

IMITATION AND ILLUSION

Applied Brocade in the Art of the Low Countries
in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries

Ingrid Geelen & Delphine Steyaert



ROYAL INSTITUTE FOR CULTURAL HERITAGE



VOLUME 6

Brussels

2011

Published by the
Koninklijk Instituut voor het Kunstpatrimonium | Institut royal du Patrimoine artistique | Royal Institute for
Cultural Heritage
Jubelpark 1 | Parc du Cinquanteaire 1
B-1000 Brussels
Tel. + 32 (0)2 739 67 11; Fax + 32 (0)2 732 01 05
CCP 679-200044759-60 – IBAN BE73 6792 0047 5960 – BIC PCHQBEBB
URL <http://www.kikirpa.be>

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Illustrations: © KIK/IRPA, Brussels and the authors (see p. 659-660), unless otherwise stated.

Responsible publisher
Christina Ceulemans

Coordination, layout concept and editing
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Translation
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Michael Lomax (French to English)
Lee Preedy (Dutch to English, French to English)

Revision and final editing
Lee Preedy

Digitalizing:
Olivier Depauw

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Cover: *Annunciation Altarpiece*, 1480-1490, Southern Netherlands; Antwerp, Mayer van den Bergh Museum (cat. 4), detail of the applied brocade.

Printed on acid free paper norm ISO 9706 by Peeters Printers.

D/2011/0613/1
ISBN 978-2-930054-11-7

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APPLIED BROCADE IN THE ART OF THE LOW COUNTRIES IN THE FIFTEENTH AND SIXTEENTH CENTURIES

Ingrid GEELEN and Delphine STEYAERT

With contributions by

Cécile GLAUDE
Elisabeth RAVAUD
Jana SANYOVA
Steven SAVERWIJNS
Wivine WAILLIEZ

FOREWORD

Myriam SERCK-DEWAIDE

Director General of the Royal Institute for Cultural Heritage, 2003-2011

This book is the result of a process of research that has been going on for several decades. The technique of applied brocade has been very slow to reveal its secrets, and for a long time a lack of knowledge compromised the restoration of works of art embellished with decoration of this type.

When the Royal Institute for Cultural Heritage was created in 1948, early painting and polychromy techniques were still little understood. The authors of the *L'Agneau mystique au laboratoire*,¹ otherwise an excellent and most important book, are lost in convolutions of language that betray their perplexity. They were unfamiliar with the complex relief technique used to imitate sumptuous brocades and cloths of gold and their interpretations of samples taken from areas of drapery might now raise a smile. With Agnes Ballestrem's arrival at the Royal Institute in 1961,² however, the Polychromed Sculpture Workshop began to develop a better understanding of this remarkable technique, developed in the Low Countries and disseminated throughout Europe in the course of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Though the first findings and analyses of the subject came from study centres in Nuremberg and Munich in publications by Mojmir Frinta, Thomas Brachert and Johannes Taubert, it was Agnes Ballestrem who delivered the first article to describe this particular technique in Belgium.³ As her student I had the opportunity to discover this type of decoration with her on many works of art. Subsequently, in my battle to establish a specific training for restorers and conservators of works of art, a number of colleagues and I were able to institute courses in early polychromy techniques at the École Nationale supérieure des Arts Visuels at La Cambre in Brussels, the Institut Français de Restauration d'Oeuvres d'Art (IFROA), now the Institut national du patrimoine (INP), in Paris, and the Koninklijk Instituut voor het Kunstpatrimonium | Institut royal du Patrimoine artistique (KIK-IRPA), also in Brussels.

Together with laboratory analyses and the study of early texts, all these contributions are gradually advancing our knowledge of the applied brocade technique. At an initial assessment carried out in 1990 as part of a conference on relief techniques,⁴ the need to create an inventory of applied brocade-embellished works that were treated at the KIK-IRPA was already being felt. The idea took firmer shape six years later, with the publication of a remarkable book on the engraved, painted and relief decorations on Swabian altarpieces:⁵ the same sort of catalogue should be created for the works produced in the Southern Netherlands.

This research subject became one of the activities funded by the federal scientific policy. The survey of paintings and sculptures including this type of decoration began! Two young members of the KIK-IRPA, Ingrid Geelen and Delphine Steyaert, set to work on the huge project. This publication is the result of their ten years of hard work.

I wish to thank the Belgian Science Policy (Federaal Wetenschapsbeleid | Politique scientifique fédérale) for the financial resources necessary for the engagement of these two researchers. I also warmly thank all those at the KIK-IRPA who helped them with photography, laboratory analyses, missions, and many and various kinds of advice. I also extend a special thank you to Lee Preedy for her translation and editing work.

There is no doubt that this book will become an international reference for the research, study and respectful treatment of sculptural polychromy and the relief decorations of panel and wall paintings.

¹ COREMANS, THISSEN 1953.

² SERCK-DEWAIDE 2009: 11-16.

³ BALLESTREM 1967-1968: 36-45.

⁴ SERCK-DEWAIDE 1990: 36-40.

⁵ *Graviert, gemalt, gepresst* 1996.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Ingrid GEELEN and Delphine STEYAERT

Imitation and Illusion is the result of a long process of research in which intensive fieldwork was combined with extensive study of the literature. Gradually the project grew. Data, texts and images increased as time went by. Information was checked and processed; texts were written, revised, and edited. Eventually a surprisingly voluminous book began to take shape. Throughout this considerable and time-consuming undertaking we were supported by the fullest confidence of the direction of the Royal Institute for Cultural Heritage (the Koninklijk Instituut voor het Kunstpatrimonium | Institut royal du Patrimoine artistique, or KIK-IRPA). First and foremost, therefore, our thanks are due to our Director General, Myriam Serck-Dewaide, who gave us the freedom and opportunity to develop what at first seemed a modest inventory into a sizeable reference work.

From the outset our project benefitted from the infrastructure and interdisciplinary expertise of the KIK-IRPA and from the direct collaboration of many of its staff, its restorers, photographers and chemists. Our colleagues in the Sculpture Workshop were especially generous with their help, and their unfailing encouragement and unstinting support greatly contributed to the materialization of this book. We are indebted to Vincent Cattersel, Christine Cession, the late Dominique Dustin-Otjacques, Emmanuelle Mercier, Erika Rabelo, Cécile Van Seymortier and Simone Verfaillie, and to the interns Pilar Alvarez, Sophie Barton and Erika Santos. We also thank the workshops for stone sculpture, painting, wall painting, and textiles, who advised and assisted us, and the photographers of the KIK-IRPA, especially Jean-Luc Elias, Hilke Arijs, Jacques Declercq, Hervé Pigeolet, Marleen Sterckx, Jean-Louis Torsin and Katrien Van Acker. Thanks, too, to Olivier Depauw, who was responsible for the digitalizing, and to Guido Van de Voorde and Catherine Fondaire, who provided the X-radiographs. We are also greatly indebted to the KIK-IRPA library, which was an inexhaustible source of information. The help we received from the library staff, particularly the late Jacques Debergh, is enormously appreciated.

We are especially grateful to Cécile Glaude, Elisabeth Ravaud, Jana Sanyova, Steven Saverwijns and Wivine Wailliez for their willingness to contribute to our book and for the fresh insights their particular perspectives and experience provided.

We warmly thank Christina Ceulemans, Christina Currie, Hélène Dubois, Pierre-Yves Kairis, Emmanuelle Mercier, Cyriel Stroo, Emile Van Binnebeke and Beatrijs Wolters-Vanderwey, who read individual sections or catalogue notes and made valuable comments on the original texts. Their critical remarks and feedback were extremely helpful. We also thank Annick Born, Peter Delmotte, Constanze Itzel, Didier Martens, Catheline Périer-D'Ieteren, Frieda Sorber and Walter Schudel for their suggestions and support.

During our research trips to museums and churches both in Belgium and beyond we met with nothing but courtesy. Numerous helpful and interested curators, collection managers, museum staff, restorers, sextons, nuns and church wardens responded to our research with fascination and enthusiasm. We acknowledge with gratitude the many individuals who led us to the works of art and facilitated our fieldwork in Belgium, Sweden, Germany, France and Spain. They generously let us in, gave us their time, removed glass, allowed us to take photographs and to browse in their archives and files. In particular we thank Marguerite Coppens, Lode De Clercq, Bernard Delmotte, Anne Deknop, Bruno François, Marie-Hélène Ghisdal, Hans-Peter Hedlund, Håkan Lindberg, Jesús Muñoz Petralanda, Eva Nyström Tagesson, Ward Hendrickx, Lizet Klaassen, Hans Nieuwdorp, Jochen Sander, Gerhard Schneider, Martina Sitt, Rutger Steenmeijer, Bart Stroobants, Monique Tahon, Stéphane Vandenberghe, Véronique van Caloen, Véronique Vandekerchove, Linda Vandijck, Frieda Van Ravensteyn, Robert Van Nevel, Sandy Van Wissen, Jan Verbeke and Martine Vrebos.

We especially thank the Franz Steiner Verlag GmbH in Stuttgart and Anna Bartl, Christoph Krekel, Manfred Lautenschlager and Doris Oltrogge, the publisher and authors of *Der "Liber illuministarum" aus Kloster Tegernsee. Edition, Übersetzung und Kommentar der kunsttechnologischen Rezepte*, Stuttgart, 2005 (ISBN 978-3-515-08472-7), for allowing us to cite their transcription of the Tegernsee Manuscript.

We are grateful to all the individuals and institutions who permitted us to use their photographs. We thank Lukas – Art in Flanders, the Flemish Heritage Institute (Vlaams Instituut voor het Onroerend Erfgoed, or VIOE), the Hamilton Kerr Institute and the President and Fellows of Queens' College in Cambridge, the Rijksdienst voor Cultureel Erfgoed in Amersfoort, Artothek, the Bridgeman Art Library, and the museums of Amsterdam, Baltimore, Barnard Castle, Beaune, Denver, Munich, Prague and Rouen.

The original texts of this book were in Dutch and French. We are therefore indebted to our translators. We thank Ferdinand Du Bois and Michael Lomax for their French to English translation work, and Lee Preedy for her Dutch and French to English translations. Lee gave many hours of peerless support and endless patience. She had a crucial input that went far beyond translation. She was our best and most critical reader, she invariably succeeded in pinning down the right word, she coached the complex editing work with enduring commitment and guided us with zeal to the final realization of our work of 'Imitation and Illusion'. The time we spent together was enriched with knowledge and sparkled with creativity and humour. Lee, it was an absolute privilege working with you. We want to express our profound gratitude.

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INTRODUCTION

In November 2001 Ingrid Geelen and Delphine Steyaert, researchers at Belgium's Royal Institute for Cultural Heritage, started work on a scientific project that examined the types of relief decoration used to imitate textiles in the art of the Low Countries between 1350 and 1550, with a specific focus on the polychromy technique known as 'applied brocade'.¹ The project took place under the direction of Myriam Serck-Dewaide, Director General of the Royal Institute for Cultural Heritage (KIK-IRPA), and within the framework of the Belgian Science Policy (Federaal Wetenschapsbeleid-Politique scientifique fédérale). The idea grew out of the decades-long tradition established by the Institute's Polychromed Sculpture Workshop in the research of late-medieval materials and techniques.

In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the deep dyes and ingenious weaves created by the textile craftsmen of Italy made silk fabrics enriched with gold and silver thread an enormously popular symbol of financial and social status on both sides of the Alps. In the visual arts ways were sought to imitate these textiles as closely as possible, and creative illusionistic painting and polychromy techniques were devised. One of the most convincing ways of achieving such mimicry was by using applied brocade, a form of relief decoration generally produced by pressing a sheet of tin foil into a mould incised with a design, adding a filler to maintain the pattern in relief, painting or gilding the surface of the moulded tin foil sheet, then applying it to the surface of the painting or sculpture to be decorated. The result was a tangible and persuasive impression of gold-brocaded fabric.

Since Mojmir Frinta and Thomas Brachert published the first articles on applied brocade in the nineteen-sixties many and varied studies on the subject have appeared.² Applied brocades have been particularly well documented in Germanic countries. As early as 1963 Brachert demonstrated the usefulness of medieval textile imitations as distinctive stylistic features of artists and workshops.³ A couple of years later Eike Oellermann made a connection between the applied brocade technique and the *Liber illuministarum* or 'Tegernsee Manuscript'.⁴ The 1970 publication by Thomas Bachmann, Eike Oellermann and Johannes Taubert on the altarpiece produced by Friedrich Herlin in Rothenburg was a significant step in the study of the subject, providing the first clear and detailed technical analysis.⁵ Some years later, Herlin's altarpiece in Nördlingen was also studied, and the relationship between applied brocade and the Tegernsee Manuscript was further explored.⁶ Eike Oellermann subsequently published various articles on applied brocade. In 1980 Brigitte Hecht made the transcription of the relevant passage on relief decoration in the Tegernsee manuscript, which had first been published in 1897.⁷ In 1996 the Württembergisches Landesmuseum at Stuttgart compiled a broad inventory of textile imitations from Swabia that included over 120 applied brocade models.⁸ Jilleen Nadolny was the first to place applied brocades

¹ *Onderzoek, systematisch overzicht en behandeling van textielimitaties, in reliëf weergegeven op schilderijen en beelden van 1350 tot 1550 in de Zuidelijke Nederlanden (techniek van geperst brokaat. | Études, relevés systématiques et traitement des motifs textiles représentés en relief (technique des brocarts appliqués) en peinture et en sculpture de 1350 à 1550 dans les anciens Pays-Bas méridionaux.*

² FRINTA 1963; BRACHERT 1964.

³ BRACHERT 1964.

⁴ OELLERMANN 1967.

⁵ BACHMANN, OELLERMANN, TAUBERT 1970.

⁶ OELLERMANN, TAUBERT 1978.

⁷ BERGER 1897; BERGER 1912; HECHT 1980; BARTL et al. 2005.

⁸ *Graviert, gemalt, gepresst* 1996.

within the broader context of cast relief decoration.⁹ The publication of her doctoral dissertation, *The Use of Relief in Northern European Painting and Polychromy 1200-1450*, which promises much information on the subject, is awaited with interest. Agnes Ballestrem was the first to document applied brocade in the Low Countries, taking the Brussels *Holy Kinship Altarpiece* (cat. 24 in the present publication) as her example. In addition, Erik Vandamme's meticulous and detailed work on the polychromy of late-medieval wood sculpture in the Southern Netherlands gives an excellent overview of relief techniques and includes valuable data about the use of tin foil. Myriam Serck-Dewaide has published several articles on the subject and has proposed a classification for relief decorations.¹⁰ Wivine Wailliez has recently made a study of the representation of textile in sculpture.¹¹ In the proceedings of the symposium *Retables brabançons des XV^e et XVI^e siècles* (2002), edited by Sophie Guillot de Suduiraut, the state of research was summarized by Agnes Cascio and Juliette Lévy.¹² They grouped retables and sculpture from the Low Countries, taking technical characteristics and more particularly applied brocade as their basic criteria.

Yet despite all these extremely useful publications the documentation of many aspects of this particular part of the polychromer's repertoire is still far from complete, being largely restricted to case studies or references to applied brocade as additional data. Until now there has been no comprehensive study of applied brocade in the Low Countries. By contrast, painted textile imitations in northern painting receive fairly constant attention. Stephen Goddard, Lisa Monnas, Anne Wardwell, Anke Koch, Rembrandt Duits and others have analysed the style, iconography and transmission of patterns. In the area of their execution, however, there is considerable scope for further research.

The aim of the present project was the systematic examination and inventory of applied brocade in the fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Low Countries in all its technical and stylistic aspects. The area in question extends from present-day North France to Zeeland, and is bounded by the North Sea and the German Empire, although the shifting borders of the principalities of Flanders, Holland, Hainaut, Brabant and Liège make an exact geographic demarcation difficult. Our catalogue consists in the first place of applied brocade produced in the Low Countries and now in Belgian collections. The result is a fascinating transversal study, in which this decorative technique provides a bridge between traditional art disciplines. Applied brocade drew its inspiration from textile design and was used in painting and the polychromy of sculpture and architecture. The technique has links with both precious metalwork and engraving.

This book is conceived in three parts, with a historical, a technical, and a catalogue section. Part One, the historical section, examines the development and spread of applied brocade. Chapter One, 'Techniques in Luxury', gives a brief overview of the history of applied brocade, dealing first with the cast relief decoration that preceded applied brocade and taking as examples two panel paintings richly embellished with relief applications that imitate precious metalwork – the *Kortesseem Panel* (1400-1410; Brussels, KMSKB-MRBAB), depicting scenes from the Life of the Virgin, and the *Epitaph of Canon Hendrik van Rijn with Crucifixion* (1363, Antwerp, KMSKA). The first generation of Early Netherlandish painters also receives attention: the Van Eycks (*Adoration of the Lamb*), Robert Campin (*Crucified Thief*) and Rogier van der Weyden (*Last Judgement*) all supplemented their subtle painted illusion with applied brocade.

Chapter Two, 'Migrating Brocades', places applied brocade in a broader artistic context and offers a footing for further research outside Belgium. This chapter looks in particular at masters who were active before 1450, whose work was exemplary and who may have contributed to the diffusion of the technique. Following the track of applied brocades also exposes another aspect of late-medieval culture, that of networks of artists and craftsmen linked by corporative structures and western European trade routes.

Chapter Three, 'Making Applied Brocade' combines an explanation of how applied brocade was made with the very few surviving references in medieval recipes. Besides the valuable information in the *Liber illuministarum*, or 'Tegernsee Manuscript' and Cennino Cennini's *Il Libro dell'Arte*, published archive materials and trial-and-error reconstructions are used to explain the various stages in a brocade's production. What material the mould may have been made of can only be conjectured, for none survive. There are several hypotheses, however, and these await confirmation after rigorous testing.

⁹ NADOLNY 1996; NADOLNY 2003; NADOLNY 2006.

¹⁰ SERCK-DEWAIDE 1989; SERCK-DEWAIDE 1990; SERCK-DEWAIDE 1991; SERCK-DEWAIDE 1998a; SERCK-DEWAIDE 2000; SERCK-DEWAIDE 2005.

¹¹ WAILLIEZ 2002.

¹² CASCIO, LÉVY 2002.

Chapter Four, 'Morphological Matters', examines the various types of applied brocade, continuous, local and braid. After some remarks on nomenclature the various classification criteria – shape, relief and pattern – are outlined and the essential characteristics of the various types are defined.

The next four chapters focus on more specific themes. With one particular pattern as a starting point, Chapter Five, 'Networking in Brussels', concentrates on the panel paintings of the Master of the View of St Gudule, his workshop and circle, raising important art-historical questions concerning attribution and the division of work and organization. The appearance of the same floral textile design rendered in various techniques in a surprising number of carved altarpieces and painted panels unfolds a complex network of collaboration and influences between different craftsmen.

Chapter Six, 'Masters of Applied Brocade', which deals especially with sculpture and more specifically with altarpieces, examines various polychromers and workshops, that of Master I*T being the most important. Identical applied brocades provide a guideline for distinguishing, grouping and identifying artists and workshops in the period between 1480 and 1520, mainly in Brussels but also in Mechelen and Antwerp.

Chapter Seven, 'The Polychromer's Choice', investigates just where in the painting or on the sculpture the brocades were applied, and also considers their relationship to the context. Here the iconographic function of applied brocade is examined – for which characters and objects was the visual impact of applied brocade reserved?

The final contribution to Part One, Chapter Eight, 'Interiors Adorned', casts light on applied brocade used in wall painting and architectural polychromy, and lists the few surviving examples of what was probably once a widespread way of adding lustre to the interior.

Part Two examines some of the more technical aspects of applied brocade. In Chapter Nine, 'Lampas, Velvets and Cloths of Gold', Wivine Wailliez briefly overviews contemporary Italian fabrics and links the technical and stylistic evolution of applied brocade to innovations in textile design, providing the conservator-restorer and the art historian with a tool for historical criticism.

Chapter Ten, 'A Technological Study of Applied Brocade', was written with Jana Sanyova, Steven Saverwijns and Cécile Glaude of the KIK-IRPA laboratory. It describes the various layers of applied brocade, from the filler to the highlighting, followed by the adhesion to the support layer, and finally the finishing of the already-made brocade. It covers the materials used as well as the structure of the applied brocades and presents all the variations encountered. The statistical processing of the data provides most interesting results.

Finally, in Chapter Eleven, 'The Contribution of X-Radiography to the Study of Applied Brocade', Elisabeth Ravaud uses her practical experience to explain the importance of X-radiographs in the study of applied brocades.

Part Three consists of a catalogue of applied brocade from the Low Countries in Belgian collections, to which is appended a small number of works in other countries. This is the first time such data has been brought together since the technique was recognized in the nineteen-sixties. Over one hundred and sixty different models of applied brocade on eighty-six works of art – sixty-six in Belgium, twenty in neighbouring countries – are discussed and richly illustrated. The brocades embellish altarpieces and individual sculptures, panel and wall paintings, and architectural elements. The technical examination of these works and their brocades was largely carried out in situ. We documented each brocade personally, and this eventually led us across modern Belgium's borders, following the track of applied brocades now in France, Germany and Sweden. Our wide and varied field of activity, which included museums, churches, convents and monasteries, called for detailed planning and a good deal of creative improvisation in order to closely examine the sometimes barely accessible, poorly lit, or glass-protected work of art. Moreover, many applied brocades have suffered damage, and this also made the compiling of a corpus a challenging task. The fieldwork was followed by a long phase during which the data we had amassed were processed and interpreted, verified and re-verified. Our own observations of the structure of the applied brocades were tested against cross sections provided by Jana Sanyova and Cécile Glaude of the KIK-IRPA laboratory. This method of detailed cataloguing often led to surprising stylistic, iconographic and technical findings.

At the end of the book is an Index of Works, a practical resource that is intended to be used conjointly with the catalogue.

This book is not addressed only to the specialist. Of course, as a reference work it is useful to curators, restorers, researchers and students in the potential attribution of newly discovered applied brocade and may be helpful in dating and in determining origin. Individual works of art can perhaps be linked by their patterns'

association. But it is also of interest to anyone who is fascinated by the optical sheen and gleam of exquisite and complex patterns and intrigued by the illusionistic ingenuity of the medieval polychromer. The sophisticated technique by which sumptuous silks were imitated produced a rich illusion of texture that beguiled the eye through the play of light and shadow. Even when distorted or worn or merely vestigial, applied brocade still provides a convincing reminder of the visual variety and material magnificence of late-medieval art.

NOTES TO THE READER

The illustrations in Chapters One to Eleven are referred to as ‘figures’ and are numbered consecutively (fig. 1 – fig. 160). The numbering of the illustrations in the Catalogue corresponds to the entry and model numbers.

The dimensions of works of art are given in centimetres, in the order of height, width and depth. Where measurements of an applied brocade are given, height also precedes width. In some cases only one measurement is given: this is the height.

‘Left’ and ‘right’ are from the viewer’s point of view. In an altarpiece, for example, the ‘left wing’ is on the viewer’s left and the ‘right wing’ is on the viewer’s right.

Wherever possible, the drawings of the applied brocades are scaled 1:1. If there is no scale indicated next to the drawing it is because accurate measurements were impossible to establish.

Modern Belgium has three official languages, Dutch (colloquially referred to as Flemish, spoken in Flanders), French (spoken in Wallonia) and German (spoken in a small part of eastern Wallonia). So the names of towns and institutions can pose something of a problem, particularly in the officially bi-lingual Brussels Capital Region, where institutions often have two titles, one Dutch, one French. Many of Belgium’s towns and cities have both a Dutch and a French name; some have an English name as well. In the present volume, for towns in modern Flanders, such as Mechelen and Leuven (Malines and Louvain in French), the Dutch (Flemish) name is used, and for towns in modern Wallonia, such as Namur and Liège (Namen and Luik in Dutch), the French name is used. Where a town has a familiar English name, such as Antwerp (Antwerpen in Dutch, Anvers in French), that is used. There are exceptions, however: the French name Bruges (Brugge in Dutch) is so familiar to the English reader that it has been retained, even though the city is in West Flanders. Likewise Ypres, rather than the Dutch Ieper. The names of churches can also be problematic. There is a possibility that ‘Sint-Jan de Doperkerk’ will not convey much to the non-Dutch speaker, but the fact that the church is dedicated to John the Baptist (Jan de Doper) may be important to understanding its contents. Church names have therefore been translated into English.

For Belgian institutions the following abbreviations have been used:

KIK-IRPA: Koninklijk Instituut voor het Kunstpatrimonium | Institut royal du Patrimoine artistique | Royal Institute for Cultural Heritage

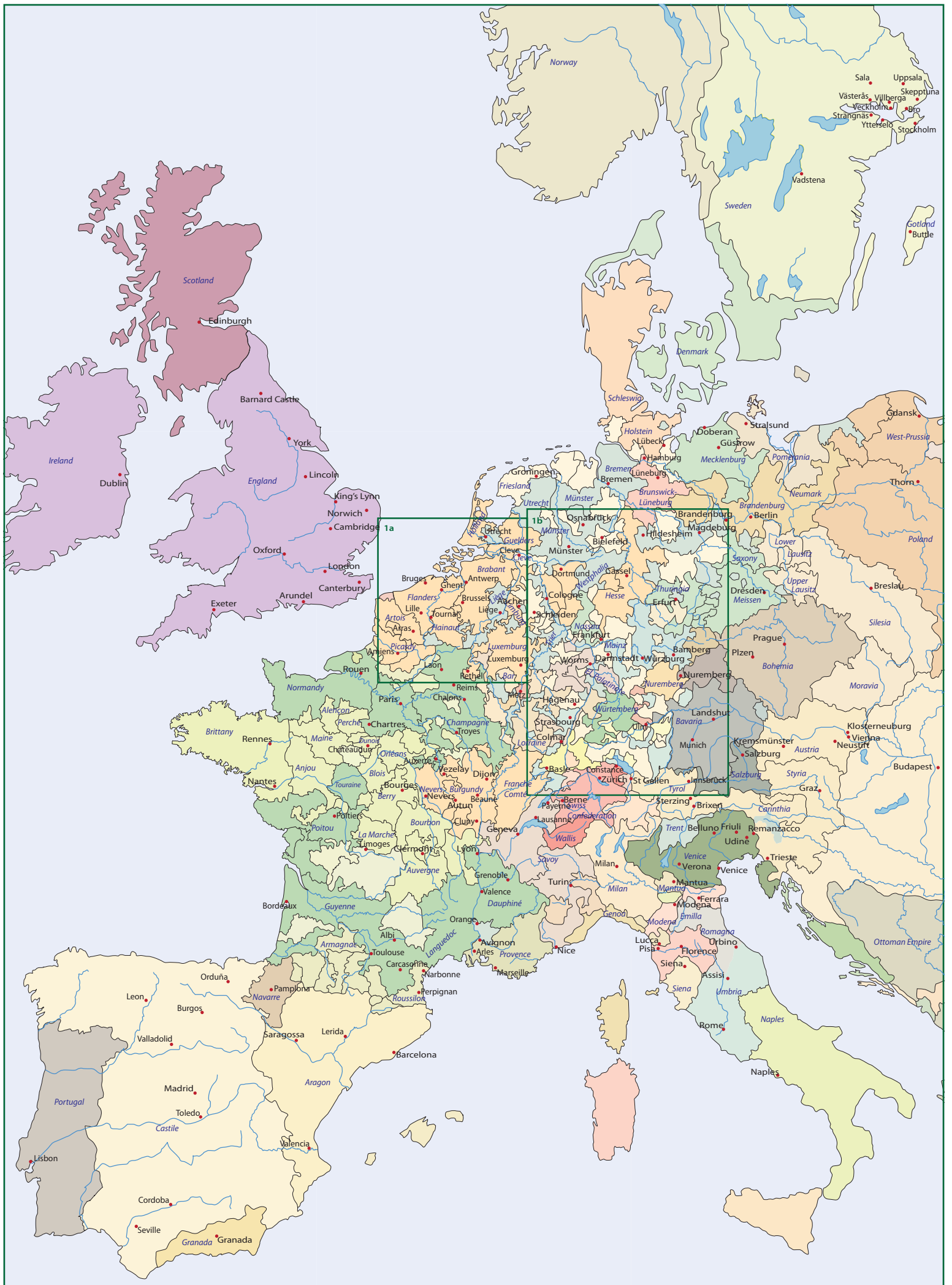
KMKG-MRAH: Koninklijke Musea voor Kunst en Geschiedenis | Musées royaux d’Art et d’Histoire | Royal Museums of Art and History

KMSKB-MRBAB: Koninklijke Musea voor Schone Kunsten van België | Musées royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique | Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium

KMSKA: Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten Antwerpen | Royal Museum of Fine Arts Antwerp

MSK Gent: Museum voor Schone Kunsten Gent | Museum of Fine Arts Ghent

VIOE: Vlaams Instituut voor het Onroerend Erfgoed | Flemish Heritage Institute





Map 1a

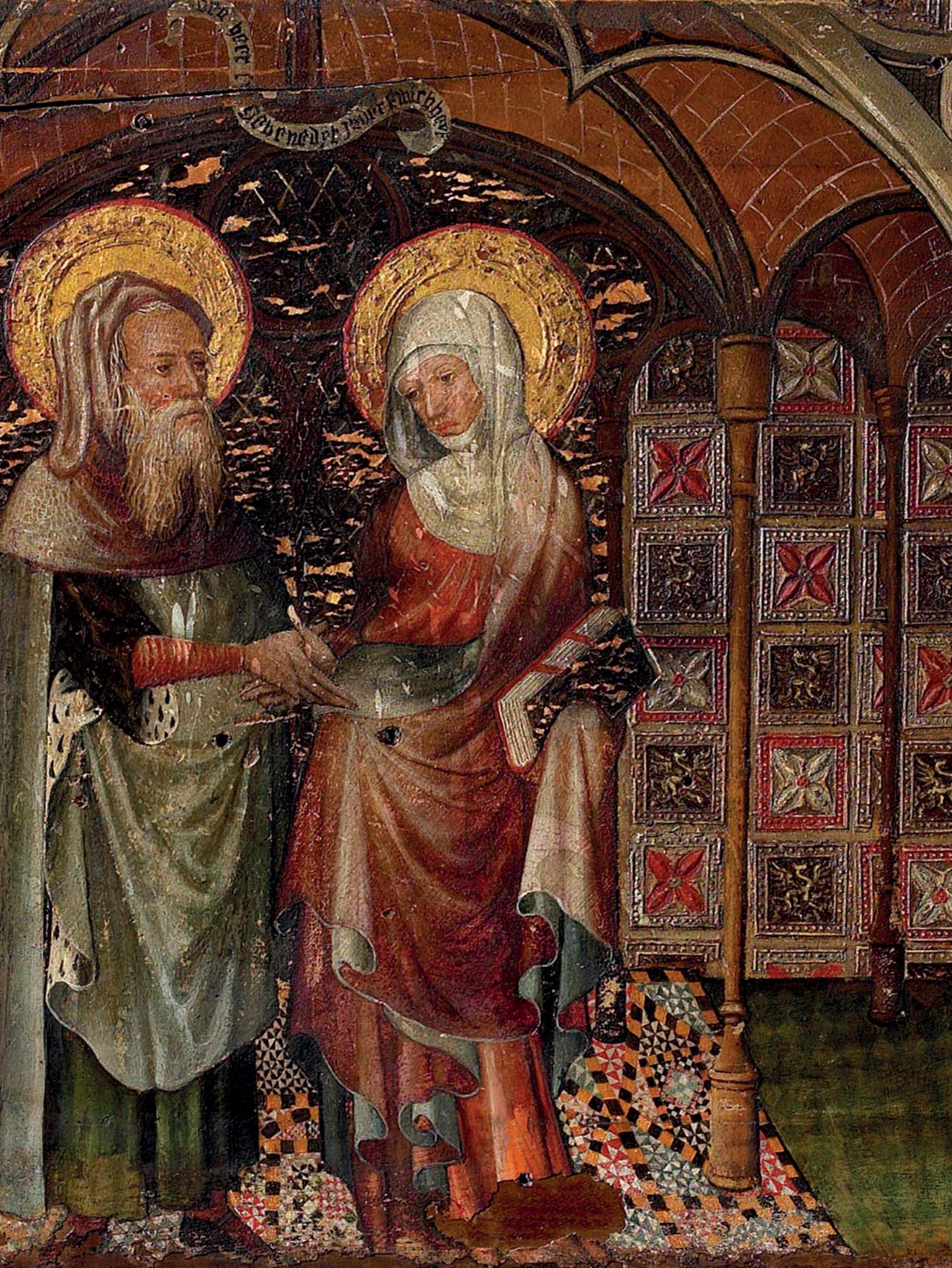


Map 1b

Passion Altarpiece, c.1420-1425, Brabant(?); Dortmund, St Reinold's Church (cat. G2) ▶
Dormition, reading apostle, applied brocade on the bed coverlet



PART I



Sicut medietas patris et matris

TECHNIQUES IN LUXURY

A BRIEF HISTORY OF APPLIED BROCADE

The refined applied brocades that appeared on panel and wall paintings, and altarpieces and sculptures in the Low Countries in the early fifteenth century attest to great finesse and mature technique. Such mastery must surely have been underpinned by a sturdy tradition. To gain an idea of how applied brocade developed, a look at its technical and stylistic context is called for.¹

The use of a mould and a malleable fill material was an efficient and accurate way of producing relief decorations, sometimes singly but more often in series, which could then be applied to carved or painted works to create repetitive patterns. The composition of such cast reliefs varied: some used a chalky filler, others had mixed or waxy ingredients; some employed a tin foil skin, others did without it. This method of prefabricating ornament is rooted in a long tradition whose origins lie in the Romanesque art of southern France and Spain.² From the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries very few examples of cast relief decoration survive: those that do were produced mainly in north-western Europe in centres such as London, Paris, Clermont-Ferrand and Westphalia, where they were used in various ways.³ Less rare are relief decorations from the period between 1350 and 1420, when the technique was commonly exploited and production had spread to a greater number of workshops.

Cast reliefs

The composition of only a few cast reliefs has been examined to date, so their technical evolution is not always easy to follow. Tin foil clearly offered advantages when casting but it was apparently not used in every case. The cast reliefs that cover the background of the *Epitaph of Canon Hendrik van Rijn*

(1363, Utrecht?; Antwerp, KMSKA), the only known example of their use in the northern Netherlands, were seemingly produced using a dry fill material but not tin foil (see p. 42).⁴ In his handbook for craftsmen, *Il Libro dell'Arte*, Cennino Cennini describes methods for casting reliefs both with and without tin foil, each using the appropriate mould and filler. To make a cast relief without tin foil he recommends *gesso sottile* well-thickened with size yet fine enough for a precise casting, and a mould of *terra* or *crea* (earth or clay). To cast a relief with tin foil he advises a mould made of stone, which will withstand the force used to beat the tin foil into it. As the tin takes an exact impression, *gesso grosso* suffices to fill up the cast.⁵

The *Kortessem Panel* (1400-1410; Brussels, KMSKB-MRBAB; see p. 45) (fig. 1), depicting scenes from the Life of the Virgin, is one of the rare surviving Southern Netherlandish examples of a work incorporating cast relief decoration.⁶ Here, gilded haloes in relief are combined with flat shapes cut from tin foil and square cast relief plaques. Represented on the plaques are alternately a dragon-like creature and a tetra-rosette (fig. 1a-b). Though later overpainted, they were originally fully gilded, providing a radiant background to the terrestrial and celestial events portrayed. With its refulgent gilded foil the panel must have presented a most sumptuous appearance.

◀ Fig. 1.
Scenes from the Life of the Virgin (detail), 1400-1410, Southern Netherlands; Brussels, KMSKB-MRBAB Meeting of Joachim and Anne

¹ An earlier version of part of this text appeared in GEELEN, STEYAERT 2009a: 153-182.

² NADOLNY 2003: 184-185, n. 26-27.

³ Ibid. 175-182.

⁴ RENGER 1993: 9-45.

⁵ CENNINI (ed. Torresi): 120-121 (Ch. CXXV, CXXVIII), 145-146 (Ch. 176); CENNINI (ed. Thompson): 77 (Ch. CXXV), 78 (Chapter CXXVIII), 109-110 ('How to do Caskets or Chests').

⁶ We thank Cyriel Stroo, Dominique Vanwijnsberghe, Dominique Deneffe and Famke Peters for the fruitful exchange of data. The *Kortessem Panel* is extensively discussed in DENEFFE, PETERS, FREMOUT 2009: 196-271.



1a-b.

Fig. 1a-b.
Tin foil cast reliefs,
dragon-like creature
and tetra-rosette
(detail of fig. 1)

A comparable luxury would also have been evoked by the relief decorations added to the wall paintings in the central radiating chapel in St Martin's Church in Halle, to the south-west of Brussels.⁷ In some of the scenes the hilly landscape behind the characters rolls beneath an abstract sky strewn with cast reliefs. Only minimal traces remain of the original gilded decorations, which date from the second quarter of the fifteenth century. In the scene depicting St John boiled in oil the hexagonal tin foil sheets (each side measuring 2 cm) are arranged in a honeycomb pattern: the motif itself consists of a minutely detailed flower with two rows of six petals. In other places, all that remains are tiny fragments in the otherwise blank spaces the reliefs once occupied, diamond-shaped in one scene, circular in the other. In the background of the Martyrdom of St Agatha only meagre fragments of relief survive, resembling solar rays. The haloes and some of the attributes in the other scenes were also executed in cast relief. All these decorations have a common layer structure: the presence of tin foil has been confirmed by physical tests.⁸

The same kind of cast relief decorations seem to have been incorporated into the fifteenth-century wall paintings (c.1435) in the choir of Our Lady of the Zavel in Brussels, according to photographs taken in 1859.⁹ In 1868 De Bruyn described how the 'embossed' diaper-pattern background was composed of a rampant lion and a pair of birds *affronté*.¹⁰ The decoration of the choir was completely reconstructed by Jean Van der Plaetsen in 1866-1867, including the reliefs behind the painted saints,¹¹ so whether or not tin foil was originally used can no longer be verified here.

Surviving production in neighbouring countries shows that individual cast relief decorations just a few centimetres in size were much used in the fourteenth century. They may have embellished various panels in the Sainte-Chapelle in Paris as early as 1240 or thereabouts.¹² Here, gilded reliefs (which were replaced in the nineteenth century) appear to have covered the entire background of the quatrefoils, for example, creating the effect of costly precious metalwork. This was how cast relief decoration tended to be used in panel and wall painting up until the early fifteenth century: in two hundred years there was little or no stylistic or technical development. Among the most impressive examples is the portrait of *Richard II Enthroned* (c.1390-1395, England; London, Westminster Abbey).¹³ The design that originally completely covered the background behind the painted monarch consists of a rose-like flower at the centre of an ornamented quatrefoil. The spaces between the quatrefoils form a cross, so that two motifs are created. Often a diaper pattern was produced by alternating two different motifs, as in the *St Clare Polyptych* (c.1360; Cologne, Cathedral), or cast and painted (and/or gilded) motifs, as on the *Thornham Parva-Cluny Retable* (c.1335-1340, East Anglia; Thornham Parva, St Mary's Church and Paris, Musée National du Moyen Âge) (figs. 2a-2b).¹⁴

Less frequently encountered are single-motif cast reliefs used to represent objects, attributes, or decorative additions to attire. In the Osnabrück *Crucifixion Triptych* (1370-1380, Westphalia; Cologne, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum)¹⁵ the centurion's belt is embellished with rosettes: the close resemblance of the cast relief-decorated accessory to the actual article worn at the time is evidenced by a number of leather belts from archaeological sites in London.¹⁶ In *The Expectant Madonna with St Joseph* (1415-1420, Franche-Comté; Washington, National Gallery of Art) not only the Virgin's crown but also the brooches and tassels of her cloak are tin foil cast reliefs.¹⁷

In Master Theodoric's *St George* (1360-1365, Prague, Karlštejn Castle, Chapel of the Holy Cross), the repeated floral cast relief decorations embellishing the saint's painted cloak were perhaps intended to evoke a silk fabric woven or embroidered with gold

⁷ VANDEN BORRE 2000: 24, 27-28; BERGMANS 1998: 313-314.

⁸ Carried out by Marina Van Bos, KIK-IRPA (report 19 April 1999).

⁹ KIK-IRPA photograph A5833-5836.

¹⁰ DE BRUYN 1868: 19; DE RIDDER, SCHUDEL 2004: 226.

¹¹ Similar relief decorations enriched a small number of other neo-Gothic wall paintings, for instance in the choirs of the Holy Cross Church in Liège and the Church of Our Lady of the Assumption in Sint-Truiden. Both churches were restored by Jules Helbig. Although he was generally inspired by late-Gothic ornamentation it has not been shown that these relief decorations derive from an original model. BERGMANS 1998: 76-77 (choir of Our Lady of the Zavel), 52, 55 (Church of Our Lady of the Assumption, Sint-Truiden).

¹² NADOLNY 2003: 176-177, 181-182. Documentary evidence for the use of tin cast reliefs in French monuments are mentioned in NADOLNY 2009: 42-46.

¹³ NADOLNY, ROY 2006: 138-143.

¹⁴ BUCKLOW 2003: 38.

¹⁵ BUDDE, KRISCHEL 2001: 38-39. The presence of tin foil has not been established in this case.

¹⁶ EGAN, PRITCHARD, BAYLEY 1993.

¹⁷ We thank Kristen Loudermilk, National Gallery of Art Washington, Painting Conservation Intern, for this information. VILLELA-PETIT 2004a: 28, 31-32.

Fig. 2a.
Thornham Parva
Retable (detail),
 c.1335-1340,
 East Anglia;
 Thornham Parva,
 Church of St Mary
 St Paul
 © Cambridge,
 Hamilton Kerr
 Institute



Fig. 2b.
Thornham Parva
Retable (detail),
 St Catherine in
 raking light
 Cast relief and
 painted fleur-de-lis
 © Cambridge,
 Hamilton Kerr
 Institute



2-2a.

thread, or alternatively the gold, silver or gilded tin adornments that nobles pinned to their garments.¹⁸ Like the sartorial embellishments, the belts and the brooches, these scattered reliefs enriched the image and enhanced the composition.

Single-motif cast reliefs could also take larger forms, like the haloes in the *Kortesse Panel* and the decorations added to the wall paintings in St Martin's in Halle. The sides of a Sienese *cassone*, or wedding chest (1350-1360; London, Victoria and Albert Museum), are covered with rare narrative scenes, the Fountain of Love and the Hunt for Love alternating along two registers.¹⁹ This is one of the few Italian examples of applied relief in which tin foil is employed. In thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Italian panel painting cast relief decorations were often used in addition to pastiglia, particularly for frames and

architectural elements, but seemingly never with tin foil as a component.²⁰

In addition to single motifs, composite reliefs also occur, either as a multiplicity of single units or as larger more complex designs in the form of strips and square or rectangular blocks. Strips in which the same motif is repeated were used chiefly as a framing device in panel painting, as in the Westphalian *Soest Crucifixion Retable* (1200-1230; Berlin, Staatliche Museen, Gemäldegalerie),²¹ or as a means of separating individual scenes, as in the wall paintings from St Stephen's Chapel (1350-1363; London, British Museum), for example.²² Blocks of decoration – particularly efficient

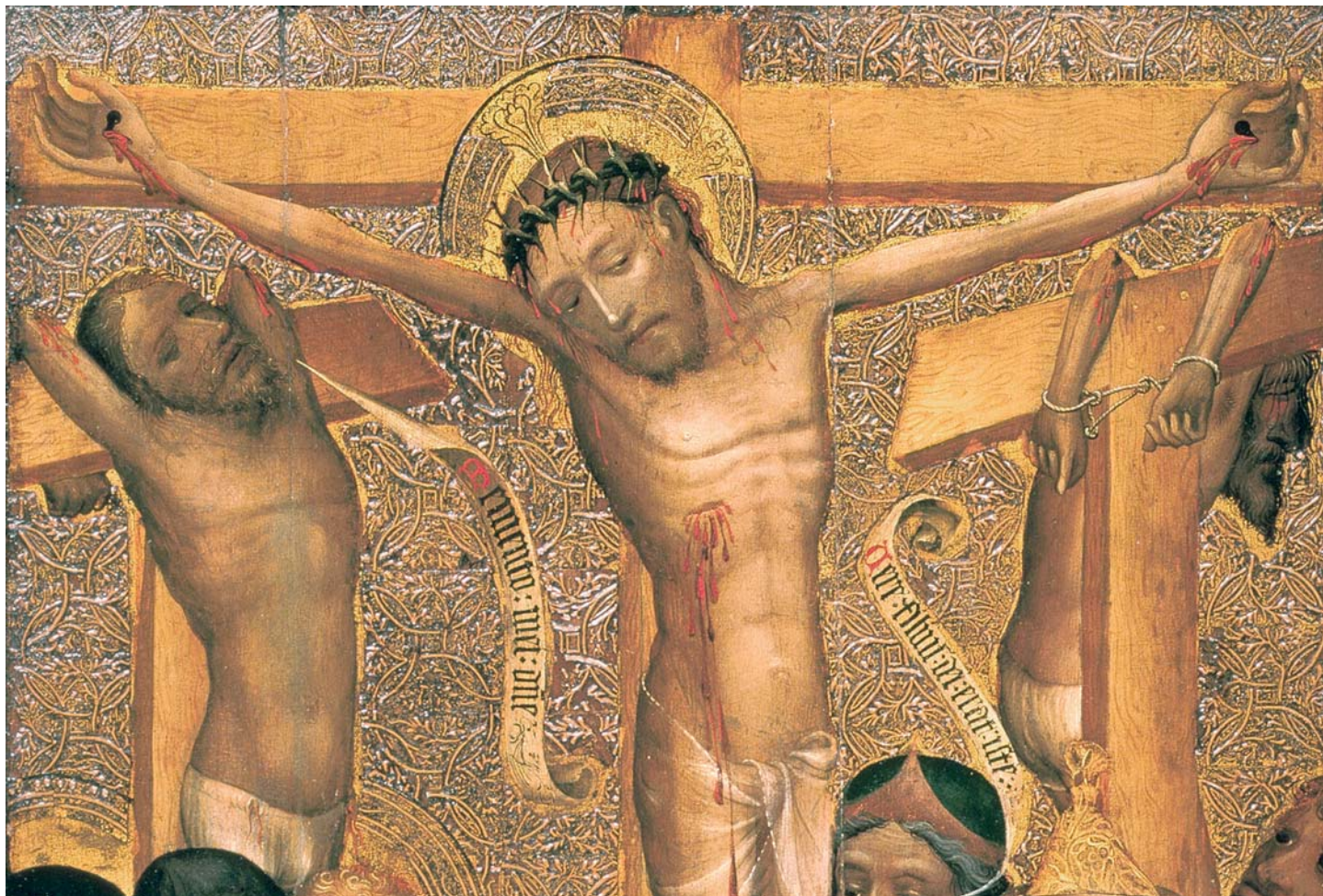
²⁰ PERUSINI, PERUSINI 1999: 58; DARRAH 1998: 55. Exceptions are perhaps the relief decorations in Simone Martini's *Maestà* (1315, Palazzo Pubblico, Siena) and *St Louis* (1317, Museo Capodimonte, Naples), but definite data are lacking.

