A TALE OF *THREE* CITIES

BETWEEN JERUSALEM AND GERUSALEMME – GERNRODE OF (ST.) SCHOLASTICA

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ABSTRACT

The twelfth century Holy Sepulchre chapel of Gernrode is renowned in literature as the earliest existent copy of Christ's sepulchre in German-speaking lands; however, the first (and most numerous) written sources relating to the chapel, go back to the fifteenth century. Combining textual and visual sources, the paper examines the later history of the chapel, exemplified by the 1489 Jubilee celebration at the convent, initiated by Abbess Scholastica of Anhalt. On this occasion, the chapel, known as "*Iherusalin*", functioned as a station in a virtual visit to the main churches of Rome. Apart from providing an instance of the richness of late medieval symbolism, the interchangeable identity of Gernrode as both Jerusalem and Rome is discussed in relation to fifteenth century female monastic devotion.

KEYWORDS

I. Introduction

Shortly before December 1488, Abbess Scholastica of Gernrode (*1451, 1469–1504) turned to the pope with a request to celebrate the Roman Jubilee at her convent.[*] Her appeal was approved by both Pope Innocent VIII (*1432, 1484–1492) and the Archbishop of Mainz Berthold of Henneberg; the Jubilee was celebrated in Gernrode the following summer.[1] Abbess Scholastica's effort was part of her untiring and productive efforts to improve the convent's standing, both financially and spiritually.[2] Due to the successful restoration projects initiated and overseen by this pious abbess, the canonesses' community experienced, during her rule, one of its wealthiest and most fulfilling periods, morally as well as materially.

The Canonesses' Convent (*Kanonissenstift*) in Gernrode in the diocese of Halberstadt was founded in 961 and dedicated to St. Cyriacus [Figs. 1 and 2].[3] One of the richest land holders in the Eastern Harz region, the convent was from the outset populated by daughters of local noble and royal dynasties, and its establishment was approved by both the Pope (John XII, *937?, 955–964) and Emperor (Otto the Great, *912, king and then emperor 936–973), suggesting that Scholastica was not the first abbess to contact the pope. Thus, the convent enjoyed relative independence, and its immunity was subsequently reaffirmed by various emperors and kings until as late as 1806, even in times of decline.[4] Owing to

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The appeal charter is known from the sixteenth-century account on the Jubilee by Andreas Popperod, Historia Ecclesiae Gernrodenses, 1560, in: Johann Christoph Beckmann (ed.), *Accesiones Historia Anhaltinae als Annales Gernrodenses*, Zerbst 1716, 27–82, 63. An English translation by Amos Bronner and the author (Lotem Pinchover, *The Presence of Jerusalem in Medieval Saxon Convents: Art and Cult*, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Jerusalem 2020).

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Klaus Voigtländer et al., *Die Stiftskirche zu Gernrode und ihre Restaurierung 1858–1872*, Berlin ²1982, 109, 147–150, 160; Franz Kindscher, Scholastica. Äbtissin von Gernrode. 1469 bis 31 August 1504, in: *Mitteilungen des Vereins für Anhaltische Geschichte und Altertumskunde* 6, 1893, 186–194.

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Selected bibliography on Gernrode: Charlotte Warnke, Das Kanonissenstift St. Cyriakus zu Gernrode im Spannungsfeld zwischen Hochadel, Kaiser, Bischof und Papst, in: Irene Crusius (ed.), *Studien zum Kanonissenstift*, Göttingen 2001, 201–274; Voigtländer et al., Die Stiftskirche zu Gernrode; Hans K. Schulze, *Das Stift Gernrode*, Cologne 1965.

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Schulze, Das Stift Gernrode, 6–21; Jo Ann McNamara, *Sisters in Arms. Catholic Nuns through Two Millennia*, Cambridge, MA 1996, 264.

Cloister

Holy Sepulchre
Sarcophagus
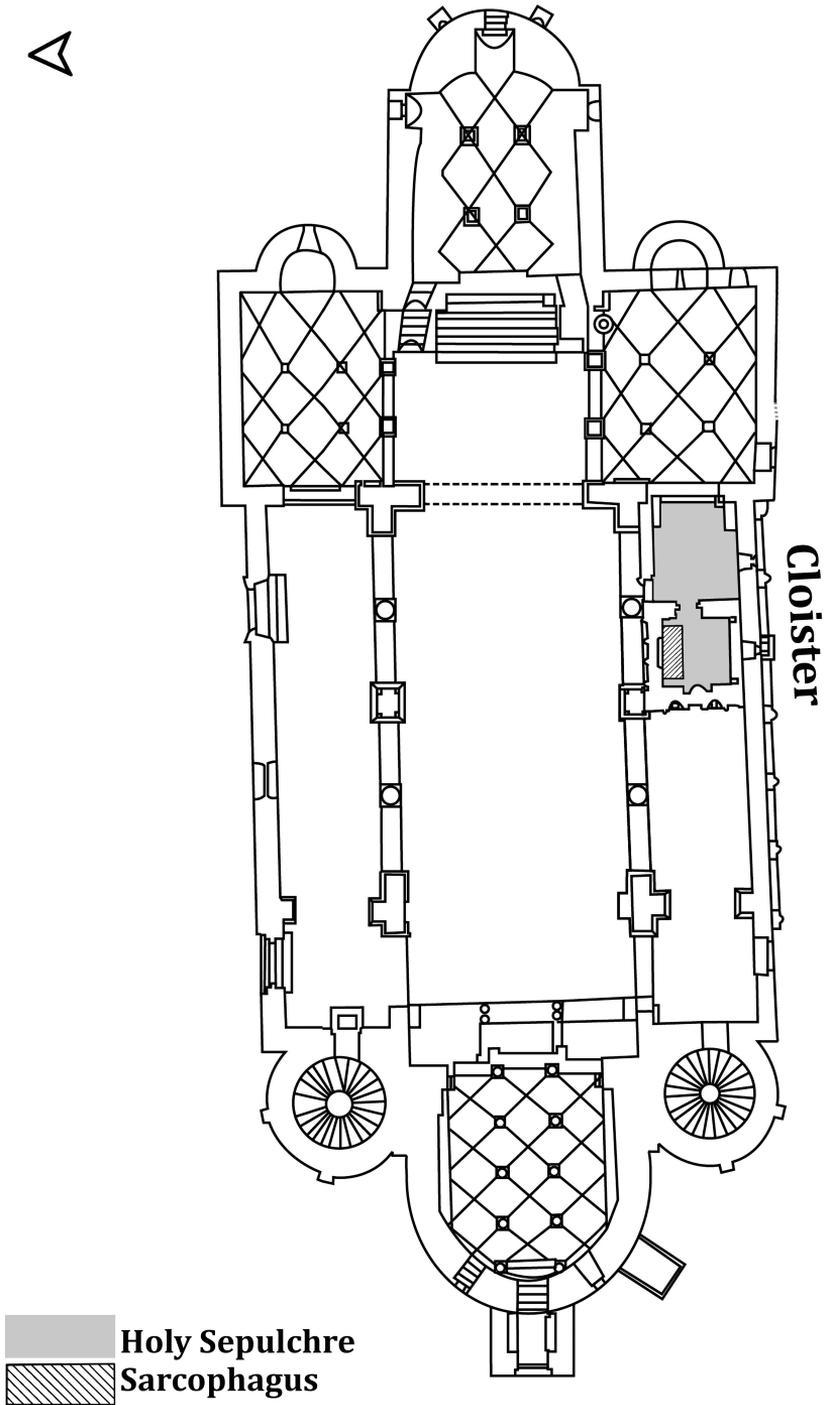
[Fig. 1]
Floor plan of the former convent church of St. Cyriacus in Gernrode, after Wilhelm Ulrich,
1858. Technische Universität zu Berlin, Universitätsbibliothek, Plansammlung Inv. Nr.
18531.

[Fig. 2]
Former convent church of St. Cyriacus in Gernrode, view towards the east. Photo: Katja
Orthen © Evangelische Kirchengemeinde Gernrode.

Scholastica's endeavours, during her rule as the abbess, the convent witnessed a second heyday.

In modern scholarship, the convent of Gernrode is well-known, mostly as home to the earliest extant "copy" of the Holy Sepulchre aedicule in German-speaking lands,[5] known as the Holy Sepulchre Chapel of Gernrode (henceforth, the chapel) [Fig. 3].[6] The chapel, which had assumed its present form by 1100 at the latest,[7] occupies the two easternmost bays of the southern aisle of the convent church; it has been discussed at length in the literature on account of its unique, elaborate decoration. A scholar studying the relevant materials might find it surprising that, among the available textual evidence relating to the chapel, the earliest sources – which are also the most numerous – go back to the latter half of the fifteenth century, although the chapel itself, in its present form, dates back to the twelfth century. The question thus arises as to why the chapel is mentioned in written sources for the first time more than 350 years after its inauguration – more precisely, between 1469 and 1504, during the time Scholastica of Anhalt served as the convent's

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Hans-Joachim Krause, Einleitung, in: Hans-Joachim Krause and Gotthard Voss (eds.), *Das Heilige Grab in Gernrode*, Berlin 2007, 15–20, here 15; Katharina Ulrike Mersch, *Soziale Dimensionen visueller Kommunikation in hoch- und spätmittelalterlichen Frauenkommunitäten. Stifte, Chorfrauenstifte und Klöster im Vergleich* (Nova Mediaevalia, vol. 10), Göttingen 2012, 68; Heidrun Stein-Kecks, Bilder im heiligen Raum, in: Susanne Wittekind (ed.), *Geschichte der bildenden Kunst in Deutschland: Romanik*, vol. 2, Munich 2009, 264–355, here 347.

