan merchant, see Gilliodts-Van Severen (1904–1906), I, p. 288. In 1514, however, mention is also made of a Constantin Sigalle, a member of the Genoese nation (*ibid.*, II, p. 450).
- 42 Buylaert (2010)c; Van den Abeele & Catry (1992), 23; Haemers (2009), 183; a preliminary list of Bruges inns from this period was compiled by Toon de Meester (2018); Geirnaert (1986), p. 289.
- 43 Macquarrie (1982).
- 44 Mozejko (2012).
- 45 De Poorter (1931), pp. 225–239. See the new edition by Noël Geirnaert as Appendix 1 in this book.
- 46 Ainsworth & Martens (1995), p. 156.
- 47 Geirnaert (2000).
- 48 Gellman (1995), pp. 101–114; Martens (1990–1991); Geirnaert (2000); Périer-D'Ieteren (2012), pp. 19–31.
- 49 Strohm (1985), pp. 71–72.
- 50 De Poorter (1931), p. 229; De Smet (1974), p. 148.
- 51 Not according to Corbellini & Hoogvliet (2020).
- 52 Derolez (1972), p. 163, p. 170.
- 53 Ainsworth & Martens (1995), p. 49; Kirkland-Ives (2008), p. 1042.
- 54 Buylaert (2010a).
- 55 The paragraphs below are largely based on information provided by the late Andy Ramandt, compiled from



the registers of the manorial court of the Burg of Bruges, preserved at SAB [Bruges City Archives], ARA [State Archives of Belgium], and RAB [State Archives of Bruges], as part of his doctoral research on the elite of the Brugse Vrije castellany. We remember him with affection.

- 56 De Poorter (1931), p. 227.  
57 De Poorter (1931), p. 237.  
58 Macquarrie (1982), p. 16, p. 19.  
59 State Archives of Belgium, RK 17435-53.  
60 Paviot (2003); Mai (2016a), and the same author's chapter in this book.  
61 See especially Heers & Groër (1978 edition) and the most recent commentary, including the older bibliography, in Trio (2021).  
62 Viaene (1964), p. 9.  
63 See Chareyron (2005), among others.  
64 Storme (1981).  
65 Trio (2020), p. 124.  
66 Lavaert (1984).  
67 Mai (2016a).  
68 Mai (2016a), p. 277. See also De Witte (2001) on this subject.  
69 Geirnaert (1987), p. 25 (no. 63).  
70 Storme (1981), p. 203.  
71 Heers & Groër (1978), p. 42, p. 450.  
72 Bruges City Archives, Adornes-Jeruzalem, 3. Another small paper notebook (under No. 3) with genealogical notes in an early-16th-century hand also mentions only one Opitius and his son Maertin. No trace here either of any earlier crusader or pilgrim activity. The 20th-century copy thus seems to rely on a somewhat later more embellished version of the family tree. A heraldic, illustrated 17th-century copy of the lost source of the 20th-century copy is also available in No. 4. Further genealogies from the 17th and 18th centuries in *ibid.*, 7; Geirnaert (2007), p. 344 affirm that these genealogies '*ten vroegste uit het laatste kwart van de zestiende eeuw dateren*' [date from the last quarter of the sixteenth century at the earliest]. This, however, specifically relates to the genealogies claiming that Pieter II and Jacob also travelled to Jerusalem...  
73 Nowé (1929), p. 388.  
74 Buylaert (2011).  
75 Gailliard (1857-1864), III, p. 103.  
76 Geirnaert (2007). Sanderus (1973), I, p. 100 mentions this, for example.





2

# THE ADORNES FAMILY TREE

A critical approach to  
the sixteenth-century genealogy

Paul Trio

Like late-medieval kings, emperors and territorial lords, noble families could task genealogists with developing a family tree of their lineage. Such a genealogy connected the current, living generation with the family's distant predecessors, in addition to embellishing the family's history and making it more heroic. In the case of the French royal family, they established a connection with members of the royal family who managed to escape from Troy. Another example is the story of the legendary *forestiers*, who are said to have founded the dynasty of the counts of Flanders.