²¹ Christ's Cross is also covered with strips of relief. KOBLER 1997: 43, fig. 3.

²² NADOLNY 2003: 188, n. 95; VAN GEERSDAELE, GOLDSWORTHY 1978: 9-12. Strikingly virtuoso trimmings in cast relief are found on a group of late-fourteenth- and early-fifteenth-century Rhenish leather sculptures. There is no mention of tin foil in the sculptures that were examined. It is equally unclear where adjoining single motifs are involved and where a composite strip is meant.

¹⁸ PRAGUE 1992: 50-51; on the accessories, see for example. FRITZ 1982: pl. 8 (Christ Child's cloak, Sarnen, fourteenth century), figs. 335-337 (reliquary of St Brigitta, Vadstena, c.1381).

¹⁹ DARRAH 1998: 55-56.



for covering large areas – would be made up by gluing reliefs edge to edge, as on the hauberk worn by the polychromed effigy of Geoffrey de Lucy (c.1350, Kent, Lesnes Abbey),²³ or they could be cut to shape, as was done to create the halo of the seraph (1263-1266; London, British Museum) from the wooden ceiling of the Painted Chamber in Westminster Palace.²⁴ The regular zigzag pattern in the background of the surviving wing of the *Altarpiece of Pierre de Wissant* (c.1410, Paris; Laon, Musée d'Art et d'Archéologie)²⁵ was created by using a composite relief, as, probably, was the weave pattern in Master Theodoric's *Holy Ruler*, *St Wenceslas*, and *Bishop Saint* (c.1360-1365, Prague, Karlštejn Castle, Chapel of the Holy Cross).²⁶

A more complex decoration is found on an English *Crucifixion* panel (1390-1400; Denver, Denver Art Museum, Berger Collection),²⁷ where the painted image is set against a backdrop of interlocking circles filled with foliage sprouting from tendrils that emerge from the circles themselves (fig. 3). Technically, all the elements of applied brocade are present, but the typical striated patterns that imitate silk textiles shot through with metal threads are not yet in evidence.

Fig. 3. *Crucifixion* (detail), 1390-1400, England; Denver, The Denver Art Museum, The Berger Collection. Crucified Christ against a background in relief © The Denver Art Museum, Denver

Generally speaking, the motifs common in cast relief decorations represent elegant stylized creatures such as lions or eagles, though floral and geometric designs also occur. They appear to belong to an interregional ornamental vernacular which had spread via a tight network of artists and workshops to practically all forms of pictorial and decorative art. There are many parallels – not all stylistic – between relief decorations and precious metalwork in particular.²⁸ Many surviving stone

²³ DARRAH 1998: 59. Examples of this 'chain mail' motif also occur elsewhere. NADOLNY 2003: 180.

²⁴ LIVERSIDGE, BINSKI 1995: 491-501.

²⁵ PARIS 2004b: 322-323; VILLELA-PETIT 2004a: 35-49.

²⁶ PRAGUE 1992: 42-43, 46-47, 56-57. In the case of a number of Tyrolean panel paintings, such as the *Crucifixion* by the Master of the Streichen Altar, Neustift Monastery (c.1410) and the altarpiece for St George's Chapel in Trausnitz Castle in Landshut by the Master of the Pfarrwerfener Altar, the whole background appears to be covered with hundreds of identical fleur de lis motifs in some ten sheets of relief. We have not examined these panels personally, however. STANGE 1960: 9, 15, figs. 11, 29.

²⁷ PIEPER 1994: 4-9; NADOLNY 1996: 44-45.

²⁸ See for example the mouldings on the Mosan *Shrine of St Mengold*, 1173, and *Shrine of Our Lady*, 1260-1270 (Huy, Collegiate Church of Our Lady); and the Mosan-Rhenish *Shrine of the Three Magi* (Cologne, Cathedral) made by Nicolas of Verdun between 1181 and 1230.

and bronze moulds may have been used for casting reliefs intended for precious metalwork and panel and wall painting alike.²⁹ Documentary evidence shows that in some cases the goldsmith was directly involved in the production of this kind of decoration.³⁰

The relief decorations were intended to emulate the prestige of gold and silver and give a painting the most costly appearance possible. The use of expensive pigments and gold leaf was a way of elevating and honouring the characters portrayed. The figures were set off by the coruscating gold background – and it was precisely for creating this that cast relief plaques were so suitable. Gold possessed a multifaceted symbolic and theological significance, and served as a metaphor for the divine light of Paradise.³¹ The relief decorations were a compromise that combined the conventional gilded background³² with attempts to achieve a greater sense of space. A flat gold surface allowed the image to extend into an infinite and timeless dimension. The paradox – between a gilded background and the illusion of space that was becoming increasingly sought from around 1300 – was partly resolved by working the surface. Punchwork, pastiglia, incisions or the cast relief decorations described above each provided a certain impression of depth by their different ways of reflecting light.³³ The relief rendered the background both decorative and tangibly present, and as a result there is more emphasis on the costliness of the materials than on sublime metaphysical symbolism.³⁴ Nevertheless, the background remained inherently a plane compared to the depth of the landscapes and interiors in which the Early Netherlandish painters would soon be setting their characters.

Applied Brocade

It was not only precious metals that were imitated, however. In the course of the fourteenth century the representation of gold brocades also became a prominent feature of painted images. The sophisticated silks portrayed with such care in the visual arts reflected the enormous value that was placed upon them by those able to afford their exorbitant cost. Italy had boasted a flourishing silk industry since the twelfth century. By the second half of the fourteenth century

Venice, Florence and especially Lucca had become leading producers of gold brocade and cloth of gold, distinguished by extraordinarily creative and refined silk velvets.³⁵ Italian textiles were one of the mercantile world's most crucial commodities and they spread throughout Europe along international trade routes. Bruges, Italy's traditional trading partner, was a major port of transit for these luxury goods. The Church was a great consumer: the sumptuous stuffs were used in liturgical ceremonies, furnishing altars, and vesting the high clergy, acquiring sacred connotations in the process. And the glamorous fabrics were also eagerly sought by the Burgundian court to be used for embellishing interiors, as diverse hangings and cloths of estate and, of course, for clothes. The wealthiest members of society attired themselves in extravagant silks, a luxurious and vastly expensive fashion with exclusive cachet. The many references to textiles in the inventories of the Burgundian court give us some indication of their importance.³⁶ That not only the colour but sometimes also the pattern and even the weave were described shows that these fabrics were regarded as exceptionally important. The powerful elite's taste for sumptuous materials is manifest in painting. The patron's status and wealth were reflected in the garments and hangings depicted. The fabric's symbolic subtext, amplified by its iconography, enhanced their prestige. Artists were faced with the challenge of representing these textiles in a recognizable and realistic way.³⁷ They met it with elaborate ornamentation and a battery of techniques, the mastery of which was a distinct asset when it came to impressing patrons.

The luxury textiles depicted in the noble painting of around 1400 entice with their refined and dynamically designed patterns. The ornamentation is richly detailed and clearly legible. Some display strong similarities to contemporary fabrics.³⁸ The material covering the Virgin's canopy and throne in the *Carrand Diptych* (1390-1400, Southern Netherlands; Florence, Museo Nazionale-Bargello), for instance, bears a striking likeness to a silk now in the Kunstgewerbemuseum in Berlin.³⁹ In the Adoration of the Magi on

²⁹ FRITZ 1982: 120, figs. 332-334; BREPOHL 1999, 2: 186-187, fig. 75.

³⁰ LYNN 1997: 24-25.

³¹ BRAUNFELS 1950: 329; BAERT 2009: 8-10.

³² We lack an adequate terminology for the various forms of 'Goldgrund' (also denoted in the past by 'idealer Raum', 'Flache ohne Ende'), SCHÖNE 1979: 25.

³³ For an overview of the various techniques in use around 1400, see also GEELEN, STEYAERT 2008b.

³⁴ BRAUNFELS 1950: 329; SCHÖNE 1979: 92-93.

³⁵ TIETZEL 1988: 99-128; MONNAS 1986: 63-64. See also Chapter Nine.

³⁶ DE LABORDE 1849-1852, I: e.g. 67 (216), 135-136 (412), 291 (1029); see also MONNAS 1986: 70; MONNAS 2000: 159.

³⁷ Something that preoccupied artists south of the Alps as well. In *Il Libro dell'Arte* Cennino Cennini explains how to design and execute cloths of gold and silver, velvet, wool and silk. CENNINI (ed. Torresi): 127-130 (Ch. CXLI, CXLII, CXLIII, CXLIV); CENNINI (ed. Thompson): 86-90.

³⁸ KLESSE 1967; WARDWELL 1976-1977: 179.

³⁹ WARDWELL 1976-1977: 184-185, figs. 8-9.



a wing of the Dortmund *Passion Altarpiece* (c.1420-1425, Brabant?; Dortmund, St Reinold's Church; cat. G2) the green houppelande worn by one of the magi looks remarkably like an olive green Lucca atlas weave fabric in the Museum für Angewandte Kunst in Cologne.⁴⁰ Many patterns are also fictive, the fruit of the artist's imagination. And luxury textiles could be more than simply decorative: the iconography of their patterns might subtly reinforce the content of the composition, or be appropriate to its destination. In the Nativity scene in the *Antwerp-Baltimore Quadriptych*, (c.1400, Southern Netherlands?; Antwerp, Museum Mayer van den Bergh and Baltimore, Walters Art Museum) for example, the cloth covering the Virgin's corn-stuffed pallet contains a subtle allusion to the Song of Solomon. The white silk is patterned with flowers in gold thread, a symbolism that alludes to Bride's belly, 'a heap of wheat, encircled with lilies' (figs. 4-4a).⁴¹

The motifs are not distributed across the surface as individual elements but rhythmically structured in a continuous design. They are linked by stemwork, which enhances the depicted fabric's materiality with the suggestion of a woven pattern. Caught up by the realistic current that was flowing from Italy, exemplified in the works of Paolo Veneziano and Simone Martini, for instance, artists devoted increasing care to the rendering of the properties and textures of the textiles they represented. They intensified their

colours, using glazes and successive paint layers to produce subtle gradations and create volume, light and shadow. Tempera, predominant till now, gave way to oily binding media.⁴² These elements are the prelude to the *pictura lucida* that would be brought to perfection by the Early Netherlandish painters a generation later.⁴³

As mentioned above, in the medieval metaphysics of light gold leaf played a particularly important role. In panel painting its symbolic allusion to the sacred was manifest in radiant haloes and gleaming backgrounds. In the second half of the fourteenth century, however, gold leaf acquired a new function – it came to be employed as a colour and was used to represent objects. It was particularly well suited to the representation of gold brocade. In the *Calvary of the Tanners* (c.1400, Southern Netherlands; Bruges, St Saviour's Cathedral)⁴⁴ gold brocades were rendered by the local incorporation of gold leaf (fig. 7). The gowns of SS Catherine and Barbara were embellished with elegant golden palmette motifs (probably created with the aid of a stencil) linked by delicate painted stemwork. In the *Antwerp-Baltimore Quadriptych* Nativity the metallic sheen of the midwife Zelomi's gown was created by the metal ground. A layer of red was painted over burnished gold leaf, the motif itself being left unpainted.⁴⁵ The red throws the bright, glittering gold

Fig. 4. *Antwerp-Baltimore Quadriptych*, c.1400, Southern Netherlands(?); Antwerp, Mayer van den Bergh Museum Nativity

Fig. 4a. Bed coverlet (detail of fig. 4)

⁴⁰ BERTRAM-NEUNZIG 2007: 91-92; MARKOWSKY 1976: 129, no. 30.

⁴¹ NIEUWDORP, GOETGHEBEUR 2003: 277; Song of Solomon 7, 2.

⁴² GIFFORD 1995: 357-370.

⁴³ BELTING, KRUSE 1994: 14.

⁴⁴ Extensively discussed in DENEFFE, PETERS, FREMOUT 2009: 124-155.

⁴⁵ NIEUWDORP, GOETGHEBEUR 2003: 272.

Fig. 5.
Antwerp-Baltimore
Quadriptych
Nativity (detail),
Zelomi's gown



motifs into dazzling contrast; to temper their shine they were filled with diverse punchwork and highlighted with white, producing a range of shimmering reflections (fig. 5). This was the technique customarily employed to evoke the shifting and changing of light across the surface of luxurious silks. Sgraffito, common in the Italian centres, seems not yet to have been used in the Low Countries, or at least not on any kind of scale, though this should be confirmed by methodical research. In the Presentation in the Temple painted by Melchior Broederlam on a wing of the *Crucifixion Altarpiece* (1393-1399; Dijon, Musée des Beaux-Arts) Simeon wears a red robe with motifs embroidered in gold thread: an elegant Chinese *feng-huang*, a phoenix-like bird, flutters among flowering stems (fig. 6). The stylish design was inspired by Italian silks of the last quarter of the fourteenth century that were themselves based on Chinese fabrics.⁴⁶ As with Zelomi's gown, just mentioned, the gleaming decoration was reserved in the red paint layer. Sharp horizontal incisions enliven the motifs, which are finished with a few highlights in contrasting colours, producing a sense of texture and evoking the fabric's warp and weft. The entire motif is depicted, irrespective of drapery folds, which are rendered by dark lines painted on top of the pattern. Punchwork and

⁴⁶ COMBLEN-SONKES 1986: 95; WARDWELL 1976-1977: 183-185.

incisions were ubiquitous in panel painting, being used to break up the flat surface and to achieve a three-dimensional effect – part of the general trend towards greater spatiality.

Melchior Broederlam was also responsible for the polychromy of the *Crucifixion Altarpiece*, likewise the *Altarpiece with Saints and Martyrs* (1393-1399; Dijon, Musée des Beaux-Arts). The carved figures are almost entirely gilded and the gold leaf on some of the robes is patterned with beautiful motifs. Unlike the textiles represented on the painted wings they are not incised, and punching is mainly confined to edges and hems. The physicality and tangibility of sculpture confers a different reality,⁴⁷ requiring from the polychromer an alternative approach. The altarpiece's carved interior, of which virtually every square centimetre is gilded, still references precious metalwork. Gold leaf was regarded as an ideal 'colour' with which to express the transcendent and underline the sacred function of the devotional image.

Painted silks certainly enchanted the eye, but it was applied brocade that produced the best illusion of the glint and gleam of gold brocade and the structure of velvet. For more than a century it was one of the most commonly used ways of reproducing textiles in the visual arts. Some of the very earliest brocades to be created in that period are on the wings of the Dortmund *Passion Altarpiece*,⁴⁸ where five different models of applied brocade ornament garments and other textiles. They are discreetly distributed throughout the composition, alternating with purely painted silks. In several places a continuous applied brocade⁴⁹ covers an entire surface: the young magus's doublet in the Adoration, the high priest's robe in the Presentation, and the bed coverlet in the Death of the Virgin (cat. G2.1), for example, are all made up of identical rectangular sheets patterned with palmette-like motifs with flowers and curling leaves, affixed side by side to cover the whole field. Only the colour of the highlighting differs from fabric to fabric. The other four models are all local brocades, applied to a coloured background on which stemwork and foliage are painted. In Christ before Pilate almost the entire surface of the garment of the kneeling prosecutor or accuser is covered with local brocades (cat. G2.2, cat. G2.4) arranged in staggered rows or quincunx formation. Tiny trilobe leaves are painted in the small spaces between the brocades, assisting the continuity of the pattern (fig. 8). The same palmette-like motif recurs on the canopy in combination with a simple

⁴⁷ PHILIPPOT 1988: 49.

⁴⁸ BERTRAM-NEUNZIG 2005a; BERTRAM-NEUNZIG 2005b: 181-203.

⁴⁹ For an explanation of the various types of applied brocade (continuous, local and braid), see Chapter Four.



Fig. 6.
Crucifixion Altarpiece (detail), 1393-1399, Jacob de Baerze,
 Melchior Broederlam; Dijon, Musée des Beaux-Arts
 Simeon's robe



Fig. 7.
Crucifixion with SS Catherine and Barbara (detail), c.1400,
 Southern Netherlands; Bruges, St Saviour's Cathedral
 St Barbara's gown



Fig. 8.
Passion Altarpiece
(detail), c.1420-1425,
Brabant(?);
Dortmund, Church
of St Reinold
Christ before Pilate,
kneeling prosecutor
or accuser

cinquefoil flower (cat. G2.3). In both the Descent from the Cross and the Entombment, Joseph of Arimathea's cloak is embellished with (badly damaged) local applied brocades (cat. G2.4) set amidst pale green painted stemwork on a dark green background. Yet another model occurs amongst the painted stems on St Catherine's blue gown (cat. G2.5). It is very similar to the floral motif on St Barbara's gown in the *Calvary of the Tanners* in Bruges. The filler used in the Dortmund brocades is extremely fine, white in colour and dryish-looking, which suggests a mix of chalk and size. No analysis has been carried out to date. Lines in a brownish-red glaze on the brocades indicate the drapery folds and suggest volume.

Where and by whom the painted wings and sculpted figures of the Dortmund *Passion Altarpiece*

were produced is unknown. Robert Didier and John Steyaert attribute the carving to a Brussels workshop, more specifically to the Master of Hakendover, creator of the *Altarpiece of the Three Virgins* in the Church of the Blessed Saviour in Hakendover.⁵⁰ Evelyn Bertram-Neunzig recently completed a study of the retable. She cautiously suggests that it was made in Flanders, possibly in Bruges, though she does not altogether dismiss Brabant as its place of origin.⁵¹

Despite their mastery of painted illusion the Early Netherlandish painters continued to employ the techniques of their predecessors where appropriate. Robert Campin's *Crucified Thief* (c.1430; Frankfurt, Städel Museum; cat. G3) is all that survives of the right wing of a lost Crucifixion triptych (fig. 9).⁵² Copies give some idea of what the complete altarpiece would have looked like originally.⁵³ The open triptych would have stood almost three metres high and five wide. Campin set his characters against a background of gilded applied brocade whose use on all three panels would have made the altarpiece an extraordinarily costly work.⁵⁴ The pattern of the brocade is complex in structure, with birds (parrots or parakeets) and a pomegranate amongst foliage and banderoles. The unusually large size of the individual sheets (27 × 29 cm) is in keeping with the dimensions of the panel (134.2 × 92.5 cm). Campin eschewed coloured highlighting, using the gold ground to achieve a special hieratic effect.⁵⁵ The gilded brocade becomes the dominant light source, enveloping the figures in a lambent glow and creating a sacred space. Though its design is that of a rather worldly textile, by leaving the pattern unhighlighted the unreal and metaphysical aspect of gold predominates over the naturalistic and figurative qualities of the pattern. Campin has given a traditional theme a new interpretation, but the symbolism still outweighs the realism.

⁵⁰ DIDIER 1989: 51; GHENT 1994: 68-69.

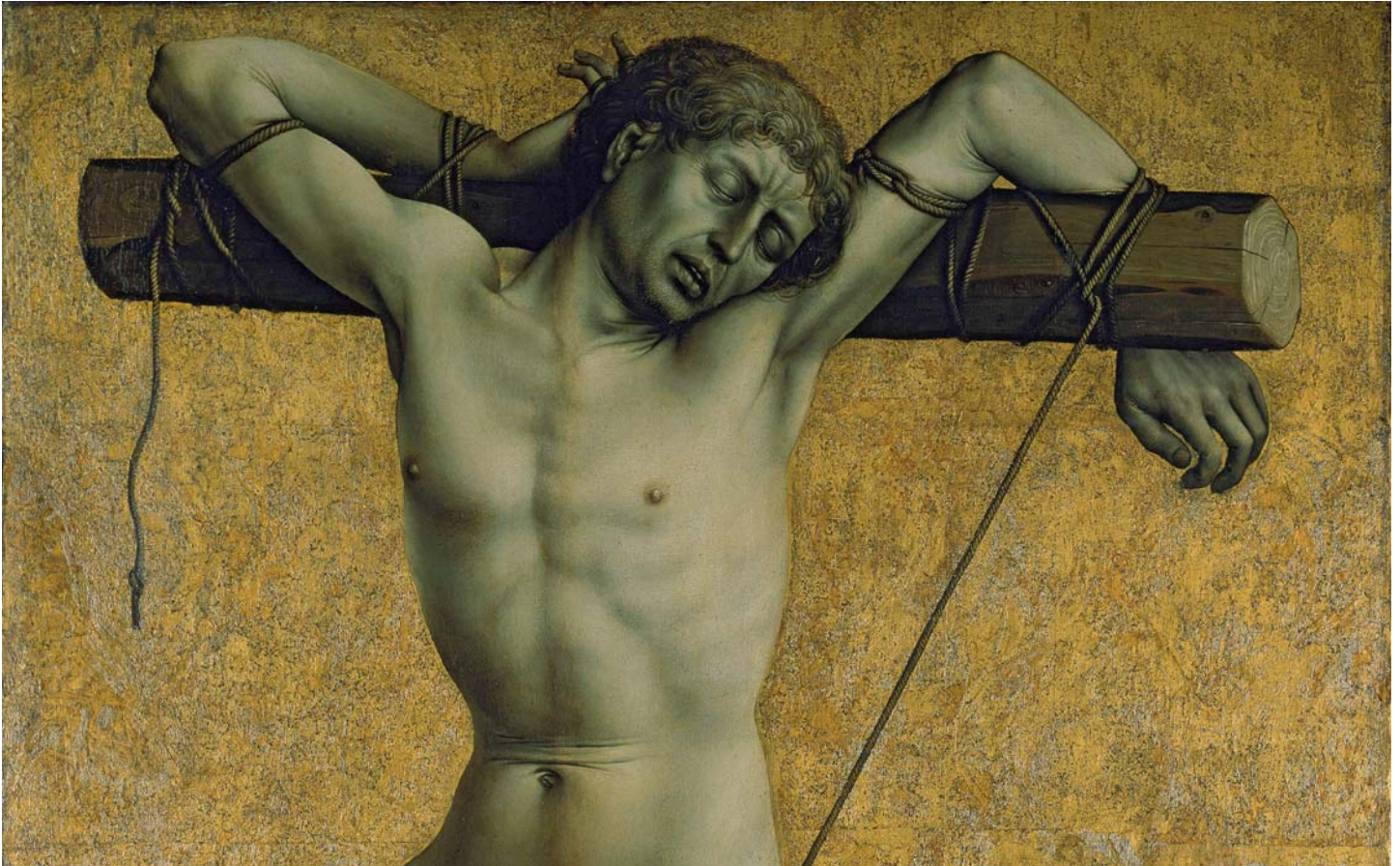
⁵¹ BERTRAM-NEUNZIG 2007: 78-79.

⁵² SANDER 1993: 145-146. We thank Jochen Sander, deputy director and curator of Flemish, Italian, French and Spanish paintings before 1800, Städel Museum, Frankfurt am Main, who gave us every facility to examine the Frankfurt panels at close quarters.

⁵³ SANDER 1993: 145-146; CHÂTELET 1996: 78-79; KEMPERDICK 1997: 30-35; FRANKFURT-BERLIN 2008: 218-223.

⁵⁴ Robert Campin was paid for the polychromy of Jean Delemer's *Annunciation*, commissioned in 1428 by Agnes Pietarde for the Church of St Peter in Tournai (and now in Tournai Cathedral). As Campin's pupil, Rogier van der Weyden was closely involved with its execution. Both the Virgin and the archangel were heavily restored and overpainted in the nineteenth century, however. The sculptures are currently undergoing technical examination at the KIK-IRPA. This will reveal whether applied brocades were used. The results will be made known in a separate publication.

⁵⁵ PANOFKY 1953, I: 167.



In both the *Virgo Lactans* and *St Veronica* (1430-1432; Frankfurt, Städel Museum) Campin abandons the gold background.⁵⁶ Standing before their cloths of honour and painted in an extraordinarily three-dimensional and almost tangible manner, these are no longer saints who appear as if in a vision but characters of flesh and blood portrayed in a context of contemporary reality. The naturalism is intensified; the background is modernized with recognizable textiles. The pattern on *St Veronica's* cloth of honour is composed of parrot-like birds and ray-emitting palmettes that sprout from a curving stem (figs. 10, 103). As we shall see elsewhere in this volume, this design was used very frequently in the fifteenth century, in painting and as

applied brocade (see Chapter Two).⁵⁷ It can be compared with fabrics patterned in what Anne Wardwell calls the 'realistic' style of the 1430s.⁵⁸ The design of the cloth of honour behind the *Virgin and Child* consists of double cords that cross at an encircled star which shines upon a lion with a banderole in its maw (fig. 11). The rows of lions face alternately left and right. The entire motif was probably stencilled. It is very similar to that on two lampas silks with a lion, banderole and beaming star, now in Vienna and Düsseldorf.⁵⁹ Gold thread was imitated with fine parallel gilded lines in relief, which were probably created by applying mordant until the desired thickness was reached, then laying on the gold leaf. In the samples examined by J. R. J. Van Asperen de Boer,⁶⁰ ultraviolet light revealed a discrete transparent layer between the red layer of the cloth of honour and the mordant of the gilding. This unpigmented layer is also present beneath the double cord. Its function is unclear. Van Asperen de Boer refers to Renate Keller, who suggests it is some sort of sealing layer. In the *De Mayerne* manuscript the painter is advised to rub oil paint with egg white before oil gilding because

Fig. 9.
Crucified Thief
(detail), c.1430,
Robert Campin;
Frankfurt, Städtelsche
Kunstinstitut
© Artortheek

⁵⁶ KEMPERDICK 1997: 13-18, 237 (fig. II). Both panels were once part of a double-winged altarpiece and were visible when the outer wings were open but the inner wings closed. According to Kemperdick each stage of opening must have produced a three-dimensional effect. The fully open altarpiece would have been occupied by gilded and polychromed carved figures. When the inner wings were closed four monumental lifelike figures (including the *Virgo Lactans* and *St Veronica*) would be revealed, two on the exterior sides of the closed inner wings, two on the interior sides of the still-open outer wings. On the exterior sides of the outer wings 'stone' statues in niches were painted in grisaille. On fifteenth-century grisaille painting, see PHILIPPOT 1966; KRIEGER 1995; KRIEGER 1996; KRIEGER 2001; MICHLER 1995; TEASDALE SMITH 1957-1959; RENGER 1983 and ITZEL 2007. We thank Cyriel Stroo for the bibliographic references.

⁵⁷ KOCH 1993: 153; LEVINE 1993: 143-147.

⁵⁸ WARDWELL 1976-1977: 210.

⁵⁹ MONNAS 2008: 128-129, fig. 136, citing Otto Von Falke.

⁶⁰ VAN ASPEREN DE BOER 1996: 23, pl. II, 7-8.

Fig. 10.
St Veronica (detail),
 c.1430-1432, Robert
 Campin; Frankfurt,
 Städelsche Kunst-
 institut
 © Artothek



Fig. 11.
Virgo Lactans (detail),
 c.1430-1432, Robert
 Campin; Frankfurt,
 Städelsche Kunst-
 institut
 © Artothek



‘the egg white prevents the gold from sticking to the oil paint on places other than where the gold paint [or colour] is.’⁶¹ The effect of the parallel gilded lines is not unlike that of applied brocade. Not only does the gilded relief allow an approximation of the fine structure of a real fabric, it also reflects light in a similar way, with the same glitter, the same play of light and shade. It is worth remarking that there is also a slight relief to some of the painted elements, such as the green and blue double cords on the red cloth of honour behind the Virgin or the tiny white dots on the wings and tails of the birds behind St Veronica. The extremely precise rendering of the material produces a *trompe-l’oeil* effect that enhances the illusionism in which the Early Netherlandish painters excelled but which is none the less hindered by the painted characters.⁶²

⁶¹ *Lost Secrets of Flemish Paintings* 2004: 252, for Eng. trans. of T. T. DE MAYERNE, *Pictoria Sculptoria et quae subalternarum atrium* 1620, B.M. Sloane 2052.

⁶² Didier Martens defines *trompe-l’oeil* and illusionism as aesthetic strategies that create confusion between the depiction of the subject in the pictorial field and the subject itself. Nevertheless, the way in which this confusion between image and reality operates differs. In the case of *trompe-l’oeil* the subject that was initially identified as real proves, on closer inspection, to be only the representation of the real thing. In the case of pictorial illusionism that which was initially perceived as a depiction of a familiar something is subsequently taken for that something itself. D. MARTENS 1992: 32; D. MARTENS 2004: 256-277.

The illusionistic effect is achieved by the setting of the scene in a space in which the floor and the cloth of honour are parallel to the surface of the painting. The viewer tends to perceive the cloth of honour as an immediate extension of the frame. Because the real panel and the painted cloth of honour are both flat, the materiality of the one is naturally transferred to the other. The cloth of honour in the background will therefore also seem real and the viewer, who will equate the cloth of honour with the surface of the panel, will accordingly project the depicted figures outwards.⁶³ But the status of the depicted reality is immediately reaffirmed by the panel’s frame, which can be seen as a threshold between two orders of reality, between the ‘inner’ and the ‘outer’, with the ‘inner’ corresponding to a higher reality.⁶⁴

This phenomenon operates not only in the case of the two Campin panels in Frankfurt, but also in the *Last Judgement* in Beaune (see below) and likewise on the later altarpiece wings attributed to the Master of the View of St Gudule or his workshop or circle. In all these works the figures are portrayed before a cloth of honour in applied brocade that hangs parallel with the surface of the panel. By the use of this device the

⁶³ D. MARTENS 2004: 270-272.

⁶⁴ PHILIPPOT 1990.

border with reality is shifted and the viewer confuses the real support with the background in the painting. In the case of the two Frankfurt panels Stefan Kemperdick has shown that in their intention they are very much in line with Rogier van der Weyden's *Descent from the Cross* (c.1435; Madrid, Museo Nacional del Prado). In the Madrid panel the powerful, sculpturally rendered characters in the painted and gilded case make for a profound ambiguity between reality and image. The same optical ambivalence is present in the *Virgo Lactans* and *St Veronica*. The paintings are characterized by the interplay of two and three-dimensionality. The interactions between picture plane and spatial illusion allows observation to swing between different apparent realities, between the lifelike painted figures and the carved characters which, Kemperdick suggests, occupied the open altarpiece.⁶⁵

The applied brocade technique was also employed in the *Adoration of the Lamb* altarpiece (Ghent, St Bavo's Cathedral; cat. 37). The polyptych, which is dated 1432, was completed by Jan van Eyck after the death of his brother Hubert. The backs of the thrones rising behind the three principal figures of the Divine Lord,⁶⁶ the Virgin and John the Baptist, revealed when the polyptych is open, are finished with gilded and moulded arches. Spanning the lower part of the throne backs are magnificent dorsers whose sumptuous patterning is rendered in applied brocade. The dorsers occupy the full width of each panel. The static, divine trio are often regarded as archaic, partly because of these textiles, which terminate the perspective rather abruptly, and partly because of the treatment of the garments, in which the courtly International Style still resonates. For these reasons the figures are often attributed to Hubert van Eyck. The figure of the Virgin was slightly modified, her hair being given slightly less width than originally conceived by extending the brocade motif in paint (see cat. 37.2). The brocades have suffered over the years.⁶⁷ The inevitable corrosion of the tin foil has led to the loss of some of the material. In such costly and refined paintings losses must have been unacceptable,⁶⁸ and the brocades were repaired and retouched several times.⁶⁹ With the help of X-radiographs taken by the

KIK-IRPA in the 1980s the original decorations can be examined.⁷⁰

The applied brocade motifs on the dorsers are symbolically associated with the painting's protagonists. The grapes and vines and the pelican in piety behind the Divine Lord are Eucharistic metaphors for the sacrifice of Christ (fig. 12).⁷¹ X-radiographs reveal the Greek monograms $\text{IHC}+\text{XPS}$ on the banderoles rather than the present IHESUS XPS . The dorsers behind Mary and John are embellished with a different applied brocade. A foliage-surrounded unicorn bathed in beams emanating from wreathing clouds is set against a white ground on Mary's cloth and a red ground on John's. The colour used to highlight the inscriptions differs too. In both cases, elegant four-petalled flowers are stencilled in light grey paint where the individual sheets meet. The unicorn, symbol of purity and virginity, is proper to Marian iconography, particularly in relation to Christ, as an allegory for the Annunciation and the Incarnation of Christ.⁷² The language of the inscription is usually perceived as Hebrew⁷³ but has not yet been convincingly deciphered. In this case, given the lacunate state of the original reliefs, X-radiography has little additional data to offer.

The applied brocades suggest figured lampases with motifs that date from a transitional period or even seem slightly archaic.⁷⁴ They reflect the taste of the time of Philip the Good, when animal-patterned lampas silks were employed chiefly for furnishing or liturgical use, or were given as oblations. For their apparel, on the other hand, the members of the Burgundian court preferred velvet, satin and damask.⁷⁵ The designs incorporating animals and banderoles are typical of Italian textiles in which an oriental influence is assimilated.⁷⁶ Nevertheless, the Van Eyck

Fig. 12. ▶
Adoration of the Lamb
(detail), c.1432,
Hubert and Jan van
Eyck; Ghent,
St Bavo's Cathedral
The Divine Lord

⁷⁰ Large-scale X-radiographs were made in 1986 by Guido Van de Voorde and digitized by Catherine Fondaire (KIK-IRPA). At the time of writing, new X-radiographs were being made by Catherine Fondaire as part of the international research and conservation campaign of the *Adoration of the Lamb* (April–October 2010): *Lasting Support: A proposal for an interdisciplinary research project to assess the structural condition of the Ghent Altarpiece*, directed by Dr Ron Spronk and Anna van Grevenstein-Kruse, supported by the Getty Panel Painting Initiative.

⁷¹ MARIEN-DUGARDIN 1947–1948: 18–21; PURTLE 1982: 138.

⁷² PURTLE 1982: 138; MONNAS 2000: 153.

⁷³ Lisa Monnas identifies the letters 'aleph' and 'yod' but also states that not all the letters are identifiable. MONNAS 2000: 153. Jacques Paviot considers that the inscriptions are based on the *Voyage de Jean de Mandeville* (probably 1356) with imaginary travel accounts written in various alphabets. In the banderole next to the unicorn the first three letters (reading from left to right) could perhaps be x, c and k. PAVIOT 2006: 55–56.

⁷⁴ MONNAS 2000: 152, 154. The V&A holds an early-fifteenth-century lampas with a unicorn motif (inv. 777-1875), see MONNAS 1991: 128, n. 27.

⁷⁵ MONNAS 2000: 152; TIETZEL 1994: 229.

⁷⁶ WARDWELL 1976–1977: 182–188; MONNAS 2000: 153.

⁶⁵ PHILIPPOT 1990.

⁶⁶ SCHMIDT 2005: 88–94.

⁶⁷ COREMANS 1953: 21–35.

⁶⁸ Broadly speaking, applied brocade is very seldom restored, although the highlighting may be repeated. Either the brocades remain as they are, usually damaged or lacunate, or they are concealed by overpaint.

⁶⁹ COREMANS 1953: 10.



HIC E DEVS POTENTISSIMVS
CONSERVATOR LIBERTATISSIMVS PROPTER IMMENSAM
MISERICORDIAM
OPTIMO DIVITIS BONTATE

SIBI



Fig. 13.
Last Judgement
Altarpiece (exterior
side of wing),
1443-1451, Rogier
van der Weyden;
Beaune, Hôtel Dieu
Nicolas Rolin
© Beaune,
Hôtel Dieu

brothers must have adapted the pattern to the iconographic requirements, even if only in part.

There is no indication of how or to what these dorsers are attached, and no sign of a selvedge or hem, so they remain flat and abstract. How the actual seats of the thrones work is equally mystifying. The shadows the figures throw on the throne backs are tangible phenomena at odds with the otherworldly aspect of the background. The abstract yet three-dimensional rendering reinforces the iconic character of the figures. The exceptional status of these three top panels is not manifested only by the divine figures' monumentality, however, but also by the gilded arches above the throne backs, the gleaming gems and lustrous pearls in their crowns and the jewel-studded aurifrisia edging their cloaks. Moreover, for painting the garments expensive pigments such as lapis lazuli were used, spread in large uniform fields as a costly material.⁷⁷

Rogier van der Weyden's *Last Judgement* polyptych (c.1443; Beaune, Hôtel Dieu; cat. F2) (fig. 13) is associated with the establishing of the Hôtel Dieu, whose foundation charter was signed by Nicolas Rolin in 1443. The altarpiece must have been created between 1443 and 1451 and, despite the fact that a significant proportion is workshop-produced, is a masterpiece of inventiveness and painterly effect.⁷⁸ On the exterior of the wings the darkly-clad figures of Nicolas Rolin and his third wife Guigone de Salins are sharply delineated against applied brocade wall hangings. The relief is badly worn; large areas of Guigone's hanging have been completely reconstructed by painted retouches, and almost all the red highlighting is lost. None the less, close examination of the X-radiographs has allowed Elisabeth Ravaud to determine what the applied brocade looked like: a pomegranate between foliage and twining stems.⁷⁹ Scrutiny of the panel itself reveals what seem to be additional design details.⁸⁰ The cloths, hung on the wall, are integrated into the composition in a naturalistic way but even so form a planar surface that counters perspective and depth. The sober compositions, with their grey walls

and subfusc attire, are enlivened by the applied brocades and gilded details. They temper the contrast between the wings' exterior and the ultimate supernatural drama that unfolds within, where the heavenly tribunal sits amidst massy golden clouds and a haze of red-glaze droplets.

Delicate applied brocades were also used for the background of the little-known *Madonna on a Grassy Knoll* (1440-1450; Dortmund, Museum für Kunst und Kulturgeschichte). Stephan Kemperdick recently attributed the painting to the circle of Rogier van der Weyden. The sheets are around 8 × 5 centimetres with flowers in medallions highlighted in a red glaze.⁸¹

By the mid-fifteenth century, however, applied brocade had, by and large, fallen out of favour in painting in the Low Countries. The value of the material (such as gold leaf) was considered less important than the imitation of it by painterly means. In 1435 in *De pictura* Leon Battista Alberti declared that it was more admirable to represent gold by the use of colour than by gold leaf itself.⁸² The use of gold changes the painting into a reflective surface that contradicts the illusion of three-dimensional space.⁸³ Accordingly, the Early Netherlandish masters represented their gold brocade textiles suggestively, evoking texture and sheen with pigments and binders. Even so, at the end of the fifteenth century applied brocades made a reappearance on a series of Brussels altarpiece wings attributed to the Master of the View of St Gudule, his workshop or circle (see Chapter Five).

In sculpture, on the other hand, applied brocade continued to be a much used means of simulating sumptuous fabrics. Not only was it easy to curve around carved volumes; as relief ornamentation it 'activated' the polychromy. The effects of contrast and light emphasized physicality and depth, bringing an added value to both decorative and devotional objects, a sublime quality manifestly represented in the works catalogued in this book.

I.G., D.S.

⁷⁷ COREMANS 1953: 99-100, 105; BRINKMAN et al. 1986: 155, 158.

⁷⁸ VERONÉE-VERHAEGEN 1973.

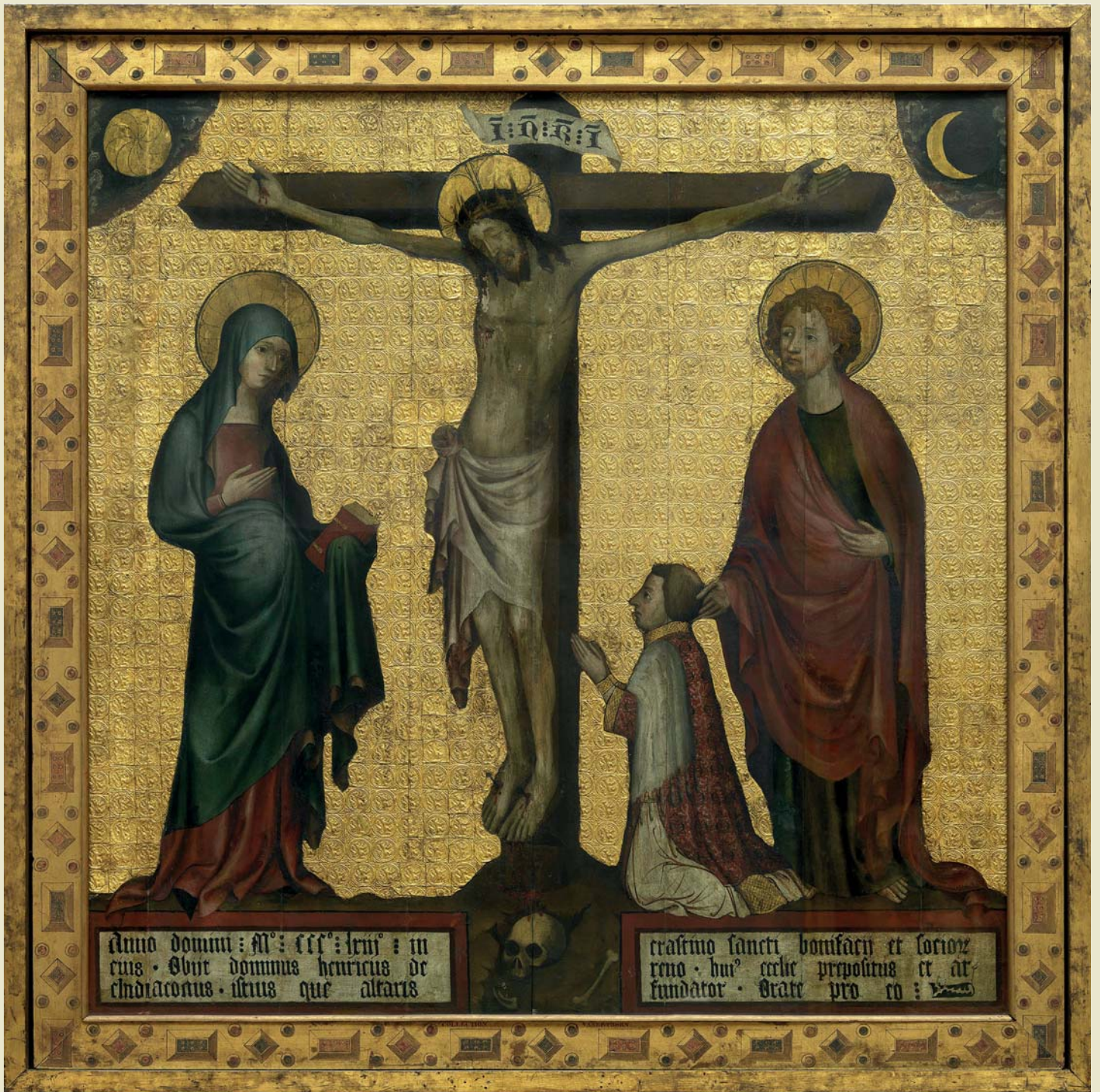
⁷⁹ RAVAUD 1999: 179-189. See also Chapter Eleven.

⁸⁰ On the flat areas of the pomegranate the red highlighting appears to be stippled. We thank Curator Bruno François of the Hôtel Dieu, Beaune, who facilitated our examination of the painting.

⁸¹ FRANKFURT-BERLIN 2008: 302-303. A similar motif occurs in the *Adoration of the Magi* (London, National Gallery), a panel from the dismembered *Liesborn Retable* (1485-1490) by the Master of Liesborn, who was strongly influenced by Rogier van der Weyden. BERNE-BRUGES 2009: 210.

⁸² ALBERTI (ed. Grayson): 60-61, esp. 92-93.

⁸³ DUIJS 2008: 11.



Anno domini : M° : CCC° : lxxij° : in
cuis . Obijt dominus henricus de
elndraconus . iustus que altaris

crastino sancti bonifacii et socior
reno . huius ecclie prepositus et ar
fundator . Orate pro eo : *Amal*

Epitaph of Canon Hendrik van Rijn with Crucifixion

Antwerp, KMSKA, inv. 519

Panel painting

1363

Northern Netherlands

133 × 130 cm (unframed)

1829: the panel is in the Church of St John in Utrecht

1841: the KMSKA acquires the panel as part of the bequest of Florent Van Ertborn, former mayor of Antwerp and governor of the province of Utrecht

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/43-2006/09159

In the centre of the painting, flanked by the Virgin and St John, is Christ crucified on Golgotha (fig. 14).⁸⁴ His feet are nailed side by side and his emaciated lifeless limbs extend the full height and width of the Cross. His loincloth is knotted at his right hip and ends just above the knee. His head, adorned with a vicious crown of thorns, has sunk onto his right shoulder. The Virgin is poised in elegant contrapposto. In her left hand she holds a closed book and the gathered fabric of her mantle, which is draped over her head and wrapped snugly around her belly. Opposite her, John pulls his cloak around him with a delicate gesture. The garments of both the Virgin and John follow the traditional colour combination: red-blue and red-green respectively. The donor, depicted on a smaller scale, is a man in middle age. He kneels at the foot of the Cross, his hands reverently together in prayer. Above his white alb and richly worked dalmatic an ermine cape or almutium covers his left shoulder. He is presented by his patron saint to the Virgin, who lifts her hand to Christ and as mediatrix commends him to God. With his petition for intercession the donor hopes to ensure his salvation. The epitaph is a memorial to Hendrik van Rijn, archdeacon of St John's Church in the episcopal city of Utrecht. At the bottom of the panel is a framed inscription with his name and the date 1363, the year of his death.⁸⁵ Among the rocks at the base of the Cross is Adam's skull: drops of Christ's blood fall onto it, signifying the redemption of man's original sin. The stylized sun and moon in the top corners are symbols derived from Antiquity, alluding to the cosmic nature of man's salvation.⁸⁶

The *Epitaph of Canon Hendrik van Rijn* and the *Memorial Tablet for the Lords of Montfoort* (c.1400, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum)⁸⁷ are the only surviving examples of fourteenth-century Northern Netherlandish panel painting. Both are attributed to a Utrecht workshop. The archives of St John's Church, where Hendrik van Rijn's memorial was probably set up on or above an altar,⁸⁸ make no explicit mention of it. The documented history of the panel goes back no further than the early nineteenth century.