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Size: inner chamber: ca. 272 x 270 cm; ante-chamber: ca. 395 x 375 cm. Current height: ca. 300 cm. Selected bibliography with further references about the Holy Sepulchre of Gernrode: Hans-Joachim Krause and Gotthard Voss (eds.), *Das Heilige Grab in Gernrode*, 3 vols., Berlin 2007; Dunbar H. Ogden, *The Staging of Drama in the Medieval Church*, Newark 2002, 55–56; Warnke, Das Kanonissenstift St. Cyriakus, here 258–262; Stein-Kecks, Bilder im heiligen Raum, 346–347; Mersch, Soziale Dimensionen, 68–72; Carola Jäggi, Orte des christlichen Kultes, in: Bruno Reudenbach (ed.), *Geschichte der bildenden Kunst in Deutschland. Karolingische und ottonische Kunst,* vol. 1, Munich 2009, 370–433.

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The current form is mainly from this date, i.e., the second building phase. The existence of an arcosolium niche at the southern aisle, before the chapel was built, was assumed already in 1907 by Ernst Wackenroder, *Das Heilige Grab in der Stiftskirche zu Gernrode*, Diss., Friedrichsuniversität Halle-Wittenberg, 1907, 27–28, 55. Material evidence for it was found in the studies by Leopold in 1969/70, see Hans-Joachim Krause and Gerhard Leopold, Die Ergebnisse der Bauuntersuchungen, in: Hans-Joachim Krause and Gotthard Voss (eds.), *Das Heilige Grab in Gernrode*, Berlin 2007, 247–302, here 247–250, 264–277, and since then its existence was accepted by most scholars. There is no agreement regarding the dates and the number of the building phases of the Holy Sepulchre of Gernrode. Krause and Voss, who carried out their research between 1994 and 2006, followed Meyer's suggestion regarding the building phases, see Erich Meyer, *Die sächsische monumentale Steinplastik von ihren Anfängen bis zum Ende des XII. Jahrhunderts*, Diss., Universität Berlin, Berlin 1924, 4–5, 14, 144–145, cited by Voigtländer et al., Die Stiftskirche zu Gernrode, 103, and validated it through material evidence. They reconstructed five different phases according to stylistic comparisons of the reliefs and other architectural elements, as well as wall paintings. I follow their assumptions with regard to each building period, relying on the chapters of Krause and Leopold, Die Ergebnisse and Rainer Kahsnitz, Die Plastik, in: Hans-Joachim Krause and Gotthard Voss (eds.), *Das Heilige Grab in Gernrode*, Berlin 2007, 311–383, containing reconstructions of the floor- and isometric plan. Regarding the dating, I follow Krause and Leopold, Die Ergebnisse, 250–253, as well as Stein-Kecks, Bilder im heiligen Raum, 346; Warnke, Das Kanonissenstift St. Cyriakus, 262, footnote 27; Edgar Lehmann, Zu den Heilig-Grab-Nachbildungen mit figürlichen Programmen im Mittelalter, in: Edgar Lehmann and Ernst Schubert (eds.), *Von der Kirchenfamilie zur Kathedrale und andere Aufsätze*, Berlin 1999, 279–291, here 279; and Günter Wilhelm Vorbrodt, Die Stiftskirche in Gernrode. Ein kunstgeschichtlicher Beitrag, in: Hans K. Schulze (ed.), *Das Stift Gernrode*, Cologne 1965, 91–129, here 121.

[Fig. 3]
The Holy Sepulchre of Gernrode, view from the nave (towards south). Photo: Katja Orthen
© Evangelische Kirchengemeinde Gernrode.

abbess.[8] Combining textual and visual sources, the following paper examines the later history of the chapel, exemplified by the 1489 Jubilee celebration at the convent, initiated by Abbess Scholastica. As part of this occasion, the chapel, known as *Capella Iherusalin*,[9] functioned as a station in a virtual visit to the seven main churches of Rome. Thus, the dedication of the chapel to a church in Rome in the fifteenth century was added to its existing association with Jerusalem from the twelfth century, demonstrating the complexity and richness of late medieval symbolism. In this way, the case of Gernrode goes back to a long-known tradition of association between these two destinations, which was, perhaps, less necessary in the early history of the Gernrode chapel.[10] This interchangeable identity of Gernrode as both Jerusalem and Rome will be discussed in relation to fifteenth-century female monastic piety while indicating the strong position of the convent's abbess in determining the devotional environment of her own community.

Scholastica of Anhalt was a princess from the House of Ascania, a local dynasty of high nobility also known as the House of Anhalt, and the daughter of Prince George I of Anhalt-Zerbst.[11] She spent her youth in the Cistercian convent of Helfta near Eisleben, then moved to the convent of St. Servatius in Quedlinburg, and

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See lists of textual sources regarding the Holy Sepulchre Chapel at Hans-Joachim Krause and Reinhard Schmitt, Quellen zur Geschichte des heiligen Grabes, in: Hans-Joachim Krause and Gotthard Voss (eds.), *Das Heilige Grab in Gernrode*, Berlin 2007, 33–74; Voigtländer et al., Die Stiftskirche zu Gernrode, 135–150; Schulze, Das Stift Gernrode, 130–201. See general list of sources from LASA in Hermann Wäschke, *Regesten der Urkunden des Herzoglichen Haus- und Staatsarchivs zu Zerbst aus den Jahren 1401–1500*, Dessau 1909. All sources before 1485 refer to "altars", which might or might not be part of the Gernrode Holy Sepulchre chapel, but do not use the name as such, see Krause and Schmitt, Quellen zur Geschichte, 35–36, numbers 1–6, from the years 1336–1432. The Latin name of the chapel, *Capella Iherusalin*, appears in a 1485 charter from Rome issuing indulgences for the convent of Gernrode (LASA, AG, N.S., Z 2, Nr. 998, transcription in ibid., 36–37, number 7). Another but similar charter issuing indulgences for the Gernrode church and chapel (to which it referred as *sepulcrum domini*) was composed in 1502 in Halberstadt and endorsed by Cardinal Raimund Peraudi, who at the time was the local papal legate (1486–1505) and indulgence commissary (LASA, AG, N.S., Z 3, Nr. 7, transcription in ibid., 38–39, number 11). The convent's Vigil book (compiled in the latter half of the fifteenth century based on an earlier version) mentions several convent chapels, and the Holy Sepulchre chapel specifically twice (LASA, AG, N.S., Z 6, Nr. 427, fols. 11v, 16r–17r. See ibid., 37, numbers 8–9; Richard Siebert, Das Viglienbuch des Reichstiftes S. Ciriaci zu Gernrode, in: *Anhaltische Geschichtsblätter* 6, 1931, 38–49).

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See above, footnote 8, regarding a 1485 charter.

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An example is the association of Hildesheim with both Jerusalem and Rome, especially under Bishop Bernward (960–1022). See Franz Niehoff, Das Ostergrab in St. Michael, in: *Der vergrabene Engel. Die Chorschranken der Hildesheimer Michaeliskirche. Funde und Befunde* (exh. cat. Hildesheim, Dom- und Diözesanmuseums Hildesheim), ed. by Michael Brandt, Hildesheim 1995, 127–133; Sible de Blaauw, Hildesheim und Rom - Architektur und Liturgie. Die römischen Eindrücke Bischof Bernwards, in: Gerhard Lutz and Angela Weyer (eds.), *1000 Jahre St. Michael in Hildesheim. Kirche - Kloster - Stifter*, Petersberg 2012, 66–76. See more on the connection between these two cities below.

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About Scholastica: Voigtländer et al., Die Stiftskirche zu Gernrode, 109, 147–150, 160; Kindscher, Scholastica; Schulze, Das Stift Gernrode, 49–50, 64. See also Michael Hecht, Die Erfindung der Askanier. Dynastische Erinnerungsstiftung der Fürsten von Anhalt an der Wende vom Mittelalter zur Neuzeit, in: *Zeitschrift für Historische Forschung* 33/1, 2006, 1–31.

was appointed as the abbess of Gernrode at the age of eighteen. Her noble lineage as a scion of a wealthy and influential dynasty was definitely an advantage for the convent, as her father and brothers are mentioned again and again as the community's benefactors, donating money and property.[12] In the 1480s, along with other convent's buildings, the twelfth-century structure of the chapel underwent renovation.[13] The renovation works may well be related to the 1489 Jubilee celebration in Gernrode.