Noble families from the County of Flanders used their reworked family trees in an attempt to prove some level of kinship with the count's family or in any case establish ties with old, high-ranking families in the early years of their family history. The urban patriciate, which entertained noble ambitions, thus had no choice but to make a usually relatively obscure start to their family tree look sufficiently glorious, especially for the oldest generations. The participation of one of the oldest purported family members in some crusade would have definitely been an excellent place to start. Was going on a crusade not one of those chivalrous ideals in which rulers and nobles also indulged?

So it makes perfect sense for Jan Adornes to fabricate a story in his description of the Jerusalem journey he undertook with his father and some of his father's acquaintances in 1470–1471, in which he and his father were direct descendants of a man named Opicius who had undertaken such a voyage as part of the retinue of the Count of Flanders. This same event is also included in a genealogy of the Adornes family, which became the official version of the family's genealogy no later than 1520–1521.

The question remains whether the rest of this genealogy was similarly embellished and can thus no longer be considered reliable, at which point it is no longer helpful for tracing the oldest generations of the Adornes family. As no thorough analysis of this genealogy from the first quarter of the sixteenth century has been undertaken to date, this approach has been chosen here.<sup>1</sup>

## A RENEWED APPROACH<sup>2</sup>

'The Archives of the Adornes family and the Jerusalem Foundation of Bruges' (*Archief van de familie Adornes en de Jeruzalemstichting te Brugge*), which are kept in the Bruges City Archives, include several numbers with fragments and complete genealogies of the Adornes family.<sup>3</sup> Inventory number 4 (fig. 9) even features a (complete) manuscript with a rather extensive genealogy of this family.<sup>4</sup> The story, which has been delineated as the first and at the same time the oldest section because it has been written by the same hand, starts in 1269 (1270 N.S.) and ends in 1520 (1521 N.S.). This hand can be dated to the mid-sixteenth century. This, however, is a copy of a copy made in 1534 by Bruges registrar Adolf van Pamele. The latter relied on a transcript collated in 1520 (1521 N.S.) by Maarten Snouckaert, also a registrar of the City of Bruges.<sup>5</sup> Another copy of this collated Snouckaert text is also kept in the De Lalaing Family Archives (*Familie-archief De Lalaing*) in the State Archives of Belgium.<sup>6</sup>

In both cases, the genealogical records of the members of the Adornes family have been embellished with the corresponding purported coats of arms in the appropriate colours. Another version was recorded in the *Memoriaelboucxkin* of Canon Pieter Adornes († 1584), which has not been preserved. An early-twentieth-century copy of this notebook exists, however, and can be found under No. 3 of the Adornes archive.<sup>7</sup> These three text versions with the genealogy up to 1520 (1521 N.S.) are very similar in content, with some spelling variations on the formal level. This early-sixteenth-century genealogy is published in part (up to and including the enumeration of Pieter II's children) in Appendix 3, based on the modern copy which may have referred to the original, although of course there is no real certainty about this.<sup>8</sup> We will discuss possible authorship and the date of creation of the copied text from 1520 below.

There are also some individual but interesting genealogical notes in No. 3 of the Adornes archive. These notes, written in late-medieval Latin and Dutch, date from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.<sup>9</sup> Were these oldest notes written up in preparation for the more officialised version referred to above, or were they themselves copied from the officialised version?

Why have we chosen to publish and study this Adornes genealogy (AG) again, which runs until 1520 (1521 N.S.) and has recently been maligned by several historians, including in this publication, because it is deemed insufficiently credible? The unreliability attributed to the AG may primarily be due to its somewhat implausible start in 1269 (1270 N.S.). The effect of the many changes that were subsequently made to

this version of the AG, some of them rather unfortunate – such as, for example, the genealogy of the Adornes family in the relatively well-known genealogical work *Bruges et le Franc* – have also meant that there is a significant risk of throwing the baby out with the bathwater.<sup>10</sup> Gailliard's grand six-volume publication, containing the genealogies of nobles and burghers from Bruges and the surrounding region, essentially summarises all prior genealogical work, with the author attempting to create a new synthesis without questioning whether this information was correct. His version of the facts has long been considered authoritative.<sup>11</sup> We must, therefore, return to the most original compiled genealogy for all these families where possible, stripping it of any subsequent additions and omissions. Then again, this may not always guarantee that a genealogy is found which was compiled with any, for the time, applied method of historical criticism. But it is always worth a try.