Above the narrow strip of parched and rocky earth the background is made up entirely of individually cast, gilded plaques, 35 mm square (fig. 15).⁸⁹ In each, worked in relief, is a rightwards-facing lion rampant in a double circle. The design is detailed and



15.

◀ Fig. 14.
Epitaph of Canon Hendrik van Rijn
Before treatment
in 2009
© KMSKA-Lukas
Art in Flanders

Fig. 15.
Cast relief plaque
Reconstruction
of the relief

⁸⁴ VANDENBROECK 1985: 25-28 (with bibliography); *Catalogus schilderkunst: oude meesters* 1988: 444; RINGER 1993: 9-45.

⁸⁵ RINGER 1993: 11: *Anno domini: M°: CCC°:LXIII°: in crastino sancti bonifacii et socior(um)ei(us). Obiit dominus henricus de reno°hui(us) clesie prepositus et archidiaconus. Istius que altaris fundator. Orate pro eo* ('In the year of our Lord 1363, on the day before [the feast of] St Boniface and his companions, Hendrik van Rijn, provost and arch-deacon of this church and donor of this altar, died. Pray for him'); VANDENBROECK 1985: 25-28, fig. 15; *Catalogus schilderkunst: oude meesters* 1988: 444; Museumboek KMSKA 2003: 18.

⁸⁶ Museumboek KMSKA 2003: 18.

⁸⁷ CHÂTELET 1980: 10-11.

⁸⁸ RINGER 1993: 21.

⁸⁹ The reliefs were examined with a binocular microscope. Physical analyses of the structure have not yet been carried out.

reproduced with sharply defined lines, with the lion's eye, eyebrow, claws and mane in greater relief than the rest of the motif. The rather thick filler is white and has a chalky appearance. No traces of tin foil have been found. The gold leaf, of which only very minute traces remain, was laid on red brown bole. No coloured highlighting was observed.⁹⁰ The heraldic lion references the coat of arms – which bears three lions – adopted by the Van Rijn family in the mid-fourteenth century.⁹¹ There is also a white, left-facing forked-tailed lion rampant, combined with a decorative green volute, painted on the donor's dalmatic.⁹² The reversed orientation of the lion on the relief plaques can probably be explained by the negative impression: the motif was correctly cut in the mould, with a left-facing lion.⁹³

Albert Châtelet noted the double nature of the painting, in which both traditional elements and progressive tendencies appear.⁹⁴ The Virgin's S-shaped silhouette, the representation of Christ with his feet nailed side by side, and the gold background are indeed in keeping with the past; and the graphically rendered folds, which are particularly linear and schematic in Hendrik van Rijn's alb, are also rooted in the fourteenth-century tradition. But the monumentality of the balanced, rather symmetrical composition and the powerful execution of the faces belong to a more innovative trend. The characters make a lively and three-dimensional impression. The Virgin's right foot and the hems of some of the garments that extend a little over the inscription's frame enhance the sense of depth.

The panel, made up of eight vertical boards, has undergone significant modification in several places. The frame is a nineteenth-century creation. It may also have been at this time that on the panel itself losses were filled and several areas were overpainted – in the garments, for instance, and the crucified body. There have also been many repairs to the background and entire rows seem to have been filled with new relief plaques (fig. 16). These were very likely cast from the originals. The

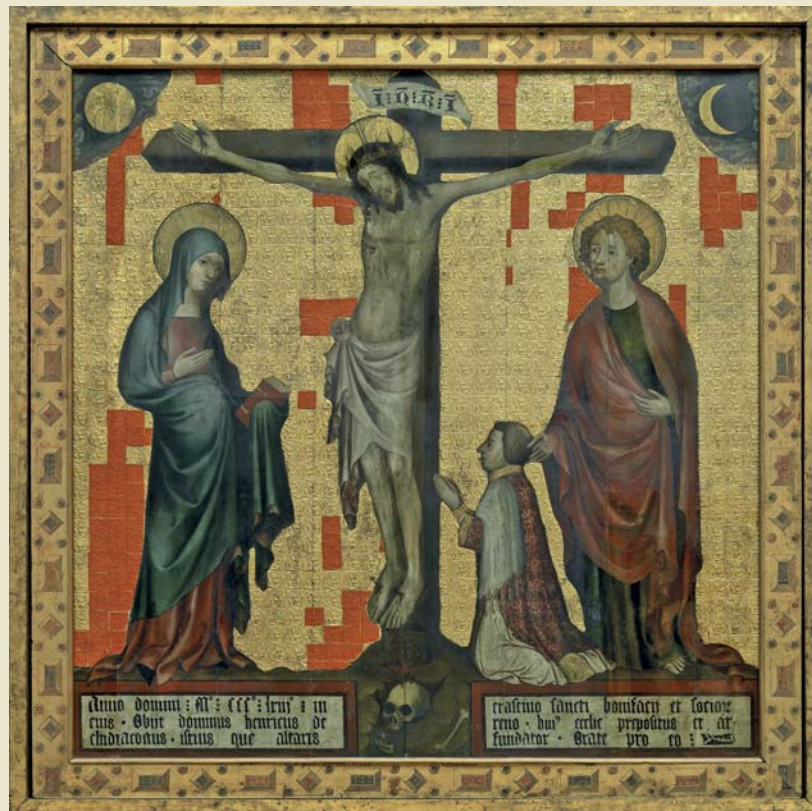


Fig. 16.
Location of
restorations
and repairs

⁹⁰ We thank Lizette Klaassen of the KMSKA, for making the *Epitaph of Canon Hendrik van Rijn* available for study, and Marie Postec, restorer of panel paintings, Cyriel Stroo (KIK-IRPA) and Lee Preedy for the interesting exchange of ideas.

⁹¹ RINGER 1993: 25.

⁹² Several more complex variants dating from the last quarter of the fourteenth century were noted in KLESSE 1967, e.g. 240 (cat. 129).

⁹³ This would not have been the case if a pastiglia stamp and a counter-mould had been used. TAVARES DA SILVA 2003: 129-133.

⁹⁴ CHÂTELET 1980: 10-11.



17.



18.

Fig. 17.
The Virgin, X-radiograph

Fig. 18.
Hendrik van Rijn,
X-radiograph

layer structure appears to be the same – a white dry filler, a mordant and gold leaf – and the measurements and motif are also identical, but the lines are less sharp. The replacement plaques are also clearly more cracked than the originals, which is probably due to the composition of the filler. Despite their identical appearance not every one of the new plaques shows up in the same way on the X-radiographs, but this may indicate differences in the filler's composition rather than separate modifications (figs. 17-18).⁹⁵ The entire background has been completely regilded at least once. Several areas of the relief decoration were overpainted with bronze paint.

In the spring of 2009 the *Epitaph of Canon Hendrik van Rijn* was treated, and the overpaint was removed. As a result the remarkable quality of the work is once more clearly apparent.

⁹⁵ X-radiographs were made in 1969 in the KIK-IRPA.



Fig. 19.
Scenes from the Life of the Virgin



Fig. 20.
Location of tin cast reliefs and tin foil

■ flat tin foil decoration
■ gilded tin cast reliefs

Scenes from the Life of the Virgin (also known as the Kortessem Panel)

Brussels, KMSKB-MRBAB, inv. 4883

Panel painting

1400-1410

Southern Netherlands

63.5 × 272 cm

1930: purchased by the KMSKB-MRBAB, Brussels⁹⁶

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/43-2003/08171

The scenes depicted on the *Kortessem Panel* are, from left to right, the Meeting of Joachim and Anne, the Birth of the Virgin, the Coronation of the Virgin and the Presentation in the Temple (fig. 18). There are many unanswered questions about the panel's origin and original function.⁹⁷ It may have served as an antependium, but could also have been made as a retable. Various decorative techniques have been combined to give this panel a most costly appearance. In addition to cast tin foil reliefs (used for the haloes and the decorative plaques that cover parts of the background) flat tin foil has also been extensively used.

The cast relief squares that ornament the background are located 'behind' the colonettes and in the spandrels (figs. 20, 22). They measure 4.5 centimetres per side; represented on them are alternately a dragon-like creature and a tetra-rossette. The motif itself, the edges and the beaded border are in relief. The tin foil is reinforced with a white, dry filler. The plaques were glued to the panel with an oily orange-brown adhesive. Once in place they were gilded with gold leaf laid on ochre-coloured mordant. Whether coloured highlighting was used has not been established. The present grey and red paint was applied at a later date.

All the haloes are in relief except the infant Mary's in the Birth of the Virgin. Their identical measurements (11 cm in diameter) and design indicate that these are prefabricated cast reliefs (fig. 21). Like the plaques, they are fixed to the panel with an orange-brown adhesive. The tin foil, which shows up clearly on X-radiographs, is completely gilded; and here too the gold leaf is on ochre-coloured mordant. The composition of the fill material differs notably, however. In contrast to the plaques, the haloes are strengthened with a red-brown waxy filler.

The vault ribs, Anne's book in the Meeting, Christ's orb and the clasp on his cope in the Coronation, as well as many other elements of the composition (figs. 20, 23) were not painted but rendered in flat tin foil. What they would have looked like originally, before they were largely overpainted, can only be conjectured, but their position can be established by X-radiography.⁹⁸ Technical examination has shown that the reliefs, which are glued to the panel with an orange-coloured adhesive, vary in shape and had several purposes. The gleaming silver-grey of the tin was highly suited to the representation of windows and pewter or metal objects. Presumably the metal foil was given some sort of protective coating to prevent corrosion. Or it might be painted with a yellow glaze to achieve the effect of gold leaf, particularly when representing textile (see also Chapter Three). Traces of red glaze on the bed coverlet in the Birth of the Virgin suggest a coloured design which undoubtedly evoked a costly cloth.

⁹⁶ SMEYERS 1992: 65-89.

⁹⁷ We thank Cyriel Stroo, Dominique Vanwijnsberghe, Dominique Deneffe and Famke Peters. For a discussion in depth, see DENEFFE, PETERS, FREMOUT 2009: 197-271.

⁹⁸ X-radiographs were made in 2003 by Guido Van de Voorde and Catherine Fondaire (KIK-IRPA).



21.



22.

When the panel was first produced the abundant use of gilded and yellow-glazed tin foil must have made a profound impact on the beholder. The shimmering image would have appeared to emit a sacral radiance that alluded to the Heavenly Jerusalem.⁹⁹ The optical effects breached the two-dimensionality of the panel, creating a deep and lasting impression, certainly by flickering candlelight.

Fig. 21.
Meeting of Joachim
and Anne, (detail)
Joachim's halo in tin
foil cast relief

Fig. 22.
Meeting of Joachim
and Anne (detail)
Tin foil cast reliefs

Fig. 23. ▶
Meeting of Joachim
and Anne, X-radio-
graph

⁹⁹ SMEYERS 1992: 80-82.

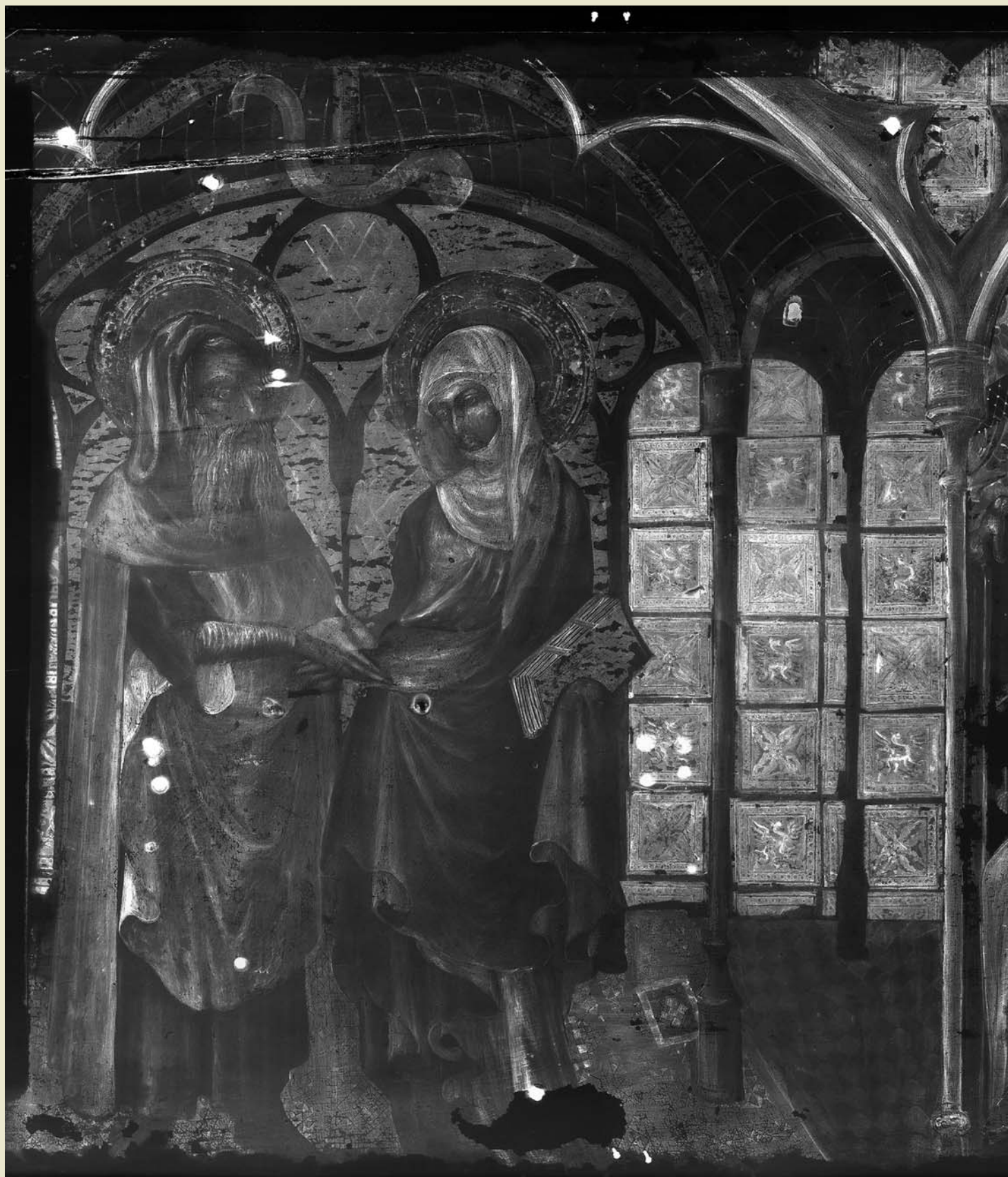




Fig. 24.
Crucifixion Triptych, 1425-1430, Cologne,
 Master of the Kirchsahr Altarpiece; Cologne,
 Wallraf-Richartz Museum
 Wings closed
 © Rheinisches Bildarchiv, Cologne



Fig. 25.
Crucifixion Triptych
 Wings open
 © Rheinisches Bildarchiv, Cologne



Fig. 24a.
 Location of the applied brocades



Fig. 25a.
 Location of the applied brocades

Fig. 24b.
 Applied brocade on
 Valerian's garment
 (with feathers and
 banderole)
 Archaeological drawing



Fig. 25b.
 Applied brocade on
 St Catherine's gown
 Archaeological
 drawing



MIGRATING BROCADES

THE SPREAD OF APPLIED BROCADE THROUGHOUT EUROPE

As we have seen in the previous chapter, prefabricated relief decorations cast in a mould and reinforced with a fill material and a coloured or gilded tin foil skin were commonly used in panel and wall painting and sculpture. They were employed to imitate precious metalwork, either as ‘abstract’ ornament or in the more literal reproduction of precious objects and sartorial accessories. And later, in the form of applied brocades, they created an illusion of sumptuous textiles, of the dazzling brocades that embellished secular and ecclesiastical spaces or the fashionable fabrics in which the rich attired themselves.

A small number of fourteenth-century sculptures are decorated with applied brocade, although these seem to have been isolated examples that spawned no imitations.¹ From the early fifteenth century, however, the technique came to be increasingly employed. By a multiplicity of channels applied brocade permeated the art production of western Europe and by around 1450 had become a standard part of the decorative repertoire in several regions. In many cases the technique was adopted by leading artists inspired by the *ars nova*, although the Early Netherlandish painters themselves employed applied brocade to a much lesser extent. Indeed, there are only three known examples of its use: Robert Campin’s *Crucified Thief*, the Van Eycks’ *Adoration of the Lamb*, and Rogier van der Weyden’s *Last Judgement*. Whether the unprecedented impact of their work also led directly to the development of the technique is hard to determine. In any case it was transmitted by travelling and migrating artists and especially by a lively artistic exchange and collaboration. For the complexity of its fabrication meant that the technique of applied brocade was difficult to learn from models or recipe books and required practical instruction from a master.²

¹ *St Thomas* (north Germany, c.1300; Darmstadt, Hessisches Landesmuseum), *Bildwerke vom 9. bis zum 16. Jahrhundert* 1999: 100-103; *St Michael* (Spain, private collection), VANDAMME 1982: 127-128; tomb of Lady Elisabeth Montacute (c.1353; Oxford, Christ Church), NADOLNY 2003: 188, n. 93.

² For the recipes of Cennino Cennini and the *Liber illuministarum* or Tegernsee Manuscript, see Chapter Three.

Precisely when applied brocade circulated in particular artistic circles and which masters were instrumental in its diffusion can be outlined here only briefly, as this chapter is based largely on published research and a limited number of extant works, those dating from before 1450 being particularly scarce.

In the crucible of Cologne

Cologne provided a fertile soil for various European artistic trends. Its proximity to the Southern Netherlands made it a considerable receptor and disseminator of artistic impulses from that region. The city was a powerful magnet and played a critical part in the artistic development of many artists. Almost as the applied brocade-embellished wings of the Dortmund *Passion Altarpiece* (c.1420-1425, St Reinold’s Church) were being completed in the Southern Netherlands,³ the Master of the Kirchsahr Altarpiece was painting his *Crucifixion Triptych* in Cologne (Wallraf-Richartz-Museum)⁴ (figs. 24-25). Dated around 1425-1430, this is as yet the earliest known example of the use of applied brocade in the Rhineland. At least three of the saints depicted on the panels wear garments made rich with applied brocade, each with a different design (figs. 24a-b, 25a-b).⁵ The

³ BERTRAM-NEUNZIG 2007.

⁴ COLOGNE 1974: 94-95; ZEHNDER 1990: 462-466.

⁵ For the motif on St Catherine’s gown, see also KLESSE 1960: 222-223. It later recurs on the *Blaubeuren Altarpiece*.

Master of the Kirchsahr Altarpiece assimilated elements of Westphalian art into the International Style. Influences from France and the Low Countries also permeated his oeuvre as a result of his connection with the workshop of the Older Master of the Holy Kinship (active in Cologne between 1410 and 1440),⁶ who also influenced the Master of the Passion Cycle, painter of the *Life of Christ in 31 Scenes* (c.1430-1435, Cologne; Cologne, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum).⁷ Here, Pontius Pilate in the scene of Christ before Pilate and the bearded and richly dressed man in the Crucifixion are distinguished from the other characters by their luxurious, brocade-covered apparel.

While the work of these masters was still strongly rooted in the traditional International Style, Stefan Lochner robustly adopted the modern formal idiom of the Low Countries. He was profoundly convinced by the *ars nova* of the Early Netherlandish painters and his oeuvre had, in turn, an enormous impact on following generations.⁸ The motif with parrot-like birds and palmettes sprouting from diagonally arranged stems on the cloth of honour behind Robert Campin's *St Veronica* (1430-1432; Frankfurt, Städel Museum) recurs in a smaller format and with slight variations as applied brocade⁹ on the cloth of honour of the majestic *Altarpiece of the Patron Saints*, familiarly known as the *Dombild* (1440-1442; Cologne, Cathedral), traditionally attributed to Lochner.¹⁰ The brocades are executed with great precision and finesse. For decades both this pattern and the pattern of the applied brocade on the exterior side of the wings (figs. 26-26a) were used and adapted by numerous workshops and in various ways.¹¹ Lochner shared some motifs with the Master of the Heisterbach Altarpiece, a virtuoso of the applied brocade technique who frequently integrated brocades in his oeuvre. His work is still strongly indebted to the Cologne style of around 1400 but it also reflects innovatory Flemish tendencies. In the *Heisterbach Altarpiece* (1445-1450?; Cologne, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum) he repeated the palmette motif from the Master of the Kirchsahr Altarpiece's *Crucifixion Triptych*.¹² In the applied brocades in the Entombment he integrated a unicorn and banderoles, a design related to the motif on the dorsers of the Virgin and John the Baptist in the Ghent *Adoration of the Lamb* altarpiece (cat. 37.2).¹³ The following generations of Cologne artists

continued the use of applied brocade to represent cloths of honour, costly attire, and accessories. In panel painting the technique was employed in the work of the Master of 1456, and a little later was extensively used by the Master of the Life of the Virgin. The applied brocades of the latter master also appear in the work of the Master of the Legend of St George and the Master of the Lyversberg Passion. Their common repertoire provides interesting data regarding the network of influences and relationships between artists in Cologne.¹⁴

In Northern Germany

Master Francke, who hailed from Guelders, represents a bridge between the art of northern and south-western Germany. His style, which differs strongly from the Hamburg school, offers good arguments for supposing that he received his training further west. In his *Man of Sorrows with Angels* (c.1435; Hamburg, Kunsthalle) (fig. 27), which is probably based on a Netherlandish archetype,¹⁵ he integrated two types of applied brocade. The simplicity of the few local motifs applied amongst the more elaborate painted ornamentation on the cloth of honour in the background is in striking contrast to the exquisite continuous brocade that makes up the cloth of gold supported by angels before the suffering Christ. The 8.5 centimetre-square tin foil sheets¹⁶ have a design in which elements – vine leaf, deer, hawk, palmette and clouds – drawn from contemporary textiles, described by Anne Wardwell as being in the 'realistic style', are combined with components from the 'transitional period' of the first decade of the fifteenth century, such as the hawk's long feathers (figs. 27a-b).¹⁷ In the complexity of its pattern, the horizontal striations and the multi-coloured highlighting the design is very suggestive of a real textile.

In the ambulatory of St Nicholas's Church in Lüneburg are nineteen carved figurative groups from a Passion altarpiece that once stood on the high altar of St Andrew's Church, the abbey church of the former Premonstratensian abbey of Heiligenthal in Lüneburg. This Bruges(?) retable was most likely exported to the small Hanseatic town around 1410-1420,¹⁸ and it evidences the vigorous trading contacts between Flanders and northern Germany. In 1447 the immense *Heiligenthal Altarpiece* received the addition

⁶ ZEHNDER 1990: 21.

⁷ COLOGNE 1974: 101-102; ZEHNDER 1990: 365-368, figs. 241-244.

⁸ See, among others, KEMPERDICK 1993: 69-80; TÄUBE 1993: 55.

⁹ KOCH 1993: 153; LEVINE 1993: 143-147.

¹⁰ For an alternative attribution, see CORLEY 2000: 133-167.

¹¹ LEVINE 1993: 144.

¹² KOCH 1995: XII-XVII (cat. 20).

¹³ COLOGNE 1993: 347.

¹⁴ SCHERER 1998: 5-25. See also KOCH 1995.

¹⁵ PANOFKY 1953, I: 124; HAMBURG 1999: 152-153.

¹⁶ What the filler consists of could not be determined with certainty. We thank Dr Martina Sitt, Head of the Department of Paintings, Kunsthalle Hamburg.

¹⁷ WARDWELL 1976-1977: 210-211, 214.

¹⁸ DIDIER 1984: 42; see also KLINCKAERT 1987-1988: 140-141.



Fig. 26.
Altarpiece of the Patron Saints (detail), 1440-1442,
 Cologne, Stefan Lochner; Cologne, Cathedral
 Annunciation (exterior side of wing)
 © Artothek

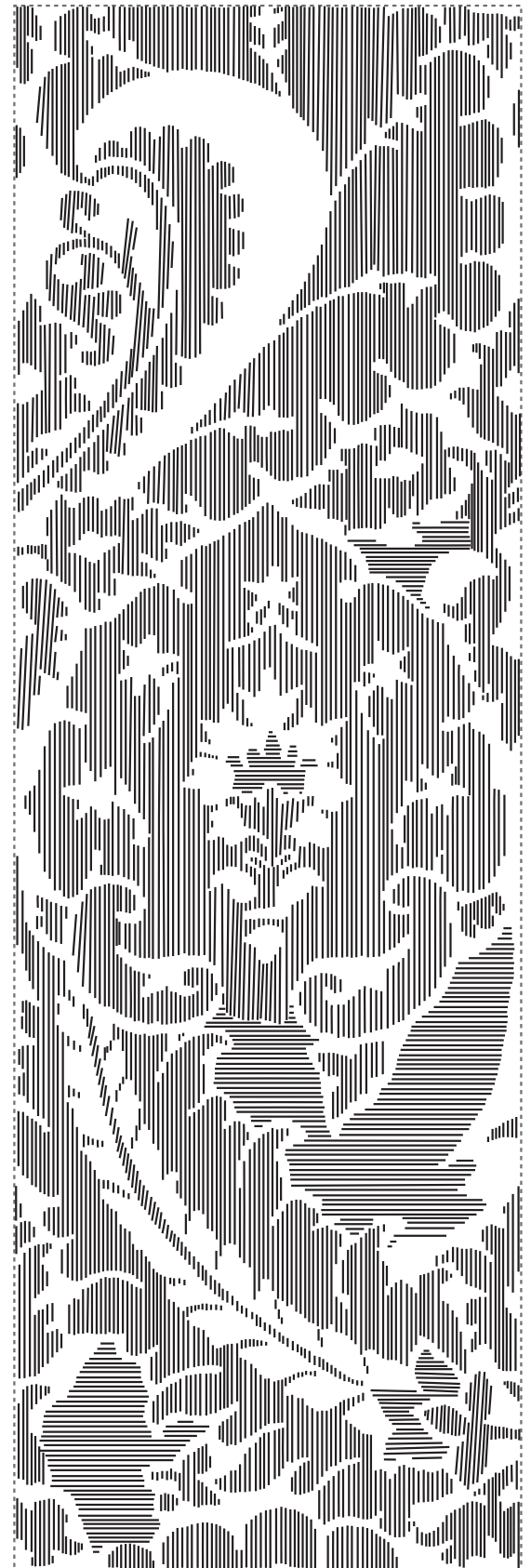
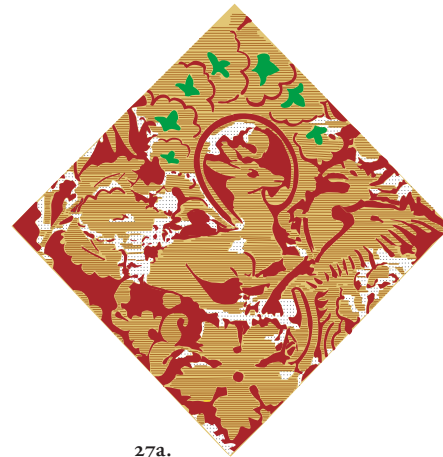


Fig. 26a.
 Applied brocade on the cloth of honour (detail of fig. 26)
 Reconstruction of the relief

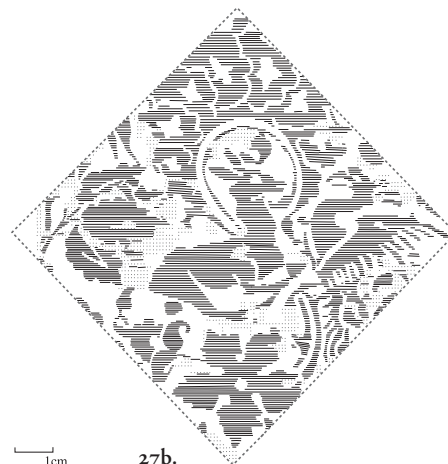


27.



27a.

1cm



27b.

1cm

Fig. 27.
*Man of Sorrows
with Angels*, c.1435,
Hamburg,
Master Francke;
Hamburg,
Kunsthalle
© The Bridgeman
Art Library

Fig. 27a.
Applied brocade on
the cloth of honour
(detail of fig. 27)
Archaeological
drawing

Fig. 27b.
Reconstruction of
the relief (detail of
fig. 27)

of painted wings comprising eighteen panels. These form the core of the oeuvre of Johannes Bornemann.¹⁹ Like his contemporary, Master Francke, whose work he certainly knew, he too travelled to the Netherlands, probably in the early 1440s.²⁰ Stephan Kemperdick maintains that the progressive Bornemann was inspired directly by Southern Netherlandish examples, incorporating such typical elements as the landscape in the background with its twisting paths and imaginary architecture.²¹ For his exemplars he drew particularly on Robert Campin and the early Rogier van der Weyden. On the exterior side of one of the altarpiece wings is the Meeting of Abraham and Melchizedek: Bornemann has covered the altar with a cloth rendered in applied brocade. Possibly he acquired this skill in a western workshop. He combined the applied brocade with magnificent, richly ornamental painted brocade patterns (figs. 29-29a). The altarpiece's carved groups were partly overpainted in 1864-1869,²² but continuous applied brocade can

still be seen in some cases – for instance on the Marriage of Joseph and Mary, the Annunciation, and the Christ before Pilate groups. The only design that can be clearly identified is on the altar cloths in the Presentation in the Temple and the Circumcision (figs. 28-28a). The groups were probably polychromed in 1444, when the convent laid out 500 marks for 'vorghuldene unse tafelen uppe deme hoghen altare' – for 'gilding our retable on the high altar'.²³ On the panels of the *Passion Altarpiece* (1447; Lüneburg) originally made for St Lambert's Church and now likewise in St Nicholas's, Bornemann also clad his characters in costly robes decorated with applied brocade. Neither his son, Hinrik Funhof, nor Absolon Stumme, who subsequently took over his workshop, seem to have employed the technique.

Among the many and dazzling polychromy techniques used in north German and Lübeck sculpture applied brocade makes only an occasional appearance.²⁴ For example, in the surviving work of Bernt Notke, who commanded an extensive array of techniques for textile imitation, applied brocade seems

¹⁹ KEMPERDICK 1994: 57-86; HAMBURG 1999: 163-167.

²⁰ KEMPERDICK 1994: 69.

²¹ Ibid. 66-67.

²² VON OSTERHAUSEN 1996: 12.

²³ Document (annuity) cited in REINECKE 1937: 102.

²⁴ *Holzskulpturen des Mittelalters* 2001: 467-471.



Fig. 28.
Heiligenthal Altarpiece (detail), carving: 1410-1420,
 Bruges(?); polychromy: c.1444, Lüneburg; painted
 wings: 1447, Lüneburg, Johannes Bornemann;
 Lüneburg, Church of St Nicholas
 Presentation in the Temple



Fig. 29.
Heiligenthal Altarpiece (detail)
 Meeting of Abraham and Melchizedek (exterior side of wing)
 © Artothek



Fig. 28a.
 Applied brocade on the altar
 cloth (detail of fig. 28)
 Reconstruction of the relief



Fig. 29a.
 Applied brocade on the altar cloth (detail of fig. 29)



30.

conspicuously absent.²⁵ Only in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century did more artists come to make use of it.²⁶ In the *Rosary Retable* (c.1525, southern Lower Saxony; Lübeck, Sankt Annenmuseum) the structure of the continuous applied brocades on the garments of several characters shows that the sheets were produced by tamping the tin foil onto a coarsely-woven textile, then painting a pattern on it (fig. 30).²⁷ This method is also encountered on the Brussels-made *Altarpiece of the Virgin* called Strängnas III (cat. S5) (fig. 101), where the tin foil is gilded as well as painted, and is also known on Nuremberg works such as those from the workshop of Michael Wolgemut.²⁸

Further north, in Scandinavia, indigenous applied brocade seems to have appeared no earlier than around 1500 and production was relatively limited. In Denmark it occurs in the work of Claus Berg.²⁹ Imported German and Brabantine retables may have encouraged Swedish production. Perhaps they inspired local artists to learn how to make applied brocade and to apply it in their own work, but examples are extremely rare.

²⁵ See, for example, PETERMANN 2000: 56-58, 78-81, 105-106, 124-126, 154-156.

²⁶ TÄNGEBERG 1986: 251.

²⁷ For a general description of the *Rosary Retable* and its iconography, see ALBRECHT, ROSENFELD, SAUMWEBER 2005: 474-482.

²⁸ OELLERMANN 1978: 56; OELLERMANN 1993: 212, fig. 12; KOLLMANN, HOMOLKA 2002: 563.

²⁹ TÄNGEBERG 1986: 251.

Up the Rhine to Swabia and Lake Constance

The trade routes along the Rhine brought travelling and migrating artists and craftsmen and their ideas from many different directions to present-day Alsace. Stimulated by impulses from the Netherlands the art produced in the Upper Rhine, with Strasbourg as capital, underwent a far-reaching stylistic renewal, albeit only from 1445-1450. Prior to 1450 there seems to be no applied brocade documented in this region. Dating from 1450-1460 is a walnut statue of a female saint (St Barbara?) attributed to the Master of the Strasbourg Charterhouse Reliefs (Darmstadt, Hessisches Landesmuseum), which incorporates applied brocade in its polychromy.³⁰ The Nativity of the altarpiece to which the master owes his sobriquet is also decorated with applied brocade (c.1460; Strasbourg, Musée de l'Oeuvre Notre-Dame).³¹ Whether this is an imported work or the product of an itinerant artist trained in the Low Countries remains to be determined: in any case the composition and style attest to the influence of Rogier van der Weyden.

The painter-contractor Friedrich Herlin, active in Nördlingen, in particular provides a link between the extensive Upper Rhine region and Cologne. Certain of the applied brocades on the altarpieces he produced for Nördlingen (1462, Church of St George; Stadtmuseum)³² and Rothenburg (1466, Church of St James)³³ derive from the brocade patterns common in the work of Cologne painters, especially Stefan Lochner.³⁴ In the Rothenburg retable the overgarment of the king in the Decollation on a painted wing and the robe of the carved John the Evangelist are both embellished with the same applied brocade (fig. 31).³⁵ The similarity between the painted and engraved brocades on the wings and the applied brocades on the sculptures and the rear wall of the case of that altarpiece suggests that Herlin's workshop was responsible not only for the painting but for the polychromy as well. The polychromy of the Nördlingen altarpiece, on the other hand, should most likely be attributed to a different workshop. The carved figures of this

³⁰ *Bildwerke vom 9. bis zum 16. Jahrhundert* 1999: 251-257, 43 (fig. XIII).

³¹ DIDIER 1989: 72, 74, fig. 47; KARLSRUHE 1970: 81-82 (figs. 6-7).

³² TAUBERT 1978: 150-166.

³³ BACHMANN, OELLERMANN, TAUBERT 1970: 327-369; BACHMANN, OELLERMANN, TAUBERT 1978: 167-195.

³⁴ OELLERMANN 1993: 210; KOCH 1993: 153-154; SCHERER 1998: II.

³⁵ TAUBERT 1970: 190; BACHMANN, OELLERMANN, TAUBERT 1970: 365; OELLERMANN 1991a: 213-238. The applied brocade motif is, moreover, related to the motif on the garment of a male figure beneath the Cross in the Crucifixion of the Ternant *Passion Altarpiece*. See figs. 43, 54a on pp. 74, 83.

Fig. 30.
Rosary Retable
(detail), c.1525,
Southern Saxony;
Lübeck, Sankt
Annenmuseum
Adoration, magus
behind the Virgin,
tin foil tamped on
coarsely-woven textile



31.

Fig. 31.
*Altarpiece with
Calvary and Saints*
(detail), 1466, painted
wings, polychromy:
Friedrich Herlin and
workshop; Rothen-
burg, Church of
St James
Applied brocade on
St John's robe



32.

Fig. 32.
*Altarpiece with
Calvary and Saints*
(detail)
Applied brocade on
St Leonard's robe

Fig. 33.
Passion Altarpiece
(detail), 1455-1460,
Brussels; Ternant,
Church of St Roch
and Our Lady of the
Assumption
Lamentation,
applied brocade on
the garment of
a male figure



33.

retable were probably ordered from the Strasbourg atelier of sculptor Nikolaus Gerhaert von Leiden, who had been active in the city since at least 1463, having previously worked for a while in Cologne. Gerhaert has been associated with the *Madonna of Dangolsheim* (1460-1465; Berlin, Bode-Museum), whose gown is decorated with an applied brocade based on the same textile as the brocades on the Nördlingen and Rothenburg retables (the motif is the same though a little more fluid; the measurements differ).³⁶ It is not inconceivable that he also carried out the polychromy, for the regulations of the Strasbourg guild did permit sculptors to paint their works.³⁷ There are also applied brocades on two reliquary busts (St Catherine and St Barbara, 1460-1473; New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art) attributed to the master, but damage has made them difficult to identify.³⁸ Nikolaus Gerhaert's work occupies a key place in Upper Rhenish sculpture and it exerted a strong influence on the next generations.

That neither the complex network linking artists nor the mobility of patterns should be underestimated

is demonstrated once more by the already-mentioned pattern on the cloth of honour behind Campin's *St Veronica*. It recurs on a reduced scale in Lochner's *Dombild*, then in the *Heisterbach Altarpiece* (1445-1450?, Heisterbach; Cologne, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum and Munich, Alte Pinakothek) by his main follower, and was further exploited by Cologne masters in the second half of the fifteenth century. It can be seen yet again, now used in reverse, on the carved figure of John the Baptist in Herlin's Nördlingen altarpiece and, in a more refined version still, on the carved St Leonard in Rothenburg (fig. 32).³⁹ Almost simultaneously it appeared in Brussels on the *Passion Altarpiece* Philippe de Ternant commissioned there (1455-1460, Church of St Roch and Our Lady of the Assumption, Ternant) (fig. 33)⁴⁰ and in Aragon on the altarpiece wings depicting St Lawrence and St Leonard by the Master of Arguís (c.1465; Baltimore, Walters Art Museum) (fig. 38).⁴¹ The motif as used by the Master of Arguís is stylistically very closely related to that of the Ternant altarpiece, showing that brocades could migrate over considerable distances.

³⁶ TAUBERT 1970: 158; BUCZYNSKI, KROHM 1989: 174-175; OELLERMAN 1991a: 236-237; OELLERMAN 1993: 210; SCHREIBER 2004: 137-179.

³⁷ OELLERMAN 1989: 152.

³⁸ WIXOM 2007: 24-25; KARLSRUHE 1970: 98-100 (fig. 28); FRINTA 1963: 142 (fig. 8: detail of *St Barbara*).

³⁹ OELLERMAN 1993; LEVINE 1993: 144, 146 n. 14; KOCH 1993: 153-154; KOCH 1995: XLIX-LIII (cat. 71).

⁴⁰ KAGAN, GÉRARD, GÉRARD-BENDELÉ 2002: 229-272.

⁴¹ WARDWELL 1976-1977: 210 compares it with a silk in the textile collection in Krefeld and types it as one of the earliest examples of the 'realistic style'; FRINTA 1963: 137.

Incorporating earlier sculpture, probably from different workshops, and custom-made painted panels, the *Isenheim Altarpiece* in the Musée d'Unterlinden in Colmar has had a complex history. The three principal carved figures (1490) came from the workshop of Nicolaus Hagenauer. When their second polychromy was executed is difficult to say. The costly applied brocade-enriched attire suggests that it was in the period in which Matthias Grünewald painted the wings (1512-1515). Some applied brocades were made by rubbing the tinfoil over a textile, as practiced in the workshop of Michael Wolgemut, with whom Grünewald was closely involved on the *Lindenhardt Altarpiece* (1502-1503, St Michael's Church, Lindenhardt) at the start of his career.⁴² Grünewald would not have executed the polychromy himself but he certainly commissioned it.⁴³

In the duchy of Swabia artistic development was largely concentrated in centres such as Ulm and Memmingen. Patterns of painted, engraved and cast textile imitations on Swabian retables have been inventoried by Hans Westhoff and Roland Hahn.⁴⁴ The earliest examples in their corpus are on the panel paintings of the now dismembered *Sterzing Altarpiece* (1456-1459; Sterzing, Museum Multscher),⁴⁵ a high point of late-medieval German retable art. This commission was entrusted to the versatile Hans Multscher, one of the region's most influential artists, and he engaged the Master of the Sterzing Altarpiece to work in close association with him on the project. The Master of the Sterzing Altarpiece was one of the first south German masters to draw inspiration from Netherlandish art and his realism distinguishes him from other Ulm artists. His workshop was taken over by Hans Schüchlin, who reused his predecessor's moulds to produce the applied brocades on the *Tiefenbronn Altarpiece* (1469, Tiefenbronn, Church of St Mary Magdalene) and later collaborated with Bartholomeüs Zeitblom. The applied brocades on this altarpiece are one of Stefan Roller's reasons for suggesting that Schüchlin had been apprenticed to Hans Pleydenwurff in Nuremberg⁴⁶ (fig. 34).

In the last quarter of the fifteenth century Swabian altarpiece production was flourishing, the efficiency of the working process enhanced by abundant use of applied brocade.⁴⁷ Among the key figures involved in this retable production were Bartholomeüs Zeitblom,



Bernhard and Ivo Strigel, Michel Erhart, and Jörg Stocker. Their brocades are remarkable for their virtuoso patterns, complex, large in size and often derived from those of previous generations. The magnificent altarpiece of the monastery church of Blaubeuren (1493-1494) offers an interesting glimpse of highly efficient labour organization, with Bartholomeüs Zeitblom's workshop painting the panels, and the carving and possibly the polychromy of the figures executed by Michel Erhart and his son Gregor, sub-contracted for the occasion. The motifs, which are both painted and engraved as well as occurring in applied brocade form, also appear in works by Zeitblom's contemporaries, leading Michael Roth and Hans Westhoff to conclude that Zeitblom ran an important workshop capable of producing ambitiously conceived retables and able to take on additional craftsmen in the case of major

Fig. 34. *Tiefenbronn Altarpiece* (detail), 1469; Tiefenbronn, Church of St Mary Magdalene Entombment, Mary Magdalene with local applied brocades on her gown

⁴² OELLERMANN 1991b: 144-145.

⁴³ OELLERMANN 1989: 151, 155, 157 n. 24.

⁴⁴ *Graviert, gemalt, gepresst* 1996.

⁴⁵ On the altarpiece, see SÖDING 1989: 35-101; on the applied brocades, see *Graviert, gemalt, gepresst* 1996: 77, 131, 157.

⁴⁶ ROLLER 2000: 29.

⁴⁷ *Graviert, gemalt, gepresst* 1996: 32-33.

commissions.⁴⁸ The prolonged popularity of certain motifs suggests that pattern books with a stock of standard designs must have circulated between artists and guild members and were handed down from one generation to the next.

In reference to the area around Lake Constance, Mojmir Frinta mentions several altarpieces dating from around the turn of the century, including the carved *Adoration of the Magi Altarpiece* from eastern Switzerland (c.1500; Zurich, Schweizerisches Landesmuseum).⁴⁹ On the basis of its applied brocades Thomas Brachert associates that altarpiece with the master who produced the panels now in the episcopal collection of St Gallen, which, moreover, feature an applied brocade with the same pattern as the one in Lochner's *Dombild*. The examples discussed by Frinta and Brachert date from the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century. Given the contacts with the Lower Rhine it may be presumed that there were earlier examples, but conclusive evidence is lacking.

From Bavaria to Tyrol and the Alps

In Bavaria the use of applied brocade seems to have begun in the second quarter of the fifteenth century.⁵⁰ One of the earliest examples in Munich is the *Tabula Magna* (Bayerisches Nationalmuseum). The Benedictine Abbey of St Quirin in Tegernsee commissioned this originally monumental altarpiece for its abbey church around 1444-1445 from the official painter to the city, Gabriel Angler. The background of the interior was covered with a 'curtain' of applied brocade suspended from a painted rod.⁵¹ In the seventeenth century this ornamentation was almost completely scraped off and replaced by a painted background, but clear traces of it were observed during a technical examination. A similar brocade hanging very likely provided the background to the *Crucifixion* in Angler's slightly earlier *Crucifixion with SS Colman, Queran, Castor and Chrysogonus* (c.1440; Munich, Alte Pinakothek), painted for the same church.⁵² From Tegernsee Abbey too comes the famous *Liber illuministarum* or 'Tegernsee Manuscript' (Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek), a compilation, written out in the abbey scriptorium around 1500, of numerous preparations and recipes for the painter, including how to make cast tin foil reliefs (see Chapter Three).⁵³

Jan Pollack, a later successor to Angler in the post of Munich's official painter, was one of that city's

most important artists at the end of the fifteenth century. He used applied brocade in several works including the *Crowning with Thorns*, originally part of the altarpiece of the former Franciscan church there (1492; Munich, Bayerisches Nationalmuseum).⁵⁴ In the Munich context the Master of the Polling Altarpiece should be mentioned. He used applied brocade in the *Annunciation* now in Munich's Alte Pinakothek and also on two wings of a dismembered altarpiece (the Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple and the Death of the Virgin, 1439; Kremsmünster, Stiftsammlungen).

Salzburg seems to have produced very few examples of the use of applied brocade, though Conrad Laib did employ the technique on the great *Crucifixion* of Graz (1457, Graz, Cathedral).⁵⁵ The *Virgin and Child* from the Benedictine abbey of Seeon (Munich, Bayerisches Nationalmuseum), however, made in Salzburg around 1430, still retains much of its original polychromy, and is also decorated with applied brocade.⁵⁶ The statue shows a clear tendency towards late-medieval monumentality yet still possesses all the characteristics of the International Style. Does this accomplished work prove that the applied brocade technique was, in fact, already in common use in the region in the 1430s, or is the Salzburg Madonna an 'avant-garde' exception?