The Roman Jubilee, or Holy Year, was formally celebrated in Rome for the first time in 1300, and is still observed nowadays, every quarter of a century.[14] The "year of indulgence" was an opportunity for a Christian to obtain a plenary remission of temporal punishment in exchange for devotional visits to Roman basilicas during a prescribed period.[15] This points to a direct connection between the institution of the Jubilee and that of pilgrimage, since the search for penitence brought hundreds of thousands of pilgrims to the city of Rome each Holy Year.[16] For centuries, Rome had been one of the three destinations of the *peregrinationes maiores*, ranking between Jerusalem and Santiago de Compostela.[17] While not equal to Jerusalem in devotional stature, Rome nevertheless had been considered as a viable pilgrimage alternative which, moreover, was less expensive, safer, and hence much more convenient – especially in the later Middle Ages, when Jerusalem was no longer in

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The link between the Ascanian family and the convent is mentioned in a large number of charters, including, e.g., charters at LASA, AG, N.S., from 13 Dec 1484, 13 Mar 1492, 2 Aug 1499, 1499 (unspecified date), 27 Mar 1500 (respectively: Z 2, Nr. 991 and 992; Z 2, Nr. 1201; Z 2, Nr. 1542; Z 2, Nr. 1554 and 1555; Z 2, Nr. 1567 and 1568, in Wäschke, Regesten der Urkunden, 457–458, numbers 991 and 992; 548, number 1201; 666–67, number 1542; 671, numbers 1554 and 1555; 675, numbers 1567 and 1568).

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Voigtländer et al., Die Stiftskirche zu Gernrode, 109, 160; Kindscher, Scholastica; Wäschke, Regesten der Urkunden, 462, number 998; 477, number 1033.

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Bernhard Schimmelpfennig, Heiliges Jahr, in: *Lexikon des Mittelalters,* vol. 4, Munich/Zurich 1989, 2024–2025; Debra J. Birch, *Pilgrimage to Rome in the Middle Ages. Continuity and Change*, Woodbridge ²2000, 196; Nine Miedema, *Rompilgerführer in Spätmittelalter und Früher Neuzeit. Die „Indulgentiae ecclesiarum urbis Romae"*. Edition und Kommentar (Frühe Neuzeit, vol. 72), Tübingen 2003; Mario D'onofrio, *Romei e giubilei. Il pellegrinaggio medievale a San Pietro (350–1350)*, Milan 1999. Though initially intended to be celebrated every 100 years, on account of the brevity of human life, as of the 1475 Jubilee year, the Jubilee was proclaimed every quarter century (Charles L. Stinger, *The Renaissance in Rome*, Bloomington 1985, 43–44; Herbert Thurston, *The Holy Year of Jubilee. An Account of the History and Ceremonial of the Roman Jubilee*, London 1900, 5–6, 13–14, 55–57, 72–73).

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Thurston, The Holy Year of Jubilee, 57, 62, 140; Stinger, The Renaissance in Rome, 36, 43–44; Barbara Wisch, The Matrix. "Le Sette Chiese di Roma" of 1575 and the Image of Pilgrimage, in: *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome* 57, 2011, 271–303, here 275–276; Miedema, Rompilgerführer, 8–9, 22.

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Thurston, The Holy Year of Jubilee, 62, 73; Jill E. Blondin, Power Made Visible. Pope Sixtus IV as "Urbis Restaurator" in Quattrocento Rome, in: *The Catholic Historical Review* 91/1, 2005, 1–25; Stinger, The Renaissance in Rome, 31–32, 43; Miedema, Rompilgerführer, 5; Wisch, The Matrix, 277.

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Stinger, The Renaissance in Rome, 33.

the hands of Christians.[18] While, by virtue of Christ's sepulchre, Jerusalem had a claim to the most important, albeit empty, tomb of Christendom, the tombs of Christ's two most prominent followers, the prince-apostles Peter and Paul, were in Rome. Moreover, the relics in Rome's churches illuminated Christ's life and martyrdom station by station, on par with Jerusalem's sites.[19]

On 29 May 1453, Constantinople was conquered by the Ottomans.[20] The entire Christian world, and in particular Italy, fell under the threat of an Ottoman invasion. Pope Innocent VIII, as well as his successors in the years to come, urged Christians to embark on a Crusade against the Turks and promised indulgences in return.[21] At the same time, the presence, in Rome, of pilgrims drawn there in search of amends increased the city's population and thus strengthened it. However, the possibility of visiting Rome or Jerusalem was not open to all believers. Cloistered women, for one, were highly unlikely to embark on a real pilgrimage although they longed to obtain salvation that such a voyage would have afforded. For them, and many others, the solution lay in pilgrimages of the spirit, as a mental visit to the seven Roman churches during a Jubilee year would have been a viable alternative. Accordingly, guides to spiritual pilgrimages, to both Jerusalem and Rome, became increasingly popular.[22] Many of these were written especially for women, and in particular nuns. For their part, the pope and his legates approved Jubilee celebrations in churches, cities and communities

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[18]
Miedema, Rompilgerführer, 1, 4–5, 23, footnote 22, 398.

[19]
Among Christ's relics in Rome are: Christ's cradle, his umbilical cord, his cradle and swaddling cloth, nappies, the clothes he wore as a child, the silver rings that Judas received for his treason, the table of the Last Supper, the flagellation column, the Crown of Thorns, parts of the cross, the cloth of Veronica and particles of the sepulchre (ibid., 422). See also Marie Tanner, *Jerusalem on the Hill. Rome and the Vision of St. Peter's in the Renaissance*, London 2010; Christian C. Sahner, Hierusalem in Laterano. Translation of Sacred Space in Fifth-Century Rome, in: Aleksej Michajlovic Lidov (ed.), *Novye Ierusalimy. Ierotopija i ikonografija sakralnych prostranstv*, Moscow 2009, 103–130; Manfred Luchterhandt, Mirabilia - Die Antiken Roms und ihre mittelalterlichen Betrachter, in: *Wunder Roms. Im Blick des Nordens von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart* (exh. cat. Paderborn, Erzbischöflichen Diözesanmuseum), ed. by Christoph Stiegemann, Petersberg 2017, 90–109; Manfred Luchterhandt, Vom Haus des Bischofs zum Locus Sanctus. Der Lateranpalast im kulturellen Gedächtnis des römischen Mittelalters, in: Michael Featherstone et al. (eds.), *The Emperor's House. Palaces from Augustus to the Age of Absolutism*, Berlin 2015, 73–92; Norman Housley, Holy Land or Holy Lands? Palestine and the Catholic West in the Late Middle Ages and Renaissance, in: Robert Norman Swanson (ed.), *The Holy Land, Holy Lands, and Christian History* (Studies in Church History, vol. 36), Woodbridge 2000, 228–249.

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Norman Housley, *Crusading and the Ottoman Threat, 1453–1505*, Oxford 2012.

[21]
Thurston, The Holy Year of Jubilee, 4–5, 72, 78, 372–373. For indulgences in general see Miedema, Rompilgerführer, esp. 377–397, 434; Nikolaus Paulus, *Geschichte des Ablasses im Mittelalter*, Paderborn 1922–1923, esp. vol. 3, 211–215; Andreas Röpcke, Geld und Gewissen. Raimund Peraudi und die Ablaßverkündung in Norddeutschland am Ausgang des Mittelalters, in: *Bremisches Jahrbuch* 71, 1992, 43–80.

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Late-fifteenth and early-sixteenth-century Germany was rich in such texts. For example, see Kathryne Beebe, *Pilgrim and Preacher. The Audiences and Observant Spirituality of Friar Felix Fabri (1437/8–1502)*, Oxford 2014; Kathryn Rudy, *Spiritual Pilgrimages in the Convent. Imagining Jerusalem in the late Middle Ages*, Turnhout 2011.

outside Rome. Numerous examples for such festivities come from the Christian west, especially as of the latter half of the fifteenth century.[23] In this context, the request of Abbess Scholastica seems to be in the spirit of the times – all the more so since the practice of a *virtual* Jubilee (or *ad instar Jubilei*) was consistent with the rules and limitations on the movement of the enclosed female religious, strengthened under the late medieval monastic reforms.

II. The 1489 Celebration of the Jubilee in Gernrode

The celebration of the Jubilee in Gernrode took place between 22 July and 10 August 1489, beginning on the feast day of Mary Magdalene and ending on the feast day of St. Laurentius. A detailed account of the celebration is provided by the post-Reformation church priest, Andreas Popperod, in his *Annales Gernrodenses*.[24] The opening ceremony included a procession which started at the nearby parish church of St. Stephan [Fig. 4] and continued to the monastery, with singing and chanting. It was led by the convent's abbess, followed by the canonesses, the entire congregation, and the other participants. Upon arrival at the convent, the *Te Deum laudamus* and *O Crux gloriosa* were sung with organ accompaniment, and in the meantime, a cross with papal banners was erected.