Over time, the early-sixteenth-century copies of the AG described above were deemed sufficiently interesting to be included in subsequent extensive genealogy collections, several of which originated in Bruges.<sup>12</sup> Similarly, a genealogy of the Adornes family must have been included in the large collection of family trees and related documentation that was recently acquired by the Bruges Public Library, compiled by Jacob Antoon Kerchof (1625–1685).<sup>13</sup> This was also, and still is, the case for the collection of Jan Idesbald Masin (1631–1694).<sup>14</sup> This also applies, for example, to the less-accessible (because privately held), comprehensive genealogical work of the Ypres-based genealogist Jan Lodewijk de Joigny de Pamele (c. 1655–1697), which is considered one of the better phases in the transmission of genealogical data.<sup>15</sup> Pieter Donche was able to demonstrate that Kerchof and Masin exchanged information. As a result, several of the genealogies compiled by these Bruges genealogists show many interesting similarities. Differences continue to emerge, however, due to omissions and additions. Although these genealogists were regularly indebted to each other, a strong similarity in a given genealogy can also be explained by the use of the same record.<sup>16</sup> In any event, it seems that the text of the AG mentioned above, which is now also part of the 'house archive', has somehow served as the starting premise for all subsequent genealogies of the Adornes family.<sup>17</sup>

In some instances, however, all sorts of subsequent additions and omissions have considerably distorted the original text. Nevertheless, De Joigny de Pamele seems to have faithfully copied the AG text, especially where the oldest generations are concerned. This author, who often drew on archival data, has a reputation for being conscientious, as mentioned above. His reasonably

strict adherence to the original AG version is consistent with this. We will discuss this below. Likewise, for reasons of convenience, it makes sense that genealogists who were compiling an extensive collection of family trees turned to already existing genealogies that also met their requirements. Once major genealogical surveys, including *Bruges et le Franc*, began to be published, especially in the nineteenth century, people had a variety of choices to draw upon when embellishing a genealogy. Besides Gailliard's work, however, we found another printed genealogy of the Adornes family that is essentially very similar to the AG.<sup>18</sup>

This explains why we have chosen to return to the essence in our contribution by focusing solely on the oldest surviving and, at first glance, the most original version of the genealogy as drafted, or copied, in 1520 (1521 N.S.) at the latest. We can be almost certain, however, that the author(s) would have had access to genealogical notes drafted earlier, as was the case, for example, with another prominent Bruges family, the Bonin family.<sup>19</sup> The sparse information, without dates, contained in this genealogy is more or less similar to the AG, as we will explain below. Even though the handwriting in this Bonin genealogy dates from the (late) fifteenth century, we think it also drew on older notes, possibly dating from the fourteenth century.

In our edition and discussion of the AG, we will limit ourselves to the oldest generations, in other words, the generations until the mid-fifteenth century. In so doing, the data, which mainly refer to the second half of the fourteenth and a large part of the fifteenth century, will be used to verify the quality of the information provided in the AG. There are clearly other sources for this period, especially archival ones, making it easier to check the information provided by the AG. We then switch to the period before c. 1350, when direct archival records on the Adornes family would have been less readily available, although the contribution by Dumolyn and Specke in this book reveals some very interesting recent finds. For this early period, we must search for more indirect indications from other kinds of sources. In our research, we mainly focused on the spouses noted, a methodology that has, strangely enough, never been thoroughly examined.<sup>20</sup> In so doing, we have attempted to find out what these spouses, if their names are correct, can tell us about the earliest history of the men and women who bore the surname Adornes. By working in this way, we have also tried to answer the question of to what extent the rise of the Adornes family was due to a well-thought-through marriage strategy.<sup>21</sup>

Despite the logical approach of starting with the younger generations, then (if possible) identifying the oldest generations, we chose to take a different tack









3

# THE JERUSALEM FOUNDATION AS A MICROCOSM OF LATE- MEDIEVAL SOCIETY

Interaction with the Holy City

Nadine Mai<sup>1</sup>







Count and Countess Maximilien de Limburg Stirum and their sons Hadrien, Gabriel and Edgar, 2019.

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Cover: Tower vault, Jerusalem Chapel. Stained-glass windows with genealogical portraits of Pieter I Adornes en Anselm Adornes.