In the artistic milieu of Tyrol applied brocade was only employed to any extent by the Master of the Uttenheim Altarpiece, a contemporary of Hans Multscher, and somewhat later by the workshop of the great sculptor and painter Michael Pacher.⁵⁷ South of the Alps, however, the provinces of Belluno and Friuli were the locus of a fascinating exchange between German and Italian culture in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century. The region's economic, religious and cultural connections drew artists from Venice and Germany. Hans Klocker, Simon of Teisten (Simone da Tesido), Ruprecht Potsch, André Haller and Michele Parth were all active around Brixen (Bressanone), where the main north-south passage through the Alps crossed the east-west route through the Pusterdal (Pustertal, Val Pusteria), and they carried out many commissions for local Italian patrons. In the numerous altarpieces made in their workshops applied brocade was used as a standard element in their repertoires of decorative techniques (figs. 35, 35a-b).⁵⁸ Among the workshops in the Italian part of the region those of Antonio Tironi, Giovanni Martini

⁴⁸ ROTH, WESTHOFF 1992: 186.

⁴⁹ FRINTA 1963: 138, 144.

⁵⁰ BUCHENRIEDER, KÜHN 1990: 59 (*Enthroned Bishop*).

⁵¹ MÖHRING 1992: 138; MÖHRING 1997: 26, 39.

⁵² MÖHRING 1997: 245.

⁵³ BERGER 1912: 178; BARTL et al. 2005.

⁵⁴ BRACHERT 1964: 38.

⁵⁵ KOLLER 1973: 51.

⁵⁶ KOBLER 1988: 272, fig. 3f; EIKELMANN 2000: 51.

⁵⁷ NEUSTIFT 1998.

⁵⁸ BELLUNO 2004; see also PERUSINI 1996: 353-367.



35.



35a.



35b.

and the sculptor Bartolomeo dell'Occhio are highly interesting in this context of collaboration.⁵⁹ Giuseppina and Teresa Perusini have pointed to the close cooperation between Tironi and Martini, who, drawing from the same stock of patterns, for twenty-five years used a single splendid brocade model with a large and complex pomegranate motif (31.5 × 28.5 cm) (fig. 129). According to the Perusinis it was Tironi who introduced the applied brocade technique into Friuli, apparently having learnt it from one of the many German artists working in Venice. Giovanni Martini was trained by the Venetian Alvise Vivarini. Alvise was a son of Antonio Vivarini, who had worked with his German brother-in-law Giovanni d'Alemagna to produce the *Coronation of the Virgin* for the Scuola Grande di S. Maria della Carità (1446; Venice, Galleria dell'Accademia). In this immense panel applied brocades embellish the vestments of St Ambrose, one of the Latin Doctors of the Church.⁶⁰

German artists were undoubtedly instrumental in spreading the relief technique south of the Alps but Netherlandish influence also contributed to its diffusion, certainly in Turin and the Piedmont region, which had significant trading contacts with Flanders. The North-South exchanges can be discerned in the regional painters' schools, witness the *Annunciation*

by the Master of the Balbo Annunciation in Chieri (1469; Chieri, Sanctuary of Santissima Annunziata). In this fresco a Flemish model melds with local ideas. Though the decoration is in a poor state the garments of both the Virgin and the annunciatory archangel seem to be enriched with applied brocade. In many cases it can be hard to tell whether decorations like these are true applied brocades or pastiglia overlaid with metal leaf. The Princess of Trebizond's glittering long-trained surcote in the *St George Cycle* in the Pellegrini Chapel in the church of St Anastasia in Verona, mentioned by Frinta, is a case in point.⁶¹ The extremely fine relief decoration is badly damaged, but its original effect must have been dazzling. These wall paintings, executed by Pisanello using the *secco* technique, date from 1436-1438; if these are indeed applied brocades they are probably the earliest transalpine examples, being only slightly later than those of the Van Eycks' *Adoration of the Lamb* and more or less contemporary with Master Francke's *Man of Sorrows with Angels*. The brocade motif is worked in perspective, foreshortened, and does not appear to repeat.⁶² In the *Arthurian Cycle* wall paintings in Mantua Pisanello achieved a similar luxurious effect, but in this case the relief decorations are certainly executed in pastiglia and covered in metal foil.⁶³

Fig. 35. *Adoration of the Magi Altarpiece* (detail), 1496, Tyrol, workshop of Simone da Tesido (Simone da Tesido) St Anthony (interior side of right wing)

Fig. 35a. Applied brocade behind St Anthony (detail of fig. 35)

Fig. 35b. Archaeological drawing (detail of fig. 35)

⁶¹ FRINTA 1963: 147, n. 7.

⁶² FRATTAROLI 1996: 454.

⁶³ WOODS MARSDEN 1983: 190-191; WOODS MARSDEN 1987: 132-137.

⁵⁹ PERUSINI, PERUSINI 1999: 55.

⁶⁰ Idem. For an illustration, see LAND 1997: 169 (fig. 11).

Fig. 36.
*Martyrdom of
 St Barbara* (detail),
 c.1465, Hans
 Schüchlin and
 workshop of
 Hans Pleydenwurff;
 Prague, Národní
 Gallery
 Applied brocade
 on the foremost
 witness's robe
 © Národní Gallery,
 Prague

From Franconia, through Bohemia, to Lesser Poland and Transylvania

By the mid-fifteenth century Nuremberg artists were regularly incorporating applied brocade into their works. In the Church of St Lawrence are several altarpieces made in the 1450s and 1460s that are decorated with applied brocade. Hans Pleydenwurff, offspring of a Bamberg family of painters, moved to Nuremberg, where in 1457 he was granted citizenship and soon became the city's premier and most influential painter. His work was heavily indebted to the art of the Southern Netherlands and had a decisive impact on the development of painting in Franconia. Applied brocade was very often integrated into the panel paintings produced in his workshop; imitation textiles appear in the *Adoration of the Magi Altarpiece* (c.1460, Nuremberg, Church of St Lawrence), the *St Clare Altarpiece* (1462; Bamberg, Staatsgalerie) and the *Hof Altarpiece* (1465; Munich, Alte Pinakothek), to mention but three.⁶⁴ The applied brocades in his *Beheading of St Barbara* (c.1465; Prague, Národní Gallery), which was created in his workshop with the assistance of Hans Schüchlin, evidence his breathtaking mastery of the technique (fig. 36). Michael Wolgemut, who wed Pleydenwurff's widow, took over his workshop and continued to use the same corpus of local motifs for some thirty years.⁶⁵ Also in St Lawrence's is the *Annunciation* (1517-1518) by Veit Stoss, who returned to Nuremberg in 1496 after years in Cracow. The archangel's dalmatic and the Virgin's gown are decorated with applied brocade. Stoss was paid not only for carving but also for gilding and polychroming the work: 'Primo dem meister Veit Stoss für den gemelten rosenrancz czu schneiden; czu fassen allerding czu vergüllden...'⁶⁶

Nuremberg's influence was not restricted to the German school. The artistic production of Silesia, too, cannot be understood without referencing the work of Nuremberg artists, particularly Hans Pleydenwurff and Michael Wolgemut. Among their Silesian followers was the Master of 1486-1487, who was trained by Wolgemut and is known chiefly for the *Strzegom Polyptych* (1486-1487, Wrocław; Warsaw, National Museum and Thorn, Regional Museum),⁶⁷ in which he included a series of brocade patterns rendered sometimes in paint and sometimes in applied brocade. Veit Stoss's sculpture was also profoundly influential. That some artists were familiar with the use of applied brocade even before 1450,



36.

however, is shown by the work of the Master of the *St Barbara Altarpiece* (1447, Wrocław; Warsaw, National Museum). The *St Barbara Altarpiece*, of which only the centre panel now survives, occupies a seminal place in the late-medieval art of Silesia. Here, applied brocades embellish the garments of St Barbara and St Adauctus. The painting style suggests influences from Nuremberg and indirectly, via Nuremberg, from Early Netherlandish artists.⁶⁸

⁶⁴ ROLLER 2000: 29, 35 n. 18.

⁶⁵ OELLERMANN 1991b: 144-145; OELLERMANN 1993: 211-212.

⁶⁶ TAUBERT 1978: 67.

⁶⁷ FLIK, OLSZEWSKA-ŚWIETLIK 2001: 49-55; UTRECHT 2007:

⁶⁸ UTRECHT 2007: 84-85.

In Bohemia the impressive assemblage of panels by Master Theodoric in Prague (1360-1365, Prague, Karlštejn Castle, Chapel of the Holy Cross) exemplifies the tradition of cast relief. Applied brocade appears in Central Europe shortly before 1450. The earliest example known to date is on the carved figure of a *Female Saint* (1440-1450, Bohemia; Prague, Národní Gallery), who wears a brocade-enriched gown. The statue is attributed to the Master of the Crucifixion of St Bartholomew of Plzeň, one of the most gifted sculptors of that region. His work manifests influences from southern Germany and Austria, but it may be that he also had personal contact with the Netherlands or the Rhineland.⁶⁹ Northern influence can also be discerned in Moravia: in the *Coronation of the Virgin of Rybníky* (Moravia, c.1480; Brno, Moravská Gallery), one of the masterpieces of late-medieval Moravian art, the painter has achieved a synthesis of his own regional tradition and the tendencies of the great Western artistic centres, such as Flanders and the Rhineland. Here, local applied brocades ornament the copes of Christ and God the Father.⁷⁰ Recently, Zofia Kaszowska has meticulously catalogued applied brocades in the Małopolska region (Lesser Poland).⁷¹

Even at the furthest eastern edge of Catholic Europe applied brocades appear. Cristina Serendan recently documented three examples in Transylvanian panel painting.⁷² On the *Altarpiece of Our Lady* (1460-1470) in the Evangelic Church in Mălâncrav local brocades in the form of pomegranates and flowers embellish the Virgin's green cloak. A positive plenitude of continuous applied brocade – at least nine different models – covers the garments of the figures in a *Passion Altarpiece* (1522?) from Dupuș, now in St Margaret's Church in Mediaș. And continuous brocade has also been used on the wings of a retable (1480-1510) in the Evangelical-Lutheran Church in Proștea Mare.

To France and Spain

The lack of published case studies make it difficult to assess the prevalence of applied brocades in France. Very few examples of early-fifteenth-century French panel painting survive. Yet remarkably, within this small corpus are three works decorated with applied brocade. Dating from the 1440s is the *Trinity of the Canons of Notre Dame in Paris* (1440-1450; Paris, École nationale supérieure des Beaux-Arts), attributed to the Master of Dunois, colleague of and successor to the Bedford Master.⁷³ The panel was probably created for the Chapelle des Ardents, whose archdeacon was Jacques Jouvenel des Ursins.⁷⁴ The panel portraying the *Family of Jouvenel des Ursins* (1444-1449; Paris, Musée national du Moyen Âge-Thermes de Cluny) (fig. 37), though stylistically very different, was produced in the same period and was also displayed in Notre Dame in Paris. With the help of X-radiographs Elisabeth Ravaud has described two of the applied brocades on the panel (see Chapter Eleven).⁷⁵ The pattern of gilded floral and foliate motifs in relief is set off by a red background. Other applied brocades were used on various elements of the panel, but in these cases damage has rendered the motif illegible. Both the Master of Dunois and the anonymous master of the Jouvenel family panel derived motifs from the Flemish *ars nova*, each in his own way.⁷⁶



Fig. 37. *Family of Jouvenel des Ursins* (detail), 1444-1449, Paris; Paris, Musée National du Moyen Âge-Thermes de Cluny (on loan from the Louvre) © The Bridgeman Art Library

⁶⁹ BRUSSELS 1999: 112-113.

⁷⁰ Ibid. 126-129.

⁷¹ KASZOWSKA 2006. We thank Stijn Lenaerts for drawing our attention to this publication.

⁷² SERENDAN, HRADILOVÁ, HRADIL 2010: 54-60. We thank Hélène Mund and Valentine Henderiks for bringing this to our attention.

⁷³ REYNAUD 1999: 23.

⁷⁴ REYNAUD 2000: 30-32.

⁷⁵ RAVAUD 2001: 179-188.

⁷⁶ LORENTZ 2004: 89-91; RAVAUD 2001: 188.

Fig. 38.
St Lawrence and
St Leonard (exterior
 sides of wings),
 c.1465, Aragon,
 Master of Arguís;
 Baltimore, The
 Walters Art Museum
 © The Walters Art
 Museum, Baltimore



To these Parisian panels can be added an important work from the Provençal school, the *Virgin of Mercy* or *Cadard Altarpiece* (c.1452, Avignon; Chantilly, Musée Condée) created by Enguerrand Quarton and Pierre Villate.⁷⁷ The applied brocades on the Virgin's gown are arranged in staggered rows to produce a continuous stylized pomegranate design.

Two important coherent groups of carved figures from the Loire region date from the second half of the fifteenth century. A *St Aldric*, an *Ecce Homo* (both c.1480; Ferrières-en-Gâtinais, Church of St Peter and St Paul,) and a *St Michael* (c.1480; Montargis, Musée Girodet) all come from the abbey of Ferrières-en-Gâtinais.⁷⁸ Both stylistically and technically they are related to the impressive figurative group commissioned around 1461-1464 by Jean d'Orléans, Count of Dunois and Longueville, for the Sainte Chapelle of Châteaudun.⁷⁹ All these statues were lavishly polychromed and ornamented with superb relief decoration.⁸⁰ Yet it is difficult to situate them within the

contemporary artistic current of the Loire Valley. It may be that they were carved in Paris, which would explain the elements seemingly derived from Brabant or Utrecht.⁸¹ Three panels depicting St Ambrose, St Augustine and St Jerome (Paris, Musée du Louvre) are part of a lost altarpiece that was produced in Provence in the third quarter of the fifteenth century. Each Doctor of the Church is portrayed before a cloth of honour rendered in applied brocade, a composition strongly reminiscent of the oeuvre of the workshop of the Master of the View of St Gudule.⁸² Also very noteworthy is the impressive late-fifteenth-century corpus of sculpture in the Cathedral of St Cecilia in Albi, near Toulouse.⁸³ The garments of many of the figures are enlivened with applied brocade. Which masters were responsible is a puzzle in this case too.

Rosaura Garcia Ramos and Emilio Ruiz de Arcaute Martinez have catalogued some thirty statues decorated with applied brocade, most of them from the Basque region and Vitoria.⁸⁴ A number of case studies

⁷⁷ STERLING 1983: 23-36.

⁷⁸ WAILLIEZ 1998: 22-23, 30-37, 47-50.

⁷⁹ GUILLOT DE SUDUIRAUT 2001b: 73-90.

⁸⁰ WAILLIEZ 1999: 123-125.

⁸¹ GUILLOT DE SUDUIRAUT 2001b: 87-90.

⁸² STERLING, ADHÉMAR 1965: 14 (pl. 103-105).

⁸³ BIGET, ESCOURBIAC 1997: e.g. 126, 127, 133, 136.

⁸⁴ GARCIA RAMOS, RUIZ DE ARCAUTE MARTINEZ 1998.

have also been published by the Grupo Latino de Escultura Policromada.⁸⁵ But we still know little about the way in which the earliest examples were introduced into the region, although intensive trading contacts with the North would certainly have aided artistic transmission.⁸⁶ On the altarpiece wing panels attributed to the Master of Arguís (c.1465; Baltimore, Walters Art Museum)⁸⁷ the motif that appears on the cloth of honour behind Campin's *St Veronica* has been used – a clear pointer to contacts with the Low Countries (fig. 38). Such influences can also be noted in other works, such as the Hispano-Flemish altarpiece with a Lamentation (1480; New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Cloisters) cited by Frinta.⁸⁸ Both local and continuous applied brocades ornament a Castilian *Miracle of the Palm Tree* (1490–1510; New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art), a composition partly based on an engraving by Martin Schongauer.⁸⁹ Six early-sixteenth-century altarpieces ornamented with applied brocades are documented in the Basque region of Gipuzkoa and are evidence of possible foreign influence (probably entering from the coast).⁹⁰ The *St Peter Altarpiece* in Orduña (c.1516; Orduña, Santa María de la Asunción) is another example of northern influence on Spanish art.⁹¹ The polychromy is enriched with several applied brocades executed by an artist who was clearly familiar with the work of the I*T Master (see Chapter Six), while the carving shows parallels with the oeuvre of the renowned Borman workshop, for instance in the treatment of the landscape and some of the compositional arrangements.⁹² Even so, the altarpiece does not seem to have come from the Low Countries, but to have been made by local artists, possibly in collaboration with Brabantine masters who had settled in Spain. A number of examples are also documented in southern Spain, such as the retable of the high altar of the Capilla Real in Granada (1520–1522). The relief decoration on the figures is combined with local *estofado* techniques.⁹³

To England and the Northern Netherlands

The *Thornham Parva Retable* and a number of panels embellished with relief decoration made the step to applied brocade a short one in East Anglia. In a composite reredos⁹⁴ made up of five panels removed from the Norwich Church of St Michael at Plea (middle or third quarter of the fifteenth century; Norwich, Cathedral) the Crucifixion is presented before an applied brocade cloth of honour (fig. 39). The backgrounds of the Annunciation – likewise part of the reredos – and a separate panel depicting St Margaret are also elaborately ornamented with relief but precisely what kind is difficult to distinguish in its present poor state. Dating from the same period are the Arundel effigies in Sussex (c.1462, Arundel, Fitzalan Chapel), where applied brocade decorates Joan Neville's dress and the four pillows.⁹⁵ Josephine Darrah also mentions a statue in wood from Wales and a tomb in Suffolk.⁹⁶ She ascribes the paucity of examples to the fact that very few English sculptures retain their original polychromy.

The almost complete lack of applied brocade in the Northern Netherlands can probably be ascribed to the destruction wrought by Calvinist iconoclasts in the 1560s. A rare survivor can be found, however, in a panel possibly painted in Dordrecht around 1460 and now in the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam. It depicts Geertruy Haeck-van Slingelandt van der Tempel kneeling before her intercessor St Agnes: behind the saint is a cloth of honour in applied brocade.⁹⁷ The stone *St Anne Altarpiece* in the chapel of Jan van Arkel (c.1500) in Utrecht Cathedral is another escapee.⁹⁸ The virtuoso painting of the textiles in the background and on the vestments is enhanced by local pomegranate motifs in applied brocade. The brocades that decorate the piers of the choir in St Peter's in Leiden on a monumental scale do evidence a familiarity with the technique, but how widespread its use may have been can only be conjectured.

⁸⁵ GÓMEZ 1994, ANTÓN 1995; LOZA, ÁNGEL 1997; BERASAIN SALVARREDI, BARRIOLA OLANO 1998; LOZA, ÁNGEL 1999; GONZÁLEZ LÓPEZ 2000; GÓMEZ, GAYO, ALQUERÓ 2004.

⁸⁶ ALVAREZ 1998.

⁸⁷ FRINTA 1963: 137.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.* 140, 143.

⁸⁹ WIXOM 2007: 38–39.

⁹⁰ RODRÍGUEZ-LÓPEZ, BAZETA GABANTES 2008: 1–10.

⁹¹ We thank Jesús Muñoz Petralanda of the Museo Diocesano de Arte Sacro in Bilbao for data and photographs.

⁹² Jesús Muñoz Petralanda rejects the Brabantine origin of the altarpiece, attributing it instead to a local workshop. His findings are part of a project related to late-medieval art in Biscay.

⁹³ GONZÁLEZ LÓPEZ 2002: 138, 149 (figs. c, f).

⁹⁴ Dated to around 1420–1430 in NORWICH 1974: 40–41; to 1415 in NADOLNY 2003: 188, n. 93; and to the middle or the third quarter of the fifteenth century in LONDON 2003: 293–294.

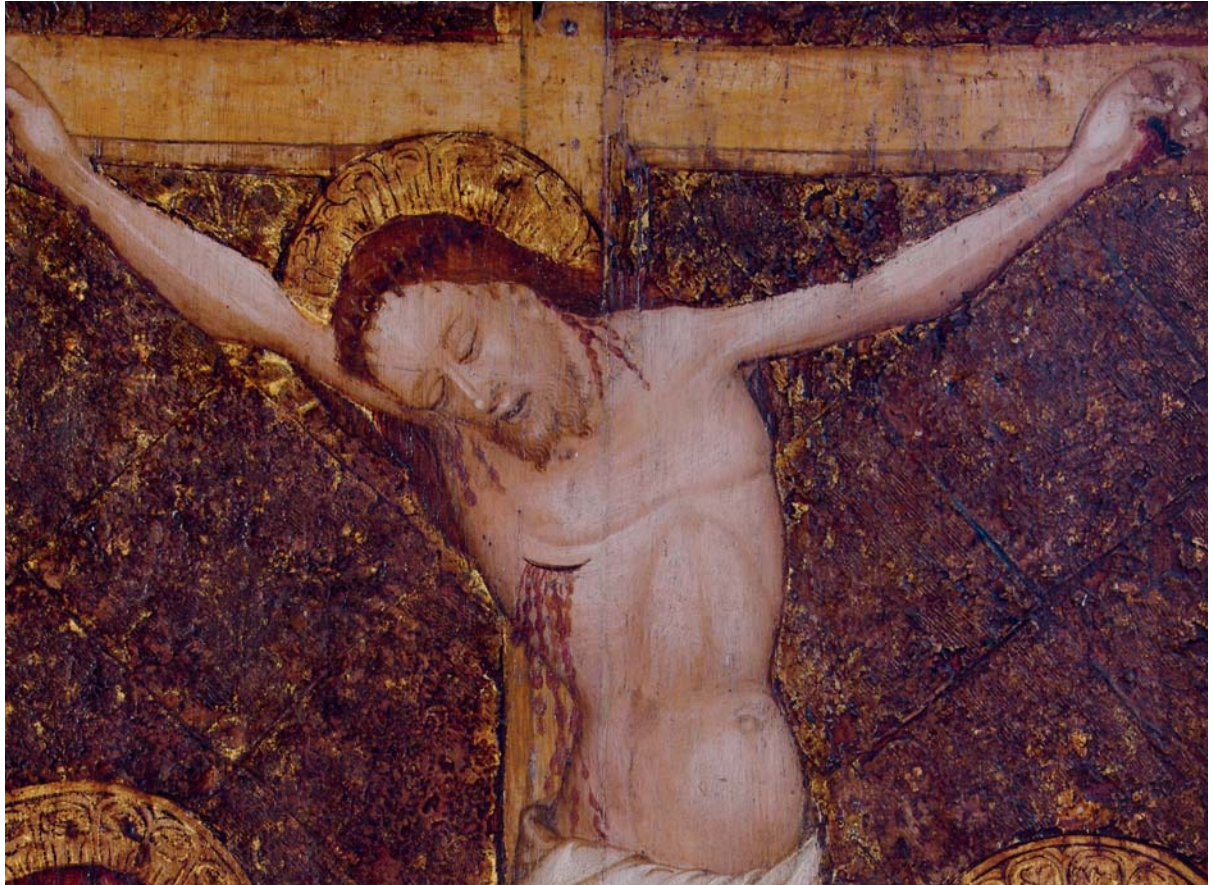
⁹⁵ BRODRICK, DARRAH 1986: 77–80.

⁹⁶ DARRAH 1998: 63–64.

⁹⁷ We thank Arie Wallert (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam) and Esther van Duin for bringing this to our attention.

⁹⁸ BROEKMAN-BOKSTIJN, VAN ASPEREN DE BOER 1970: 392 (no. 10). The figures were defaced on 7 March 1580.

Fig. 39.
Crucifixion (detail),
 middle or third
 quarter of the
 15th century(?),
 England(?); Norwich,
 Cathedral
 Crucified Christ
 against background
 of continuous applied
 brocade



This summary gives some idea of the extent to which the use of applied brocade had spread across Europe. It allows us to consider the applied brocades of the Southern Netherlands in a wider perspective and provides a basis for further research. The most important literature on the subject has also been integrated. It shows that applied brocades were by no means exceptional but part of the standard repertoire of

many great painters from the 1450s onwards. The first publications on the subject already indicated that applied brocade offers an excellent means of illuminating relationships and clarifying influences. Although diverse case studies have stimulated research, virtually every region still awaits a proper inventory of its applied brocades.

I.G.



40a.
The design is cut into a piece of wood with a sharp tool



40b.
The tin foil is beaten into the mould



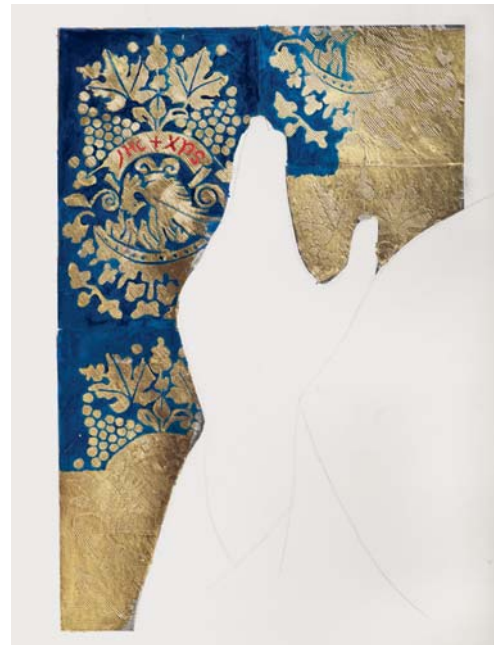
40c.
The tin foil is reinforced with a filler



40d.
The tin foil sheets are glued onto the prepared panel



40e.
The tin foil is gilded



40f.
The gilded tin foil is highlighted with paint

MAKING APPLIED BROCADE

RECIPES AND METHODS

By combining the observations of art historians and restorers with a study of medieval recipes, instructive reconstructions, and laboratory analyses, we have gained a fairly good idea of how applied brocade was made. This chapter gives an overview of the fabrication, relevant recipes for and components of applied brocade and the archival references relating to it.

As we have seen in the previous chapters, prefabricated relief decoration has a long history. The technique we call applied brocade was the culmination of a quest to simulate luxury textiles in works of art, and by the first quarter of the fifteenth century it had become a regular part of the polychromer's repertoire. The applied brocades used in the painted scenes on the wings of the Dortmund *Passion Altarpiece* (cat. G2), which is dated between 1420 and 1425, are, as far as we know at present, the earliest examples from the Low Countries. Subsequently, applied brocade became fairly common in west-European art, not only in sculpture and panel painting but also in wall painting and architectural polychromy, and remained so for over a century.¹ By the mid-sixteenth century, however, the technique had fallen out of favour, and other means were used to portray the gorgeous stuffs of garments and hangings.² The latest applied brocades in our catalogue date from the 1530s and 1540s,³ after which time the technique seems to have been forgotten. For over four centuries it went unstudied

and unregarded. When, in the early 1960s, Mojmir Frinta and Thomas Brachert published the first articles on applied brocade to include technical data, the production method was not completely understood, nor were all the various components identified. Eike Oellerman was the first to document the typical presence of tin foil in the layer structure and to connect the technique with the recipe in the *Liber illuministarum*, or 'Tegernsee Manuscript' (see below).⁴ The publication in 1970 of the interdisciplinary study of Friedrich Herlin's altarpiece in Rothenburg (1466, St James Church), in which applied brocade received particular attention, was a significant step in the study of the subject, providing the first detailed technical analysis.⁵

How to make applied brocade

Applied brocade is made in a mould, probably of wood or metal,⁶ in which a design – very often based on an existing textile pattern – is incised (fig. 40). Parallel striations in the design create an illusion of the gleaming threads of cloth of gold. Depending on the type of applied brocade the striations might alternate with flat zones or be combined with other forms of relief, such as contours, raised dots and plateaus (see Chapter Four). Applied brocades can vary greatly in size; those in our catalogue range from less than two

¹ It is also possible that applied brocade was used to embellish utensils and furniture, or was integrated into temporary decorations for feasts and tournaments.

² The complexity of the technique may well have been partly to blame for this, likewise the degradation resulting from the degradation of the tin. From around 1510, polychromers and painters increasingly employed other techniques for imitating gold brocade, with sgraffito and tooled and painted solutions being particularly popular.

³ The *Gaasbeek Altarpiece* (cat. 34), the *St Remaclus* (cat. 59) and the *Mass of St Gregory* (cat. 25), respectively dated c.1525, c.1530 and 1530-1540. Later still, in 1566, Michiel Coxcie used a simplified form of applied brocade in his copy of the *Adoration of the Lamb* altarpiece (see cat. 37).

⁴ OELLERMANN 1967: 174; NADOLNY 1996: 46.

⁵ BACHMANN, OELLERMANN, TAUBERT 1970; BROEKMAN-BOKSTIJN et al. 1970.

⁶ Other materials, such as slate or a chalk and size ground may also have been used.

◀ Fig. 40.
Reconstructing a continuous applied brocade to be used in panel painting (reconstruction by I. Geelen)

to over twenty centimetres. The engraved mould is treated with a release agent then a sheet of tin foil is laid on it. According to the medieval texts this is pressed lightly into the mould with a humid cloth pad, then covered with a wad of damp tow or flax and beaten with a mallet or club. The wad absorbs the shock of the blow, ensuring that the pressure of the beating is equally distributed, and prevents any tearing of the tin foil.⁷ Then a thin fill material, usually consisting of wax mixed with resin, pigments or oil but occasionally made of chalk and size, is spread over the tin foil to fill up the hollows. Any excess filler is removed with a knife, leaving a smooth flat surface. The function of the filler is to strengthen the relief and ensure it holds its shape; it also makes demoulding and handling easier, helping to avoid tears and cracks.⁸ Sometimes the filler is reinforced by a second, separate layer (see Chapter Ten).⁹ Once the filler is dry the foil is lifted from the mould with the tip of a knife and trimmed to the required shape.

Judging by the examples in our catalogue, applied brocade would usually be gilded, either before or after it was applied to the surface for which it was destined. Presumably for reasons of economy a gold-imitating glaze might be used instead of gold leaf, though examples of this practice are not especially common in the Low Countries and are found primarily in wall painting. Where silver leaf was to be imitated, the tin foil would be coated with a transparent glaze, probably as a protective layer, that was invisible to the naked eye and allowed the tin's own glitter to mimic the costlier metal.¹⁰ The tin foil might also be covered with real silver leaf, as it was, for instance, on the applied brocade gown of the mourning holy woman in the Lamentation in the Ternant *Passion Altarpiece* (1455-1460, Church of St Roch and Our Lady of the Assumption) (fig. 41).¹¹

How an applied brocade was attached to its supporting surface varied according to its type (the three types of applied brocade – continuous, local and braid – are described in Chapter Four). A *continuous* brocade was glued to its background with an adhesive.

⁷ GONZÁLES LÓPEZ 2000: 72.

⁸ Ibid. 73.

⁹ BROEKMAN-BOKSTIJN et al. 1970: 391-392 (table III); DARRAH 1998: 64-71, 76-77.

¹⁰ Certain parts of the floral motifs of the applied brocade garlands decorating Lodewijk van Gruuthuse's private oratory were left ungilded, so that the silvery glitter of the tin foil complemented the gilded parts (see Chapter Eight). One of the applied brocades on the *Altarpiece of the Life of the Virgin and the Infancy of Christ* in Rouen (cat. F3.2) was probably also treated in this way. In the Antwerp-produced *Altarpiece of the Virgin* made for Lofta (1510-1515; Stockholm, Statens Historiska Museet) the applied brocades on the bed coverlet in the Annunciation are also not covered with gold leaf, unlike the other applied brocades on the retable.

¹¹ KAGAN, GÉRARD, GÉRARD-BENDELÉ 2002: 246.



Fig. 41. *Passion Altarpiece*, 1455-1460, Brussels; Ternant, Church of St Roch and Our Lady of the Assumption. Applied brocade covered with silver leaf

A *local* brocade, on the other hand, was almost invariably applied, without any other adhesive, directly onto the still tacky paint layer – usually the coloured top layer but sometimes the underlayer, after which the coloured top layer would be painted around it – although in some cases local brocades were glued to the ground layer with additional adhesive. Applied brocade *braid* generally seems to adhere to the gilding without any specific adhesive.

Almost invariably, the gilding on the flat zones and the furrows between the striations would be painted with coloured glaze or matt paint, leaving the raised striations to gleam and glint like the gold threads they imitated.¹² This finishing might be done before or after the brocade was fixed in place.

Recipes

Only a few medieval recipes refer to cast relief decorations that included tin foil in their manufacture but these are of great importance in clarifying the various stages in the production of applied brocade. The *Liber illuministarum*, or 'Tegernsee Manuscript', a compilation written out in the scriptorium of the Benedictine Abbey of St Quirin in Tegernsee and now in the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek in Munich, is dated around 1500.¹³ It contains German and Latin texts of

¹² Even where only the motif is gilded and the coloured highlighting applied to the ungilded flat background, as occurs in the applied brocade on the ceiling joists of the Bruges Oosterlingenhuis (cat. 17), the colour is applied after the gilding.

¹³ BERGER 1912: 194-195; HECHT 1980: 27; BARTL et al. 2005: 176-179, 531-533.

diverse dates in various hands. One of the former gives instructions for making cast relief decorations that have *stamuol* or tin foil as a component. The description is very detailed as regards the use of the material and the procedure to be followed, though it does not say what the mould was made of (see p. 73). Some details seem to pertain specifically to Bavaria, where the Tegernsee Manuscript was made, such as the use of *Zwischgold* or 'part gold', a significantly less expensive leaf formed by laminating gold with another metal, usually silver but possibly tin.¹⁴ Part gold does not seem to have been much used in the Low Countries but was frequently employed in polychromy in Bavaria, Tyrol, Swabia, Saxony and the Lower Rhine.¹⁵ The recipe also seems to say that the part gold does not have to cover the whole surface but only those parts that are to look like gold, although it does no harm if the part gold leaf overlaps onto the *feldung* – presumably the zone destined to be highlighted with colour. There is an example of this kind of partial gilding in our catalogue (cat. 17). The filler based on chalk and resin ('reib kreÿden vnd pech') ground in gum water ('leimwasser'), rather than the usual wax and resin, also seems to be particular to the region or perhaps even to a specific workshop.¹⁶ No examples of this mixture are known in the Low Countries. Before attaching the applied brocade with the appropriate adhesive, the Tegernsee Manuscript recommends the preparation of the surface, either with size or oil depending on the support.¹⁷

A good century before the Tegernsee Manuscript was written out, the Italian Cennino Cennini compiled a handbook for craftsmen entitled *Il Libro dell'Arte*. Written at the end of the fourteenth century, probably in Padua, it is a veritable goldmine of information about many different painting and polychromy techniques, including instructions for producing cast relief decorations.¹⁸ Apart from the iconographic difference

¹⁴ STRAUB 1988: 183-184; KNOEPFLI et al. 2002: III. Jilleen Nadolny has proposed the term 'part gold', derived from the Old English 'partie gold', as the equivalent of *Zwischgold*. The material itself has been widely documented in Europe, likewise the medieval terminology used to describe it. See NADOLNY 1999: 134, 139-140.

¹⁵ See, for example, DARRAH 1998: 66, 69-72, 76-77.

¹⁶ J. Flik and J. Olszewska-Świetlik identified a similar admixture in an applied brocade on a panel painting by the Master of 1486-1487 (Silesian workshop). The white filler is composed of chalk, natural resin and also oil and egg white. FLIK, OLSZEWSKA-ŚWIETLIK 2001: 54.

¹⁷ BARTL et al. 2005: 178-179, 532-533, 596.

¹⁸ CENNINI (ed. Thompson 1933): 78 and 109-110. The recipes given by Cennino Cennini (in Ch. CXXVIII and the chapter entitled 'How to do caskets or chests') are well known and generally cited together with the Tegernsee Manuscript. HECHT 1980; VANDAMME 1982: 124-125, 184; NADOLNY 1996; DARRAH 1998; GONZÁLES LÓPEZ 2000, etc. As early as 1897 the connection between Cennini's Chapter CXXVIII ('How to take reliefs from

from applied brocade – which was intended to produce a simulacrum of gold brocade textile rather than precious metalwork – and the slightly different components used, the fabrication process is identical. Cennini describes three methods for making cast relief decorations, two with tin foil and one without, each using the appropriate mould and filler.¹⁹

In Chapter CXXVIII – 'How to take reliefs from a stone mould, and how they are good on wall and on panel' – Cennini explains how reliefs can be made in a stone mould and used to embellish a wall, a chest, a stone surface or 'anything you please'. Grease the stone mould, he tells us, with bacon fat or lard (*lardo o sugna*). Lay some fairly moist tow on the tin which lies over the mould and beat it hard with a willow mallet (just as prescribed in the later Tegernsee Manuscript). The impression is then filled up with *gesso grosso* and the resulting relief is glued to the surface with ship pitch (*piece da nave*), probably a resin.

Later in the book, in 'How to do caskets and chests', he gives a procedure identical to the one just described but the resulting reliefs are specifically intended for embellishing caskets or chests. Cennini offers an ingenious and thrifty way of ornamenting those 'caskets of less worth', for here the gilding is done not with gold leaf but with coloured glaze.²⁰ He also gives precise details about the mould and motifs (see below). In both recipes the fill material is a mix of *gesso grosso* and size.

Whereas ship pitch is used to glue on the reliefs described in Chapter CXXVIII, the *gesso grosso* filler of the casket ornaments is moistened with size, allowing the reliefs to be attached to the casket. The reliefs are then covered with fine gold (Chapter CXXVIII) or with a 'varnish' and 'hatched and embellished' with colours ('How to do caskets and chests'). This latter chapter also describes the trimming away of the excess tin from the relief, which should be put on 'a good flat board of nut wood' and 'all the tin which comes outside the outline of your figure' should be cut away with 'a good sharp knife'.

In Chapter CXXV – 'How You Should Cast a Relief for Embellishing Areas of Anconas' – Cennino Cennini gives a third recipe for cast reliefs, and this one does not involve the use of tin foil. Comparison with the recipes described above suggests that certain technical details and the preference for particular materials depend on the technique. The mould used

a stone mould, and how they are good on wall and on panel') and the Tegernsee recipe was published by Ernst Berger in his work on the history of painting techniques. BERGER 1897: 180; BERGER 1912: 195, n. 4.

¹⁹ CENNINI (ed. Thompson 1933): 77 (Ch. CXXV), 78 (Ch. CXXVIII), 109-110 ('How to do caskets or chests').

²⁰ On yellow and white tin foil, see DARRAH 1998: 49-60.

here is made not of stone but of earth or clay. The use of lamp oil as a release agent rather than bacon fat or lard is probably necessitated by the porosity of the substrate. Instead of tin foil Cennini recommends the use of *gesso sottile* well thickened with size and fine enough to obtain a smooth and exact impression. When this has set, the ornament can be fixed to a panel with some of the same gesso. He does not mention any kind of finishing with metal leaf or colour, though it may be assumed that the reliefs were gilded.

Erik Vandamme has drawn attention to the little-known Sloane Manuscript in the British Library, published by M. M. Van Dantzig.²¹ Sloane MS. 345 is a miscellany of recipes from the Low Countries written out in Old Dutch in the fifteenth century. According to Vandamme it tells how to make relief decorations using a mould (*worme*) and tin foil (*tent*). Jilleen Nadolny interprets these terms quite differently, however. In her reading a mixture that includes ‘vermeil’ (*tent*) is heated (*worme*) as part of the process of woodblock printing on canvas.²²

Among the surviving medieval texts on artists’ methods and materials, recipes for cast tin foil reliefs seem to be very few and far between.²³ Daniel V. Thompson mentions none at all in his trial index to some unpublished sources (dating from the twelfth to the fifteenth century) for the history of medieval craftsmanship.²⁴ Nevertheless, examination of archives may lead to new discoveries.

Archival references

Despite the prevalence of applied brocade there are few if any written sources dating from the period of its commonest use. Archival reference to its practice, materials or technique, such as contracts, inventories and accounts, seems to be very scarce.

An entry in the 1398-1399 accounts of the dukes of Burgundy records payment for a plate, apparently of brass, made by Gilet the founder and intended for the painter Jean Malouel, who would make ‘estampes’ and possibly cast reliefs as well, for the decoration of the Charterhouse of Dijon.²⁵

‘Item pour une table de latton pesant xxii livres, baillée audict peintre pour tailler en icelle plusieurs estampes nécessaires pour la peinture de plusieurs choses à faire pour ladict église...’

A year later wax and tin foil were bought, respectively ‘pour moler plusieurs escuz’ and for ‘les escuceaux de mesdiz seigneurs et dames’.²⁶ Another entry refers to moulds incised with the Beaumetz ‘dévisé’.²⁷ According to Vandamme these could also have been used for turning out tin foil reliefs. Still other accounts mentioned by Nadolny evidence the use of tin cast reliefs, such as escutcheons and stars, for the embellishment of interiors and monuments.²⁸

Erik Vandamme also cites an entry from 1468 that mentions ‘empraintes et formes’ for which four pounds of vermilion wax was required.²⁹

‘Pour ij livres de cirre vermeille, pour d’icelle faire empraintes et formes, à vj s. la livre.’

Guild statutes also provide valuable data. For instance, on 9 November 1470 the Antwerp St Luke’s Guild ratified a regulation that contains what seems to be explicit reference to applied brocade.³⁰ The replacement of gold leaf by coloured or uncoloured (metal) foil (*tentvelle*) was forbidden unless the foil was to be impressed or stamped, the back filled with an appropriate filler (*semente*), and the resulting ornament affixed with gold-coloured paint or priming.

‘Item gheen foelie oft tentvelle en sal men verwercken by fyn gout, ten sal wesen geprint, gevult achter met semente, ende opgestelt met gout veruwe of pourmuersel.’

A document of 1480 from the Tournai painters’ and glassworkers’ guild mentions ‘leaf tinted with a glaze’ and ‘moulded leaf’ that could be applied to various surfaces. In article 25, the use of ‘feuille mollée’ (apparently not gilded with gold leaf) is allowed if the patron wants to cut the cost of the work. Article 26 speaks of ‘foelle molée’ laid on ‘or couleur’ that is itself laid on an ‘emprimure souffisanment faicte’. This may refer to local applied brocades fixed on glazed gold.³¹

²¹ VAN DANTZIG 1936: 209-210, 216; VANDAMME 1982: 130-131, 183.

²² NADOLNY 2009: 40-41.

²³ CLARKE 2001.

²⁴ THOMPSON 1935: 410-431.

²⁵ DEHAISNES 1886, 2: 770; VANDAMME 1982: 119; NADOLNY 2009: 42-44; NASH 2010: 119, 121. Ernst Berger mentions a later document (1499) which refers to the purchase for the Benediktbeuern Monastery of seventeen brass moulds: ‘im Jahre 1499 wurden für Benediktbeuern 17 “messing illuminier mödl” für 10 Pfg. gekauft’. BERGER 1912: 195, n. 4; BARTL et al. 2005: 532, n. 66. Nadolny doubts that this refers to cast tin relief. NADOLNY 2009: 46.

²⁶ NADOLNY 2009: 44.

²⁷ DELEN 1966: 28; VANDAMME 1982: 119-120.

²⁸ NADOLNY 2009: 42-46.

²⁹ DE LABORDE 1849-1852, II: 355 (4676); VANDAMME 1982: 129.

³⁰ VANDAMME 1982: 125, 187 (article 12); GUILLOT DE SUDUIRAUT 2001a: 24.

³¹ VANDAMME 1982: 155, 191.

A similar item appears in 1496 in the statutes of the guild of painters, sculptors and glaziers in Lyon:³²

‘... et que nul ne mette estaing doré, estaing blanc ou estaing de coulleurs sur ymages de pierre, ... s’il n’est doré de fin or comme draps d’or molliz et affiz arillec’

The mould

As far as we know, there is not one surviving mould that can be said beyond doubt to have been used for the casting of applied brocade. The Tegernsee Manuscript does mention a mould (*das model*) but adds no further details.

Archival references, such as the abovementioned entry from the Burgundian accounts referring to brass sheets, are very rare. Cennino Cennini describes a mould that could be used to fashion small ornaments with tin foil. It should be made of soft stone, flat and fine grained, in which animals, flowers, stars, roses, or ‘any kind [of device] your mind requires’ could be engraved. The Victoria and Albert Museum in London holds an Italian limestone mould that fits this description (inv. A.4-1993).³³ Whether the mould was made by the polychromer himself or by a specialized workshop can only be conjectured. Presumably a polychromer would have been able to cut a mould, but he may also have subcontracted the job to a colleague, be that a sculptor, engraver or goldsmith.

Observations and reconstructions can help us to discover which materials may have been used for the mould (fig. 42). Whatever it was, it must have been fine-grained enough to engrave yet strong enough to withstand the force of beating the tin foil. Metal is a likely material, especially when very detailed applied brocade was to be produced.³⁴ Wood also seemed a possibility for somewhat coarser reliefs.³⁵ Brigitte Hecht has demonstrated that both could have been used for brocades with seventeen or eighteen striations per centimetre. Hecht’s reconstructions showed that in principle cherrywood, pearwood, brass and copper were all possible. The latter was borne out by Sophie Barton (KIK-IRPA intern, 2007-2008) with a reconstruction in which sixteen striations per centimetre were incised in a copper plate. Slate can also be engraved with detailed designs.³⁶ Prestigious materials such as alabaster, marble and ivory seem less likely, given their expense and limited availability.

³² NADOLNY 2009: 43.

³³ DARRAH 1998: 57.

³⁴ Jilleen Nadolny defends the use of metal moulds for cast tin reliefs in general. She regards the technique as a direct descendant of the goldsmith’s practice. NADOLNY 2009: 39.

³⁵ See the summary in HECHT 1980: 36-38.

³⁶ OGNIBENI 1981: 35.

In the case of an applied brocade with twenty-two striations per centimetre, like those on the *Saluzzo Altarpiece* (cat. 19.1), the mould must have been made of a high-quality material, fine yet durable. Boxwood (*buxus*) has a structure fine enough for the engraving of such detailed relief. This hardwood was also used for woodcuts and for small carved items such as chess pieces and miniature retables. But its limited size – no more than twelve centimetres per side – makes its large-scale use rather unlikely.³⁷ A chalk and size ground also gave good results. Vincent Cattersel (KIK-IRPA) established that this surface was eminently suitable for engraving, achieving a density of twenty-four striations per centimetre.³⁸ A high concentration of size (18%) produced an excellent effect. The ground, which was applied to a piece of wood in five or six thick layers, each well smoothed, was easily engraved. This mould was also stable enough to allow at least fifty sheets of tin foil to be stamped without any loss of quality.