The celebration was intended for a broad audience. According to Popperod's account, besides the residents of Gernrode, and the large number of deans, priests, and pastors of neighbouring churches who participated in the proceedings, "people from all over the Harz gathered for such a pious occasion".[25] During the nineteen remaining days of the celebration, after Vespers, the *dominae* and the canons sang *O Crux* to the sound of the convent's church bells,
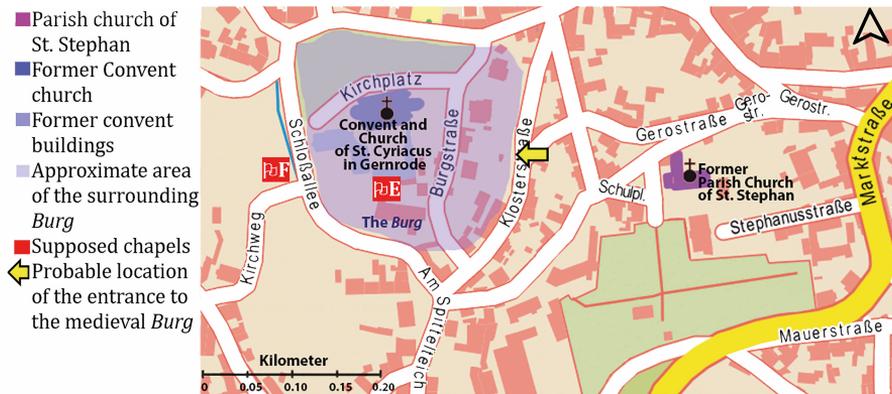
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[23] To name a few examples: Braunschweig, Hildesheim, Lübeck, Hamburg, Bremen, Mainz, Speyer "sowie in verschiedenen Städten Sachsens" (Paulus, Geschichte des Ablasses, vol. 3, 71, 169, 210–215). See also Nikolaus Paulus, Raimund Peraudi als Ablaßkommissar, in: *Historisches Jahrbuch* 21, 1900, 645–682, here 666; Jan Van Herwaarden, *Between Saint James and Erasmus. Studies in Late-Medieval Religious Life. Devotions and Pilgrimages in the Netherlands*, Leuven 2003, 66–67, 104–106; and an early example in Leigh Ann Craig, "That You Cannot See Them Comes Only from an Impossibility." Women and Non-Corporeal Pilgrimage, in: Leigh Ann Craig (ed.), *Wandering Women and Holy Matrons. Women as Pilgrims in the Later Middle Ages*, Leiden 2009, 221–260, here 242. Pope Nicholas V (*1397, 1447–1455), who proclaimed the 1450 Jubilee, extended the privilege to celebrate the Roman Jubilee and issue indulgences to several locations outside Rome. After the 1500 Jubilee, this custom became more common. See Thurston, The Holy Year of Jubilee, 78–79, 372–382; Miedema, Rompilgerführer, 410, footnote 24.

[24] The following is based on Popperod, Historia Ecclesiae Gernrodenses, 62–63. Kindscher's account (Kindscher, Scholastica, 191–192) is inaccurate. See also Schulze, Das Stift Gernrode, 62–63; Krause and Schmitt, Quellen zur Geschichte, 38, number 10; Mersch, Soziale Dimensionen, 72.

[25] Among them, the description goes on, were "many killers and sinners", who "made public penance, and abandoned their sins through the Jubilee". "Quia ad tam pium opus, populus de Hartone & circumquaque confluxit, plures enim homicidae & peccatores, sceleribus suis inveterati, poenitentiam publicam egerunt, atque sua peccata per Jubilaeum, ad discretionem confessorum, deposuerunt." Popperod, Historia Ecclesiae Gernrodenses, 63; Pinchover, The Presence of Jerusalem.

Legend:
- ■ Parish church of St. Stephan
- ■ Former Convent church
- ■ Former convent buildings
- ■ Approximate area of the surrounding *Burg*
- ■ Supposed chapels
- ◁ Probable location of the entrance to the medieval *Burg*

[Fig. 4]
A current map of the old city of Gernrode with proposed locations of the old Burg, convent, parish church and chapels. Basic map after http://www.stadtplan.net/branchenbuch/ results.php?stadtplan=deutschland/sachsen-anhalt/harz/gernrode.

a procession carrying the papal bull endorsing the ceremony was held, and confessional letters were distributed to the public. During the course of the celebration, the dean (Heinrich Kloke, a priest from St. Paul's at Halberstadt) remained present in Gernrode, and the *custos*-canon stood guard over the donation chest (*capsa*), placed before the cross, probably at the centre of the convent church's nave [Fig. 5].[26]

The apex of the celebration was a visit to seven locations within the church and convent [Figs. 4 and 5], each representing a church in Rome. Each station was marked by a red banner painted on its door, and by a nobleman's coat of arms. The red banners were left on the doors of the stations after the celebration was over, to commemorate the event.[27]

The route, calculated in line with the local topography, proceeded as follows: the first station represented the basilica of San Pietro in Vaticano. The location chosen is stated as being "the monastery of Gernrode", probably at the entrance to the church and convent.[28] The Holy Sepulchre chapel represented the church of Santa Croce in Gerusalemme. St. Mary's chapel at the cloister[29] represented the Basilica of San Paolo fuori le Mura. The Metronius altar, in the church's western choir,[30] stood for San Lorenzo fuori le Mura. The following three stations were outside the convent, the designated path gradually leading the participants towards the parish church. The Mauritius chapel, no longer extant, which was inside the area of the medieval *Burg*,[31] represented the church of San Sebastiano fuori le Mura.

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[26] This indicates that the celebration brought economic benefits to the church and convent. The text continues with a detailed account of the sums of money produced by the Jubilee in Gernrode. On this matter, see footnote 61 below.

[27] "Quod vexillum supradicti Commissarii, ad petitionem Dominarum & Dominorum in perpetuam rei memoriam anni Jubilaei dederunt & reliquerunt", Popperod, Historia Ecclesiae Gernrodenses, 63.

[28] My suggestion is based on the topographical logic of the procession as well as on the assumption that a door or an entrance was needed upon which to place the banners.

[29] The exact location is unknown. The chapel was probably positioned in the eastern cloister wing, see Voigtländer et al., Die Stiftskirche zu Gernrode, 122, footnotes 9, 11; 144. This chapel is mentioned often as part of liturgical processions at the convent on Sundays and other feast days (mentioned also in the 1502 processional), ibid., 136–138, numbers 21, 59; 144, 242–248. See also Werner Jacobsen, Die Stiftskirche von Gernrode und ihre liturgische Ausstattung, in: Jan Gerchow and Thomas Schilp (eds.), *Essen und die sächsischen Frauenstifte im Frühmittelalter* (Essener Forschungen zum Frauenstift, vol. 2), Essen 2003, 219–246, here 236; Krause and Schmitt, Quellen zur Geschichte, 38.

[30] Regarding the location of altars in fifteenth-century Gernrode see Jacobsen, Die Stiftskirche.

[31] The exact location is unknown. Location based on Voigtländer et al., Die Stiftskirche zu Gernrode, 121, 142, 144; Schulze, Das Stift Gernrode, 3, footnote 9. The borders of the *Burg* on fig. 4 are based on Paul Grimm, Zur Befestigung der Burg Gernrode, in: *Ausgrabungen und Funde* 10, 1965, 273–278, fig. 1b; Paul Grimm, *Die vor- und frühgeschichtlichen Burgwälle der Bezirke Halle und Magdeburg*, Berlin 1958, 101–102, 268, number 422, fig. 22e.
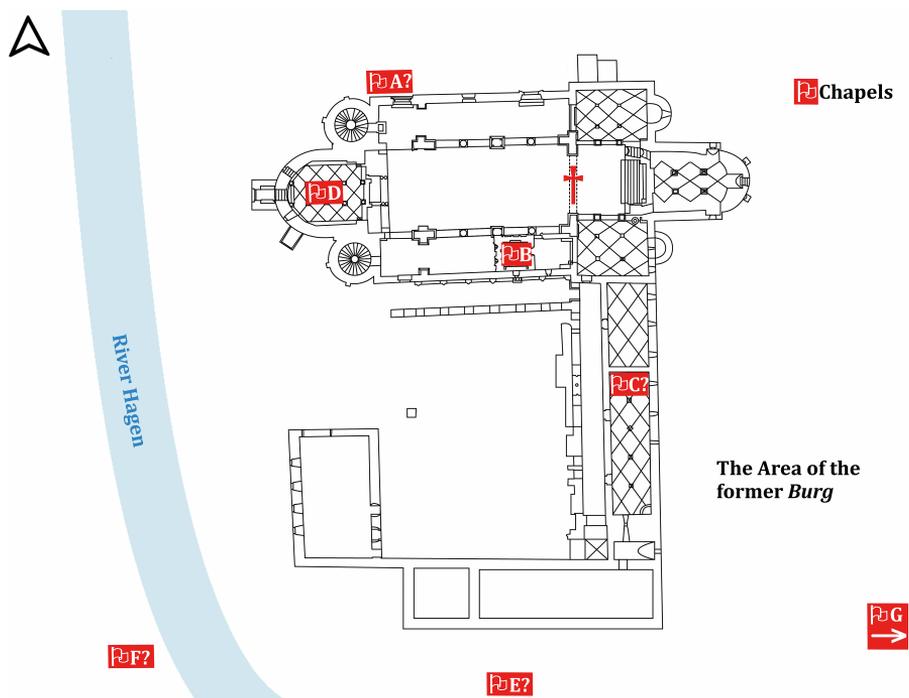
A: 1ˢᵗ station of San Pietro: the Monastery of Gernrode (approximate location);
B: 2ⁿᵈ station of Santa Croce in Gerusalemme: the Holy Sepulchre;
C: 3ʳᵈ station of San Paolo fuori le Mura: the St. Mary Chapel in the Cloister (approximate location);
D: 4ᵗʰ station of San Lorenzo fuori le Mura: the chapel of St. Metronus at the Western Choir;
E: 5ᵗʰ station of San Sebastiano fuori le Mura: the chapel of St. Maurice, in the Burg of Gernrode (approximate location);
F: 6ᵗʰ station of San Giovanni in Laterano: the Chapel St. John at the Hospital (approximate location);
G: 7ᵗʰ station of Santa Maria Maggiore: the Parish and Market Church of St. Stephan;
†: Location of the Altar of the Cross and, possibly, the Chest of Donations

[Fig. 5]
A floor plan of the convent church of St. Cyriacus in Gernrode and the attached cloister and Burg, with proposed locations for the stations of the Jubilee of 1489, after Wilhelm Ulrich, 1858. Technische Universität zu Berlin, Universitätsbibliothek, Plansammlung Inv. Nr. 18531.