The tin foil

Tin foil was used throughout the Middle Ages in many different applications. It has a silver, metallic appearance. It cannot be burnished as well as gold or silver leaf but has the advantage of being cheaper, and also easier to use. In the Middle Ages the finest quality tin came from southwest England, most of it from mines in Devon (which were almost worked out by 1220) and Cornwall, whence it was exported to Europe.³⁹

The *Compositiones variae* or ‘Lucca Manuscript’ and the *Mappae clavicula*, both dating from the late eighth or early ninth century and both based on the same earlier source, describe how tin was worked into foil by being beaten into sheets on an anvil, then cut and beaten again until the desired thinness was achieved.⁴⁰ In the first quarter of the twelfth century Theophilus describes the same procedure in *De diversis artibus*.⁴¹ Both the *Compositiones variae* and *Mappae clavicula* refer to yet another process in which molten tin was poured onto a marble slab and so formed a thin foil that could be cut into several smaller sheets. Certainly from the thirteenth century metal foil was often being made by specialized metalbeaters.⁴²

³⁷ We thank Jean-Albert Glatigny, who provided the boxwood and cherrywood for the reconstructions.

³⁸ We thank the interns in the KIK-IRPA Sculpture Workshop who produced various reconstructions: Pilar Alvarez (2004-2005), Sophie Barton, Vincent Cattersel and Erika Santos (2007-2008).

³⁹ NADOLNY 1999: 135.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.* 140.

⁴¹ *Idem.*

⁴² Susie Nash has recently made an extensive and extremely interesting examination of Burgundian sources relating to painters’ materials, including tin foil. NASH 2010: 97-182.



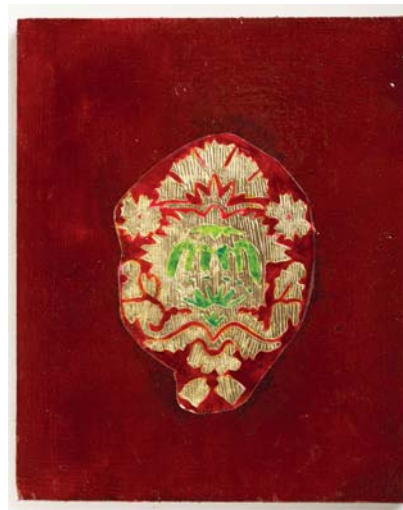
42a.
Lead mould



42b. The resulting brocade (cat. 19.1)
(reconstruction by V. Cattersel)



42c.
Chalk and size mould



42d.
The resulting brocade (cat. 16.1)
(reconstruction by I. Geelen)



42e.
Wood moulds (cherrywood, limewood)



42f.
The resulting brocade (cat. 22.2) (reconstruction by P. Alvarez)

Fig. 42.
Reconstructing the
mould in different
materials

References to tin foil appear in recipes until the late fifteenth and the sixteenth century, and it is still mentioned in the seventeenth-century De Mayerne manuscript (1620-1650), where it is used in the preparation of 'Vernix dorant sur Argent, Etagnol, Estaing moulu etc.'⁴³

In painting and polychromy tin foil was mainly employed to imitate silver and as a component of cast reliefs. As we will see throughout this book, it is a constant in every applied brocade.⁴⁴ It was also covered with coloured glaze, or served as the support for *pictura translucida* (a design in glaze on polished metal),⁴⁵ and could be gilded with very fine gold or silver leaf.⁴⁶ There are indications in the Rouen guild regulations that part gold was sometimes counterfeited by replacing the silver with tin foil.⁴⁷ In the fifteenth century tin foil was also used as a support for painted portraits that were subsequently integrated into panel paintings.⁴⁸ The pastepaints that embellished certain German manuscripts in the second half of the fifteenth century incorporated tin foil, worked, moreover, by a method that strongly resembles that of applied brocade (see below). And tin foil was also used in illumination, in powder form.⁴⁹

According to Jilleen Nadolny the first use of tin foil in northern Europe is evidenced on the twelfth-century *Vicklau Madonna* in Stockholm (Statens Historiska Museet) and a *Crucifix* in Buttle (Gotland, Sweden).⁵⁰ Josephine Darrah has commented on a Tuscan carved figure of the crucified Christ from 1240-1260 whose loincloth is hemmed with a band of tin foil decoration.⁵¹ In the Low Countries, on the tympanum over the west door of the Church of St Nicholas in Ghent, the figure of Synagoga wears a garment embellished with tin foil lozenges, which were probably added at the time of the first overpaint in the late thirteenth or early fourteenth century.⁵² Tin

foil was employed in various ways to enrich the scenes from the Life of the Virgin depicted on the *Kortesse Panel*, which dates from 1400-1410 (Brussels, KMSKB-MRBAB; see also p. 45).⁵³ Here, flat pieces of tin were used to produce the sumptuous textiles of the bed coverlet, canopy and cloth of honour. Overpainting makes it hard to say now how they would have looked originally, but probably the tin was coated with yellowish glaze to give the effect of gold leaf, which was then painted with many-petalled flowers. The windows in the background, the vault ribs, organ pipes, the flagons and bread on the table, the hanging lamps, and a pair of angels on pillars were also rendered in tin foil. In most of these cases the silver effect of the metal itself was probably sought.

The imitation of gold leaf by coloured glaze on tin foil

In order to simulate real gold leaf, tin foil was sometimes coated with coloured glaze,⁵⁴ as indeed can be seen in several cases in our catalogue (see also Chapter Ten). The gilded effect has been lost with the degradation of the tin foil and the glaze is now scarcely visible to the naked eye. In cross sections it has a brown or reddish colour and it fluoresces orange in ultraviolet light.⁵⁵

Gold leaf was imitated by glazed tin foil from as early as the eleventh century.⁵⁶ Silver leaf might also be mimicked.⁵⁷ In the earliest manuscripts such shifts were not regarded as imitations. Indeed, Theophilus suggests this solution when gold leaf is unavailable. Cennino Cennini acknowledges, somewhat deprecatingly, that when a wall is to be decorated, 'most people make a practice of embellishing [...] with golden tin, because it is less costly', but he strongly advises the use of real gold and good colours, especially in the depiction of the Virgin.⁵⁸ From the early fifteenth century, however, this kind of imitation was prohibited by painters' guilds, not only in the Low Countries but also in places such as Cologne and Rouen.⁵⁹ In 1440 in Tournai Jean le Kien was found guilty of selling tin foil as gold and silver leaf.⁶⁰ The archival references to *tyntvellen* or *tentvelle* and *bresielvellen* catalogued by

⁴³ VAN DE GRAAF 1958: 136; VANDAMME 1982: 150.

⁴⁴ In Antwerp Cathedral, however, on the pillars of the first bay of the south ambulatory, there are signs of an attempt to produce applied brocade without tin foil (see cat. II.1).

⁴⁵ STRAUB 1988: 188, 236.

⁴⁶ MERRIFIELD 1967, I: 94-95; TINTORI 1982.

⁴⁷ VANDAMME 1982: 196.

⁴⁸ There are portraits painted on tin in a number of fifteenth-century panel paintings made in the Low Countries. These were usually portraits that for one reason or another had to be painted outside the workshop, and integrated into the painting later. Rogier van der Weyden's *Seven Sacraments Altarpiece* (c.1440-1445; Antwerp, KMSK) is a well-known example. A similar process also occurred in Nuremberg panel painting, in the circle of Hans Pleydenwurff and Michael Wolgemut (faces and coats of arms). See MARIJNISSEN, VAN DE VOORDE 1985; STROO, SYFER-D'OLNE 1996: 130-151; KOLLMANN, HOMOLKA 2002; LEUVEN 2009: 531.

⁴⁹ MERRIFIELD 1967, I: 146-149.

⁵⁰ NADOLNY 1999: 144-145.

⁵¹ DARRAH 1998: 52.

⁵² DIDIER, FONTAINE-HODIAMONT, KOCKAERT 1990-1991: II2-II4 (fig. on p. II4).

⁵³ DENEFFE, PETERS, FREMOUT 2009: 221-224.

⁵⁴ See VANDAMME 1982: 151-157.

⁵⁵ This layer is extremely thin and therefore difficult to isolate and analyse. Nevertheless, the National Gallery's laboratory was able to identify pine resin in the applied brocades of the Arundel effigies. BRODRICK, DARRAH 1986: 92; DARRAH 1998: 63.

⁵⁶ VANDAMME 1982: 149-157; STRAUB 1988: 189, 232-235.

⁵⁷ VANDAMME 1982: 150.

⁵⁸ CENNINI (ed. Thompson 1933): 60-61 (Ch. LXXXV, LXXXVI, LXXXVII).

⁵⁹ VANDAMME 1982: 151-152.

⁶⁰ Ibid. 147-148.

Erik Vandamme relate to coloured metal foil. Vandamme suggests that tin foil or silver leaf or both could be meant. In the Brussels regulations of 1454 the use of *tintvellen* on the rear walls of altarpiece cases was forbidden. In Antwerp the St Luke's Guild banned the use of *tynvellen* unless impressed or stamped and filled with *semente* (regulations of 1470 and 1472). In Tournai the rules laid down in 1480 repeated the prohibition of *foelle de bateur* (probably tin foil), unless gilded with gold leaf. Certain exceptions were made for polychromy, however, and ungilded *foelle de bateur* and *or partit* could be used on tabernacles and 'aultre machonerie', as well as on coats of arms and decorations for tilting, tournaments and banquets.

There are recipes for gold-imitating glaze in the *Mappae clavicula* and Theophilus's *De diversis artibus*.⁶¹ Theophilus prepares his glaze from the bark of rotten twigs, using saffron to intensify the colour produced by the bark, and stale wine or beer (no. XXIII, *De petula stagnae*).⁶² The word *auripetrum* appears in the Heraclius (or Eraclius) Manuscript (*De coloribus et artibus romanorum*, tenth and thirteenth century) and in the treatise by Petrus de Saint Audemars (*Coloribus faciendis*, late thirteenth-early fourteenth century),⁶³ which Jean le Bègue, in the *Tabula de vocabulis sinonimis et equivocis colorum* (c.1400), later defined as the yellow colour that is laid over very bright and well polished tin 'so that it assumes the appearance of gold to those who look on it': 'Auripetrum [sic] est color croceus qui stanno lucido suppositus et linitus speciem auri procul intuentibus mentitur'.⁶⁴ Petrus de Saint Audemars also tells his readers how to know good tin and good saffron,⁶⁵ then goes on to explain how to make tin foil look like gold, the price of the real thing being beyond the reach of all but the rich.⁶⁶ In Chapter LXXXVII of *Il Libro dell'Arte* – 'How you should cut the golden tin' – Cennini describes how 'white tin' and 'golden tin' should be cut, which suggests that tin foil with a silver or gold appearance was certainly used.⁶⁷ Chapter LXXXVIII informs the reader how *deauratura* or 'golden tin' is created by using a liquid known as *vermeil*. This can also be used as a mordant for real gold leaf. The aforementioned Sloane MS. 345 describes how a glaze can be made from linseed oil, aloes and saffron.⁶⁸ The glaze was intended to coat silver foil

and probably tin foil as well, although that is not stated as such, possibly due to the official ban on its use. And, as mentioned earlier, the De Mayerne manuscript also contains instructions for making a 'Vernix dorant sur Argent, Etagnol, Estaing moulu etc'.⁶⁹

Pasteprints

Pasteprints are images in relief that embellish a number of manuscripts thought to have been produced mainly in southern Germany in the second half of the fifteenth century, as the composition of the mostly religious figurative scenes recalls the engravings of Master E.S. or the Master of the Dutuit Mount of Olives.⁷⁰ Many pasteprints come from Tegernsee, like the abovementioned *Liber illuministarum* manuscript. The majority are in a sadly deteriorated state, having suffered both physical and chemical damage (abraded relief and the results of the inherent incompatibility of materials and sensitivity to cold and humidity). Their production technique is in some ways analogous to that of applied brocade: pasteprints are also made in an engraved mould and incorporate tin foil reinforced with a filler, though they also include paper in their layer structure.⁷¹ How pasteprints were made has raised many questions. Sarah Bertalan suggests that tin foil and pigmented resin were fused together in a heated metal mould. The paper was probably applied before the resin had dried and when the relief was still in the mould, which would explain the absence of adhesive. These images were apparently never gilded with gold leaf but would typically be coated with gold-simulating glaze (which in most cases has now discoloured to red or yellow). The raised lines of the design in relief were inked in black; sometimes additional details would be hand-painted in colour.

As we have seen, there are very few old recipes that document the making of cast reliefs using tin foil: the chapters in Cennino Cennini's *Il Libro dell'Arte* and the *Liber illuministarum*. The latter describes the fabrication of what we have called applied brocade, though it gives no specific details about design. Archival references to applied brocade are also scarce. A painstaking examination of the brocades in our catalogue along with laboratory analyses and reconstructions are the main source of information about this complex technique.

I.G., D.S.

⁶¹ SMITH, HAWTHORN 1974: 36 (*Mappae clavicula*); VANDAMME 1982: 149.

⁶² THEOPHILUS (ed. Dodwell) 1961: 22-23; VANDAMME 1982: 149.

⁶³ MERRIFIELD 1967, I: 158-159 (202), 220-221 (XIII [276]); VANDAMME 1982: 149.

⁶⁴ MERRIFIELD 1967, I: 19; VANDAMME 1982: 150.

⁶⁵ MERRIFIELD 1967, I: 114-115, 150-152 (188), 158-159 (202).

⁶⁶ Ibid. 160-165 (205-209).

⁶⁷ CENNINI (ed. Thompson 1933): 61. See also DARRAH 1998.

⁶⁸ VANDAMME 1982: 151.

⁶⁹ VAN DE GRAAF 1958: 136; VANDAMME 1982: 150.

⁷⁰ BERTALAN 1993: 31.

⁷¹ Both Thomas Brachert and Cynthia Bowman have noted the relationship to applied brocade. See BRACHERT 1964: 38-39, n. 16; BERTALAN 1993: 35.

From the *Liber illuministarum* or ‘Tegernsee Manuscript’

Munich Library, Cod. Germ. 821: 103-104 [239-242].

Von dem stamuol

Nimm das stamuol vnd e du das stempfs so beraitt ein weiß also reib kreÿden vnd pech dar ein als vil das mann das wol dar auß smeck vnd reib das in leim wasser vnd mach das gar dick vnd tú das in ain tegel vnd leg ein nasß tůchlein dar vber das
 103^r es nit hert wertt vnd nim dann den model der auß geraist seÿ vnd nim das stamuol als vil du wilt vnd legs auff den model vnd cher das gulden ein vnd vber fars mit ainem nassen padswam Darnach mach ein pú/s/chel aus werck vnd necz das gar wol vnd nÿms peÿ ainem zipfel vnd hab es auf das stamuol vnd schlag auff das werck mit ain klain schlegel das das stamuol wol in dem model kôm vnd wenn du das werck auf hebst so greiff mit ainem vinger auf das stamuol das du das nit aufzůchst vnd wenn du ain tail geschlagen hast oder gar was auf dem model gewesen ist so nim dann ein messer vnd das obgenant weÿß vnd trags mit dem messer auf vnd far mit dem messer schon dar vber her das das weÿß nur in die raisel chôm Darnach greiff mit ainem messer zwischen des madels vnd das stamuol vnd hebs gar schon dar auf vnd laß es drucken vnd wildu mer haben so mach sein mer pis du sein genug habst vnd will du es nit vberziehen mit golt so trag die feldung auf wildu aber das vberziehen mit golt so tú das also
 103^v mach ain air klar also nim das weis vnd den totter vnd schút es in ein schüssel vnd per es mit ainem holcz gar wol das es sich wol vermisch Darnach streich es auf das stamuol das sol vor dir leigen vnd streich es als dick auf das es /nit/ her abmug gerinnen vnd.. scheuss dann zwischen golt dar ein wo es geschlagen seÿ vnd ob es die feldung auch trifft das schad nit vnd wenn das selbig drucken wird so trag die feldung auf;
 Item die feldung auf das stanniol magstu machen von leim varb oder von öl varb
 Item zw roter feldung nim zinober vnder öl zw plaber nim ein ring plab oder lasur vnd temperirs mit öl zw prauner feldung nim ain tunkels rösel vnder leim wasser zw grün nim spangrün vnder öl vnd reibs den gar wol vnd mach in gar dün so wirt es ettwas durchsichtig

Also nucz das stamuol

Item auf tafel oder pild oder auf tůcher dÿ mit leim varb gemacht sein oder
 104^r noch plaß sein so leimtrencks vor die tafel dreÿstund Nimm die tafel oder pild die vor geweist sein die bedarfst du nit leimtrenken Darnach nim ein holcz leim und streich in an das stamuol vnd kleib es dann an oder mach ein cleÿsteren von mel vnd misch dar ein puluer von pech als vil das man das wol smeck und misch das vntereinander mit einem holzleim vnd streigs dann an das stamuol vnd kleib es dann an wo du wilt oder auf pild die geweist seind oder an meirer oder an tůcher oder was mit öl gemacht ist chlaib es also an N/ÿ/m die golt varb vnd streichs an das stamuol vnd cleib dar nach an vnd merck für ain gemaine regel wo du die golt varb oder ander firniß varb oder öl varb auf tregst oder an kleist / so öl trencks vorhin mit öl vnd die meir vnd eÿsen trenck mit haissen öl /

Etlich machent zw dem stamuol ain ander grunt auf die meir vnd also nim kalisch vnd reib den mit öl vnd mit firniß vnd streigs an das stamuol vnd cleib es dann an die maur

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* We are most grateful to the Franz Steiner Verlag GmbH in Stuttgart and to Anna Bartl, Christoph Kregel, Manfred Lautenschlager and Doris Oltrogge, the publisher and authors of *Der "Liber illuministarum" aus Kloster Tegernsee. Edition, Übersetzung und Kommentar der kunsttechnologischen Rezepte*, Stuttgart, 2005 (ISBN 978-3-515-08472-7), for so readily allowing us to cite their transcription of the Tegernsee Manuscript. Their fascinating publication provides a glossed transcription and modern German version of the complete *Liber illuministarum*. The compendious text is a remarkable and indispensable resource for the study of medieval artistic practice.



Fig. 43.
Passion Altarpiece (detail), 1455-1460, Brussels; Ternant, Church of St Roch
and Our Lady of the Assumption
Crucifixion, applied brocade on the garment of a male figure beneath the Cross

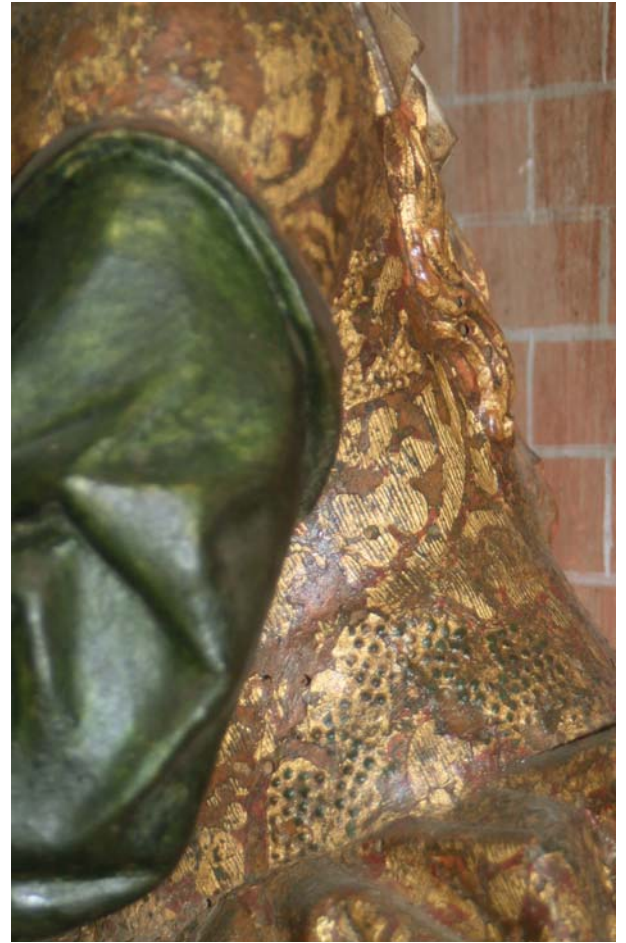


Fig. 44.
Passion Altarpiece (detail); Ternant
Lamentation, applied brocade with raised dots
on Mary Magdalene's gown

MORPHOLOGICAL MATTERS

THE TYPE, SIZE, RELIEF AND DESIGN OF APPLIED BROCADE

This chapter examines the various types of applied brocade, all of which will be encountered in this book. Throughout the fifteenth century in the Low Countries and well beyond, artists employed these illusory textile imitations to add luxury and splendour to panel paintings, murals and sculpture. Yet no surviving historical document gives a name to the applied brocade technique.

The term ‘applied brocade’ (*geperst brokaat, brocart appliqué, brocado aplicado*), useful if not entirely adequate, was derived from the German *Pressbrokat*,¹ introduced in the 1960s by Thomas Brachert,² and soon came to be accepted. As understanding of the diverse aspects of this polychromy technique grew, however, the term became increasingly unsatisfactory. From at least the late fourteenth century the word ‘brocade’ was used to describe silks woven with supplementary pattern threads. In his *Trattorio dell arte* (1584) Giovanni Paolo Lomazzo used *broccati* as a generic term alluding not to a specific technique or weaving method but rather to any silk textile that incorporated gold and silver thread.³ Etymologically, the word ‘brocade’ can perhaps be linked to the French *brochié*, or ‘needlework’, subsequently translated into the Italian *broccato*.⁴ In principle, therefore, the term ‘applied brocade’ should be limited to imitations of silks woven with metal thread. In practice the technique was just as useful for mimicking embroidery and various sorts of non-woven trimmings, and ‘applied brocade’ was employed not only to reproduce the entire silk textile represented, but also the individual motif.

All applied brocades are made with tin foil, though not all tin foil decorations are applied brocades (a flat decoration, not cast in a mould, cannot be called an

applied brocade). Differences in structure and fabrication also occur. A number of examples in the present catalogue lack a fill material, for instance. And in the Strängnäs *Altarpiece of the Virgin* called Strängnäs III (cat. S5) the tin foil was probably given its striated design not by beating it into an engraved mould but by tamping it onto a piece of coarsely woven fabric. Jilleen Nadolny, who has tackled the terminology, proposed the term ‘tin-relief’ to denote applications cast in moulds using tin foil as a substrate, and more specifically ‘tin-relief textiles’ for the imitation of brocades and embroidery.⁵ However, while taking into account the terminology’s limitations as well as the inclusion in the catalogue of borderline cases that defy easy definition, we decided to retain ‘applied brocade’ for the purposes of this publication. Under this denominator fall very diverse models that can be subdivided according to different criteria.

Our starting point was a corpus of applied brocades produced in the Low Countries and presently conserved in and beyond Belgium. On the basis of this corpus we tried to define the essential characteristics by which the various types can be categorized. Place of production did not prove a useful criterion; applied brocade was not a regional speciality but a widely used technique. Although brocades survive on works attributed to artists or workshops in practically every urban centre in the Southern Netherlands, and skilled artists from Brabant (Brussels, Antwerp,

¹ Frinta was the first to make a study of the technique, calling it ‘appliqué relief brocade’. FRINTA 1963: 136.

² BRACHERT 1964: 37-47.

³ AVIGNON 1997: 31; DUIJS 2008: 31.

⁴ DUIJS 2008: 32.

⁵ NADOLNY 1996: 42-43; NADOLNY 2003: 183, nn. 1, 5; NADOLNY 2009: 40.

Leuven, Mechelen), Flanders (Bruges and Ghent), and the Hainaut and Meuse regions were very familiar with the procedure and were ingenious in its use, it is none the less impossible to speak of regional types, as if a particular town or region used its own characteristic applied brocades. The mobility of artists and, indeed, of patterns (some of which appear in locations as far apart as Germany and Aragon), and the collaboration between various workshops, exemplified by the Mechelen and Brussels ateliers that jointly produced the output of Master I*T, show that this kind of work was not defined by city limits or regional borders. On the other hand, morphological traits such as shape, size and relief, and stylistic categories based on design are distinctive features that can be used to create a broad referential framework.⁶

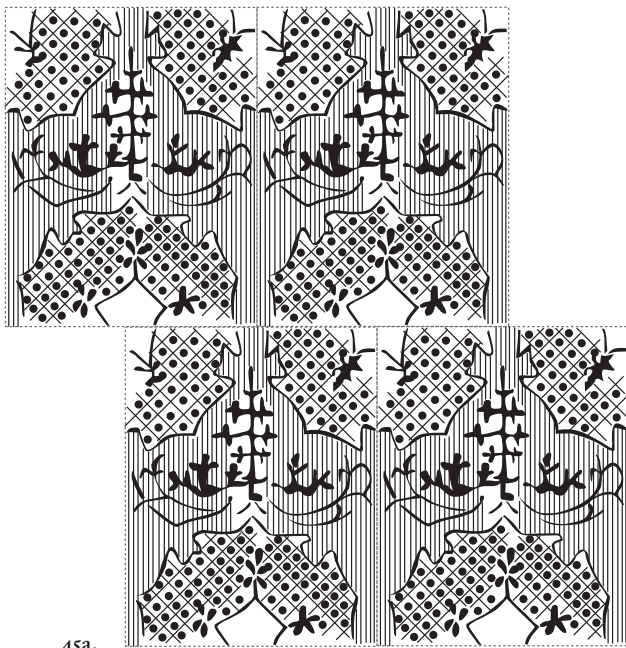
While defining categories makes it easier to follow certain changes it is not always possible to make clear-cut distinctions between examples or neatly place every brocade in this subdivision or that. Moreover, given the vast amount of material lost to bad restoration and stripping or concealed beneath layers of over-paint, our catalogue represents only a tiny fraction of the original complement of works to which these textile simulacra were applied, and surviving examples may not be characteristic of the production as a whole. Our understanding of the variants and varieties is necessarily conditional.

Type: the three types of applied brocade, continuous, local and braid

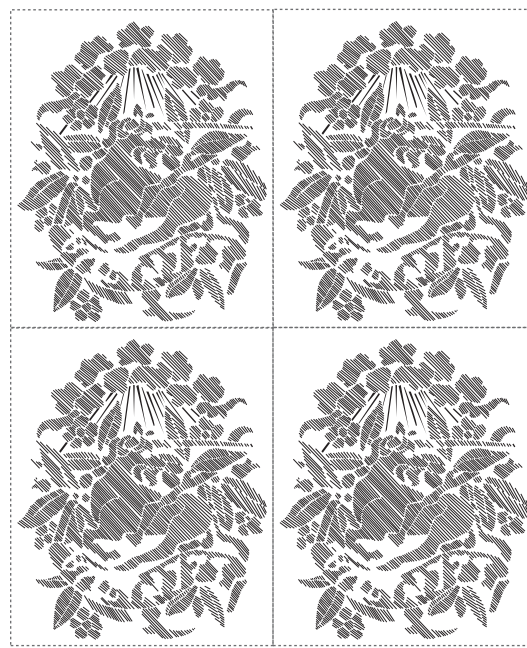
A subdivision of applied brocade into three easily distinguishable categories – continuous, local, and braid – is based on the shape and arrangement of the tin foil sheets. In the Low Countries the applied brocade that was integrated into panel paintings was predominantly the continuous type.⁷ In sculpture, wall painting and architectural polychromy all three types occur, continuous and local applied brocades being the norm in the earliest period and applied brocade braid appearing somewhat later. In our catalogue, continuous brocades represent 50%, local brocades 41%, and braids 9%.

Continuous applied brocade

Continuous applied brocade is produced in sheets that are square or rectangular in shape, and which are glued onto the support layer edge to edge in straight or staggered rows to cover a whole surface, thus reproducing an entire fabric, be it a cloth of estate or a sumptuous garment (figs. 42a-b). Usually the pattern extends to the edges of the tin foil, occupying the entire sheet, and its repetition creates horizontal, vertical or serpentine compositions. This type of applied brocade was especially useful for rendering cloths of honour, splendidly emphasizing the characters in front, as exemplified by the dorsers behind the three principal figures in the Ghent altarpiece (cat. 37.1, cat. 37.2), or the rear wall of the Ytterselö altarpiece case (cat. SII.1, cat. SII.2).



45a.



45b.

Fig. 45a.
Continuous applied
brocade, sheets
applied in staggered
rows
Passion Altarpiece,
1480-1490, Brussels;
Barnard Castle,
Bowes Museum

Fig. 45b.
Continuous applied
brocade, sheets
applied in straight
rows (cat. 37.2)

⁶ Certain components, such as the filler, tin foil, gilding and adhesive, are analysed in more detail in Chapter Ten.

⁷ In other regions panel paintings were embellished with local applied brocades as well.

Local applied brocades

Local applied brocades may occur as polygonal sheets or be trimmed to closely follow the shape of the motif and tend to be arranged at regular or random intervals on a painted surface (fig. 46a). They simulate the individual motif, woven or embroidered in gold thread, and work by interaction with the painted background, which represents the basic ground of the textile. By treating the background in various ways with glazes and additional decorative elements such as little metal cupules or fleurs de lis many different effects could be achieved. For practical reasons – the complexity of the pattern, its small size, or its construction from diverse discrete elements – the excess tin foil around a local brocade was not always trimmed away. Leaving this margin of tin foil around the motif, as in the fully striated flowers on the Dortmund *Passion Altarpiece* (cat. G2.3), made the brocade easier to handle (fig. 43b). In the Low Countries local applied brocades were used mainly in the embellishing of sculpture, but they occasionally occur in architectural polychromy too.

Braid

Braid is the third type, added to continuous and local applied brocade⁸ by Agnès Cascio and Juliette Lévy.⁹ Strips of brocade are joined end-to-end and the design follows the length of the strip. Braid usually occurs as an edging or trim. Most of the surviving examples, such as the extraordinarily refined edgings and the orphrey on the *Saluzzo Altarpiece* (cat. 19.9, cat. 19.10) (fig. 47a), date from around 1500 and come from the workshop of Master I*T,¹⁰ but the complex ‘embroidery’ on the stole of the earlier *St Cornelius* in Bruges (cat. 14.1) suggests that this kind of decoration might well have been in use some decades before this. The simulated trimmings in Antwerp Cathedral (cat. 11.1, cat. 11.2) and the decorative strips on the ceiling of the Oosterlingenhuis in Bruges (cat. 17.1) are still other variations of this category (fig. 47b).

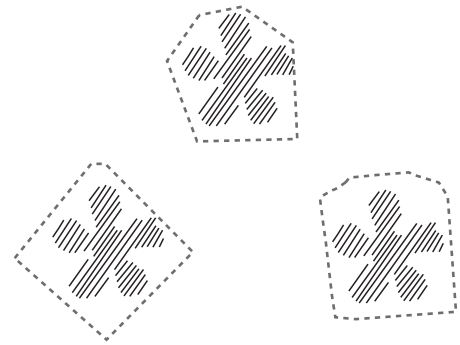
Fig. 46a.
Local applied brocade
trimmed around
the motif (cat. 5.3)



Fig. 46b
Local applied brocades with
untrimmed edges
(cat. G2.3)

46a.

46b.



47a.



Fig. 47a.
Applied brocade
braid (cat. 19.9)

Fig. 47b.
Applied brocade strip
(cat. 17.1)



47b.

⁸ SERCK 1990: 37.

⁹ CASCIO, LÉVY 2002: 136.

¹⁰ Idem.

Size: small, medium, large and extra-large

The size of applied brocades ranges from less than 2 centimetres, like the tiny stars of the *Saluzzo Altarpiece* (cat. 19.9) and the leaf motif of the *Zoutleeuw Passion Altarpiece* (cat. 64.2), to over 30 centimetres like the brocades used in the architectural polychromy in the sacristy of 'Het Pand' in Ghent (cat. 41.1) and the *Oosterlingenhuis* in Bruges (cat. 17.1).

Based on the catalogue, four sizes of applied brocade have been formulated: small, medium, large, and extra-large. Of 114 different models for which dimensions were available, almost half are less than 7 centimetres in any dimension.

	Size	114 models
Small	<= 7cm	43.9%
Medium	> 7cm <= 14cm	33.3%
Large	> 14cm <= 21cm	20.2%
Extra-large	> 21cm	2.6%

The brocades do not come in standard sizes, nor is there an evolution towards larger or smaller brocades as time goes on. They are generally proportionate to the size of the surface they cover, apparently with little account taken of the distance from which they were to be seen, or so the brocades found on sculptures belonging to high triumphal crosses – those in Halle (cat. 43) and Leuven (cat. 45), for instance – or on the robe of God the Father in the Trinity on Mattheüs de Layens's monumental sacrament tower in Leuven (c.1450, Church of St Peter) would seem to suggest.

Relief: striations, contours and flat zones

The illusionistic effect of applied brocade is largely determined by the different heights of the relief. The profile of an applied brocade might combine striations (convex-concave-convex) with flat areas, possibly a higher convex contour line, and perhaps still other elements in relief such as latticing, raised dots or zig-zags. This varied structure absorbs and reflects light in different ways, influencing the depth and brilliance of the brocade and producing a persuasive three-dimensional effect. The height of the relief and the density and direction of the striations were crucial to the simulation of rich velvet brocade, to producing an illusion that would have been extremely convincing in the diffuse light in which the brocade-adorned work would originally have been seen.

The number of striations in an area of relief may be as high as twenty-two per centimetre. In most

models the sequence is extremely compact and fairly regular with at least ten striations per centimetre. In the majority of models all the striations are vertical. In another large group they are aligned in different directions, creating dynamic and contrasting effects within the motif itself. In a small number of cases, principally from the early part of the period, the striations are uniformly diagonal – for instance in the patterns of the *Adoration of the Lamb* altarpiece in Ghent and the *Dortmund Passion Altarpiece*. Patterns with horizontal striations only – striations that conform to the direction of the weft, in other words – are rare. Perhaps horizontal striations did not achieve the same suggestion of depth. The creators of applied brocade were more concerned with subtle optical effect and suggestion than the literal representation of a weaving technique.¹¹

The structure of the relief provides a criterion for a typological classification but it really requires in-depth examination with the binocular microscope. Wivine Wailliez has distinguished a 'Tegernsee type', a 'relief pattern' and a 'mixed pattern' (see Chapter Nine). In some continuous applied brocades both the Tegernsee type and the relief pattern can be identified with a real and specific silk textile. In a broader sense the terms can sometimes also be applied to local applied brocades and braids.

Patterns with striations and flat zones

In these patterns, which appear on both continuous and local applied brocades, striated zones alternate with flat zones. The striations are the only kind of relief; there is no raised contour or border. The whole sheet was gilded; the flat zones were then very often highlighted with coloured glaze or paint, thus accentuating the motif formed by the gold striations. In local applied brocades the flat zones were usually painted to match the background to which the brocades were applied. In both continuous and local brocades the gilded striations of the motif reflect the light more strongly and are thus perceived as being higher than the coloured background, as in the continuous applied brocades of the *St John the Baptist* in Abbeville (cat. F1) (fig. 48a) or the local brocades on the gown of the Virgin in the *Altarpiece of the Holy Family with St Catherine* in Zoutleeuw (cat. 63) (fig. 48b). Wivine Wailliez has called this kind of pattern the 'Tegernsee type',¹² after the description in the *Liber illuministarum* from Tegernsee Abbey.

¹¹ See also MONNAS 2000: 150.

¹² See Chapter Nine.

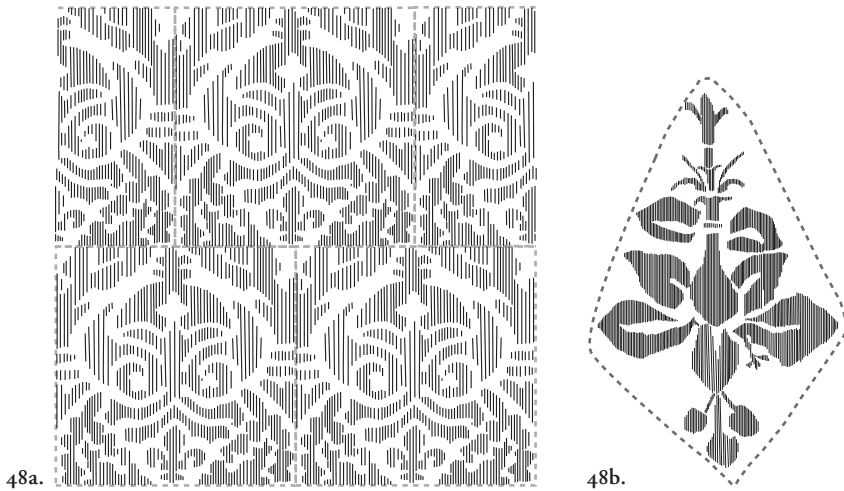


Fig. 48a.
Continuous applied
brocade with
striations and flat
zones (cat. F1.1)

Fig. 48b.
Local applied brocade
with striations and
flat zones (cat. 63.2)

Patterns entirely in relief: the relief pattern

These patterns are made up entirely of elements in relief, fully striated, with no flat zones (fig. 49a-b). Local brocades and braids are frequently rendered in this way, the predominating gold of the relief causing the painted background to which they are applied to recede. In the fully striated braids produced by the I*T workshop the motif is reserved in the paint applied over the gilded striations. Alternatively, the motif, or particular parts of the motif, may be emphasized by a delineating contour and lines in relief, and

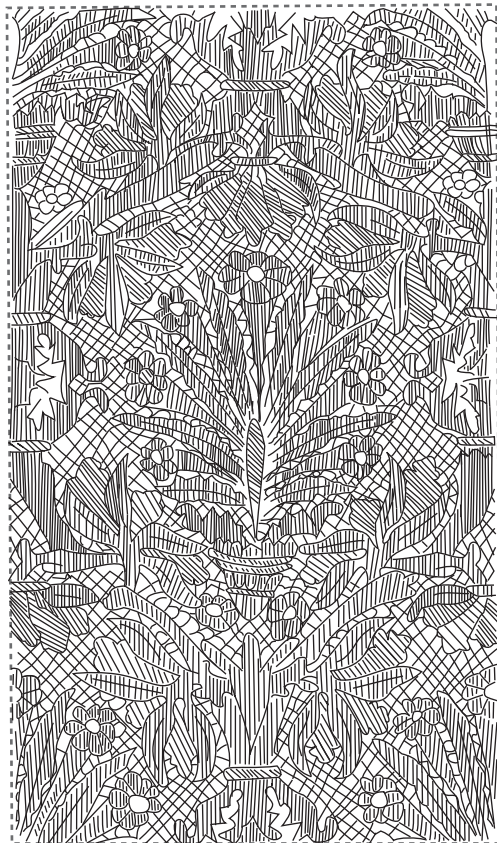


Fig. 49a.
Continuous applied
brocade with relief
pattern (cat. 19.1)

Fig. 49b.
Local applied brocade
with relief pattern
(cat. 19.6)

Fig. 49c.
Local applied brocade
with excision in
the relief pattern
(cat. S10.3)

49a.

sometimes further highlighted with colour. For instance, the veins of leaf-like elements are often rendered in extra relief on top of the striations, as occurs in the local brocades of the *Mass of St Gregory* (cat. 25.1). Or sections of the tin foil might be cut out, as happens in the centre of the leaf motif in the *Villberga Passion Altarpiece* (cat. S10.3) (fig. 49c). Damage, coloured highlighting, later polychromy and overpaint often make it difficult to distinguish excisions from flat zones in the tin foil and thus to tell a relief pattern from a 'Tegernsee type'.

As noted above, in some local applied brocades the excess foil around the motif is not trimmed off, so that a flat margin of tin foil is left. This margin is not a 'flat zone' and is not part of the pattern as such. Only the relief structure of the motif itself counts. A local applied brocade like this is therefore not a Tegernsee type but a relief pattern.

When a continuous applied brocade has few or possibly no flat zones a highlighted contour distinguishes the striated motif proper from its striated and gilded background. This type was very prevalent between around 1465 and 1480, when cloth of gold with a fine pile velvet motif was to be represented, for instance. The pattern with the posy of flowers and lanceolate leaves on the *Saluzzo Altarpiece* (cat. 19.1) is a good example (fig. 49a).

The artist's unlimited imagination allied to his pragmatism produced interesting variations, such as the stippled fabric (tooled with a dot punch after demoulding) that occurs on the *Antwerp Passion Altarpiece* (cat. 5.1) and the *Saluzzo Altarpiece* (cat. 19.2), or the applied brocade on the *Altarpiece of the Virgin* called *Strängnäs III* (cat. S5.1), where the tin foil, cast by tamping it onto coarse linen or hessian, is painted with a linear pattern. In the light of such creativity it is virtually impossible to devise a convenient typology that encompasses every individual brocade.



49b.



49c.

Patterns with striations, flat zones and lines in relief: the mixed pattern

In mixed patterns gilded striated zones defined by a line in relief alternate with low flat zones. This is a large group that includes both local and continuous applied brocades. The mixed pattern is distinguished from the Tegernsee type by the addition of raised contours, as on the cloak of the *St Ursula* from the Convent of the Sisters of St John in Bruges (cat. 16) (fig. 50b). The lines in relief clearly define the striated motif and strengthen the contrast between the flat zones and the relief. In the local brocade representing the initial 'M' on the ceiling boards of the palace of Margaret of Austria in Mechelen (cat. 56) the narrow flat zone and the contours in relief enhance the effect of depth and shadow. The floral textile design of the Geel Master of the *Dianthus* is composed of a striated background and a motif that incorporates a raised contour, plateaus and raised dots. This combination of heights makes for a convincing imitation of plain cut-velvet motifs against a brocaded or *lancé* gold background (see cat. 35 and Chapter Nine) (fig. 50a).

Design: animals, plants, geometric and miscellaneous motifs

Applied brocades were chosen not only for their texture but also for their pattern and colour. Their ornamentation reflects technological developments in silk-making at a time when extravagant silk velvets enriched with gold thread demonstrated an

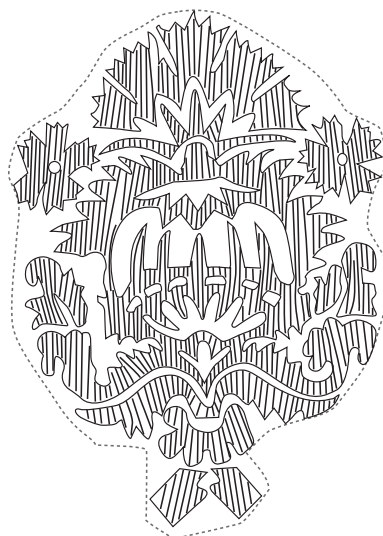
extraordinary level of accomplishment. Some patterns are akin to or derived from real contemporary patterned silks; others spring entirely from the artist's imagination.¹³ Usually, fictive 'fabrics' were created, based on but rarely identical to actual textile designs. The various designs reflect the patterning of fashionable contemporary fabrics. A distinction can be made between animal designs, floral and foliate designs, geometric designs and those that fall into the 'miscellaneous' category. They did not follow one another in a linear trend; the styles were concurrent and largely overlapping.

Animal designs

Designs incorporating animals or birds – eagles, hawks, parrot-like birds, rampant lions, deer and hounds – are largely derived from the ornamentation of fourteenth-century lampas silks. These motifs were seldom used individually but in combination with foliage, palmettes, clouds, sunbursts and banderoles. They are taken from what Anne Wardwell describes as the 'realistic style' in contemporary textile design, which was derived from the natural world and reached its full development between around 1400 and 1430.¹⁴ Animal designs were especially popular in the first half of the fifteenth century. In the Low Countries they appear in the applied brocades that form the background to Robert Campin's *Crucified Thief* (cat. G3.1) and the dorsers behind the three principal figures of the Van Eycks' *Adoration of the Lamb* altarpiece (cat. 37). The 'Campin' palmette and parrot-like



50a.



50b.

Fig. 50a.
Continuous applied
brocade with mixed
pattern (cat. 35.1)

Fig. 50b.
Local applied brocade
with mixed pattern
(cat. 16.1)

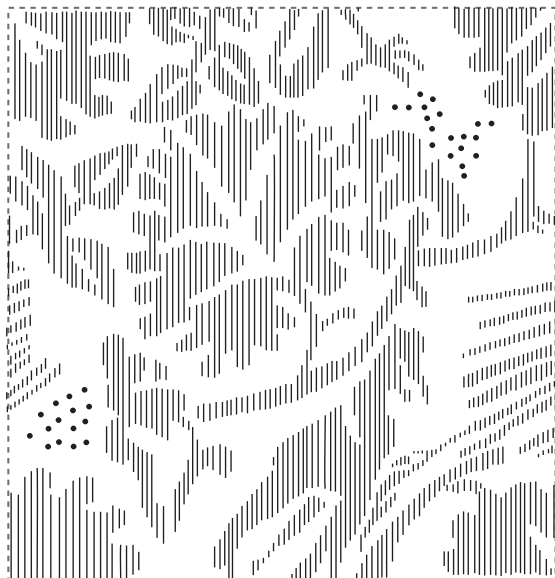
¹³ According to Rembrandt Duits most pictorial representations are painters' fictive creations. DUIS 2008: 16.

¹⁴ WARDWELL 1976-1977: 206-207.

Fig. 51a.
Applied brocade
with animal design
Passion Altarpiece;
Ternant
Lamentation,
garment of
a male figure

Fig. 51b.
Applied brocade with
animal design
Dormition,
1450-1460, Brabant;
Autun, Musée Rolin

51a.



51b.



bird in the Ternant *Passion Altarpiece* also comes into this category. It occurs on the garments of the centurion to the right of the Cross in the Crucifixion and the man in the background in the Lamentation (fig. 51a).¹⁵ In the applied brocades on the two carved groups representing the *Dormition* and *Coronation of the Virgin* (1450-1460; Autun, Musée Rolin),¹⁶ which come from the same Brabantine retable, the rampant lion is separated from the stooping eagle by the thick leafy branch (fig. 51b). These compositions are neatly and lucidly constructed with a fine balance between relief and flat zones, pattern and background, gold leaf and colour. The diagonal division of the design is taken from a fourteenth-century Italian silk, which was itself derived from Chinese textiles.¹⁷

Among the examples of animal designs from beyond the Low Countries are those on the tabard worn by St Valerian on the Rhenish *Crucifixion Triptych* by the Master of the Kirchsahr Altarpiece (1425-1430, Cologne; Cologne, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum, see p. 48) and the angel-supported textile in Master Francke's *Man of Sorrows with Angels* (c.1435, Hamburg; Hamburg, Kunsthalle, see p. 52). After 1460 animal designs make only an occasional appearance in applied brocades produced in the Low Countries, where they were superseded by ornamentation based on plants and flowers. This reflects a trend in textile design – the last documents to refer to fabrics patterned in the realistic style date from the third quarter of the fifteenth century.

Floral and foliate designs

Floral and foliate designs developed more or less simultaneously with animal patterns. The design of the braids of Master I*T, the Oosterlingenhuis, and Antwerp Cathedral comprises curving stems, acanthus leaves, arabesques and volutes. Stylized motifs with lobed or dentate leaves appear frequently in the catalogue. In the Brussels *Nativity Altarpiece* in Berlin (1470-1480; Bode-Museum)¹⁸ the canopy, bedspread and altar cloth are covered with applied brocades consisting of fully striated tin sheets on which bunches of flowers appear to be stencilled (fig. 52a). The pomegranate that gradually developed from the lotus and palmette motifs was as prominent in the ornamentation of applied brocade as it was in textile design. The thistle and artichoke, pine cone or pineapple, were the basis from which numerous variations evolved,¹⁹ often appearing as local brocades. In Rogier van der Weyden's *Last Judgement* (c.1443, Beaune, Hôtel Dieu; cat. F2) the pomegranate motif is combined with foliage and twining stems (fig. 52b). These sophisticated pomegranate designs became especially successful from the second half of the fifteenth century. In the symmetrical pattern of the Antwerp *Annunciation Altarpiece* (cat. 4) the pomegranate motif is joined with vine leaves or dianthus flowers.

A considerable number of floral designs are built up of staggered rows of palmettes and/or rosettes. In the continuous applied brocades of the Dortmund

¹⁵ KAGAN, GÉRARD, GÉRARD-BENDELÉ 2002: 245.

¹⁶ GUILLOT DE SUDUIRAUT 2002b: 216-217.

¹⁷ MARKOWSKY 1976: 49.

¹⁸ DE BOODT 2005: 189.

¹⁹ BONITO FANELLI 1993: 507.

Passion Altarpiece (c.1420-1425; cat. G2.1) the palmette-like motifs alternate with flowers and curling leaves. In the Entombment depicted on the Ternant *Passion Altarpiece* (1455-1460), the green ground of Joseph of Arimathea's garment backs a design of multilobed rosettes alternating with palmette-like motifs (fig. 53a), a design that is very closely related to the contemporary painted cloth of honour behind the *Virgo Lactans* from the workshop of Rogier van der Weyden (c.1451; Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum).²⁰ The same kind of designs can still be seen in the cloths of honour depicted in the Passion retables of Dinslaken (c.1480; cat. G1.1) (fig. 53b) and Barnard Castle (c.1485).

The applied brocade repertoire also includes large serpentine patterns. The drooping main flower is sometimes accompanied by dianthus flowers and daisies, vine leaves, rosehips and lilies – flora that occupied a special place in medieval plant symbolism.²¹ The asymmetrical pattern on the garment of the male figure beneath the Cross in the Crucifixion in the Ternant *Passion Altarpiece* is ingeniously conceived

and used in staggered rows (figs. 54a, 43). The slightly raised stemwork provides a counterweight to the flower that curves away from it. The balanced patterns on the Vadstena *Virgin and Child* (cat. S8.1), the garment of Mary Magdalene in the Ternant *Passion Altarpiece* Lamentation, the rear wall of the Ytterselö *Altarpiece of the Virgin* (cat. S11.1) (fig. 54b), and in the oeuvres of the Geel Master of the Dianthus and the Master of the View of St Gudule (fig. 54c), illustrate a continuity of design and indicate a popularity that lasted several decades. On the other hand, clarity of design has been lost in the applied brocade on the statue of *St Helena* in Zoutleeuw (cat. 61.1), where legibility is obscured by the accumulation of motifs.

Symmetrical compositions structured around a central axis with a central motif in a circular, oval or ogival field of curving twigs, twining stems or intercut foliage make up a separate category, exemplified by the black-highlighted pattern on the rear wall of the *Altarpiece of the Virgin* in Ytterselö (cat. S11.2). The central stylized cusped-foilage motif on the lining of

Fig. 54a. ▶ Applied brocade with serpentine pattern incorporating a floral motif
Passion Altarpiece; Ternant Crucifixion, garment of a male figure beneath the Cross

Fig. 54b. ▶ Applied brocade with serpentine dianthus pattern (cat. S11.1)

Fig. 54c. ▶ Applied brocade with serpentine dianthus pattern (cat. S8.1)



52a.



52b.

Fig. 52a. ▶ Applied brocade with floral and foliate design
Nativity Altarpiece, 1470-1480, Brussels; Berlin, Bode Museum
Bed hanging

Fig. 52b. ▶ Applied brocade with floral and foliate design (cat. F2.1)



53a.



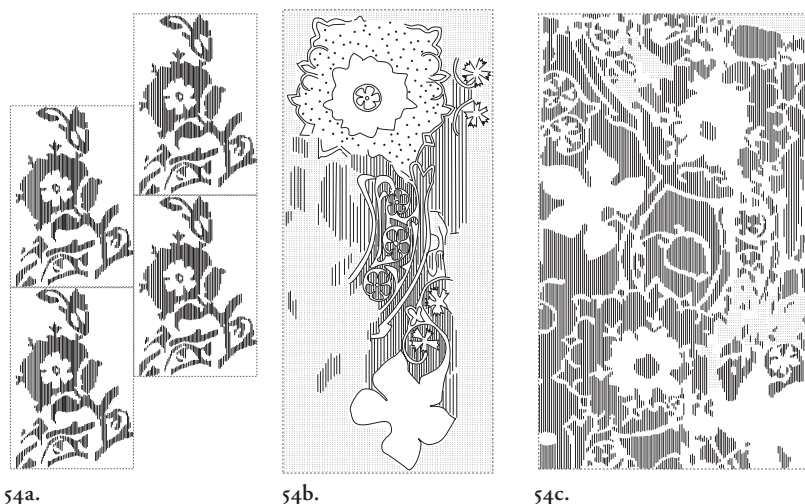
53b.

Fig. 53a. ▶ Applied brocade with multilobed rosettes
Passion Altarpiece; Ternant Entombment, Joseph of Arimathea's garment

Fig. 53b. ▶ Applied brocade with multilobed rosettes (cat. G1.1)

²⁰ FRANKFURT-BERLIN 2008: 313-316.

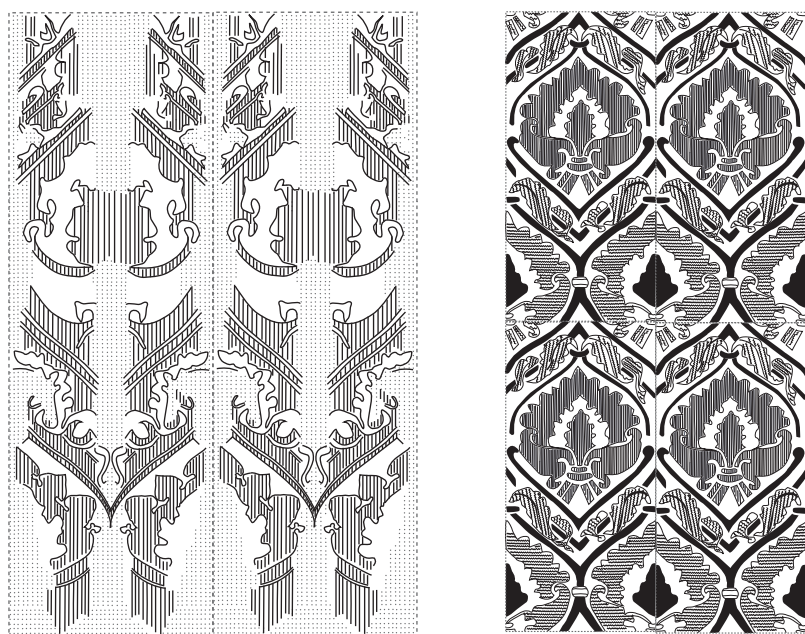
²¹ KOCH 1964: 70-78.



54a.

54b.

54c.



55a.

55b.

Fig. 55a.
Applied brocade
with ogival fields
(cat. S8.2)

Fig. 55b.
Applied brocade
with ogival fields
(cat. 63.1)

the Vadstena Virgin's cloak (cat. S8.2) (fig. 55a) and later on the rear wall of the Zoutleeuw *Altarpiece of the Holy Family with St Catherine* (cat. 63.1) (fig. 55b) was also frequently used in Tuscan painting.²²

In the elegantly ornamented cloth of gold in which Master I*T clad several of the carved figures of the *Saluzzo Altarpiece* (cat. 19.1), for example, the posy of flowers is encompassed by an ogival network of flowering stems. This pattern bears a striking resemblance to that of a late-fifteenth-century Florentine lampas weave chasuble now in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London (ill. 19.1e).²³

²² MONNAS 2008: 52.

²³ Ibid. 64. There is a similar design on the chasuble illustrated in SANTANGELO 1959: pl. 43.

The applied brocade on the cloth of honour of the Skepptuna *Altarpiece of the Virgin* (cat. S2.1) has a similar design, but what remains of the motif in the centre of a wreath of lanceolate leaves is too little for identification. There is what seems to be another example on the rear wall of a domestic altarpiece depicting the Lamentation, St John, and Mary Magdalene from the former Schoufour-Martin collection (1500-1510; Rotterdam, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen),²⁴ although the many losses make any identification hazardous.

Geometric designs

Geometric designs of simple abstract motifs such as lozenges and diamond heads occur on a number of sculptures presumed to come from the Meuse region, on the *Virgin and Child 'Causa Nostrae Laetitiae'* in the Basilica of Our Lady of the Nativity in Tongeren (cat. 60.2) and the *St Lambert* now in the KMG-MRAH in Brussels (cat. 32.1). The quatrefoils on the braid that trims the hems of several figures on the Skepptuna *Altarpiece of the Virgin* (cat. S2.2) and the stippled fabric on the Antwerp *Passion Altarpiece* (cat. 5.1) can also be classed among the geometric patterns.

Miscellaneous designs

Motifs that fail to fit into any of the three previous categories are grouped here. Among them are designs that incorporate human figures, such as those on saints' orphreys (cat. 14.1, cat. 19.10), the beaming stars of the *Saluzzo Altarpiece* (cat. 19.8), and the initials on the boards from the ceiling of the former palace of Margaret of Austria (cat. 56.1).

This wealth of shape, size, and design testifies to the immense creativity of the artists and craftsmen and of course such diversity cannot always be conveniently categorized. Nevertheless, the morphological and stylistic criteria established here were useful in handling the abundance of data synthesized in the catalogue and also offer a tool for use in further research and study.

I.G.

²⁴ VAN VLIJERDEN 2008: 167-168.



NETWORKING IN BRUSSELS

A FLORAL TEXTILE DESIGN IN A GROUP OF
CARVED ALTARPIECES WITH PAINTED WINGS, 1480-1500¹

The representation of textiles was a significant aspect of medieval painting and sculpture. Luxury cloths were an essential part of noble life. Adorning the person and embellishing the interior, they were visible indicators of status and wealth in both the secular and the ecclesiastical realm, and their recognizable and realistic depiction was a challenge to the artist and craftsman.

As we have seen in Chapter One, for well over a century prefabricated ornament made in a mould was one method by which sumptuous silks and cloths of gold were imitated in art. In sculpture this method continued to be used throughout the fifteenth century, but in painting it fell out of fashion, and by the late 1440s, painters in the Low Countries had seemingly abandoned prefabricated decoration, including applied brocade, which with its relief and use of different materials broke the surface unity of their work, in favour of the solutions made possible by oil paint.

At the end of the fifteenth century, however, applied brocade made a comeback in a number of painted wings of carved altarpieces from Brussels. Studying the applied brocades on these wings led us to consider a network of collaboration and influence between various artists as well as between the various crafts – painters, carvers, polychromers – involved in altarpiece production. Indeed, we identified the same applied brocade, actually made in the same mould, on diverse painted wings. The same design was also repeated in brocades made in other moulds, and it appeared yet again in the polychromy of the carved parts of the various altarpieces, though rendered in another technique which we have called ‘line gilding’. We tried to determine which artists used applied brocade and how the same design came to circulate in

this group of retables, and also to clarify the extent to which a textile design could be used as an aid to attribution. The technical study was therefore coupled with a stylistic study.

Thirty-eight wing panels (coming from eleven altarpieces) on which applied brocade was used were found during the project.² Thirty of the panels are still attached to their carved centre section. The other eight have become detached at some stage, but they too would most probably have closed over altarpieces filled with carved scenes. On the exterior side of each panel a saint is portrayed before an applied brocade cloth of honour that very often hangs on a stone wall (fig. 56). Most of the saints are shown outdoors, standing on a flowery sward or seated on a bench along the wall; some appear indoors, enthroned. The iconic representation of the saints provides a contrast to the narrative character of the story revealed on the inside of the altarpieces (where these still exist), which are generally devoted to the Infancy or Passion of Christ or the Life of the Virgin.

The representation of a saint before a cloth of honour is not in itself unusual. In the Low Countries such images were widely produced throughout the fifteenth century. A single saint was a common subject

◀ Fig. 56.

Altarpiece of the Life of the Virgin and the Infancy of Christ, carving: c.1475-1480; painted wings and polychromy: c.1485-1490, Brussels; Rouen, Musée départemental des Antiquités de la Seine-Maritime

Wings closed (cat. F3)
© Musée départemental des Antiquités de la Seine-Maritime, Rouen

¹ We thank Hélène Dubois, Pierre-Yves Kairis, Cyriel Stroo and Emile Van Binnebeke for their critical reading of this chapter.

² To these works can be added three wing panels from the dismembered Oisquercq Altarpiece (KMSKB-MRBAB), recently published in DUBOIS, SLACHMUYLDERS 2009: 187-206. They are thought to have been produced in Brussels around 1500. Although none of the applied brocades in our catalogue match the ones on these wings, cat. Fl.1 is similar.

for the exterior side of carved altarpiece wings, often appearing in grisaille, sculpture-like in a niche, or in a tiled interior or a landscape. And some have a rich hanging behind them, but in the very great majority of these cases the cloths of honour are painted rather than rendered in applied brocade. In the late-fifteenth-century Low Countries the use of applied brocade seems to be particular to panels painted by the Master of the View of St Gudule and the circle of Brussels painters who orbited around him, such as the Master of the Corkscrew Curl.³

The Master of the View of St Gudule takes his provisional name from the so-called *Instruction pastorale* or *Preaching of St Géry*, now in the Louvre, in which the Brussels Church of St Gudule can be seen in the background. Apparently active from the 1470s onwards, his work is characterized by the general features of the Brussels school: brightly coloured clothing, typical vegetation in the foreground, background landscapes of hills and cities. Nevertheless, his work is distinguished by particularly expressive compositions and an individual style whose origin seems to lie outside the circle of Brussels painters. The exaggerated and vivid side of this style and the graphic aspect of his execution appear to draw inspiration from German engraving.⁴ The Master of the View of St Gudule was the principal figure in a stylistic trend that developed in Brussels in the last decades of the fifteenth century. Colijn de Coter and Jan II van Coninxloo were likewise major Brussels painters whose workshops also specialized in the production of painted wings for carved altarpieces.⁵

In the course of the project, the applied brocade designs on these altarpiece wing panels were systematically recorded, in most cases in situ though in other cases necessarily on the basis of photographs. Three groups were formed, based on the different designs.

GROUP 1 (one mould)

The same continuous applied brocade recurs on twenty panels on or from five altarpieces, in each case forming a cloth of honour behind a saint; the same mould was probably used in every case (fig. 57, see also Table B).

- the *Passion Altarpiece* in the Church of St Dymphna, Geel (cat. 35.1)
- the *Altarpiece of the Life of the Virgin and the Infancy of Christ* in the Musée départemental des Antiquités de la Seine-Maritime, Rouen (cat. F3.1)
- the *Passion Altarpiece* called Strängnäs II in Strängnäs Cathedral (cat. S4.1)
- three wing panels from a Passion altarpiece (with SS Catherine, Barbara and George on the exterior sides) in Queens' College, Cambridge
- the *St Sebastian* panel in a private collection

The second group presents very similar continuous brocades which were clearly inspired by the same textile design as the group 1 brocade, but were made in different moulds.

GROUP 2 (one or two moulds)

The same design appears on five panels from two altarpieces, in each case forming a cloth of honour behind a saint (fig. 58):

- the *St Mark / Pentecost* panel in Loppem Castle (cat. 52.1)
- the *Passion Altarpiece* in the Hospitalkapelle in Stassfurt (cat. G5.1)

Applied brocades closely resembling those of Loppem and Stassfurt also occur on the statue of the *Virgin and Child* in Vadstena abbey church (cat. S8.1) and the case of the *Altarpiece of the Virgin with SS Botvid and Eskil* in Ytterselö parish church (cat. S11.1). These were also made in two different moulds.

The applied brocades in groups 1 and 2 are all around 17 × 9 centimetres. The density of the relief varies, however: around 8 striations per centimetre in group 1; 10 or 12 striations per centimetre in group 2.

³ The recurrence of applied brocade cloths of honour in the oeuvre of the Master of the View of St Gudule and his circle has already been noted by a number of authors, but there has been no comprehensive study.

⁴ DUBOIS 1989: 44-45, 47-52.

⁵ ENGELLAU-GULLANDER 1992; PÉRIER-D'ETEREN 2000.



Fig. 57
Passion Altarpiece (detail), c.1490, Brussels; Geel, Church of St Dymphna (cat. 35)
 Applied brocade on the cloth of honour behind St Adrian

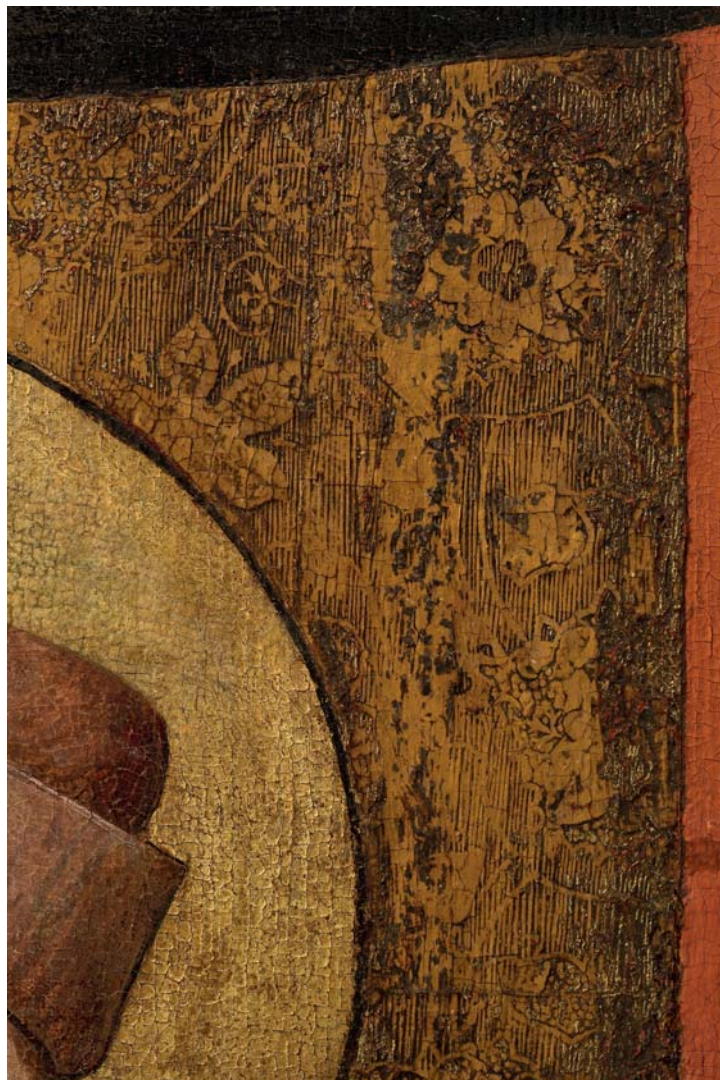


Fig. 58
St Mark (detail), 1480-1500, Brabant(?), Picardy(?); Loppem, Loppem Castle
 (cat. 52)
 Applied brocade on the cloth of honour behind St Mark

The third group consists of the remaining thirteen wing panels in the corpus. These are embellished with continuous brocades which, as far as we have been able to determine, appear nowhere else.

GROUP 3 (five moulds)

Five different designs of continuous applied brocade on thirteen panels from five altarpieces, in each case forming a cloth of honour; a different mould was used in each case:

- the *St Luke / Ascension* panel in Loppem Castle (cat. 52.2) (one design)
- the *Christ before Pilate / St George* panel in the Amuso (municipal museum), Oudenaarde (cat. 58.1 and 58.2) (two different designs)
- the *John the Baptist* panel in the Musée Boucher de Perthes, Abbeville (cat. FI.1) (one design)
- the six wings of the *Passion Altarpiece* in the Church of St Vincent, Dinslaken (cat. GI.1) (all the same design)
- the four wings of the *Passion Altarpiece* in the Bowes Museum, Barnard Castle (all the same design) (see fig. 45a on p. 76)

In three of the Group 1 altarpieces, Geel, Rouen and Strängnäs II (all of which are intact), the design of the continuous applied brocade embellishing the cloths of honour on the wings is repeated in the polychromy of the carved figures, albeit rendered in a different technique – line gilding on silver leaf that is very often coated with a brown glaze (figs. 59–61).

The design is reproduced in a painted version on St Peter's robe on the wing panel depicting the *Last Supper with Christ washing St Peter's Feet*, attributed to the Master of the Corkscrew Curl and dating from around 1480, now in Antwerp (KMSKA).⁶ It also occurs on panels ascribed to painters outside the circle of the Master of the View of St Gudule, embellishing

a canopied cloth of estate in the Marriage at Cana scene on the left wing of the *Miracles of Christ* triptych in Melbourne (National Gallery of Victoria),⁷ attributed to the Master of the Portraits of Princes and dated around 1490 (fig. 62), and the queen's gown in the Brussels panel depicting *Solomon and the Queen of Sheba* dated 1480–1500 and now in Florence (Museo Nazionale del Bargello),⁸ as well as the centurion's garment in an anonymous *Crucifixion* in Loppem Castle, said to have been painted in Bruges by 1500.⁹ It had already appeared quite some time earlier, however, being used in the 1430s by Jan van Eyck on the archangel's glorious cope in *The Annunciation* now in Washington (National Gallery of Art, Mellon Collection).¹⁰

The appearance, in Groups 1 and 2, of the same floral textile design rendered in various techniques in a whole range of carved altarpieces and panels is intriguing (see also Tables B, C, D). Which artists used the pattern and how was it transmitted? Following this thread has provided a better grasp of the collaborative network woven between the several crafts involved in making a retable. It was particularly interesting to understand to what extent the painted wings were interlinked in other respects than applied brocade, and to try to discover whether the polychromy was executed by the painter of the wings or by a specialized workshop.

Table A gives an overview of the altarpieces and wing panels referred to in this chapter and the attribution of the various elements. Tables B, C and D summarize the works in which the floral textile design has been identified.

⁶ VANDENBROECK 1985: 8–12 (fig. 3).

⁷ CARLIER 2007.

⁸ COLLOBI RAGGHIANI 1990: 40–41.

⁹ VAN CALOEN 2001: 174, 176.

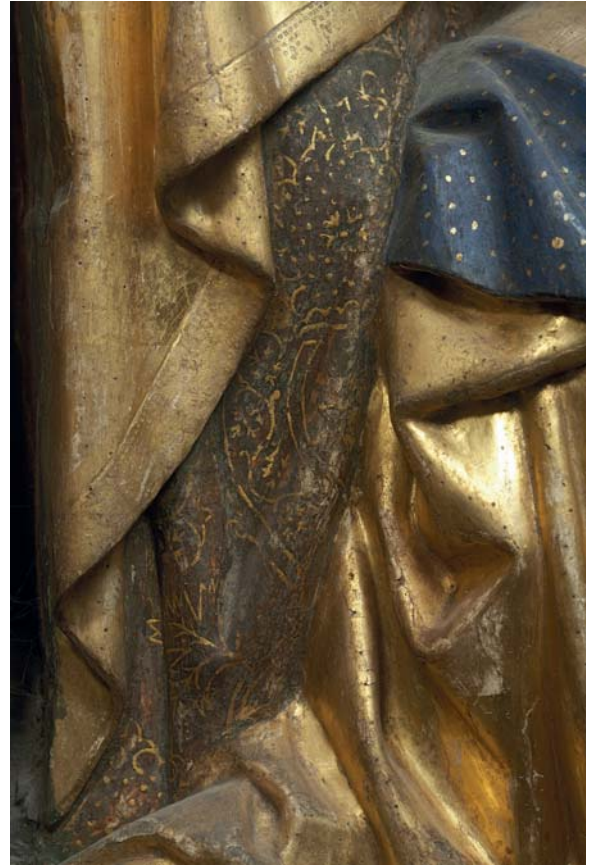
¹⁰ MONNAS 2000: 151; MONNAS 2008: 113–115.

Fig. 59.
Passion Altarpiece
 called Strängnäs II,
 c.1500, Brussels;
 Strängnäs, Cathedral
 (cat. S4)
 Crucifixion,
 line gilding on
 St John's robe



59.

Fig. 60.
Passion Altarpiece,
 c.1490, Brussels;
 Geel, Church of
 St Dymphna (cat. 35)
 Crucifixion, line
 gilding on St John's
 robe



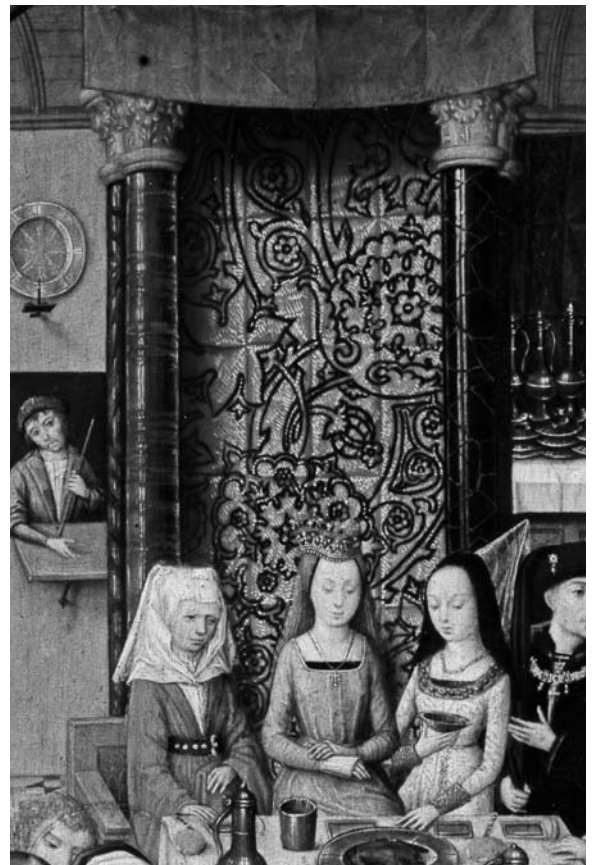
60.

Fig. 61.
Altarpiece of the Life
of the Virgin and the
Infancy of Christ;
 Rouen (cat. F3)
 Adoration of the
 Magi, line gilding on
 Caspar's brown tunic



61.

Fig. 62.
Triptych with the
Miracles of Christ
 (Marriage at Cana)
 (detail), c.1490,
 Master of the
 Portrait of Princes;
 Melbourne, National
 Gallery of Victoria



62.

Table A. Attribution of the various elements of the altarpieces and separated wings panels

Location	Work	Painted wings	Carving	Polychromy
cat. 35 Geel Church of St Dymphna	<i>Passion Altarpiece</i> c.1490	workshop of the Master of the View of St Gudule	carver of the Geel altarpiece = carver of the Bowes altarpiece	Geel Master of the Dianthus
cat. 52 Loppem Castle	<i>St Luke and Ascension</i> <i>St Mark and Pentecost</i> two wings from a dismembered Passion altarpiece 1480-1500	painter of the Loppem wings	-	-
cat. 58 Oudenaarde Amuso (municipal museum)	<i>Christ before Pilate</i> wing from a dismembered Passion altarpiece 1470-1490	Master of the Corkscrew Curl	-	-
cat. F1 Abbeville Musée Boucher de Perthes	<i>John the Baptist</i> panel from a dismembered altarpiece 1490-1500	painter of the Abbeville panels	-	-
cat. F3 Rouen Musée départemental des Antiquités de la Seine-Maritime	<i>Altarpiece of the Life of the Virgin and the Infancy of Christ</i> c.1485- c.1490	painter of the Rouen Retable	carver of the Rouen Retable	Geel Master of the Dianthus
cat. G1 Dinslaken Church of St Vincent	<i>Passion Altarpiece</i> c.1480	workshop of the Master of the View of St Gudule	carver of the Dinslaken altarpiece	-
cat. G5 Stassfurt Hospitalkapelle	<i>Passion Altarpiece</i> 1480-1490	Master of the Corkscrew Curl	carver of the Stassfurt altarpiece	-
cat. S3 Strängnäs Cathedral	<i>Passion Altarpiece</i> called Strängnäs I 1480-1490	Colijn de Coter and workshop	Jan II Borman?	polychromer of the Strängnäs I altarpiece
cat. S4 Strängnäs Cathedral	<i>Passion Altarpiece</i> called Strängnäs II c.1500	circle of the Master of the View of St Gudule	carver of the Strängnäs II altarpiece = carver of the Bowes altarpiece?	Geel Master of the Dianthus
cat. S8 Vadstena Abbey Church	<i>Virgin and Child</i> statue from an altarpiece 1443	-	carver of the Vadstena <i>Virgin and Child</i>	polychromer of the Vadstena <i>Virgin and Child</i>
cat. S11 Ytterselö Parish Church	<i>Altarpiece of the Virgin with SS Botvid and Eskil</i> c.1500	-	circle of Jan Borman	polychromer of the Ytterselö altarpiece
Antwerp KMSKA	<i>Last Supper</i> panel from a dismembered Passion altarpiece c.1480	Master of the Corkscrew Curl	-	-
Cambridge Queens' College, Chapel	three panels from a dismembered Passion altarpiece c.1480	Master of the View of St Gudule and workshop	-	-
Barnard Castle Bowes Museum	<i>Altarpiece of the Passion of Christ</i> 1480-1490	workshop of the Master of the View of St Gudule	carver of the Bowes altarpiece = carver of the Geel altarpiece	-
Paris Musée des Arts décoratifs	<i>Passion Altarpiece</i> c.1490	Master of the View of St Gudule or workshop	workshop of the carver of the Strängnäs II altarpiece?	Geel Master of the Dianthus
Private collection	<i>St Sebastian</i> panel from a dismembered altarpiece 1480	Master of the View of St Gudule	-	-

Table B. The floral textile design in applied brocade




Location	Work	Applied brocade
cat. 35.1 Geel (Group 1)	<i>Passion Altarpiece</i> (cloth of honour)	 <p>(Geel - reconstruction)</p>
cat. F3.1 Rouen (Group 1)	<i>Altarpiece of the Life of the Virgin and the Infancy of Christ</i> (cloth of honour)	
cat. S4.1 Strängnäs (Group 1)	<i>Passion Altarpiece</i> called Strängnäs II (cloth of honour)	
Cambridge (Group 1)	three wing panels from a dismembered Passion altarpiece (cloth of honour)	
Private collection (Group 1)	<i>St Sebastian</i> panel from a dismembered altarpiece (cloth of honour)	
cat. 52.1 Loppem (Group 2)	<i>St Mark and Pentecost</i> wing from a dismembered Passion altarpiece (cloth of honour)	 <p>(Loppem - reconstruction)</p>
cat. G5.1 Stassfurt (Group 2)	<i>Passion Altarpiece</i> (cloth of honour)	
cat. S8.1 Vadstena (Group 2)	<i>Virgin and Child</i> statue from an altarpiece (Virgin's gown)	 <p>(Ytterselö - reconstruction)</p>
cat. S11.1 Ytterselö (Group 2)	<i>Altarpiece of the Virgin with SS Botvid and Eskil</i> (rear wall of altarpiece case)	

Table C. The floral textile design in line gilding




Location	Work	Line gilding	
cat. 35 Geel	<i>Passion Altarpiece</i> (on garments)		
cat. F3 Rouen	<i>Altarpiece of the Life of the Virgin and the Infancy of Christ</i> (on garments)		
cat. S4.2 Strängnäs	<i>Passion Altarpiece</i> called Strängnäs II (on garments)		
Paris Musée des Arts décoratifs	<i>Passion Altarpiece</i> (on garments)		
		(Strängnäs II)	

Table D. The floral textile design in painting

Location	Work	Painting
Antwerp KMSKA	<i>Last Supper with Christ washing St Peter's Feet</i> panel c.1480 (on garment)	
Florence Museo Nazionale del Bargello	<i>Solomon and the Queen of Sheba</i> panel, Brussels 1480-1500 (on garment)	
Loppem Castle	<i>Crucifixion</i> , anonymous c.1500 (on garment)	
Melbourne National Gallery of Victoria	<i>Miracles of Christ</i> triptych (Marriage at Cana) panel c.1490 Master of the Portraits of Princes (on canopy)	
Washington National Gallery of Art, Mellon Collection	<i>Annunciation</i> Jan van Eyck 1434-1436 (on garment)	
		(Antwerp)

Around the Geel Passion Altarpiece

The Brussels-made *Passion Altarpiece* in the Church of St Dymphna in Geel (cat. 35), whose painted wings are attributed to the workshop of the Master of the View of St Gudule, provided the starting point for the study.¹¹ The same continuous applied brocade was used for all the cloths of honour that hang behind the standing saints. The pattern consists of stylized flowers at different stages of growth, seen from different angles and integrated into a network of undulating stems (see fig. 57 and Table B).¹² The brocade is fully gilded, with the pattern standing out from the background. The coloured contrast between the velvet and the gold background has been omitted here, so the suggestion is of a sumptuous textile woven entirely from gold thread.¹³ In other cases, such as Strängnäs II, the areas supposed to imitate velvet are emphasized with coloured glaze.

The Geel applied brocade also occurs on the wing panels from a dismembered altarpiece in the chapel of Queens' College, Cambridge (figs. 63-64).¹⁴ Higher and narrower than the large Geel panels,¹⁵ they are also ascribed to the Master of the View of St Gudule and dated around 1480.¹⁶ The dimensions, design and relief of the brocade correspond in every point to those of Geel. To these wing panels we can also add the *St Sebastian* panel (c.1480) in a private collection (fig. 65). This too is attributed to the Master of the View of St Gudule.¹⁷

¹¹ On this altarpiece, see among others: D'HULST 1953; MARIJNISSEN, SAWKO-MICHALSKI 1960: 143-153; PÉRIER-D'ETEREN 1984: 39, 47, 95-96; DUBOIS 1989: 49-50; MUND, STROO 1998: 346-347 (bibliography); WOODS 2007: 296-297.

¹² Leo Vanhecke of the Belgium National Botanical Gardens confirms that this is indeed an imaginary plant, though points out that certain details are reminiscent of poppies or certain members of the *caryophyllacea* (pinks) family. In the fifteenth century many plants were depicted not after nature but after artists' vague ideas of them, producing various more or less hybrid plants, see VAN ASSCHE 1996: 8-25 and VANWIJNSBERGHE 1998: 223-229.

¹³ The panel depicting the *Last Supper with Christ washing St Peter's Feet* in the KMSK Antwerp (c.1480), which includes the same textile pattern in a painted form, clearly shows a coloured velvet pattern on a gold background. VANDENBROECK 1985: 8-12, fig. 3. For more specific information about this textile see Chapter Nine.

¹⁴ MASSING 1991: 690-693.

¹⁵ The Cambridge paintings are between 154.4 and 154.9 cm high and 61.2 to 61.3 cm wide; the large Geel wings, unframed, measure 145 × 64 cm.

¹⁶ MASSING 1991: 690-693.

¹⁷ VERONÉE-VERHAEGEN 1989-1991. Having disappeared after a sale in the 1960s this panel reappeared at the 2004 European Fine Art Fair (TEFAF) in Maastricht. There is a colour illustration in an advertisement for Adam Williams Fine Art Ltd in the *Burlington Magazine*, no. 1200, vol. CXLV, March 2003. At 126.4 × 53.3 cm the panel is smaller than those of the Geel and Cambridge wings, but the applied brocades are again identical. The clumsily painted black highlights on the brocades are not original and were partially removed between the 1989-1991 and 2004 publications.

The Doctors of the Church and two female saints on the wings of the *Passion Altarpiece* called Strängnäs II in Strängnäs Cathedral are portrayed before cloths of honour covered with applied brocade identical to that on the Geel *Passion Altarpiece*, except for the alternating red and green glaze highlights (fig. 66 and cat. S4.1). The dimensions of this retable are almost a match for those of the Geel work.¹⁸ The wings also exhibit numerous similarities with those at Geel, particularly in the compositions, the figures' poses, and the drapery, but the Strängnäs paintings are less expressive and less rapidly executed. They may well have been produced by a member of the St Gudule Master's workshop or by a master 'producing a synthesis of the manner of this workshop and the spirit of the compositions of the Master of the St Catherine Legend'.¹⁹ Perhaps the work was sub-contracted to this putative painter by the Master of the View of St Gudule at a moment when he had too many commissions to handle himself.

The same continuous applied brocade recurs yet again on the exterior of the wings of the *Altarpiece of the Life of the Virgin and the Infancy of Christ* in the Musée départemental des Antiquités de la Seine-Maritime in Rouen (see fig. 56 and cat. F3.1).²⁰ The reliefs are very worn and have suffered losses. Nevertheless, it is possible to make out the floral pattern of the Geel brocade, and this is confirmed by the perfect match when tracings of the Geel brocade are laid over it. The Rouen wings are attributed to a Brussels painter active in the circle of the Master of the View of St Gudule. Catheline Périer-D'eteren places their production around 1485-1490. Stylistically the painting recalls the Master of the View of St Gudule but the handling is quite individual. The formula used for presenting the saints on the outside of the wings and also certain morphological details and patterns²¹ are borrowed from the master, for instance, but the figures are less spindly, heads are larger, and the poses are more rigid and less graceful. The saints also have a rather disgruntled look, in contrast to the elegance of those of the *Passion Altarpiece* in Geel.

The floral design of the Geel brocade also reappears, with some minor divergences, in the polychromy of the carved figures of the Geel,

¹⁸ The Strängnäs II altarpiece measures 252 × 291 cm; the Geel altarpiece is 254 × 293 cm.

¹⁹ PÉRIER-D'ETEREN 1984: 39; PÉRIER-D'ETEREN 2002: 324.

²⁰ On this altarpiece, see PÉRIER-D'ETEREN 1996; GUILLOT DE SUDUIRAUT 2001c.

²¹ The painted brocade embellishing St Catherine's gown in the Geel altarpiece is repeated on St Ursula's gown in Rouen. PÉRIER-D'ETEREN 1996: 19.



Fig. 63.
St Barbara, c.1480,
Brussels, Master
of the View of
St Gudule;
Cambridge, Queens'
College Chapel
© The President and
Fellows, Queens'
College, Cambridge



Fig. 64.
St Georges, c.1480,
Brussels, Master
of the View of
St Gudule;
Cambridge, Queens'
College Chapel
© The President and
Fellows, Queens'
College, Cambridge

Strängnäs II and Rouen altarpieces, the three works in the group that have retained their carved cases and original polychromy (Table C). Here it is rendered in line gilding, however, and a different type of fabric is simulated (figs. 59-61).²² In the Geel Lamentation St John wears a robe sumptuously decorated with line gilding that stands out against a brown glaze on silver leaf (fig. 60).²³ At Rouen, the same design is clearly visible on Caspar's brown tunic in the central Adoration of the Magi (fig. 61).²⁴ On the Strängnäs II retable it occurs on John's robe (fig. 59) and the head-dress of a soldier in the Crucifixion, and on the soldier's doublet in the Resurrection.

Given that the same design repeatedly recurs in the polychromy of the carved figures the logical inference is that the same polychromy workshop was responsible for its execution in each instance, but was that in fact the case? Moreover, how can the use of the same applied brocade on all the painted wings be explained when those wings were painted by different masters?

²² This appears to be a *inferriata* velvet. See Chapter Nine. Examples of a *inferriata* velvet are given in ERRERA 1907, cat. 161, 163, 165. This type of textile was also represented in painting by Colijn de Coter, for example: see PÉRIER-D'ETEREN 1985, figs. 133, 148b.

²³ The motif was first painted in mordant with a fine brush on the brown glaze background then covered with gold leaf, which adhered only to the mordant.

²⁴ GUILLOT DE SUDUIRAUT 2001C: 14. The brocade rendered in line gilding on the tunic of the Rouen magus could, however, be by another hand using the same model.

The polychromy of the Geel, Rouen and Strängnäs II retables was therefore examined for other points of comparison. The task was complicated by the poor state of the Geel altarpiece's polychromy, which is worn and partly overpainted or reworked.²⁵ In all three altarpieces burnished gilding (mostly redone in the case of Geel) and silver leaf, with or without brown glaze, predominate.²⁶ Line gilding on glazed silver leaf has also been used on all three, and the repertoire of motifs rendered in this technique is likewise common to them all. Furthermore, in addition to the floral textile design already described, the same types of script in the letter-borders, and the same pomegranates, dianthus and geometric motifs were identified (figs. 67-70).²⁷

The comparison between the three works can be extended to the local applied brocades on certain robes and gowns: the same thistle or pomegranate motif with a lozenge-patterned centre, double crown and dentate leaves recurs (cat. 35.2, 35.3, cat. F3.3, cat. S4.3). The measurements and motifs are equivalent, though different moulds have been used. The same headdresses in white cloth striped with blue or red appear in Geel, Rouen and Strängnäs II. And

²⁵ MARIJNISSEN, SAWKO-MICHALSKI 1960: 148-149.

²⁶ Already noted by GUILLOT DE SUDUIRAUT 2001C: 14; CASCIO, LÉVY 2002: 133-134, 147-148, 155, 159; PÉRIER-D'ETEREN 2002: 324, 327.

²⁷ On the Strängnäs II altarpiece a magnificent eagle clutching its prey also emblazons the shield of a soldier in the *Crucifixion*.

Fig. 65.
St Sebastian,
 1480-1500, Brussels,
 Master of the View
 of St Gudule;
 Private collection
 © Adam Williams
 Fine Art Ltd
 (*Burlington
 Magazine*, no. 1200,
 vol. CXLV,
 March 2003)



Fig. 66.
Passion Altarpiece
 called Strängnäs II
 (cat. S4)
 St Ambrose
 (exterior side of wing)



there is an additional technical argument to support the comparison between the altarpieces: in places in all three works an orange underlayer is present, probably with a red lead base. Though this orange underlayer is not exceptional per se, it is unusual to find it in Brussels polychromy.²⁸

There are, however, differences in other aspects of the polychromy. The punched ornamentation of the Rouen and Strängnäs altarpieces differs although it shows the same type of geometric and vegetal patterns on the borders of cloaks and flat surfaces (unfortunately, most of the original tooling on the Geel altarpiece has been lost). The brocades painted on gold or the gilded motifs on azurite blue (small dots, geometric motifs, letters separated by dianthus flowers), comparable in the Geel and Strängnäs altarpieces, hardly occur on the smaller Rouen retable. The flesh tones of the Rouen and Strängnäs altarpieces also vary,²⁹ the Rouen faces being smooth and enamelled, the Strängnäs faces matt.

The identical polychromy techniques (line gilding on glazed silver leaf, the local presence of an orange underlayer), similar colouration (predominance of surfaces covered with gold or brown-glazed silver leaf) and the identical or similar repertoire of motifs leads us to think that the polychromy of the three altarpieces was carried out by the same workshop, which we will call that of the Geel Master of the Dianthus in allusion to the repeated occurrence of this flower (figs. 67-68). The differences between the three works may be explained by the involvement of different artists within the workshop³⁰ or an evolution over time. The carving of the Rouen altarpiece is dated around 1470-1480. Comparison with the paintings of the Master of the View of St Gudule allows the wings to be placed somewhat later, around 1485-1490. The polychromy is probably contemporary with the wings rather than the carving, given that the same textile design appears both on the wings and in the polychromy. The Geel and Strängnäs altarpieces are dated around 1490 and around 1500 respectively. A stylistic development over a period of ten to fifteen years between these three altarpieces is quite plausible.

²⁸ Another Brussels example is the *St Adrian Altarpiece* (1490-1495) in Boendael Church in Brussels, whose matt gilding is on a bright orange underlayer. MERCIER 2002: 169-170.

²⁹ The flesh tones of the Geel carvings are partly original, though worn, and partly repainted in the nineteenth century. MARIJNISSEN, SAWKO-MICHALSKI 1960: 148-149.

³⁰ We thank Myriam Serck-Dewaide, who has pointed out that specialities would have developed, with a particular gilder for metal foils (gold and silver leaf) and applied brocade, and another specialist for the flesh tones, for example, though these could also have been executed by the painters of the wings.



Fig. 67.
Passion Altarpiece;
Geel (cat. 35)
Carrying of the
Cross, line gilding on
a soldier's tunic



Fig. 68.
*Altarpiece of the
Life of the Virgin and
the Infancy of Christ*,
Rouen (cat. F3)
Adoration of the
Magi, shell gold
on blue
©Musée départemen-
tal des Antiquités de
la Seine-Maritime,
Rouen



Fig. 69.
Passion Altarpiece
called Strängnäs II
(cat. S4)
Crucifixion, line
gilding on Longinus's
right sleeve



Fig. 70.
Passion Altarpiece;
Geel (cat. 35)
Entombment, line
gilding on Mary
Magdalene's sleeve

Fig. 71.
Passion Altarpiece;
Geel (cat. 35)
Flagellation,
Christ's head



Fig. 72.
Passion Altarpiece
called Strängnäs II
(cat. S4)
Crowning with
Thorns, Christ's head



It is very likely that the applied brocade on the wings was produced by the polychromers rather than the painters, for the same applied brocade recurs on wings painted by different artists. The same design, rendered in line gilding, also appears in the polychromy of the three altarpieces, suggesting that the same polychromer was responsible in each case.