The chapel of St. John at the Hospital, also no longer extant,[32] served as San Giovanni in Laterano. The parish and market church of St. Stephan stood for Santa Maria Maggiore. At the stations, the visitors earned indulgences according to directives endorsed by Pope Innocent VIII.[33] Subsequently, donations were collected and kept in a designated chest at the church.

The account of the Jubilee celebration in Gernrode is valuable – indeed unique – for its elaborate detail. The decision to begin the ceremony at the convent on 22 July, which is the feast day of Mary Magdalene, as opposed to the traditional starting date (Christmas Eve),[34] can be attributed to the importance of this figure for the Gernrode canonesses.[35] It is noteworthy that, in the tradition of medieval liturgical drama, the annual performance of the *Magdalenenspiele* usually took place on that day.[36] In addition to its commencement date, the Jubilee celebration at Gernrode is linked to medieval drama through the chanting of the *Te Deum* hymn twice, at the beginning and at the end of the celebration – a practice remi-

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[32]
The exact location is unknown. Krause and Schmitt, Quellen zur Geschichte, 38, state that this chapel was to the west of the church. Voigtländer et al., Die Stiftskirche zu Gernrode, 122, 130, 145–146 give a more justified location, showing that the chapel was close to the hospital building but not attached to it, and is documented to be "on the river bank" and "by the river", i.e. to the west or south outside the *Burg*, although the hospital building was probably inside the Burg to the east.

[33]
The account of Popperod mentions a papal charter from 4 Dec 1488, signed in Mainz, whose original I haven't been able to find, see Popperod, Historia Ecclesiae Gernrodenses, 62.

[34]
It is Christmas Eve of the preceding year, see Thurston, The Holy Year of Jubilee, 98.

[35]
Voigtländer, Berger, and Lehmann state that the Gernrode Jubilee began on 20 July, see Voigtländer et al., Die Stiftskirche zu Gernrode, 160 but the text of Popperod clearly sets the feast day of Mary Magdalene as the beginning of the celebration, see Popperod, Historia Ecclesiae Gernrodenses. As of the eighth century, this would be 22 July (see below, footnote 37). The importance of Mary Magdalene for the Canonesses of Gernrode is evident in the chapel's decoration as well as in the text of Gernrode's liturgical drama (see below). Her persona played an important role in the devotional life of nunneries in general, as a role-model and an inspirational figure. See Gisela Muschiol, Osterliturgie in Frauenklöstern des Mittelalters, in: Linda Maria Koldau (ed.), *Passion und Ostern in den Lüneburger Klöstern*, Ebstorf 2010, 45–66, here 63; and Henrike Lähnemann, Der Auferstandene im Dialog mit den Frauen. Die Erscheinungen Christi in den Andachtsbüchern des Klosters Medingen, in: ibid., 105–134, here 113, 129; Peter Loewen and Robin Waugh, Introduction. Where Sacred Meets Secular. The Many Conflicted Roles of Mary Magdalene, in: Peter Loewen and Robin Waugh (eds.), *Mary Magdalene in Medieval Culture. Conflicted Roles*, New York 2014, 1–29, here 15; Diane Apostolos-Cappadona, From Apostola Apostolorum to Provençal Evangelist. On the Evolution of a Medieval Motif for Mary Magdalene, in: ibid., 163–180; Katherine Ludwig Jansen, *The Making of the Magdalen. Preaching and Popular Devotion in the Later Middle Ages*, Princeton, NJ 2000, 62–82.

[36]
Bernd Neumann, *Geistliches Schauspiel im Zeugnis der Zeit. Zur Aufführung mittelalterlicher religiöser Dramen im deutschen Sprachgebiet*, New York 1987, 313; Peter Loewen, Mary Magdalene Converts her Vanities through Song. Signs of Franciscan Spirituality and Preaching in Late Medieval German Drama, in: Loewen and Waugh, Mary Magdalene, 181–207, here 187. July 22 is identified as Mary Magdalene's date of birth by Bede, see Veronica Ortenberg, Le culte de sainte Marie Madeleine dans l'Angleterre anglo-saxonne, in: *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome. Moyen-Âge* 104/1, 1992, 13–35, here 13; Theresa Coletti, *Mary Magdalene and the Drama of Saints. Theater, Gender, and Religion in Late Medieval England*, Philadelphia 2004, 54, 245, footnote 59.

niscent of medieval Easter plays, in which it was sung right after the *Visitatio* scene.[37]

The dramatic tradition was well established in the fifteenth and sixteenth-century Gernrode. A processional text from 1502, often referred to as "the Easter play of Gernrode", recorded in two manuscripts and now preserved in Berlin, is probably based on earlier sources.[38] Throughout the minutiae of liturgical ceremonies, which included a large number of processions, the Holy Sepulchre with its decoration served as a backdrop to the dramatic action [Figs. 3 and 6].[39]

The second station in the Jubilee visitation path, the Gernrode chapel of the Holy Sepulchre, symbolised the church of Santa Croce in Gerusalemme. This designation seems natural enough, as the church of Santa Croce, which was built in the fourth century by Emperor Constantine in the complex of the Sessorian palace, established its association with Jerusalem already early on: the sixth-century *Liber Pontificalis* mentions a piece of wood from the True Cross which, among other relics, had been brought by Constantine and installed in the church – hence the name, *Hierusalem*.[40] It was shown that the relic had been kept in a chapel behind the basilica's apse, reminiscent of the position of the Golgotha chapel in relation to the *Martyrium* basilica in Jerusalem, and thus rendering the church of

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[37]
Karl Young, *The Drama of the Medieval Church*, Oxford 1933, 131, 231.

[38]
SBB, Mus. ms. 40080 (Processional and *Liber Ordinarius* of the Convent of Gernrode), fols. 16v–18v, 93v–95v, 239v–240r, 241v–243v (esp. fols. 239v–240r, 241v–243v). Another, very similar, a little later, is Mus. ms. 40081 at the same library (fols. 109v–112r, 223v, 225v–228r, especially fols. 223v, 225v–227r). Numbers 786 and 786a in: Walther Lipphardt (ed.), *Lateinische Osterfeiern und Osterspiele*, 9 vols., New York 1975–1990, vol. 5, 1976, 1524–1530, with corrections in vol. 8, 1990, 729–733; Jacobsen, Die Stiftskirche; Krause and Schmitt, Quellen zur Geschichte, 39–40, number 12; Voigtländer et al., Die Stiftskirche zu Gernrode, 141–142. The assertion that the text is based on an earlier version relies on the "archaic" textual contents. Walter Lipphardt, Die Visitatio sepulchri (III Stufe) von Gernrode, in: *Daphnis* 1, 1972, 1–14, here 6, 9–10; Ogden, The Staging of Drama, 55–60, app. B; Jacobsen, Die Stiftskirche, 235; Kahsnitz, Die Plastik, 350–357; Mersch, Soziale Dimensionen, 68–69. In addition, a short reference to the *Elevatio* ceremony at Gernrode, with no indication of its specific location in the church but in all likelihood involving the Holy Sepulchre, is preserved from as early as 1432, see LASA, AG, N.S., Z 2, Nr. 254; Krause and Schmitt, Quellen zur Geschichte, 36, number 6. As noted by many scholars, the themes depicted on the chapel walls, executed long before the extant late-medieval textual evidence, corresponded to the Easter liturgy and relay the religious practices performed since the chapel was first built in the late eleventh century; to name a few: Lipphardt, Lateinische Osterfeiern, vol. 8, 729; Justin E. A. Kroesen, *The Sepulchrum Domini through the Ages. Its Form and Function*, Leuven 2000, 189–191; Ogden, The Staging of Drama, 39, 55–60; Gustaf Dalman, *Das Grab Christi in Deutschland* (Studien über christliche Denkmäler, vol. 14), Leipzig 1922, 69; and more.

[39]
Mersch, Soziale Dimensionen, 72.

[40]
Theodor Mommsen (ed.), *Liber Pontificalis* (MGH Gesta pontificum Romanorum, vol. 1), Berlin 1898, 61–62; Sible de Blaauw, Jerusalem in Rome and the Cult of the Cross, in: Renate L. Colella, Meredith J. Gill, Lawrence A. Jenkens and Petra Lamers (eds.), *Pratum Romanum. Richard Krautheimer zum 100*, Wiesbaden 1997, 55–74, here 61; Galit Noga-Banai, *Sacred Stimulus. Jerusalem in the Visual Christianization of Rome*, Oxford 2018, 16–21. More on the church: Roberto Cassanelli et al., *Gerusalemme a Roma. La basilica di Santa Croce e le reliquie della passione*, Milano 2012; Sahner, Hierusalem in Laterano, 107–111.
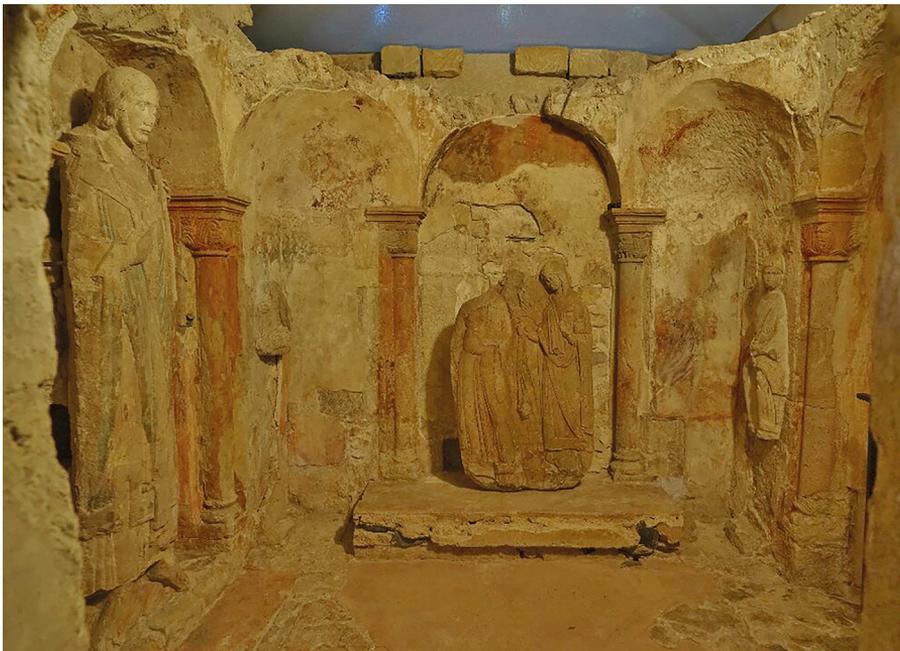
Santa Croce in Gerusalemme an early replica of the Jerusalem Holy Sepulchre Church.[41]

The Jubilee procession transformed the Gernrode convent into Rome, and the participants into pilgrims visiting its holy churches. The dedication of the chapel of the Holy Sepulchre was twofold: the chapel, *Capella Iherusalin*, turned into a Roman basilica which, in itself, represented Jerusalem. In this way, the chapel's relation to Rome served to strengthen its affinity with Jerusalem. A participant's spiritual journey to Jerusalem proceeded through Rome, as it were, indicating that the identities of these two sacred cities could have been perceived as interchangeable and thus also pointing to the fluidity of the hierarchical relations in the sacred Gernrode-Jerusalem-Rome triangle.

This juxtaposition of Rome and Jerusalem was by no means a fifteenth-century innovation.[42] In fact, the relationship between Rome and Jerusalem is inherent in the Jubilee institution itself: probably already in the fifteenth century, the opening of the Jubilee year included an official ceremony in which the pope passed through the *Porta Santa* of St. Peter's Basilica. That sacred door, it was believed, had once been the "Golden Gate" of Jerusalem, and had been brought to Rome from the Holy Land; ever since, it has been sealed and opened only on that particular occasion.[43] When visiting Rome during the Holy Year, pilgrims repeated that ritual by entering a specific door in each of the seven of Rome's basilicas, all representing the *Porta Santa*, and hence evoking a spiritual connection with Jerusalem.[44]

The late-medieval practice of spiritual pilgrimage, which frequently involved both Jerusalem and Rome,[45] was encouraged by the church on a par with *ad instar Jubilei*. Some churchmen even

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[41]

Hartmann Grisar, *Analecta Romana. Dissertazioni, testi, monumenti dell'arte riguardanti principalmente la storia di Roma e dei Papi nel medio evo. Volume primo con una tavola cromolitografica, dodici tavole Fototipiche e molte incisioni*, Rome 1978, vol. 1, 556–558. See also: Blaauw, Jerusalem in Rome, 67; Noga-Banai, Sacred Stimulus, 18–19.

[42]

For example, Noga-Banai, Sacred Stimulus, 16–21; Tanner, Jerusalem on the Hill. See also footnote 10 above.

[43]

Stinger, The Renaissance in Rome, 44–45; Thurston, The Holy Year of Jubilee, 76, 216, 218.

[44]

Stinger, The Renaissance in Rome, 44.

[45]

Regarding the link between Rome and Jerusalem spiritual pilgrimages see, for example, Jan Mombaer (ca. 1460–1501), who links Roman altars to holy places in Jerusalem in his meditations *Rosetum exercitiorum spiritualium*, in Miedema, Rompilgerführer, 412–413. The same can be seen in the case of Heiningen and Bickenkloster, to be discussed below. This link was sustained in later periods, as well, and Jerusalem is mentioned in the accounts of Jubilee ceremonies from 1700, see Thurston, The Holy Year of Jubilee, 235, 237. See also Ursula Ganz-Blättler, Unterwegs nach Jerusalem. Die Pilgerfahrt als Denkabenteuer, in: Paul Michel (ed.), *Symbolik von Weg und Reise*, Bern 1992, 82–107; Klaus Herbers, Reisen für das Seelenheil: Kommen Pilger Gott näher?, in: Volker Eid (ed.), *Fernweh, Seelenheil, Erlebnislust. Von Reisemotiven und Freizeitfolgen*, Bergisch Gladbach 1998, 27–51, here 41–44; Miedema, Rompilgerführer, 1, 4, 22 footnote 23, 23, 398–431; Craig, Women and Non-Corporeal Pilgrimage, 240–259; Tanner, Jerusalem on the Hill; Rudy, Spiritual Pilgrimages.

favoured such mental voyages over a real pilgrimage, as is evident from their sermons; moreover, guides to virtual pilgrimages often offered their followers an equal or even larger amount of indulgences.[46]

Those embarking on a spiritual pilgrimage would, in most cases, be aided by an instructive text. In the later Middle Ages, mental Jubilee pilgrimages and virtual visits to Rome were often based on the texts of *Indulgentiae ecclesiarum urbis Romae* and *Stationes cum indulgentiis*. Originally intended as actual pilgrim guides for practical use during the Jubilee years, these texts were extremely widespread, especially as of 1475; they were translated to the vernacular and disseminated all over Europe.[47] Among more than 200 late-medieval manuscripts based on the *Indulgentiae* preserved to this day, 83 are written in German vernacular.[48] It is very likely that such texts reached Abbess Scholastica in Gernrode. Several of the German texts originated in north-German nunneries, and a Latin version comes from the convent of Quedlinburg, which had especially close ties with Gernrode.[49] The Heiningen convent, situated a few dozen kilometres north-west of Gernrode, was home to a fifteenth-century middle-high-German version of the text, preserved to this day.[50] The wide interest in such texts outside Rome goes hand in hand with the growing popularity of mental pilgrimages to Rome and Jerusalem.

It is probably the prevalence of the texts elaborated above that impelled pious abbesses, among them Scholastica, to write to the pope requesting to grant indulgences to the visitors and inhabitants of their convents. Another abbess who made the same request was Ursula Haider of the Poor-Clares' convent of Bickenkloster in Villingen (the Black Forest, southern Germany). In 1490, after applying to Pope Innocent VIII with a petition for indulgences, Abbess Ursula placed carved panels symbolising pilgrimage stations on the

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[46]

See examples in Kathryne Beebe, Reading Mental Pilgrimage in Context. The Imaginary Pilgrims and Real Travels of Felix Fabri's "Die Sionpilger", in: *Essays in Medieval Studies* 25/1, 2008, 39–70, here 43; Miedema, Rompilgerführer, 400, 412–414.

[47]

The texts were often compiled in the *Mirabilia Romae vel potius Historia et descriptio urbis Romae*. Miedema, Rompilgerführer, 5, 9–12, 425–427; Stinger, The Renaissance in Rome, 34, 36; Bernhard Schimmelpfennig, „Guide di Roma" im Mittelalter, in: Cesare Alzati (ed.), *Cristianità ed Europa: Miscellanea di studi in onore di Luigi Prosdocimi,* vol. 1, Rome 1994, 273–288.

[48]

Miedema, Rompilgerführer, 10; Stinger, The Renaissance in Rome, 34, 36.

[49]

Halle (Saale), Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek Sachsen-Anhalt, Qu. Cod. 80, fols. 50ra–51rb (Jutta Fliege, *Die Handschriften der ehemaligen Stifts- und Gymnasialbibliothek Quedlinburg in Halle*, Halle 1982, 57–58. The manuscript is from the fourteenth century). About the ties with Quedlinburg see Krause and Leopold, Die Ergebnisse, 270–271.

[50]

HAB, Cod. 1130 Helmst., fols. 36r–41r.

walls of her convent.[51] Unlike the Gernrode route of seven stations, the number of painted plaques in Bickenkloster initially exceeded 200, each inscribed with the name of a sacred site in the Holy Land or Rome, and detailing the indulgences earned there. Of these plaques, seventy are preserved to this day [Fig. 7]. A guide for the walk prescribed inside the convent, using the plaques as stations, is still preserved today, albeit in the form of a seventeenth-century manuscript based on older sources.[52] The manuscript does not explicitly mention the Jubilee celebration, but the panels' inscriptions referring to the seven churches of Rome, and their brevity, resonate with the contents of the *Indulgentiae* and with the practice of *ad instar Jubilei*. In Gernrode, no such instructive text has been preserved, though a similar a guide might have existed originally.