The question of the carvers' identities also arises. What parallels can be drawn between the carvings of the Geel, Rouen and Strängnäs II altarpieces? From a morphological point of view the same types of male faces with grave expressions (Christ, John, bystanders) (figs. 71-72) or the hard, grotesque features of the executioners with their deep lines and

sunken eye sockets appear at Geel and Strängnäs. The straight, thick noses with a horizontal furrow between the eyes appear typical, as do the oval female faces with mouths with downturned corners (figs. 73-74). The Strängnäs II carvings are more finely modelled, however, with less incisive features and softer transitions; the poses are more dynamic and flexible,³¹ and the broken folds of the draperies are less angular. This retable's small lateral scenes appear to have been produced by a second hand: the little figures are altogether stockier, with round faces and upturned 'trumpet' noses. The carvings of the Geel altarpiece, on the other hand, form a very homogeneous ensemble, while the high-relief



Fig. 73.
Passion Altarpiece; Geel (cat. 35)
Crucifixion, the Virgin and St John



Fig. 74.
Passion Altarpiece called Strängnäs II
(cat. S4)
Crucifixion, the Virgin and St John



Fig. 75.
Altarpiece of the Life of the Virgin and the Infancy of Christ, Rouen (cat. F3)
Circumcision, detail

³¹ WOODS 1996: 788-794; WOODS 2007: 296-297.

figures of the Rouen altarpiece, with their elongated proportions, graceful gestures and fine features, are clearly distinct from those of Geel and Strängnäs (see cat. F3) (fig. 75).

The Paris, Barnard Castle and Dinslaken altarpieces

The Geel Master of the Dianthus also seems to have been the polychromer of the *Passion Altarpiece* now in the Musée des arts décoratifs in Paris.³² Despite the absence of applied brocade there are many technical and ornamental similarities, such as the recurrent floral motif that decorates the garments of St John (fig. 76) and Nicodemus. The punchwork and the letters painted in gold on brown glaze are also reminiscent of the Strängnäs II altarpiece. The black, green and red dots on gold, the metallic cupules on azurite blue and black, and the red and green brocades painted on the harnesses of some of the horses are all elements already encountered in the Geel and Strängnäs II retables. Thus the collaboration between the workshop of the Master of the View of St Gudule and the Geel Master of the Dianthus appears to have been repeated in this *Passion Altarpiece*. Moreover, the carving could be from the same workshop as in Strängnäs II though it looks as if has been executed rather more rapidly.

The *Altarpiece of the Passion of Christ* in the Bowes Museum at Barnard Castle also evidences the collaboration between the carver of the Geel retable and the workshop of the Master of the View of St Gudule. Kim Woods attributes the carving of both altarpieces to the same workshop.³³ The continuous applied brocade of the cloths of honour on the painted wings has a design made up of foliage in trefoils and rosettes (see fig. 45a). No other examples of this brocade are known but it is similar to the brocade employed on the wings of another *Passion Altarpiece* in the Church of St Vincent in Dinslaken (cat. G1).³⁴

³² On this altarpiece see BLANC 1998: 108–110; CASCIO, LÉVY 2002; PÉRIER-D'ETEREN 2002: 324–326.

³³ WOODS 1996: 793–794; DE BOODT 2005: 191–192; WOODS 2007: 296–297.

³⁴ The wings of the Dinslaken altarpiece are attributed to the workshop of the Master of the View of St Gudule; the carvings are in a more archaic style than those of Geel and Barnard Castle. On the Dinslaken altarpiece see LÖHR 1970; DUBOIS 1989: 46 (fig. 5), 49–50; WOODS 1996: 793–794; DE BOODT 2005: 191–192. The neo-Gothic polychromy visible today probably conceals the original decoration, as the relief of applied brocade can be discerned here and there beneath the overpaint.



Around the Stassfurt Passion Altarpiece

The applied brocade on the *Passion Altarpiece* in the Hospitalkapelle in Stassfurt (cat. G5) and the brocade on the St Mark panel at Loppem (cat. 52.1) offer another interpretation of the Geel brocade. In both works severe damage to the brocade prevents a categorical identification, and we cannot conclude that they were made in the same mould. Detail photographs and drawings show equivalent measurements and striation density (10 per centimetre), and a design in relief interpreted almost identically. But the slight differences and shifts in pattern noted when tracings are compared indicates the use of two different moulds, though the patterns incised in them were very likely intended to be identical.

The Stassfurt *Passion Altarpiece*, which can be dated to 1480–1490, is thought to come from Brussels, given the Brussels mallet mark on the back of the Carrying of the Cross.³⁵ The paintings on the wings display striking similarities with a number of wing panels from dismembered altarpieces: the Oudenaarde panel (cat. 58),³⁶ the wing panel depicting the *Last Supper with Christ washing St Peter's Feet* now in Antwerp (KMSKA),³⁷ and two panels in the Palais des Beaux-Arts in Lille,³⁸ works which various art historians have attributed to the same hand. We can now add the wings of the Stassfurt *Passion Altarpiece* to the oeuvre of this painter, whom Didier Martens has dubbed the Master of the Corkscrew Curl.³⁹

³⁵ LINSSE 1961: 809–818; DE BOODT 2005: 195–196.

³⁶ BRUSSELS 1996: 44–54 (cat. 1).

³⁷ VANDENBROECK 1985: 8–12 (fig. 3).

³⁸ The panels depict Christ before Pilate and Christ in Limbo on the front and the Annunciation on the back (1460–1470). See GIL 1999: 199–203; HECK et al. 2005: II, 401–404 (cat. 55); D. MARTENS 2007: 116–126.

³⁹ D. MARTENS 2007: 116–126.

Fig. 76. *Passion Altarpiece*, c.1490, Brussels; polychromy; the Geel Master of the Dianthus; painted wings: Master of the View of St Gudule or workshop; Paris, Musée des Arts décoratifs Crucifixion, line gilding on St John's cloak



Fig. 77.
Passion Altarpiece, 1480-1490, Brussels;
 Stassfurt, Hospitalkapelle (cat. G5)
 John the Baptist (exterior side of wing)



Fig. 78.
Passion Altarpiece; Stassfurt (cat. G5)
 Agony in the Garden and Christ before Pilate (interior side of wings)



Fig. 79.
Passion Altarpiece, 1480-1490,
 Brussels; Barnard Castle, Bowes Museum
 Agony in the Garden
 (interior side of wing)
 © Bowes Museum, Barnard Castle



Fig. 80.
Passion Altarpiece; Barnard Castle
 Christ before Pilate (interior side
 of wing)
 © Bowes Museum, Barnard Castle

In the Stassfurt panels, as in most of the wings just mentioned, the interior scenes are viewed through a round-headed arch with marbled spandrels (fig. 78). The architecture continues quite logically inside, with cross vaulting supported on slender scagliola columns. In all the paintings the floor tiling is defined by lines incised into the ground. The drapery of the garments with indented tubular folds is similar, likewise the handling of the highlights on the crests of the folds. In each case the haloes and a number of accessories are gilded and contoured in black or red. The masonry wall behind the Stassfurt and Oudenaarde saints has the same sloping sill, and the same type of vegetation grows in the foreground (fig. 77, ill. 58b). And in the figure of Christ we find the same pictorial treatment of highlights around the eyes. In each case the hair is fairly flat, and falling over the forehead is the corkscrew curl from which Didier Martens derived the master's sobriquet.

The influence of the Master of the View of St Gudule is attested first and foremost by the formula of the figures presented before applied brocade cloths of honour. The Agony in the Garden and Christ before Pilate depicted in the Stassfurt retable exhibit notable similarities with the same scenes in the Barnard Castle *Passion Altarpiece* (figs. 79-80). These similarities can be explained by a common influence, the engravings of Master E.S. or Martin Schongauer, which seem to have provided the models for these compositions.⁴⁰ The Master of the Corkscrew Curl

appears to have been more faithful to the models than his fellow painter, the Master of the View of St Gudule.⁴¹ The hypothesis of his Brussels origin seems to be confirmed by the Stassfurt altarpiece, which, as just mentioned, is not only stamped with the Brussels mark but also incorporates an applied brocade that had been known in Brussels since the 1440s (witness the Vadstena *Virgin and Child*; cat. S8.1).

The two altarpiece wings in Loppem Castle (cat. 52) have aroused very little interest in the literature and today they are regarded as Picard works.⁴² The double-sided panels depict the Ascension and Pentecost, and on the reverse St Luke and St Mark respectively, seated in niches with applied brocade cloths of honour hanging behind them. St Mark's cloth of honour is embellished with an applied brocade with a floral textile design very common in Brussels, suggesting that city as its place of origin. The Loppem paintings are executed in an archaic and much more graphic style than that of the Master of the Corkscrew Curl and *a fortiori* that of the Master of the View of St Gudule (fig. 81). There are points of comparison with the painted wings of the Dinslaken altarpiece (cat. G1), attributed to the workshop of the Master of the View of St Gudule, but these are limited to composition and iconographic details: the saints on the Loppem panels are portrayed in positions much the same as those of their Dinslaken counterparts and St Luke's attire is also similar,



Fig. 81.
Pentecost, 1480-1500,
Brabant(?),
Picardy(?); Loppem,
Loppem Castle
(cat. 52)

Fig. 82.
*Altarpiece of the
Virgin with SS Botvid
and Eskil* (detail),
c.1500, Brussels;
Ytterselö, Parish
Church (cat. S11)
St Botvid's sheath

⁴⁰ On the influence of German engraving on the Master of the View of St Gudule and particularly his Agony in the Garden scenes, see DUBOIS 1989: 49-51.

⁴¹ We thank Didier Martens for drawing our attention to this point.

⁴² VAN CALOEN 2001: 174, 176-177.

Fig. 83.
Birth of the Virgin
 (detail), c.1460,
 Cologne, Master
 of the Life of the
 Virgin; Munich,
 Alte Pinakothek
 Applied brocade
 on St Anne's bed
 hanging
 © Bayer.
 Staatsgemälde-
 sammlungen,
 Munich



though the evangelist symbols and inscribed banderoles have been differently placed.⁴³ Comparison of the Loppem and Dinslaken Ascensions also suggests that the Loppem master had seen the Dinslaken altarpiece or one very similar.⁴⁴ The lack of stylistic filiation renders the attribution of the Loppem wing panels to a Brussels painter uncertain, but the matter merits further study.

Applied brocades similar to those at Stassfurt and Loppem adorn the gown of the carved Vadstena Madonna (cat. S8.1), which dates from 1443⁴⁵ and comes from a dismembered altarpiece, and the rear wall of the Ytterselö *Altarpiece of the Virgin with SS Botvid and Eskil* of around 1500 (cat. S11.1). More or less forty years separate the Vadstena statue from the Ytterselö altarpiece, and this provides a valuable indication as to when the pattern appeared in the form of an applied brocade. In the Ytterselö altarpiece the line gilding on silver leaf and the dianthus flowers rendered by this technique on the Virgin's

gown and the sheath of St Botvid's knife recall the work of the Geel Master of the Dianthus (fig. 82).

Another late-fifteenth-century panel depicting John the Baptist and now in Abbeville (cat. F1) includes an applied brocade cloth of honour with a rosette pattern (not the floral textile design).⁴⁶ It is displayed as a pendant to a Presentation of Mary in the Temple, but the two panels were probably originally the front and back of the same altarpiece wing. They look as if they could come from Brussels, given the range of bright colours and the representation of the saint in front of an applied brocade cloth of honour. The Presentation's composition appears to be based on the Master of the View of St Gudule's *Presentation of Mary in the Temple* now in the KMSKB-MRBAB.⁴⁷

Finally, mention should be made of the *Birth of the Virgin* panel by the Master of the Life of the Virgin, a Cologne painter active around 1460-1480. The applied brocade embellishing the low hanging that defines St Anne's bedchamber has a textile motif that is highly reminiscent of the applied brocade on the *Passion Altarpiece* in Geel, with open flowers and buds

⁴³ DUBOIS 1989: 49 and fig. 5-7 (p. 46-47).

⁴⁴ For an illustration of the Dinslaken Ascension see LÖHR 1970.

⁴⁵ Date of the consecration of the Lady Altar in the Church of St Brigitte, the abbey church of Vadstena Abbey. DIDIER 1989: 51-54; GHENT 1994: 83-85.

⁴⁶ HAZEBROUCK 1995: 77. We thank Didier Martens for bringing these panels to our attention.

⁴⁷ DUBOIS, SLACHMUYLDERS 2006: 366-376.

linked by undulating stems (fig. 83).⁴⁸ The Master of the Life of the Virgin is also the author of painted wings depicting female saints in front of applied brocade cloths of honour.⁴⁹ To what extent the Master of the View of St Gudule was influenced by German painting in his use of applied brocade cloths of honour in his own oeuvre is an interesting question that also needs further study.

The floral textile design that has formed the common thread of this chapter appeared in the mid-1430s, when it was used by Jan van Eyck on the Archangel Gabriel's cope in the *Annunciation* now in Washington. It occurs as an applied brocade on the statue of the *Virgin and Child* at Vadstena, which dates from 1443, after which it reappears in the last two decades of the fifteenth century in a whole series of Brussels altarpieces, where it is rendered in various techniques – applied brocade, line gilding on brown glaze, and as a painted pattern.

The applied brocades featuring this floral textile design were made in four or five separate moulds. A first group comprises the Geel, Rouen, Strängnäs II and Cambridge wings and the privately owned *St Sebastian* panel, and the same mould was probably used in every case. The Loppem and Stassfurt wing panels form a second group, for which one or two moulds were used, to which are added the brocades on the *Virgin and Child* at Vadstena and the rear wall of the Yterselö altarpiece case, whose design is similar but not identical to the Stassfurt and Loppem brocades and for which two separate moulds were used.

The polychromy of the carved parts of the altarpieces in the first group, the Geel, Rouen and Strängnäs II retables, was almost certainly carried out by the same workshop – that of the Geel Master of the Dianthus – and it was very probably this workshop which produced the applied brocade on the wings.⁵⁰ Plausibly, it follows that the *St Sebastian* and Cambridge wing panels also belonged to altarpieces whose polychromy was executed by the Geel Dianthus Master. The same reasoning can be applied to Loppem and Stassfurt: the polychromy of the carved parts of these two altarpieces may also have been undertaken by one workshop. This is impossible to verify, however, as in both cases the polychromy of the carving is lost (at Loppem only the two painted wing panels

remain and at Stassfurt the carving is covered by one or more overpaints).

Naturally, this raises the question of how the work was organized between the different crafts involved. Did the Geel Master of the Dianthus run an independent workshop or was he attached to that of the Master of the View of St Gudule? In the absence of archival evidence all we can do is speculate.

Another question relates to the commissioning of the altarpieces and the management of their production vis-a-vis the various workshops. Was it the painter, the polychromer or the carver who sold the altarpiece on the open market or received the order for its customized manufacture? Who organized the production of the work? In the case of the network studied here, it was probably the painter or the polychromer, with different carvers being engaged for different altarpieces – selling altarpieces on the open market was much more complicated for carvers than it was for painters or polychromers.⁵¹

A good number of the altarpieces discussed in this chapter would have been bought on the open market, perhaps in Antwerp. In other cases, commissions would have come from other towns within the Burgundian territories or from abroad, possibly conveyed by merchants with business to transact in that metropolis, where Brussels painters and polychromers were also well represented.⁵²

The use of the same or very similar decorations in this whole series of works testifies to a certain rationalization of the work process in order to meet the very sharp rise in demand for altarpieces (see also Chapter Six) but it also evidences exchanges of patterns. And in doing so raises the interesting question of the origin of this popular floral textile design. Perhaps the Master of the View of St Gudule or the Geel Master of the Dianthus owned a sample of fabric that served as the model. It is also possible that the polychromer or painter took as his basis a drawing or engraving that must have been in circulation in various workshops since the mid-1430s, when Jan van Eyck used the design in his *Annunciation*. Research is also required to show how the Master of the Portraits of Princes came to reproduce this self-same design in the

⁴⁸ *Altdeutsche Gemälde* 1972: 309, fig. 61 (WAF 619); SCHERER 1998: 5-6, 9 (figs. 1, 6).

⁴⁹ *Altdeutsche Gemälde* 1972: 363-368, figs. 83, 84 (WAF 633, WAF 634).

⁵⁰ The polychromy of the *Passion Altarpiece* in the Musée des Arts décoratifs in Paris can also be ascribed to this master.

⁵¹ On the open market carvers could offer only their own finished product – unpolychromed works, in other words. They were allowed to subcontract the polychroming and painting of the wings only if no buyer had been found after the product had been on display for a month. NIEUWDORP 1981.

⁵² In Antwerp ready-made retables were sold on the market known as the 'Pand', next to the Church of Our Lady. An agreement guaranteeing places to Brussels painters and polychromers on the Pand for the coming decades was concluded by the Antwerp and Brussels St Luke's Guilds in 1481. See NIEUWDORP 1981: 85-98.

Marriage at Cana he painted on a wing of the *Miracles of Christ* triptych now in Melbourne and how it recurred on the *Solomon and the Queen of Sheba* panel in Florence.

A sort of informal partnership must have linked all the artists involved in producing the Brussels altarpieces discussed in this chapter⁵³ – ties of kinship or friendship, or even neighbourly proximity, could partly explain these associations.⁵⁴

The use of patterns and models was not confined to painters and sculptors; polychromers also had recourse to them, particularly textile designs, which

they reproduced in several ways including applied brocade. The repeated use of the same applied brocade on different works continued into the early sixteenth century and on an increased scale by Brussels workshops such as that of Master I*T.

Future study of the retables discussed in this chapter might focus on the detailed technical and stylistic comparison of each altarpiece's sculpture, painting and polychromy, in order to understand how the artists – all with their own specialties but all working on the same work – influenced each other.

D.S.

⁵³ WOODS 1996: 794.

⁵⁴ At a symposium held in Lille in 2007 on the Master of the Embroidered Foliage, collaboration between artists and the exchange of models were examined in depth. See especially: BORN 2007: 9-22 and CAMPBELL 2007: 45-54.

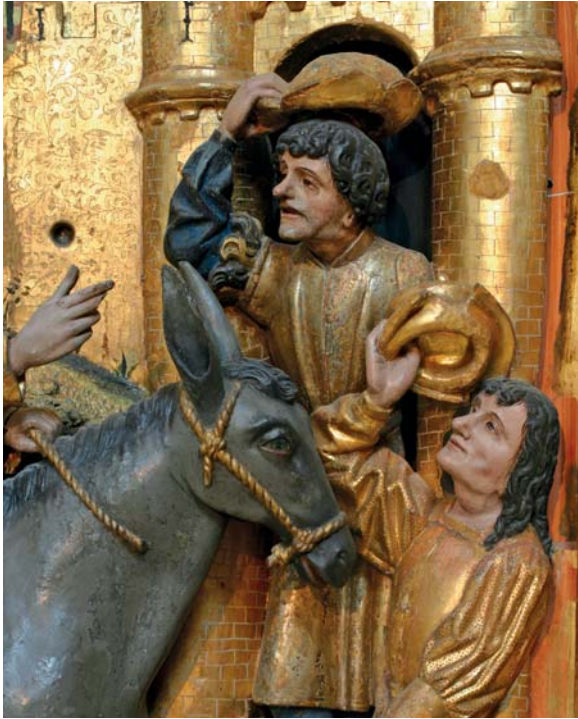


Fig. 84.
Passion Altarpiece called Strängnäs I (detail), 1480-1490,
 Brussels; Strängnäs, Cathedral (cat. S3)
 Christ entering Jerusalem



Fig. 84a.
Passion Altarpiece called Strängnäs I (detail), (cat. S3)
 Line gilding on silver (detail of fig. 84)



Fig. 85.
Passion Altarpiece called Strängnäs I (detail) (cat. S3)
 Ecce homo, local applied brocade on Pilate's cushion



Fig. 86.
Passion Altarpiece called Strängnäs I (detail) (cat. S3)
 Lamentation, velvet sleeve, painted red moiré tunic

MASTERS OF APPLIED BROCADE

THE GEEL MASTER OF THE DIANTHUS, MASTER I*T,
AND OTHER POLYCHROMERS¹

In the study of late-medieval carved altarpieces, art historians have tended to focus either on the carving or on the painted wings. Examination of the polychromy, on the other hand, has generally been the preserve of restorers, who in interdisciplinary collaboration with chemists are able to distinguish original elements from overpaints and make the most of what are frequently the tiniest of remains.

On fifteenth- and sixteenth-century altarpieces we find the same polychromy methods recurring on one work after another. Execution varied from workshop to workshop, however, and preference may have been given to certain patterns and techniques.² Some of these techniques were aimed at imitating textile designs whose range may offer a valuable guide to attribution, in particular those rendered in applied brocade, as this is made in a mould and no two moulds are identical. Prolonged and painstaking analysis has led to the discovery, often by way of the most tenuous of traces, of identical or closely comparable applied brocades and consequently to the identification of several polychromy workshops in operation between 1480 and 1520, especially in Brussels but also in Mechelen and Antwerp.

A number of the workshops presented in this chapter have already been discussed at a symposium at the Louvre in 2002. Taking technical characteristics as a basis, Agnès Cascio and Juliette Lévy, Sophie Guillot de Suduiraut, and Catheline Périer-D'Ieteren established various groups of Brussels altarpieces, which were generally in line with our own findings.³

The idea of using imitated textile patterns as a criterion for attribution is not new. In reference to the Low Countries both Stephen Goddard and Catheline Périer-D'Ieteren have respectively demonstrated that the same painted brocades recur in numerous paintings by the Master of Frankfurt and Colijn de Coter and their workshops.⁴

Taking a detail as a criterion for attribution is treated here as a guideline, leading to a more general consideration of the works of art, which in the present case are mostly carved altarpieces with painted wings.

The Geel Master of the Dianthus

A single textile pattern was identified in a large group of Brussels carved altarpieces with painted wings dated between 1480 and 1500. This floral design occurs not only on the painted wings in the form of applied brocade but also in the polychromy of the carvings, albeit rendered in another technique, which we have termed 'line gilding'.⁵ The discovery of the same textile design on such a number of retables led us to examine the collaborative network linking painters, polychromers and carvers in their production. One of the conclusions of the study, which is presented in detail in Chapter Five, is the attribution of the polychromy of four altarpieces to the same polychromer or workshop. The Geel *Passion Altarpiece*

¹ We thank Emmanuelle Mercier and Emile Vanbinnebeke for their critical reading of this chapter.

² Emmanuelle Mercier has drawn attention to the specific characteristics of the polychromy of the *St Adrian Altarpiece* in St Adrian's Church in Boendael in Brussels: matt gold only, no tooling, no applied brocade, but some very beautiful motifs initiated by the carver and finished by the polychromer. MERCIER 2002.

³ CASCIO, LÉVY 2002; GUILLOT DE SUDUIRAUT 2002a: 277-282; PÉRIER-D'ETEREN 2002; see also the other articles in the symposium's Proceedings.

⁴ GODDARD 1985; PÉRIER-D'ETEREN 1985.

⁵ This was achieved by drawing the design in mordant with a fine brush then laying on gold leaf, which adhered solely to the mordant, thus producing a linear design on a coloured background.

(c.1490; cat. 36), the Rouen *Altarpiece of the Life of the Virgin and the Infancy of Christ* (polychromy c.1485-1490; cat. F3), the *Passion Altarpiece* called Strängnäs II (c.1500; cat. S4), and the *Passion Altarpiece* now in the Musée des arts décoratifs in Paris (c.1500)⁶ were all ascribed to the workshop of the Geel Master of the Dianthus.

The study started with the painted wings of the Geel, Rouen and Strängnäs II retables, which all feature applied brocade cloths of honour on their exterior sides. The same continuous brocade occurs in each; moreover, the individual tin foil sheets were all made in the same mould.⁷ These wing panels were all painted by the Master of the View of St Gudule or his workshop or by other Brussels painters in his immediate circle. The floral design featured in the brocade also occurs, with some minor variations, in the form of line gilding in the polychromy of the carved figures of these three altarpieces and the Paris retable.⁸

In all four altarpieces the polychromy of the carved figures is similarly conspicuous for its burnished gilding and silver leaf, with or without brown glaze.⁹ Comparison can also be extended to the local applied brocades (excepting the Paris retable, on which there is no applied brocade): on certain robes and gowns the same thistle or pomegranate motif with a lozenge-patterned centre, double crown and dentate leaves recurs (cat. 35.2, cat. 35.3, cat. F3.3, cat. S4.2), although the brocades were made in different moulds. The Rouen altarpiece differs from the Strängnäs II and Paris retables in its punched ornamentation, however (unfortunately the original tooling on the Geel altarpiece has largely been lost). The flesh tones of the Rouen, Strängnäs II and Paris altarpieces also vary,¹⁰ the Rouen faces being smooth and enamelled, the Strängnäs II and Paris faces matt.

⁶ BLANC 1998: 108-110.

⁷ The same applied brocade also occurs on three wing panels in Queens' College Chapel in Cambridge and a *St Sebastian* on panel in a private collection. Applied brocades with the same design but made in different moulds were also found at Loppem (cat. 58.1), Stassfurt (cat. G5.1), Vadstena (cat. S8.1) and Ytterselö (cat. S11.1).

⁸ Line gilding has been used to produce delicate linear motifs on silver leaf. In the Geel altarpiece St John wears a robe sumptuously decorated with the floral design rendered in this way: At Rouen, we find it on Caspar's brown tunic in the central Adoration of the Magi. On the Strängnäs II retable it occurs on John's robe and the headdress of a soldier in the Crucifixion, and on the soldier's doublet in the Resurrection. The same line-gilded motif also occurs on the garments of several figures of the Paris retable.

⁹ See GUILLOT DE SUDURAUT 2001C: 14; CASCIO, LÉVY 2002: 133; PÉRIER-D'ETEREN 2002: 324, 327.

¹⁰ The flesh tones of the Geel carvings are partly original, though worn, and partly repainted in the nineteenth century. MARIJNISSEN, SAWKO-MICHALSKI 1960: 148-149.

Despite the small differences the identical polychromy techniques, the similar colouration, and the identical or very similar repertoire of motifs suggest very strongly that the polychromy of the Geel, Rouen, Strängnäs II and Paris altarpieces was carried out by the same polychromer. Whether this was an individual master with his own atelier, or a journeyman working on a regular basis for the Master of the View of St Gudule, we do not know. But we propose to call him the Geel Master of the Dianthus in allusion to the repeated occurrence of this flower. The differences between the four altarpieces may be explained by the involvement of additional artists or a gradual evolution between around 1485 and around 1500. We can probably also assume that the applied brocade on the painted wings was produced by the polychromer rather than the painters, as the same type of polychromy is found on the carved figures whereas the wings were executed by several different artists, though all operating in the circle of the Master of the View of St Gudule. Working in partnership with the Master of the View of St Gudule and his circle and the Geel Master of the Dianthus was the carving workshop to which Kim Woods has also attributed the *Altarpiece of the Passion of Christ* now in the Bowes Museum,¹¹ whose work can be recognized in the Geel, Strängnäs II and Paris retables.¹²

The Master of the Strängnäs I altarpiece

The *Passion Altarpiece* called Strängnäs I (cat. S3), which is dated around 1490, has a most refined and exceptional polychromy that includes elements common to the works attributed to the Geel Master of the Dianthus, such as line gilding on silver leaf (figs. 84-84a). The silver leaf still retains its brilliance, most likely due to a protective transparent coating. Some of the line gilded motifs – dianthus, buds, blooming flowers full of stamens – were inspired by the Dianthus Master's floral design. The local applied brocade on Pilate's cushion (fig. 85 and cat. S3.2) is very similar to those on the Geel and Strängnäs II retables (cat. 35.2, cat. 35.3, cat. S4.2) and it too is accompanied by the scattering of tiny metal cupules on a blue-painted surface. Yet there are other characteristics seemingly unique to Strängnäs I, such as the simulation of a heavy velvet-like textile achieved by working the ground in irregular relief (used on a bystander's sleeves and hat, and the gown of one of the Maries in the

¹¹ On the collaboration between the Master of the View of St Gudule and the Bowes workshop see WOODS 1996: 788-794; JACOBS 1998: 216; WOODS 2007: 291-297.

¹² The carved figures in Rouen, with their elongated proportions, graceful gestures and fine features, were clearly produced by a different hand.

Fig. 87.
Passion Altarpiece
 called Strängnäs I
 (detail) (cat. S3)
 Carrying of the Cross,
 tooled decoration on
 the tunic of Christ's
 scourger



Fig. 88.
Passion Altarpiece
 called Strängnäs I
 (detail) (cat. S3)
 Lamentation, scat-
 tered red dots on
 Mary Magdalene's
 gown



Lamentation) and the red moiré painting on a tunic (also worn by the bystander in the Lamentation) (fig. 86). The gilded surfaces that alternate with the silver leaf are embellished with a particularly rich range of tooled decoration (letter-borders, floral and geometric motifs, birds, masks) (fig. 87), or with red painted brocades with occasional scatterings of red dots or lines (fig. 88). Blue-painted linings are sometimes enhanced with gilded motifs (probably shell gilding). A fine landscape is painted on the gilded background in the first two scenes. The polychromer, the Master of the Strängnäs I Altarpiece, appears to have brought his craftsmanship to a very high level of refinement.







Master I*T and his workshop, polychromers operating in Brussels between 1500 and around 1522

With its repetitive mechanical method of manufacture applied brocade lent itself well to serial production, as is evidenced in a group of Brussels-made altarpieces and small statues dated between 1500 and 1525. The applied brocade on these works has allowed the identification of a major polychromy workshop, referred to as that of Master I*T, for this monogram appears on the bases of a number of statuettes. Among

the works that can now be attributed to Master I*T are some forty small statues (see below) and several Brussels altarpieces: the *Saluzzo Altarpiece* (cat. 19) and *Holy Kinship Altarpiece* (cat. 24) in Brussels, the Passion altarpieces in Güstrow (cat. G4), Västerås (cat. S9) and Villberga (cat. S10), the *Glorification of the Virgin* altarpieces in Sala (cat. S1) and Vadstena (cat. S7), and the *St Anne Altarpiece* in Uppsala (cat. S6). To this group can be added two fragments also produced in Brussels: the *Burial of St Andrew* (cat. 7) and *Three Angels* (cat. PC1).

A total of thirteen different designs can be distinguished on these altarpieces: there are two continuous applied brocades, nine local, one orphrey and one braid (the latter decorated with five different patterns painted on the uniformly striated and gilded surface). These are shown in Table A. The continuous applied brocade whose design is made up of a posy of flowers and lanceolate leaves in a basket appears on nearly all of them (fig. 89). The applied brocade braids of the *Saluzzo Altarpiece* (cat. 91.9) also occur on virtually every work, the exception being the *Three Angels* (cat. PC1) (fig. 91). The local brocades in the form of a sort of thistle leaf or acanthus leaf (model 19.7 on the *Saluzzo Altarpiece*) can also be found on nearly all the works, albeit in poor condition and not always clearly distinguishable (fig. 90).

Table A. The applied brocades of Master I*T

Work							
		posy of flowers and lanceolate leaves in a basket	thistle leaf or acanthus leaf 1	thistle leaf or acanthus leaf 2	thistle leaf or acanthus leaf 3	pomegranate 1	pomegranate 2
cat. 6 Antwerp Mayer van den Bergh Museum	<i>Altarpiece of the Virgin with SS Barbara and Catherine</i>	6.1	6.2	-	-	-	-
cat. 7 Antwerp Mayer van den Bergh Museum	<i>Burial of St Andrew</i>	7.1	-	-	-	-	-
cat. 19 Brussels Broodhuis-Maison du Roi	<i>Saluzzo Altarpiece</i>	19.1	19.7	19.6	-	19.4	19.5
cat. 24 Brussels KMKG-MRAH	<i>Holy Kinship Altarpiece</i>	24.1	24.2 [?]	24.5 [?]	-	-	24.4
cat. 28 Brussels MRAH-KMKG	<i>Virgin and Child</i>	-	28.1	-	-	-	-
cat. 29 Brussels MRAH-KMKG	<i>St Barbara</i>	-	29.1	-	-	-	-
cat. 49 Leuven M – Museum Leuven	<i>Virgin and Child</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-
cat. 66 Private coll.	<i>Altarpiece with Three Saints</i>	66.1	66.2	-	-	-	-
cat. G4 Güstrow Church of Our Lady	<i>Passion Altarpiece</i>	G4.1	G4.2	-	-	-	G4.3
cat. S1 Sala Parish Church	<i>Altarpiece of the Glorification of the Virgin</i>	S1.1	S1.2	-	-	-	-
cat. S6 Uppsala Cathedral	<i>Altarpiece of the Glorification of the Virgin</i>	?	S6.2	S6.3	-	-	-
cat. S7 Vadstena Abbey Church	<i>Altarpiece of the Glorification of the Virgin</i>	S7.1	S7.2	S7.4	-	-	S7.3
cat. S9 Västerås Cathedral	<i>Passion Altarpiece called Västerås III</i>	S9.1	S9.2	-	-	-	-
cat. S10 Villberga Parish Church	<i>Passion Altarpiece</i>	S10.1	S10.2	?	S10.3	-	-
cat. PC1 Private coll.	<i>Three Angels</i>	-	PC1.1	-	-	-	-
The polychromy on the following altarpiece is probably not by Master I*T							
cat. 18 Brussels Broodhuis-Maison du Roi	<i>Altarpiece of the Virgin</i>	-	-	-	-	-	18.2

The other types of brocades appear only occasionally. Applied brocade orphreys (see cat. 19.10) occur on just three altarpieces (Saluzzo, Sala and Vadstena), and the small thistle of the *Saluzzo Altarpiece* (cat. 19.6) is repeated only at Vadstena (cat. S7.4), Uppsala (cat. S6.3) and possibly on the *Holy Kinship Altarpiece* (cat. 24.5). There are certain applied brocades that seem specific to an individual altarpiece, such as the spread-winged eagle gripping a branch and holding a flowering twig in its beak on the *Saluzzo Altarpiece* (cat. 19.3)

The polychromy of around forty small statues dating from around 1500-1510 can also be ascribed to Master I*T.¹³ The Mechelen mark (three pales) appears on the back of most of them, and we can assume that this was where they were carved. The BRVESEL (Brussels) mark occurs on the pedestals of eight, indicating where they were polychromed (fig. 92a).¹⁴ Four of the statues also bear the I*T monogram (fig. 92b).¹⁵ The carving of all the statues in this group has very homogeneous stylistic characteristics displaying a quite distinctive Brussels influence. They were probably produced by different carvers in the same workshop or in various shops working in the same style. Continuous applied brocades, braids, and the large thistle or acanthus leaves (cat. 19) appear on nearly all of them. One pattern – the familiar posy of flowers and lanceolate leaves in a basket inside an ogival framework of flowering stems, on a latticed background – can be made out on two of the statues (cat. 6.1, cat. 66.1), though their traces are minimal. The braids, and the large thistle or acanthus leaves occur much more frequently (cat. 6, cat. 28, cat. 29, cat. 66). The polychromy of all the statuettes is so alike that it would almost certainly have been executed in the same polychromy workshop. And as it is so similar to the polychromy of the *Saluzzo Altarpiece*

and the other altarpieces in the group, the logical inference is that it was Master I*T who was responsible for its execution. Such a level of production implies a large and well-organized workshop whose Brussels location is attested by the use of the BRVESEL mark.¹⁶

It may be wondered why the I*T monogram stamped on the pedestals of four Mechelen statuettes does not appear in the polychromy of Brussels altarpieces. It would seem that signing polychromy with a monogram was more of a Mechelen custom. We find such monograms on the pedestals of other Mechelen statues but they are of a slightly later date (after 1515).¹⁷ There is just one known example from Brussels of a monogram, the letters JF (or IF) on the *Passion Altarpiece* at Veckholm.¹⁸ Full signatures are also not so common. In Brussels polychromy there is one known example, that of Cornelis I Schernier – executed, moreover, in applied brocade (cat. S2.2); in Mechelen we find ‘Jan van Wavere’, ‘Doermael’ and ‘Cornielis’.¹⁹ The Brussels I*T Master would seem to have started the tradition in Mechelen of signing pedestals with a monogram but to have remained anonymous with regard to works executed entirely in Brussels.

The polychromy of all the I*T Master’s altarpieces is traditional. Burnished gold predominates. Sometimes embellished with tooling, it contrasts with the matt gold used for hair. The blue surfaces of the garments and linings are exceptional, with a smooth, powdery and matt quality. Red surfaces (red glaze on silver leaf) are also very frequent, whereas the use of green is more discreet, with the exception of the Vadstena

¹³ GUILLOT DE SUDUIRAUT 2001a: 42. GEELEN, STEYAERT 2009b: 23-26.

¹⁴ These eight statues are the *St Barbara* (6570) now in the KMKG-MRAH in Brussels, the *Virgin and Child* (RF 1788) and the *St Michael* (OA 310) in the Louvre, the *St Christopher* (A 227) in the Museum Schnütgen in Cologne, and four statues in private collections: *Virgin and Child* (undocumented), *St Roch*, *St Ursula* and *St Catherine*. GODENNE 1958: 54-55; GODENNE 1960: 121-122 (cat. XCIV); GODENNE 1973: 138-139 (cat. II/246); *La sculpture des Pays-Bas méridionaux | Beeldhouwwerken van de Zuidelijke Nederlanden* 2000: 152-153; GUILLOT DE SUDUIRAUT 2001a: 98-100 (cat. 10) and 108-110 (cat. 16); KIK-IRPA photograph: 105 309 B.

¹⁵ *St Elizabeth* (altarpiece in a private collection), *St Michael* (Louvre) and *St Roch* (private collection). On the base of the KMKG-MRAH *St Barbara* are traces of letters that could be the I*T monogram in addition to the BRVESEL mark. See GUILLOT DE SUDUIRAUT 2001a: 23, 108-110 (cat. 16); GODENNE 1960: 121-122 (XCIV); *La sculpture des Pays-Bas méridionaux | Beeldhouwwerken van de Zuidelijke Nederlanden* 2000: 152-153.

¹⁶ This collaboration between workshops in different towns is evidenced by altarpieces dating from the early sixteenth century. The *Passion Altarpiece* called Västerås III and the *Passion Altarpiece* in Bro in Sweden both originated in Brussels but have wings from Mechelen. In the case of the *Altarpiece of the Passion and the Life of the Virgin* at Jäder in Sweden the carving and the wings were executed in Brussels but the polychromy is signed by Jan van Wavere of Mechelen. The *Passion Altarpiece* at Elmpt in Germany has painted wings attributed to a Mechelen artist, while the case was made in Antwerp. The *Passion Altarpiece* at Pruszcz in Poland is an illustration of cooperation between Antwerp and Brussels. PÉRIER-D’ETEREN 1977; PÉRIER-D’ETEREN 1984: 83-85; ENGELLAU-GULLANDER 1992: 91-94, 103-105, 171-174; PÉRIER-D’ETEREN 1995; GUILLOT DE SUDUIRAUT 2002a: 292-293, 297; DE BOODT 2005: 209, 220-221; JACOBS 1998: 228; PÉRIER-D’ETEREN 2000: 44.

¹⁷ Other monograms found on the base of Mechelen statuettes are IS, BP and J(E?). The *Virgin and Child* in the Amuso, Oudenaarde’s municipal museum, is one example of the IS monogram (see GODENNE 1962: 72, 125-127 (cat. CXXX); SERCK-DEWAIDE 1995: 109-110). For an overview of this topic, see among others VAN DOORSLAER 1933; LEUVEN 1971: 314-315, 423-426; VANDAMME 1982: 175-178.

¹⁸ LEUVEN 1971: 315; GUILLOT DE SUDUIRAUT 2000a: 297; DE BOODT 2005: 221-222.

¹⁹ See VAN DOORSLAER 1933; GODENNE 1962: 71-74; 170-173; MARIJNISSEN, SAWKO-MICHALSKI 1960: 158-159; LEUVEN 1971: 314-315; KOLLER 1995: 92, 95.



Fig. 89.
Saluzzo Altarpiece (detail), 1500-1510, Brussels; Brussels,
 Broodhuis-Maison du Roi (cat. 19)
 Continuous applied brocade



Fig. 90.
Passion Altarpiece (detail), before 1522, Brussels, Güstrow,
 Church of Our Lady (cat. G4)
 Local applied brocade



Fig. 91.
Saluzzo Altarpiece (detail) (cat. 19)
 Applied brocade braid



Fig. 92a.
Altarpiece with Three Saints (detail); Private collection (cat. 66)
 BRVESEL mark on St Ursula's pedestal



Fig. 92b.
Altarpiece with Three Saints (detail), 1500-1510,
 Mechelen-Brussels; Private collection (cat. 66)
 I*T monogram on St Elizabeth's pedestal



Fig. 93a.
Passion Altarpiece (detail), c.1514, Brussels;
 Villberga, Parish Church (cat. S10)
 Adoration of the Magi, Caspar's tunic



Fig. 93b.
Passion Altarpiece (detail); Villberga (cat. S10)
 Lamentation, Mary Magdalene's headdress



Fig. 94.
Altarpiece of the Glorification of the Virgin (detail), c.1515-1520, Brussels; Vadstena, Abbey Church (cat. S7)
 St Ursula and the 11,000 Virgins

altarpiece where green enhances the chromatic scale (fig. 94). The same linen fabrics, white, pink, and pale blue with coloured stripes are found from one work to the next. The faces differ, though the way of painting features to express the desired personality is similar. Their execution is more or less elaborate depending on whether the figures occupy the predella or the main case. The use of the same polychromy processes is accompanied by specific effects. In the Villberga retable, Caspar's tunic and Mary Magdalene's head-dress incorporate beautiful and unique painted decoration (figs. 93a-93b). In Vadstena a lavish effect is attained by a richer range of colours and a more varied rendering of both male and female garments (fig. 94). The quality of the polychromy is remarkable in all these works.

Motif repetition is manifest not only in the applied brocades but also in the tooling. The same open lily-shaped flower recurs in the Saluzzo, Villberga, Västerås and Güstrow altarpieces. Moreover, the lilies are also carried out in blue sgraffito on gold scabbards (Villberga and Västerås III), and are sketched in shell gold on azurite blue on a cloak collar (Vadstena) (figs. 95-97).²⁰

Designs were used in series in the production of altarpieces which are, none the less, all unique works of art. Making these small relief decorations must have been intensely laborious even though the use of moulds would have speeded up production. It can also be assumed that these decorations were Master I*T's

trademark and that high demand encouraged serial production. This modularized serial production of elements is not an isolated instance, for it was already a well-established practice by the end of the fifteenth century and even more common by the beginning of the sixteenth, especially in paintings, on statuettes, and in carved retables with painted wings.²¹

The altarpieces ascribed to Master I*T can be dated between 1500 and 1522, the Güstrow retable being the latest. The Mechelen-Brussels statuettes polychromed by Master I*T are thought to have been produced within a shorter timeframe, between 1500 and 1510.²² How long a mould would have lasted is an interesting question, especially a mould such as the one used to produce the continuous brocade that features largely in nearly every altarpiece belonging to this group (see cat. 19.1). Though the brocades are now generally in a poor state with many losses, the still-extant parts show a strong similarity. It is of course possible, indeed likely, that several moulds were used but that these were 're-produced' as exactly as possible. How the I*T workshop was organized is also an intriguing question. The production methods evidenced by the altarpieces and statuettes point to the involvement of a fairly large number of specialist craftsmen. Did all the polychromers work in one place, or were there small independent shops nearby, subcontracted to Master I*T?²³ At the very least we can suppose that the applied brocades were produced by well-trained collaborators.

Fig. 95.
Passion Altarpiece
(detail); Güstrow
(cat. G4)
Carrying of the
Cross, tooling on the
Cross

Fig. 96.
Passion Altarpiece
(detail); Villberga
(cat. S10)
Lamentation, scab-
bard with blue sgraf-
fito on gold

Fig. 97.
*Altarpiece of the
Glorification of the
Virgin* (detail);
Vadstena (cat. S7)
Glorification, shell
gold on azurite blue
on the emperor's
cloak



95.



96.



97.

²⁰ The same motif occurs on the domestic *Adoration of the Magi Altarpiece* now in the V&A, London. WILLIAMSON 2002: 108-109 (cat. 29).

²¹ GODDARD 1984: 95-101, 107-108; GODDARD 1985: 401-417; JACOBS 1998: 209-237; VAN DEN BRINK 2001: 12-43; CURRIE 2001: 80-124; BORN 2007: 19-21.

²² 1522 is the date of the installation of the Güstrow altarpiece in the Church of Our Lady. See D'HAINAUT-ZVENY 1986: 5; DE BOODT 2005: 193.

²³ There seems to have been both formal and informal collaboration, with work at the shop facilitated by familial, friendly or neighbourly relationships. See: BOONE 1998; BORN 2007; CAMPBELL 2007.



Fig. 98a.
St Peter Altarpiece
(detail), c.1516,
Hispano-Flemish;
Orduña, Church
of Santa Maria de
la Asunción
Resurrection
of Christ
© Jesús Muñiz
Petralanda, Museo
Diocesano de Arte
Sacro, Bilbao



Fig. 98b.
St Peter Altarpiece
(detail); Orduña
Crucifixion, Mary
Magdalene
© Jesús Muñiz
Petralanda, Museo
Diocesano de Arte
Sacro, Bilbao

To produce these altarpieces, Master I*T collaborated with a network of carvers and painters. All the carvings seem to follow a common style, that of the Borman workshop and in particular of Jan III Borman (called Jan Borman the Younger), whose signature is on the Güstrow altarpiece (cat. G4),²⁴ although the differences in working revealed by closer examination prevent the attribution of all the works to his hand.²⁵ Comparison with the signed compartment (containing the Carrying of the Cross) in the Güstrow work suggests that Jan Borman was probably also responsible for the carving of the Villberga and Västerås III retables. The *Saluzzo Altarpiece* (cat. 19) and the *Holy Kinship Altarpiece* (cat. 24) in Brussels seem to constitute another group that is stylistically close to though distinct from the Vadstena and Skepptuna altarpieces, the latter with its polychromy signed by Cornelis I Schernier (see below).

The wings of these altarpieces were painted by various Brussels artists, most often by Jan II van Coninxloo, without any consistent association with particular groups of carvers. Jan II van Coninxloo seems to have worked on the retables at Uppsala, Sala, Västerås (predella) and Vadstena (predella).²⁶ Colijn

de Coter was responsible for the wings of the Villberga altarpiece, while the wings of the Vadstena retable were most likely executed by a painter from his circle.²⁷ The wings of the Västerås altarpiece, on the other hand, were probably painted in a Mechelen workshop.²⁸

The posy of flowers and lanceolate leaves in a basket (cat. 19.1) which is virtually the hallmark of Master I*T seems to have inspired a Mechelen polychromer, as a *Virgin and Child* of around 1510 (cat. 47.1) now in the M-Museum in Leuven is embellished with a very similar applied brocade. It is still possible to make out a motif of flowers (larkspur?), dentate leaves and latticed zones. Here, however, the brocades are much smaller (4 cm high, compared to 11 cm on the *Saluzzo Altarpiece*) and the striations tend to be less dense.