Scholastica's and Ursula's initiatives are telling examples for the rich devotional practices characterising the monastic landscape in German-speaking areas on the eve of the Reformation. In the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, Crusades and pilgrimages, both involving the trade in indulgences, were manifestations of the anxiety over death, exacerbated by the constant threat of an Ottoman invasion. Virtual pilgrimages and Jubilee celebrations were similar responses on the part of the enclosed monastic population, whose movement was restricted by the contemporary powerful monastic reforms.

III. The Holy Sepulchre of Gernrode, the Jubilee and the Enclosure

Led by the convent's abbess, the virtual Jubilee celebration in Gernrode was meant to involve the convent's residents as well as the surrounding community. The accounts of the celebration indicate that, on that occasion, lay people were allowed to enter not only the

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[51]
Stegmaier-Breinlinger and Miedema refer to a document from 5 June 1491 as „Urkunde im Klosterarchiv St. Ursula", see Renate Stegmaier-Breinlinger, „Die hailigen Stett Rom und Jerusalem". Reste einer Ablassammlung im Bickenkloster in Villingen, in: *Freiburger Diözesan-Archiv: Zeitschrift des kirchengeschichtlichen Vereins für Geschichte christliche Kunst, Altertums- und Literaturkunde des Erzbistums Freiburg mit Berücksichtigung der angrenzenden Bistümer* 91, 1971, 176–201; Miedema, Rompilgerführer, 177–178, 427–430. According to Glatz, no document was issued on this date, Karl Jordan Glatz, Auszüge aus den Urkunden des Bickenlosters in Villingen, in: *Zeitschrift für die Geschichte des Oberrheins* 32, 1880, 274–308. Instead, two documents are salient for the purposes of this investigation: 13 June 1490 (page 298, number 116), issued in Rome, details the abbess's request for the permission to "build stations of the seven main churches and of Rome and Jerusalem and of seven altars in the corridors of the monastery", as well as the privilege of annual indulgences after performing the prescribed prayers; and 30 Aug 1491 (pages 298–299, number 118), issued in Villingen, in which Friar Minor Konrad von Bondorf, a professor of theology and a custos who had previously served at the Roman court, granted the abbess and the reformed convent the graces of salvation. According to the latter document, Pope Innocent VIII granted the indulgences requested for spiritual pilgrimages to all the Holy Land's *loca sancta* and to the seven Roman churches.

[52]
Stegmaier-Breinlinger, Reste einer Ablassammlung; Miedema, Rompilgerführer, 427–430. The text was designed for use during the Holy Week, and specified the chronological order of the stations on a route following the events of the Passion, from the entrance to Jerusalem to the Ascension.

[Fig. 7]
Stations of Jerusalem and Rome from Bickenkloster. Photo: Lotem Pinchover ("Ite die capell helisey des propheten vii jar vii k (Item, there is the chapel of Elisha the prophet. 7 years and 7 carene). Ite da joachim by sinen schaff in wainet und got bat um ain sälige frucht 7 ja und 7 k (Item, here it is, where Joachim wept with his sheep and asked God for a blessed fruit. 7 years and 7 carene").

church but also the cloister. This might seem odd, since the general conception of the *cura monialium* (the pastoral care of the nuns) was to separate cloistered women from society, in order to prevent sins of the flesh and mitigate the temptations of worldly interests.[53] In practice, however, these ideals were not always realised.[54]

The fact that the Gernrode convent was home to a community of non-incorporated canonesses might have contributed to a looser observance of the claustration rules prescribed at the end of the thirteenth century.[55] Moreover, the fifteenth-century monastic reforms which increased the rigours of the enclosure in medieval Saxony had not reached Gernrode.[56] Thus, the canonesses enjoyed relative freedom, which made it possible for the parish to gain access to the Holy Sepulchre chapel during the Jubilee celebration and on other occasions as well.[57] This is not to say that the segregation rules did not apply at the Gernrode convent. As in other similar cases, the chapel would probably have been open to the public only at certain hours.[58]

Several charters from the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, which describe it as "just as the real sepulchre of our Lord Jesus Christ",[59] invite visitors to the chapel, confirming that it was open to the outside community not only during the Jubilee celebration. The chapel was home to the convent's relic of the Crown of Thorns, which made it a worthy pilgrimage destination.[60] The charters offered indulgences to pilgrims at the chapel, as well as

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[53]
Jeffrey F. Hamburger et al., The Time of the Orders, 1200–1500. An Introduction, in: Jeffrey F. Hamburger and Susan Marti (eds.), *Crown and Veil. Female Monasticism from the Fifth to the Fifteenth Centuries*, New York 2008, 41–75, here 45, 46, 61.

[54]
Jeffrey F. Hamburger, *The Visual and the Visionary. Art and Female Spirituality in Late Medieval Germany*, New York 1998, here 43; Caroline A. Bruzelius, Hearing Is Believing. Clarissan Architecture. Ca. 1213–1340, in: *Gesta* 31/2, 1992, 83–91, here 84.

[55]
The papal decretal *Periculoso* was issued by Boniface VIII in 1298, see Jeffrey F. Hamburger, Art, Enclosure and the Cura Monialium. Prolegomena in the Guise of a Postscript, in: *Gesta* 31/2, 1992, 108–134, here 109.

[56]
McNamara, Sisters in Arms, 398–418.

[57]
See note 8 above regarding the charters granting indulgences to the church of Gernrode.

[58]
For example, the chapel of Sts. Fabian and Sebastian at the convent of Wienhausen. See June L. Mecham, *Sacred Vision and Sacred Voice. Performative Devotion and Female Piety at the Convent of Wienhausen. Circa 1350–1500*, Diss., University of Kansas, 2004, 120–121.

[59]
"qui vero sepulcrum domini nostri Jesu Christi" (LASA, AG, N.S., Z 3, Nr. 7. See transcription in Krause and Schmitt, Quellen zur Geschichte, 38–39, number 11).

[60]
During that time, a mass was celebrated in the chapel every Friday, see Mersch, Soziale Dimensionen 69; Krause and Voss, Das Heilige Grab, 35, number 5, 253, 326. For the textual sources see above, note 8. The relic is mentioned as early as 24 May 1394, without specifying its location, in an indulgences charter from Bischof Georg von Lemberg, in LASA, AG, N.S., Z 1, Nr. 1213; Otto von Heinemann, *Codex Diplomaticvs Anhaltinvs*, Dessau 1881, 174, number 212; Voigtländer et al., Die Stiftskirche zu Gernrode, 147, number 242.

to those who benefited the chapel in any possible way, including through donations for repairs and refurbishment. The indulgences and the commemorative services sustained the flow of donations, which were an important source of income for the convent and substantially improved its financial standing in the latter half of the fifteenth century.[61] The numerous donations to the church and convent's *Baumeisterei* (architectural works) are mentioned in charters from that period, which also document renovation works carried out at the church and convent buildings.[62] The textual sources are corroborated by the material and stylistic features of the church decoration, since they converge on the same time period.[63] Thus, although the Gernrode convent church did not become a parish church until after the Reformation, it was financially dependent on visitors from the surrounding parish.[64]

The chapel's centrality in festive processions, liturgy, pilgrimages, and relic worship does not entail that the canonesses had access to it at all times. For all that, the physical proximity between the chapel, the nuns' choir, and the cloister served an important purpose. In the third phase of the chapel's construction (1150–1160 [Fig. 8]), a new nuns' choir was built above the southern transept arm, such that the gallery stairs leading to it were attached to the antechamber's eastern wall.[65] A high arch (the so-called Oswald arch, visible in Fig. 8) in the transept's western wall let the light into the Holy Sepulchre chapel and also afforded the canonesses a better view of the liturgy within the church, and specifically the Holy Sepulchre. Moreover, the architectural setting in which the chapel shared a wall with the northern cloister wing made it possible for the canonesses to glimpse into the chapel through a small

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61

Esther Cohen, Roads and Pilgrimage. A Study in Economic Interaction, in: *Studi medievali* 21, 1980, 321–341, 321; Paulus, Geschichte des Ablasses, vol. 3, 450–470.

62

Voigtländer et al., Die Stiftskirche zu Gernrode, 109, 160. Of these charters, see the following documents in LASA, AG, N.S.: 25 May 1483; 25 Apr 1487; 24 June 1490; 14 Feb 1492; 29 Sept 1495 and 9 Oct 1495, respectively: Z 2, Nr. 963; Z 2, Nr. 1033; Z 2, Nr. 1132; Z 2, Nr. 1193; Z 2, Nr. 1343; Z 2, Nr. 1344; Z 2, Nr. 1542. In Wäschke, Regesten der Urkunden, 446–447, number 963; 477, 1033; 521–522, 1132; 544, 1193; 597, numbers 1343 and 1344; 666–667, number 1542. Another charter, from 19 November 1479, appears in secondary literature only (ibid., 405–406, number 878).

63

For example, the style of the sepulchre wall-paintings. Angelica Dülberg, Zu den spätgotischen Wandmalereien in der Grabkammer, in: Krause and Voss, Das Heilige Grab, 385–391.

64

Voigtländer et al., Die Stiftskirche zu Gernrode, 21; Krause and Schmitt, Quellen zur Geschichte, 40, number 13.

65

Krause and Leopold, Die Ergebnisse, 258–261, 290–300; Wolfgang Erdmann et al., Neue Untersuchungen an der Stiftskirche zu Gernrode, in: Martin Gosebruch and Frank N. Steigerwald (eds.), *Bernwardinische Kunst. Bericht über ein wissenschaftliches Symposium in Hildesheim vom 10.10. bis 13.10.1984*, Göttingen 1988, 245–285, here 265–269.

Church

Cloister

Sarcophagus

Optional view from
the cloister

Church

Cloister
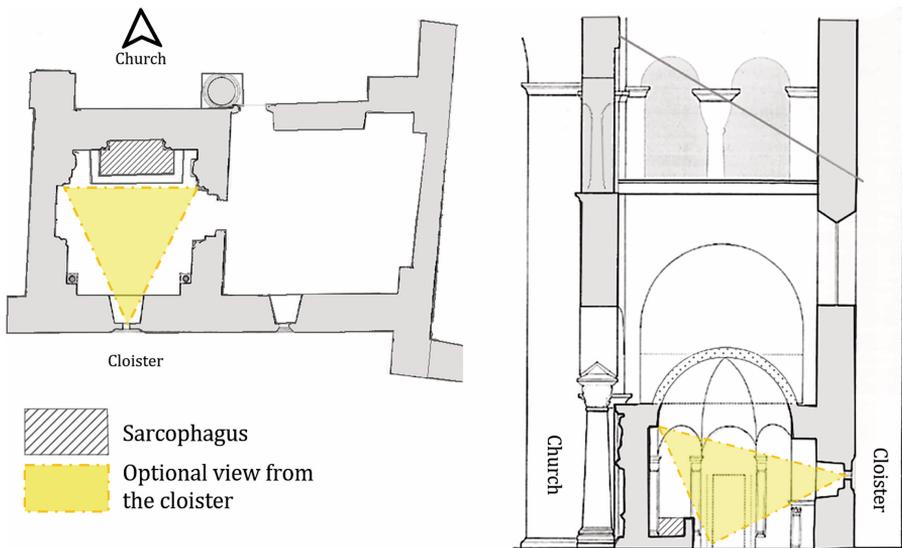
[Fig. 8]
Floor and isometric plan since the third phase of the Holy Sepulchre, after Hans-Joachim
Krause and Gotthard Voss (eds.), *Das Heilige Grab in Gernrode*, 3 vols., Berlin 2007, 257, 259,
figs. 143, 145.

window [Figs. 5 and 9].[66] In the twelfth century, the sarcophagus was moved from its initial position at the southern niche to the northern niche.[67] Now, the canonesses were able to see it, thereby obtaining a view of the most important part of the chapel, and perhaps of the whole church. All this was accomplished already in the twelfth century – without breaking the rules of monastic segregation. The "peephole" window could be a precursor of hagioscope, or squint – an architectural feature whereby an opening, usually oblique, is cut through a wall or a pier in the chancel of a church to enable the congregation to observe the liturgy.[68]

The action of peeping through a squint allowed one to appropriate the space being viewed and created a sense of intimacy with the object or action observed, which was experienced as if one were handling the object or performing the action oneself.[69] In this way, the Gernrode canonesses were enabled to take possession, as it were, of the Holy Sepulchre chapel, and to attain intimacy with the resurrected Christ portrayed in its decoration. Thus, while the restrictions of the enclosure insulated its female residents from the outside community, they may at the same time have empowered them as well.

IV. (St.) Scholastica of Anhalt

When the chapel was renovated in the 1480s, under the rule of Abbess Scholastica, its walls were adorned by paintings relating to the convent's denizens. On the southern wall of the chapel, to the left of the window that looks out to the cloister, is a relatively well-preserved fragment of a fifteenth-century wall painting [Fig. 10]. It shows a haloed female figure, *en face*, dressed in a white mantle and

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[66]

The current remains of the cloister, probably at the same location as the Ottonian building, date to the high Romanesque period, probably beginning in mid-twelfth century and continuing through the 1170s, see Krause and Leopold, Die Ergebnisse, 258–259, 290, 295–300. Erdmann et al., Neue Untersuchungen, 281–282, date the cloister's physical foundation to between 1130 and 1150.

[67]

Now, when a visitor entered the burial chamber from the antechamber, facing west, the sarcophagus would have been on her right-side, replicating a pilgrim's experience in Jerusalem's Holy Sepulchre. Krause and Leopold, Die Ergebnisse, 250, 253, 255, footnote 140; Kahsnitz, Die Plastik, 358.

[68]

The subject has been poorly studied. See Christine Kratzke, Ausstrahlung und Anblick. Hagioskope in mittelalterlichen Klosterkirchen der Zisterzienser und Zisterzienserinnen im architekturhistorischen und theologischen Kontext, in: Ernst Badstübner and Gerhard Eimer (eds.), *Licht und Farbe in der mittelalterlichen Backsteinarchitektur des südlichen Ostseeraums* (Studien zur Backsteinarchitektur, vol. 7), Berlin 2005, 71–97; Paul Binski, The English Parish Church and Its Art in the Later Middle Ages. A Review of the Problem, in: *Studies in Iconography* 20, 1999, 1–25, here 13–14.

[69]

Sarah Stanbury and Virginia Chieffo Raguin, Introduction, in: Virginia Chieffo Raguin and Sarah Stanbury (eds.), *Women's Space. Patronage, Place, and Gender in the Medieval Church*, New York 2005, 1–21, here 8.

[Fig. 9]
Niche at the southern wall of the Holy Sepulchre with a window opening. Photo: Katja
Orthen © Evangelische Kirchengemeinde Gernrode.

Remains of a wall painting of St. Scholastica on the southern wall inside the burial chamber of the Sepulchre. Photo: Katja Orthen © Evangelische Kirchengemeinde Gernrode.

a dark, voluminous dress, seated against a dark background.[70] The mantle is fastened with a chain on the woman's chest, and her head is covered by a white veil and a wimple. One of her hands is raised, while the other holds a staff or sceptre, and it is possible that, originally, she held a book in her lap as well. To the right of the figure are fragments of an inscription that read as *schol*, probably part of *[Sta] schol[astica]*. According to early-medieval legends, St. Scholastica (ca. 480–547) was the sister of St. Benedict, born and raised in Italy, and dedicated to monastic life at a young age. In late medieval art, she is depicted as an abbess, holding a crosier.[71] Her bone relics, as goes the legend, were translated to France, and her cult was developed mainly in that area. In most visual representations from the fifteenth century on, St. Scholastica is featured young and dressed in the Benedictine habit: a long dress; a mantle tied up at the front; a wimple; a head cover; and a veil – all these elements also appear in the Gernrode wall painting. The representation, on the chapel wall, of a saint who shares with abbess Scholastica both name and status cannot be a matter of coincidence.[72] Scholastica, as both the abbess portrayed in the painting and her saintly predecessor, was given the most advantageous placement at the chapel, and perhaps in the church as a whole: positioned next to the window connecting the chapel with the cloister, the abode of her canonesses, Scholastica gazes directly at the sarcophagus.

To conclude, this paper has added a previously unwritten chapter to the history of the Holy Sepulchre chapel of Gernrode. On the eve of the Reformation, the Gernrode chapel, in its late medieval form, played a significant role in the economy of salvation at the convent. During the Jubilee celebration, the chapel assumed the identity of Santa Croce in Gerusalemme, thus becoming part of a complex world of symbolic relations, in which the convent came to represent farther, unreachable places. The rich devotional reality demonstrated by the Gernrode chapel is a testament to the creativity and intensity of female religious life in the late medieval enclosure as expressed in art, architecture, and liturgical practices.

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The description is based on Krause and Voss, Das Heilige Grab, 206, 390.

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Mary Richard Boo and Joan M. Braun, Emerging from the Shadows. St. Scholastica, in: Miriam Schmitt and Linda Kulzer (eds.), *Medieval Women Monastics*, Collegeville, PA 1996, 1–12; Christel Squarr, Scholastika, in: Engelbert Kirschbaum and Wolfgang Braunfels (eds.), *Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie,* vol. 8, Rome 1976, 313–315. Not much is known about St. Scholastica. See Walter Goffart, Le Mans, St. Scholastica, and the literary tradition of the translation of St. Benedict, in: *Revue Bénédictine* 77, 1967, 107–141; Pearse Aidan Cusack, St Scholastica. Myth or Real Person?, in: *The Downside Review* 92/308, 1974, 145–159.

[72]
Dülberg, Zu den spätgotischen Wandmalereien, 390. The figure can be compared to the twelfth-century relief figure of an anonymous bishop, probably that of Halberstadt. The fifteenth-century depiction of St. Scholastica can be seen as a representation of the contemporary abbess, a pictorial female counterpart of the bishop's sculpted figure. Material investigation has revealed that the figure was originally tilted toward the sarcophagus in the southern niche of the burial chamber, and was readjusted when the sarcophagus was moved to the northern wall, such that it was now turned to the sepulchre in its new locale, see Krause and Voss, Das Heilige Grab, 98, 101, 256.

In Gernrode, the popularity of the chapel in the late middle ages appears to be strongly connected to the figure of Abbess Scholastica of Anhalt. Whether representing Jerusalem and / or Rome and whether visited by the clergy, nuns, or laypeople, the Gernrode chapel of the Holy Sepulchre has for centuries preserved the image of its local heroine, Scholastica, the abbess who guided the devotional life of the convent to its zenith.

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