That the I*T Master's influence extended beyond the borders of the Southern Netherlands is indicated by the *St Peter Altarpiece* in Santa Maria de la Asunción in Orduña (Spain), made in Hispano-Flemish style. It dates from the second decade of the sixteenth century (c.1516) and was probably produced

Fig. 99. ▶
*Grace proclaims
the Honours* (detail),
c.1520, Brussels,
attributed to the
workshop of Pieter
van Edingen;
Madrid, Palacio Real
Cloak of the
enthroned figure of
Grace, motif with
posy of flowers and
lanceolate leaves in
a basket

²⁴ D'HAINAUT-ZVENY 1986.

²⁵ GUILLOT DE SUDUIRAUT 2002a: 287-288; PÉRIER-D'ETEREN 2002.

²⁶ ENGELLAU-GULLANDER 1992: 65-70, 71-74, 91-94, 103-105, 171-174.

²⁷ PÉRIER-D'ETEREN 1984: 74-79.

²⁸ ENGELLAU-GULLANDER 1992: 91-94, 103-105, 171-174.





◀ **Fig. 100.**
Altarpiece of the Virgin (detail),
 c.1510-1515, Brussels,
 carving: attributed
 to Jan Borman and
 collaborators; poly-
 chromy: Cornelis I
 Schernier; painted
 wings: Brussels,
 attributed to
 Valentijn van Orley;
 Skepptuna, Parish
 Church (cat. S2)

locally.²⁹ It features certain elements strongly reminiscent of Master I*T's polychromy: local applied brocades (as in cat. 19.5), pink linen material striped with red, painted sunbeam motifs and so on (figs. 98a-98b). The tooled floral motifs (Christ's tomb) also recall those on the *Saluzzo Altarpiece*. Particularly significant, however, is the influence of the Borman workshop displayed in the carved scenes (for example in details such as background rocks inhabited by little people, animals and dwellings). It may be supposed that Hispano-Flemish artists had seen an altarpiece carved by a member of the Borman circle and polychromed by Master I*T. No doubt other works that can be compared with the altarpieces attributed to the Borman-I*T team will come to light in Spain.

The posy of flowers in a basket design appears not only as an applied brocade but also in painted form in numerous pictures attributed to Colijn de Coter or his workshop and in a series of tapestries dated between 1500 and 1510 whose compositions are

ascribed to this painter or have characteristics in common with his art (fig. 99). It also occurs in Brussels tapestries of a slightly later date that are attributed to Bernard van Orley or members of his circle (see also pp. 274-275).

The polychromers, painters and woodcarvers in the two networks that have been reconstructed around the Geel and Saluzzo altarpieces seem to have operated independently of each other in consecutive periods: 1480-1500 and 1500-1522. Nevertheless, a certain number of similarities can be established. The Strängnäs I and Ytterselö altarpieces, dating from around 1490 and 1500, have polychromy similar to that of the Geel altarpiece but carvings attributable to the Borman workshop. One of the motifs employed by the first network also passed to the second: the small local thistle-shaped brocades typical of the Geel Dianthus Master (cat. 35.2, 35.3) reappear, with some minor differences, in certain of Master I*T's altarpieces (cat. 19.5, cat. 24.4, cat. G4.3).

Cornelis Schernier

The Skepptuna *Altarpiece of the Virgin* (cat. S2), whose carving is attributed to the Borman workshop, is resplendent with sgraffito executed with masterful dexterity on different coloured backgrounds.³⁰ This technique is not uncommon in Brussels altarpieces but here it imparts an unusual intensity. The perfectly integrated motifs vary from simple stripes to sophisticated floral designs. This complexity can also be seen in the applied brocade of the canopied cloth of honour behind Mary in the Adoration of the Magi and the brocade braids on the garments of several of the carved figures. One of the braids has been produced in a very distinct manner: small floral motifs are worked in relief and there are no striations – quite exceptional for applied brocade braid. Other braids support text, the letters being left unpainted and thus appearing to be woven in gold: 'BINNEN', 'RINNEN', and 'BRVESEL' occur as well as the signature of the polychromer, 'CORNELIS SCHERNIER', in different scripts (fig. 100). This name – which is borne by two artists – appears in the Brussels archives between 1498 and 1558. The Skepptuna signature is probably that of Cornelis I Schernier (who also signed himself Cornelis van Coninxloo), who gilded the spire of the Brussels Town Hall, which was being restored at that time, and painted the arms of Philip the Good in the collegiate church of St Gudule. Cornelis I Schernier not only undertook polychromy but also painted panels. In 1511-1512, he was working on the wings (now lost) of

³⁰ More detailed information in GUILLOT DE SUDUIRAUT 2002a: 273-310.

Fig. 101.
Altarpiece of the Virgin called
 Strängnäs III (detail),
 c.1507-1508, Brussels;
 Strängnäs, Cathedral
 (cat. S5)
 Marriage of the
 Virgin, the Virgin's
 gown, continuous
 applied brocade with
 tin foil probably
 tamped on coarsely-
 woven textile



²⁹ We thank Jesús Muñoz Petralanda, custodian of the Museo Diocesano de Arte Sacra de Bizkaia, for the photographs and documentation of this altarpiece. Jesús Muñoz Petralanda plans to publish a note on the altarpiece in a book on Gothic sculpture in Biscay province.

the *St Anne Altarpiece* at the Benedictine Abbey in Forest.³¹ Cornelis I died in 1519.³² The second Cornelis Schernier – his descendant or kinsman? – continued to work with the Borman workshop, Cornelis II and Passier Borman working together in 1529-1530 on the tabernacle of St Peter's Hospital in Brussels.³³

The Strängnäs III altarpiece

The *Altarpiece of the Virgin* called Strängnäs III – again carved by the Borman workshop – displays contrasting colours to great dramatic effect. The three scenes are dominated by a wide variety of sgraffito decorations combined with a broad range of tooled motifs. The letters painted or scratched in different colours on the edges of the garments and the colourful chequerboard paving produce an appealing liveliness. Several characters wear garments decorated with applied brocade. Although these brocades are continuous the tin foil does not have the usual striations but a weave pattern reminiscent of linen or hessian, which was probably created by tamping the tin foil onto a piece of coarsely woven textile (fig. 101). After gilding, the brocade was highlighted freehand, with no precise pattern being followed (see cat. S5). This altarpiece's luxurious polychromy is the antithesis of the large *Passion Altarpiece* called Strängnäs I in the same church. Whereas the sober treatment of Strängnäs I achieves an uncluttered monumentality, the miniaturization that characterizes Strängnäs III results in an enchanting lightness.³⁴

The 'Brimo de Laroussilhe' Passion Altarpiece

The *Passion Altarpiece* from the former Brimo de Laroussilhe collection and now in the KMKG-MRAH in Brussels (cat. 20) is dated 1470-1490. No marks remain by which its origin can be determined. It was thought to have been produced in a Brussels workshop due to the high quality of the carving and the refined polychromy with its wide variety of applied elements.³⁵ But more recent research draws comparisons with the altarpieces carved by the Master of Klausen from Antwerp and other groups of carvings which seem to be influenced by that artist's works.³⁶ The Brimo altarpiece appears to be by the same hand as the groups now in the Louvre in Paris and the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.



Fig. 102.
Adoration of the Magi,
c.1500, Brussels(?),
Mechelen(?); London,
V&A
Open lily-shaped
flower (in shell gold?)
on Joseph's robe

The Brimo de Laroussilhe *Passion Altarpiece* is embellished with a particularly rich repertoire of applied adornment: six different applied brocades, each combined with tiny gilded metal cupules. There are also small metal fleurs de lis, stars, crowns and trefoils arranged in decorative bands along garment edges or scattered patterns decorating entire surfaces (imitating small metal elements sewn onto clothing). The combination of applied brocades and small metal elements recurs in the altarpieces of the Master of Klausen and also the retables in the Louvre and the Metropolitan Museum of Art,³⁷ though none of the brocades on these works are identical to those on the Brimo altarpiece.

Attribution by applied brocade?

The similarity of the applied brocades in separate works is not always a sufficient criterion for attributing those works to a particular artist. For example, the small pomegranate with the lily-shaped stem on the *Saluzzo Altarpiece* (cat. 19.5) occurs on the *Holy Kinship Altarpiece* in Brussels (cat. 24.4) and the *Passion Altarpiece* in Güstrow (cat. G4.4), and also on the *Altarpiece of the Virgin* in the Broodhuis-Maison du Roi in Brussels (cat. 18.2). The polychromy of the first

³¹ WAUTERS 1909: 110.

³² ENGELLAU-GULLANDER 1989: 72.

³³ WAUTERS 1909: 111; ENGELLAU-GULLANDER 1989: 72.

³⁴ PHILIPPOT 1988: 56.

³⁵ BRUSSELS 2000a: 38-47.

³⁶ WENIGER 2002, esp. p. 506; GUILLOT DE SUDUIRAUT, LÉVY 2007.

³⁷ KOLLER 2002: 474-475; WENIGER 2002: 506; GUILLOT DE SUDUIRAUT, LÉVY 2007: 98.

three has been clearly identified as being by Master I*T, but this is not the case with the *Altarpiece of the Virgin*, where in particular the way of painting faces differs and no use is made of applied brocade braid for edging garments.³⁸

On the background of the carved *Adoration of the Magi Altarpiece* in the Victoria and Albert Museum³⁹ is a continuous applied brocade which seems similar to one of the brocades of the *Passion Altarpiece* in the Mayer van den Bergh Museum in Antwerp (cat. 5.2). The polychromy of these two altarpieces does not appear to have been executed in the same workshop, however. In turn, the polychromy of the London altarpiece has some points of resemblance with works by Master I*T. For example, the open lily-shaped flower (in shell gold?) on Joseph's robe (fig. 102) is the same as the one described earlier as appearing on the Saluzzo, Villberga, Västerås, Vadstena and Güstrow altarpieces in sgraffito, shell gold or punchwork (see fig. 95-97).

Though the applied brocades resemble each other, their poor condition often means that no definite identification can be made. This is the case, for example, in a Madonna from Mechelen (cat. 30.1) and the *Besloten Hofje with SS Anne, Augustine and Elizabeth* (cat. 54.1). Nevertheless, closer inspection of the sgraffito letter-borders points to the same polychromer at work.

The organization of carvers, polychromers and painters

This study of late-fifteenth and early-sixteenth-century polychromers offers much new data about workshop practices. How does this new material help our understanding of the way in which work was organized between the various crafts involved in altarpiece production? Did the polychromer have his own independent workshop or was he dependent on the painter? Who received the orders and who organized the production of altarpieces that involved the partnership of a number of different workshops – the painter, the polychromer or the carver? Perhaps there was no one way of working. In the case of the Brussels group formed around the Geel *Passion Altarpiece*, the commission was probably entrusted in the first instance to the polychromer (the Geel Master of the Dianthus) or the painter (the Master of the View of St Gudule); as regards the second group (also from Brussels), it was probably either the

polychromer or the carver, Master I*T or the Borman workshop. On the open market it is more likely to have been the polychromers who were at the centre of demand, as they are the common denominator in the majority of the altarpieces studied. Moreover, according to the Brussels regulations, they, like the painters, were accustomed to selling finished altarpieces made on spec – polychromed and with painted wings – on the open market. This was not permitted to the carvers, who could only display their products as non-polychromed works. If such works had not found a buyer within one month, the carvers were allowed to subcontract the polychroming and wing-painting then offer their works for sale once more. When altarpieces were made to order – as was probably the case with very many of the altarpieces studied here – the carvers enjoyed the same rights as the polychromers and painters.⁴⁰

A mark in the shape of a young man's head in profile (St Michael?), whose significance is uncertain, has been located on three of the Swedish altarpieces (Uppsala, Strängnäs I and Vadstena) and on the Güstrow *Passion Altarpiece*.⁴¹ It may be the mark of the merchant or businessman who, as commissioner or intermediary, set in train the production of these altarpieces, or of one of the workshops involved, or of the city of Brussels. In any case it is not – as far as we can judge – the mark of a polychromer: the polychromy of the Uppsala, Vadstena and Güstrow altarpieces was carried out by the I*T workshop, that of the Strängnäs I altarpiece by a different workshop in a style that in some respects is reminiscent of works by the Geel Master of the Dianthus.

The series production of applied brocades came at a time when the demand for Brabant-made statues and altarpieces was soaring. In this context, applied brocades were being used as modules in some polychromy workshops though certainly not to the detriment of the individual character and high quality of each finished altarpiece.

The detailed and painstaking study of applied brocade has produced very interesting results. It has been shown that textile motifs provide a relatively objective criterion for attributing works to certain craftsmen as long as caution is used and technique, style and iconography are taken into account. In addition the project has amply demonstrated the importance of examining altarpieces in their entirety with their carving, polychromy and painted wings.

D.S., I.G.

³⁸ This lack of braid may be explained simply by the smaller size of the carved figures, however. The garments are bordered with decorative punchwork and painted motifs.

³⁹ We thank Paul Williamson and his team at the V&A, London, for enabling us to examine this work in detail.

⁴⁰ NIEUWDORP 1981: 85-98.

⁴¹ GUILLOT DE SUDUIRAUT 2002a: 295, 296; DE BOODT 2005: 214, 218, 220.



Fig. 103.
St Veronica (detail), c.1430-1432, Robert Campin; Frankfurt, Städelsche Kunstinstitut
Cloth of honour

THE POLYCHROMER'S CHOICE

THE SELECTION AND LOCATION OF APPLIED BROCADE
ON THE WORK OF ART

The aim of this chapter is to examine which type of applied brocade was chosen to ornament the various supports on which it was used, be they painted panels, walls, or wood or stone statues.¹ And also to see which surfaces in those works were enriched with these brocades. Was there a logic to their distribution? And with which other decorative techniques were they sometimes combined? It should be said at the outset that whatever conclusions may be reached refer only to fifteenth and sixteenth-century works from the Low Countries. The situation may be different elsewhere in Europe.

Panel painting

Applied brocade was rarely used in panel painting. In those cases where it has been identified it is almost invariably in the form of continuous brocade, embellishing the curtains or cloths of honour that hang behind donors or saints, enhancing the status or sacredness of the figures.² There are, however, two notable exceptions. The background of Robert Campin's *Crucified Thief* in Frankfurt (cat. G3) is completely covered with continuous applied brocade that forms not a cloth of honour but a glittering abstract gold sky. And on the painted wings of the Dortmund *Passion Altarpiece* (cat. G2) both continuous and local applied brocades add splendour to garments and other textiles.³

Covering a cloth of honour with applied brocade was generally a response to the requirements of the iconography (the representation of cloth of gold), but it also satisfied the desire for a striking gold effect in the painted compositions. Used on the exterior side of

altarpiece wings, moreover, the sumptuous cloths of honour in low relief heralded the splendour of the dazzling polychromy that would be revealed when the wings were opened. These applied brocades were often left simply gilded, without the addition of coloured highlights,⁴ the large rectangular surfaces punctuating and giving rhythm to the exterior wing panels, which would be all that was visible on ordinary days when the altarpiece was closed.

There are applied brocade cloths of honour in the Van Eycks' *Adoration of the Lamb* altarpiece in Ghent (cat. 37), not on the outside of the wings in this case but on the inside of the polyptych in the upper register, where the Divine Lord, the Virgin and John the Baptist sit enthroned before simulacra of shimmering silk dorsers cunningly woven with animal motifs. These large motifs, which stand out in gold against a coloured ground and are integrated into a network of painted patterning, could easily be taken for local brocades on a painted surface.⁵ They are, however, continuous, with much of their surface masked in paint to allow the design to stand out clearly. The use

¹ More specific classification criteria based on type, size, relief structure and design can be found in Chapter Four. We thank Emile Van Binnebeke for his critical reading of this chapter.

² For examples of applied brocade on the exterior sides of altarpiece wings, see cat. 35.1, cat. 39.1, cat. 52.1, cat. 52.2, cat. F2.1, cat. G1.1, cat. G5.1.

³ As far as we know at present, the Dortmund *Passion Altarpiece*, which dates from 1420-1425, is the earliest example of the use of applied brocade on a work made in the Low Countries. See Chapters One and Two and cat. G2).

⁴ The applied brocades on the dismembered wing panels at Loppem (cat. 52.1, cat. 52.2) and the panels of the *Passion Altarpiece* called Strängnäs II (cat. S4.1) are exceptions to this rule, being highlighted alternately with green or red glaze. The applied brocade on Rogier van der Weyden's *Last Judgement* in Beaune (cat. F2.1) is highlighted with red glaze.

⁵ This was how Michiel Coxie interpreted the applied brocades in his copy of the *Adoration of the Lamb* altarpiece. See cat. 37.

of local applied brocades would have disrupted the unity of the surface material and made the regularity of the pattern more difficult to achieve. Even so, it was the solution chosen by the painter of the Dortmund *Passion Altarpiece* wings (cat. G2.2, G2.3, G2.4), who combined three models of local brocade (using two wherever he applied them), integrating them into a painted design to produce an illusion of luxurious variously-patterned textiles. The outlines of the applied brocades are perceptible beneath the paint, breaking the unity of the surface. Nevertheless the effect is very decorative and rich. Robert Campin found a solution to the problem of surface unity where local textile motifs woven from gold thread were to be rendered in relief and integrated into a coloured surface. The relief of the gold thread of the palmettes and parrots incorporated in the painted cloth of honour behind his *St Veronica* (Frankfurt, Städelsches Kunstinstitut) is achieved not with applied brocade but with a thick mordant brushed on where the gilded metal threads were to be represented (fig. 103).

Wall painting

Applied brocade was equally little used in wall painting and architectural polychromy. In the few examples studied we find that here too it was primarily continuous applied brocade which was used to create the cloths of honour behind the figures of painted or sculpted saints (see also Chapter Eight).⁶ Local brocades do appear from time to time, arranged on painted surfaces to imitate brocaded or embroidered motifs.⁷ And applied brocade braids mimicking bands of trimming or embroidery may enliven the edges of large painted wall hangings (cat. 11.1, cat. 11.2) or cloths of honour (Leiden, St Peter's Church⁸). Continuous applied brocades and braids ornamenting architectural elements (vault ribs, ceiling joists) have also been identified: two cases are listed in the catalogue (cat. 17.1, cat. 41.1).

Sculpture

Both continuous and local applied brocades were frequently used on wood and stone sculpture, as were applied brocade braids, although the latter appeared only in the third quarter of the fifteenth century in the form of ecclesiastical stoles or as orphrey bands elaborating the borders of copes.⁹ The narrow braids that imitate trimmings along the edges of gilded

cloaks and other garments and which appear from 1500 on, seem to have been a speciality of Master I*^T^o and, to a lesser extent, of Cornelis I Schernier¹¹ (see Chapter Six).

Choosing the type of applied brocade...

In the densely-populated carved narrative scenes that fill the interiors of altarpieces applied brocade is used in all manner of places. It embellishes coifs, hoods and gowns, chasubles, dalmatics and albs, the garments of biblical characters, saints and dignitaries, and even those of soldiers and shepherdesses. It adds lustre to cloths of honour, coverlets, curtains and canopies. And it decorates the rear walls of altarpiece cases.

One observation is worth mentioning. It would seem that neither continuous nor local applied brocades were ever employed to decorate the cloaks and mantles worn by the carved figures that people these scenes. The third type of applied brocade, the braid, was used on them, but not until quite late in the technique's history. As a rule – though there are a few exceptions – cloaks and mantles were gilded with burnished gold on bole or sometimes with matt gold. It was only around 1470-1480 that their borders began to acquire decorative flourishes, initially tooled, though by 1500 or thereabouts painted scalloping, applied brocade braids and sgraffiti had started to become fairly common (figs. 104-106).¹² Before 1470-1480 the outer surfaces of such cloaks tended to be simply and uniformly gilded. This lavish use of gold leaf was inherent to the predominance accorded to gilding. It covered the altarpiece's frame, the architectural canopy, the colonettes separating the various scenes, and many other elements of architectural ornamentation. Gold was also heavily used on garments in general, but not in the systematic way evidenced by the cloaks. Exceptions to this omnipresent gilding can, however, be noted on Brabantine altarpieces dating from around 1450-1470.¹³ And in

¹⁰ See especially cat. 6.3, cat. 7.2, cat. 19.9, cat. 28.2, cat. 29.2, cat. 66.3, cat. 51.3, cat. 56.4, cat. 59.4, cat. 510.4.

¹¹ See cat. 52.2.

¹² Most linings of gilded cloaks are blue. They were usually plainly coloured but from around 1500 they were also sometimes enriched with sgraffito decoration.

¹³ See especially the Brabantine retables and fragments dated 1450-1470 studied by Sophie Guillot de Suduiraut (GUILLOT DE SUDUIRAUT 2002b: esp. 196, 199, 201). The figurative groups depicting the Dormition and Coronation of the Virgin from a dismembered Marian altarpiece in Autun are conspicuous for their large plainly coloured surfaces: blue for the garments of the Virgin (cloak and gown), red for those of Christ and John, and green for the reading apostle. And on the Ternant *Passion Altarpiece* (c.1460) the predominating applied brocade-covered surfaces contrast with the single-colour attire of the Virgin (though her blue cloak has a gold border) and St John (KAGAN, GÉRARD, GÉRARD-BENDELÉ 2002: 245-246).

⁶ See cat. 2.1, cat. 11.1, cat. 12.1, cat. 33.1, cat. 42.1, cat. 65.1.

⁷ See cat. 11.5, cat. 42.2, cat. 56.1.

⁸ The cloths of honour 'hang' on the twelve pillars of the choir. See FRIEDRICHS 2003: 84-85.

⁹ See cat. 14.1, cat. 31B.4.



104.

Fig. 104.
Saluzzo Altarpiece
(detail), 1500-1510,
Brussels; Brussels,
Broodhuis-Maison
du Roi (cat. 19)
Adoration of the
Magi, applied bro-
cade braid on cloak
of black magus



105.

Fig. 105.
Passion Altarpiece
(detail), c.1500,
Brussels; Antwerp,
Mayer van den Bergh
Museum (cat. 5)
Lamentation, painted
border on the Virgin's
mantle

Fig. 106.
Passion Altarpiece
called Strängnäs III
(detail), c.1507-1508,
Brussels; Strängnäs,
Cathedral (cat. 55)
Nativity, sgraffito
decoration on the
shepherd's garments



106.

the Entombment on a *Passion Altarpiece* produced between 1470 and 1490 (Brussels, KMKG-MRAH, former Brimo de Laroussilhe collection; cat. 20) the Virgin wears a blue cloak over a blue gown (though her cloak is gold in the central scene) (fig. 107).¹⁴

Unlike the cloaks of the small characters of the carved narrative scenes, the cloaks and copes of larger individual statues were adorned with applied brocade. In these cases, however, only local brocades were used to simulate the brocaded and embroidered silks. Yet here too, gold leaf predominates, exemplified in the *Altarpiece of the Holy Family with St Catherine* in Zoutleeuw (cat. 63), in which an individual statue stands facing the beholder in each of the three compartments (fig. 108). The coloured cloaks of the Virgin and Joseph (red and black respectively), decorated with local applied brocades, are swept back or thrown over the shoulders and therefore visible mainly from the side. Seen from the front, as was intended, the gilded garments they wear beneath the cloaks are much more in evidence, although part of Mary's ample red mantle is still clearly visible. Unlike the Virgin and Joseph, St Catherine's cloak, worn over a red gown ornamented with local applied brocades, is

¹⁴ The *St Veronica* from St Catherine's Convent in Utrecht (Museum Catharijneconvent) is likewise clad in a blue cloak, albeit over a gilded gown. VAN VLIJERDEN 2004: 279, fig. p. 41. A number of Antwerp retables dating from the early sixteenth century are also distinguished by the inclusion of brightly coloured cloaks covered with patterns in sgraffito. See for example the *St Anne Altarpiece* and *St Anthony Altarpiece* in Kempen (DE BOODT, SCHÄFER 2007: 89, 91-92, 94, 96, 158-159, 163).

gilded but she has gathered it around herself to form a mass of golden drapery at the front. Despite this eye-catching attire, the Virgin derives greater importance not only from her central position and her rather taller stature compared to the other two figures but also from the sheer splendour of her red cloak, on which two models of local applied brocade are accompanied by tiny metal cupules and fleurs de lis.

The statues of St Margaret of Antioch (cat. 15) and St Ursula (cat. 16) now in Bruges are carved fully in the round and designed to be viewed from the back as much as the front. Both saints wear cloaks on which local applied brocades take pride of place, being mostly visible at the rear, where they create a most impressive effect, or the sides. They are less in evidence when the statues are viewed from the front, where the gilding of the gowns and the magnificent blue lining of Ursula's cloak irresistibly draw the eye.¹⁵

Conversely, the applied brocades on two statues of popes (St Sylvester and an unidentified pontiff; cat. 31A, cat. 31B) now in Brussels (KMKG-MRAH) are most evident at the front and sides, where they easily predominate over the burnished gold leaf. Both copes are embellished with local applied brocades; both chasubles are covered with continuous brocade; both albs are adorned with applied brocade apparels.¹⁶ The statues' original context is lost, but the rood screen of St Rombaut's Cathedral in Mechelen, from

¹⁵ The statue's polychromy has been overpainted but the colours and gilding apparently correspond to the original.

¹⁶ The same can be said of the statue of St Remaclus in Spa (cat. 59.1).



Fig. 107.
Passion Altarpiece
(former Brimo
de Laroussilhe
collection) (detail),
1470-1490,
Brussels(?),
Antwerp(?); Brussels,
KMKG-MRAH
(cat. 20)
Entombment, the
Virgin wears a blue
mantle over a blue
robe

Fig. 108.
*Altarpiece of the
Holy Family with
St Catherine*, 1479(?),
Brabant, Leuven(?);
Zoutleuw, Church
of St Leonard
(cat. 63)

which they reputedly came and which was dismantled in 1664, probably included large gilded surfaces, at least on the architectural elements.

There is a tension in the altarpieces and statues between the unrealism of the gilding and the realism implicit in the brocades. Gold is a precious material, brilliant and untarnishable, which is cited very literally with gold leaf. Applied brocade, on the other hand, produced the illusion of silks and cloths of gold; it did not rely on real textiles or actual gold thread. Nevertheless, both the gilding and the applied brocade contribute to the creation of an unreal ensemble in which the preciousness and brilliance of the materials are sought. The gold dominates by its brilliance. With its matt gilding and relief the applied brocade has a more muted appearance. It catches the light differently and introduces modulations in the presentation of gilding while evoking the expensive silks woven with gold thread that were also regarded as precious and prestigious materials.

...and deciding where to apply it on an altarpiece

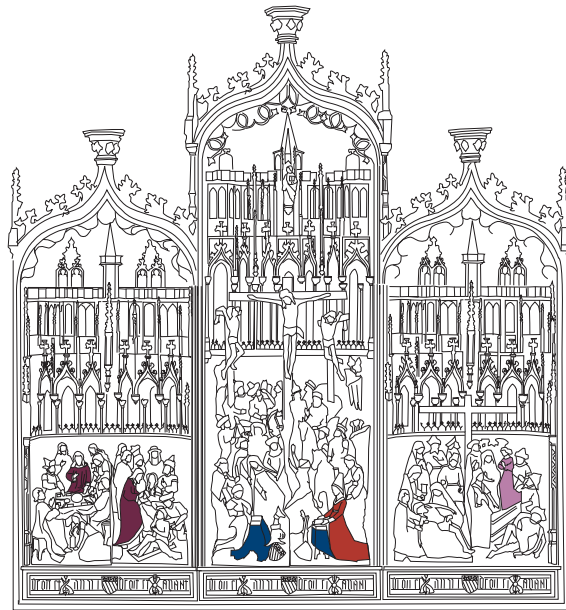
We turn now to how much and where applied brocade was used on altarpieces. It may have been employed quite discreetly, or more conspicuously, or have been added with a lavish hand. A particular model may have been reserved for the garments of a particular character, who perhaps reappeared in several scenes, each time adorned with the same applied brocade, which aided the figure's identification. But such exclusivity is rare and occurs on only a few retables, such as the *St Leonard Altarpiece* in Zoutleuw (cat. 62) and the *Altarpiece of Claudio de Villa and Gentina Solaro* in Brussels (cat. 21), where the applied brocade underscores the religious or social status of

the principal figures – Bishop Remigius in Zoutleuw; Christ, the angel at the Sepulchre, and the donatrix in Brussels (fig. 109).¹⁷ In the *Altarpiece of the Life of the Virgin and the Infancy of Christ* in Rouen (cat. F3) Mary wears the same blue gown conspicuously enriched with the same local applied brocade in each of the three scenes (cat. F3.3) (see ills. F3a, F3.3a). It is not hers alone, however. It also occurs on a holy woman's blue gown and an acolyte's blue robe in the Circumcision, though here used much more discreetly (the two figures appear only in the second and third row). From the third quarter of the fifteenth century, however, the idea of keeping a certain brocade for a specific character seems to have waned. And from around 1490, with applied brocade now being employed as part of a modularized production of altarpiece elements, the notion vanished completely. This serial production of applied brocades, evidenced by the appearance of the same brocade, actually made in the same mould, on a range of retables produced by the I*T workshop, for example, was a well-established practice by the beginning of the sixteenth century (see Chapters Five and Six).

¹⁷ In the *Altarpiece of Claudio de Villa and Gentina Solaro* the applied brocades do not always adorn the most important figures. Indeed, neither the Virgin nor Mary Magdalene wears brocade-embellished garments, though they both play an important role in the work. The Virgin wears a plainly-gilded cloak and gown; Mary Magdalene, who appears in every scene, is distinguished by a highly refined decoration of small red lilies painted on the gilded surface of her gown, which makes her very easy to identify in each episode.

Fig. 109.
Altarpiece of Claudio de Villa and Gentina Solaro, 1470-1480, Brussels; Brussels, KMKG-MRAH (cat. 21)
 Location of the applied brocades

- Model 21.1
- Model 21.2
- Model 21.3
- Model 21.4

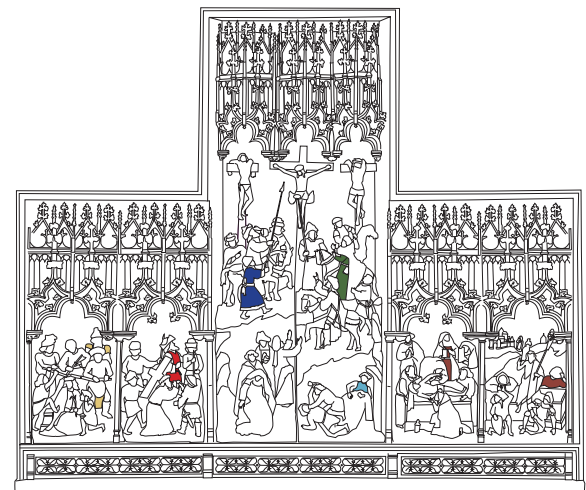


The distribution of applied brocades does not always meet strict criteria or logic. It seems to respond to the dual needs of giving prominence to certain characters and increasing the range of decorative effects while maintaining the unity of the work. On the small *Altarpiece of the Virgin* in the Broodhuis-Maison du Roi in Brussels (cat. 18) the applied brocades (mostly local) are allotted not only

Fig. 110a.
Passion Altarpiece (former Brimo de Laroussilhe collection) (detail); Brussels (cat. 20)
 Crucifixion, the swooning Virgin



Fig. 110b.
Passion Altarpiece (former Brimo de Laroussilhe collection); Brussels (cat. 20)



110b. Location of the applied brocades

- Model 20.1
- Model 20.2
- Model 20.3
- Model 20.4
- Model 20.5
- Model 20.6

¹⁸ In the Crucifixion the Virgin wears a blue gown covered in little patterns painted in shell gold and a gilded cloak, but in the Entombment she is dressed entirely in blue with the same shell gold pattern. The garments of John and the holy women are ornamented with a scattering of tiny and highly refined metal stars, rays, cupules and fleurs de lis.

Virtually all the figures of the *Passion Altarpiece* in the Mayer van den Bergh Museum in Antwerp (cat. 5) wear a garment decorated with applied brocade but a distinction seems to have been made according to the type of brocade used, local or continuous. The same model of local brocade appears on the robes of the Virgin, the holy women and St John (cat. 5.3) (fig. 111). One of the holy women wears a surcote of continuous applied brocade, however (cat. 5.2). The costumes of dignitaries, soldiers, Nicodemus, and Joseph of Arimathea are in turn covered with the same continuous applied brocade, which imitates a rich cloth of gold. Christ's robe is ornamented with a different model of continuous brocade that evokes a rather rough material patterned with stipples (this brocade also makes a discreet appearance elsewhere on the altarpiece).

Applied brocade is one of the principal features of the polychromy of Master I*T, who employed more than a dozen different models. He also distributed the various types of applied brocade throughout his altarpieces so as to introduce a rhythmic alternation of surfaces coloured (very often with red glaze) then enriched with local applied brocades and surfaces completely covered with continuous brocade. Applied brocade braids accentuate the edges and hems of gilded surfaces, enhancing the legibility of the volumes and punctuating the crowded scenes like commas and periods in a text (see fig. 112). The famous continuous applied brocade with the posy of flowers and lanceolate leaves in a basket design appears on practically every example of the I*T Master's work (see fig. 89; cat. 19.1). On the *Saluzzo Altarpiece* (cat. 19), whose interior scenes depict the Life of the Virgin and the Infancy of Christ, for example, it embellishes all manner of garments and textiles. In the case of the Virgin and the high priest the surfaces ornamented with this brocade are particularly eye-catching (fig. 112). It adds extra emphasis to the status of these figures, which occupy centre stage wherever they appear. The Virgin is in every scene, each time clad in a gown entirely covered with this brocade consistently highlighted in blue, this colour being reserved almost exclusively for her (see ill. 19.1c). The same brocade is used on the garments of other figures and on hangings, but almost always highlighted in red. The same distribution by colour was also used on the *Passion Altarpiece* called Västerås III in Västerås Cathedral (cat. 59). But the formula was less strictly followed on the *Passion Altarpiece* in Güstrow (cat. G4): certainly the blue-highlighted brocade always adorns the gown of the Virgin but it was also applied to the robes of the apostles, the canopy, details of the soldiers' dress and one or two other places (cat. G4.1).



Fig. 111.
Passion Altarpiece
(detail), c.1500,
Brussels; Antwerp
(cat. 5)
Crucifixion, the
swooning Virgin

Combining applied brocade with other decorative techniques

It is rare to find more than one model of applied brocade adorning the same surface, though there are a few instances where this is the case, most spectacularly the bed hanging in the Annunciation scene on the *Saluzzo Altarpiece*, which is decorated with no fewer than four local brocades. The *Altarpiece of the Holy Family with St Catherine* in Zoutleeuw (cat. 63) is another good example. Here we find two models of local applied brocade (cat. 63.2, cat. 63.3) combined on both the Virgin's red cloak and St Catherine's gown. The decorative effect is further enhanced by the addition of tiny metal cupules and fleur de lis-shaped ornaments glued onto the brocades themselves or the surrounding red glaze. The combination of applied brocade and small stamped and gilded metal embellishments is something that occurs quite often. The earlier-mentioned *Passion Altarpiece* in Brussels (cat. 20) is a splendid example, on which local applied brocades are systematically combined with metal cupules and fleurs de lis ornaments between 1 and 4 millimetres in width (fig. 113). Many of the garments have richly decorative borders of minuscule metal cloverleaves, rays and stars in addition to cupules and fleurs de lis, which form decorative edging patterns or letter-borders. The local applied



112.

Fig. 112.
Saluzzo Altarpiece
(detail) (cat. 19)
Circumcision

Fig. 113.
Passion Altarpiece
(former Brimo
de Laroussille
collection) (detail);
Brussels (cat. 20)
Resurrection, local
applied brocade
combined with small
cupules on the
garment of the sleep-
ing soldier behind
the tomb



113.

brocades on the Strängnäs I and Strängnäs II Passion altarpieces display the same kind of combination, though here only metal cupules expand the decorative repertoire (cat. S3.2, cat. S4.2).¹⁹ Local applied brocades are occasionally also combined with small gilded rectangles (gold leaf on mordant or gilded tin), as occurs on the polychromed wood statues of *St Marcoul* in Liège (cat. 50.1) and *St Remaclus* in Spa (cat. 59.1).

From around 1500 and throughout the first two decades of the sixteenth century those surfaces on Brussels, Antwerp and Leuven-made altarpieces that were decorated with applied brocade were juxtaposed with surfaces ornamented with sgraffito and tooling and painted decoration, with a result that is quite exuberant. The Brussels-produced *Altarpiece of the Virgin* called Strängnäs III is certainly the most spectacular example (fig. 115). A certain lavishness of decorative effect can also be seen in the *Passion Altarpiece* in Zoutleeuw, which was made in Leuven, and the *Life of the Virgin Altarpiece* produced in Antwerp around 1510–1515 for the parish church of Lofta and now in Stockholm (Statens Historiska Museet), for example (fig. 114). Paul Philippot describes this escalation of

polychromy effects well.²⁰ In the Low Countries, he suggests, the increasing use of glazes, sgraffito, applied brocade, tooling and painting on gold – the reflection in the polychromy of the increasing miniaturization of the narrative scenes²¹ – may transform an almost anecdotic scene into the unreality of a fairy tale. He goes on to point out that the various treatments of the gold surface such as burnishing, punchwork and sgraffito cannot be regarded merely as decorative additions, being rather a form of modulation of spatial values and playing a role in polychromy analogous to the one they played in painting, used to great effect by the likes of Fra Angelico and Giovanni di Paolo.

The Brussels polychromy of Master I*T, dated between 1500 and 1522, also displays these rich contrasts of colour and texture, of brilliant and matt surfaces (fig. 112). The gilded and burnished surfaces of garments are embellished with borders of applied brocade braid. An almost tactile effect of real cloth of gold is produced by the continuous brocades applied to so many garments, drapes and hangings, where they alternate with glazed (red, green), velvety (blue) or simply matt (pink, pale blue, white) areas of colour frequently punctuated with local brocades of various shapes and sizes. Blue areas are not only ornamented with local brocades but also with beautiful patterns painted in shell gold, ranging from simple dots to complex motifs. Specific effects characterize each

²⁰ 'Dans les Pays-Bas, la surenchère artisanale des glacis, sgraffito, brocarts appliqués, poinçonnages et peintures sur l'or, poursuivant la miniaturisation au niveau de la polychromie, peut, comme dans le retable de Strängnäs III, transposer une scène presque anecdotique dans l'irréalisme d'un conte de fées [...] Le traitement superficiel de l'or, notamment par le jeu du polissage, du poinçonnage et du sgraffito ne peut en aucun cas être considéré comme une simple addition décorative. Il constitue en effet une forme de modulation de valeurs spatiales, et joue dans la polychromie un rôle analogue à celui qui lui est dévolu en peinture, et dont un Angelico ou un Giovanni di Paolo ont tiré les jeux les plus riches.' PHILIPPOT 1990b: 283.

²¹ Here, the author alludes to the phenomenon of the miniaturization of the carved scenes in Southern Netherlandish altarpieces. See PHILIPPOT 1990a.

¹⁹ This type of combination also appears on the *St Ursula* in Bruges (cat. 16.1).



114.



115.

Fig. 114.
Altarpiece of the Virgin (Loftha Altarpiece) (detail), 1510-1515; Antwerp; Stockholm, Statens Historiska Museet
Annunciation, Visitation

Fig. 115.
Altarpiece of the Virgin called Strängnäs III (detail), c.1507-1508; Brussels; Strängnäs, Cathedral (cat. S5)
Adoration, black magus

retable polychromed by Master I*T. The *Saluzzo Altarpiece* (cat. 19) is distinguished by its profusion of punchwork on elements such as furniture, stable and throne, and the beauty of the designs painted in shell gold on blue (now barely perceptible). There is an abundance of punchwork on the *Holy Kinship Altarpiece* in Brussels (cat. 24). On the Passion altarpieces of Villberga (cat. S.10), Västerås (cat. S.9) and Güstrow (cat. G.4), on the other hand, punchwork is limited to the burnished gilding on the Cross carried by Christ. The Villberga retable is distinguished by painted patterns of exceptional quality, such as those on Mary Magdalene's coif and the garments of one of the magi. Sgraffito makes a tentative appearance on the Villberga and Västerås retables, ornamenting some of the soldiers' scabbards, but is much in evidence in the *Altarpiece of the Glorification of the Virgin* in Vadstena (cat. S.7). This retable also features some original colour effects not found elsewhere, such as an abundance of greens and purplish pinks. On the *St Anne Altarpiece* in Uppsala (cat. S.6), blue sgraffito on gold is increasingly important, appearing on the clock and the maidservant's apron. Shell gold patterns on matt blue also occur here and there, on the Virgin's drawstring bag and a maidservant's sleeves.

In the polychromy of a retable's carvings it would seem that the textured applied brocade was always secondary to the smooth gilding, whether burnished or matt, that predominates with its brilliance. Applied brocade is altogether more muted, catching the light in a different way and thereby modulating the gold as it evokes the precious silks shot through with gold thread. Often brocades were distributed according to a coherent system specific to the individual work, helping to accentuate the religious or social status of particular figures, or to emphasize a figure or to differentiate between categories of characters. Each altarpiece had its own system and rules; yet these were not always adhered to, even within the same work, and exceptions to the system were still fairly common. A decorative appearance was also invariably sought and often seems to have been more important than iconographic logic. Finally, applied brocade could also be combined with other kinds of decoration – tiny gilded metal elements, simple flat gilded rectangles – on the same surface, or with other techniques, such as sgraffito, punching and painting, on contiguous surfaces. An escalation of decorative effects characterizes the polychromy of Brabant retables in the early sixteenth century, with altarpieces made in the various centres – Brussels, Antwerp and,



Fig. 116.
Saluzzo Altarpiece
 (detail) (cat. 19)
 Presentation in the
 Temple, high priest's
 dalmatic, shell gold
 on velvety azurite

to a lesser extent, Leuven – taking on an appearance of spellbinding luxury.

Thus it will be seen that which type of applied brocade was chosen and where it was applied is a relevant and indeed intriguing question, but that general conclusions are hard to draw. Nevertheless, it offers possibilities for research more specifically focused on this as yet little explored aspect of the polychromy of retables and sculptures made in the Low Countries.

D.S.



INTERIORS ADORNED

APPLIED BROCADE IN ARCHITECTURAL POLYCHROMY

In the foregoing chapters we have more or less concentrated on applied brocade as it was used in panel painting and sculpture. But the polychromer also employed the technique in the elaborate decoration of walls and other architectural elements, and the catalogue includes several examples of applied brocade used in this way in both domestic and ecclesiastical interiors.

In the late-medieval interior textiles were a crucial element, providing embellishment, warmth, and a subtle demonstration of their owner's position.¹ Highly prized luxurious tapestries and refined and fashionable fabrics enjoyed considerable prestige. As status symbols par excellence they temporarily or permanently adorned royal, princely and ecclesiastical spaces. Italian silks enriched with metal thread were particularly appreciated for their ingenious weaving techniques and deep dyes. As wall decoration they alternated with vibrant narrative tapestries and 'verdures'. By the late fifteenth century, textile centres such as Lille, Arras, Tournai and Valenciennes were introducing innovative light fabrics such as 'changeants', 'camelots' and 'satins' that imitated the costly Italian silks.² Other substitutes – imitations painted or printed on canvas and silk – were also regarded as quality products in which the Southern Netherlands carried on a flourishing trade in the fifteenth century.³ These fabrics often featured figurative images, but imitation damasks or cloths with complex foliate, animal or geometric patterns were also produced.⁴ Not every purse was deep enough for real textiles, however. For a cheaper, permanent wall covering, murals were eminently suitable; and from

around 1450, applied brocades were also being incorporated into this kind of interior wall decoration.

In the wall paintings in the Church of St Peter and St Guy in Anderlecht (cat. 2), St Bavo's Cathedral in Ghent (cat. 38) and St Leonard's Church in Zoutleeuw (cat. 65) the saints' importance was underscored by representing them as if before rich cloths of honour rendered in applied brocade. This 'framing' device allocated a sacred space to the characters and highlighted their holy status.⁵

In the Godfrey Chapel in the Church of Our Lady of the Chapel in Brussels⁶ a niche (cat. 33) provided a sacred space for a precious liturgical object, possibly a staurotheke. The niche's vaulting and colonettes and its rich polychromy, which incorporates painted borders and fringes as well as applied brocade, reinforce the impression of a sacred space, fitting accommodation for a venerated object.

⁵ SANDSTRÖM 1963: 21; M. MARTENS 1989: 50, 98. The frame emphasizes the image as object, as a painted statue on the wall, but impedes good spatial coherence. Moreover, when confined in a frame, as if in a panel painting or painted tapestry, rather than integrated into the surrounding architecture, the figures' monumentality is diminished. In composition these murals are reminiscent of panel paintings such as the wings of the *Geel Passion Altarpiece* (cat. 35) and the *St George* panel in Oudenaarde (cat. 58), both dating from the last quarter of the fifteenth century. In wall painting in this period the tendency was to borrow materials and techniques from panel painting, such as the use of brilliant oil paint and dense opaque brushwork.

⁶ *Patrimoine monumental* 1989: 243-252; BERGMANS 1998: 301-302.

◀ Fig. 117.
Nave and Choir of the Church of our Lady in Utrecht, 1641, Pieter J. Saenredam; Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum © Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

¹ This theme was one of the topics covered during the Historic Interiors Study Day (31 March 2004), University of Ghent and already published: GEELLEN, STEYAERT 2003: 48-77; GEELLEN, STEYAERT 2005: 1-24.

² CHORLEY 1993: 162.

³ REYNOLDS 2000: 89-98; ZANDER-SEIDEL 1995: 216-227.

⁴ Listed among the expenses for the Passion play performed in Mons in 1501 is a 'pièce de toile pointée à manière de damas': COHEN 1925: 472.

In the eastern part of the so-called Oud Huys of the Convent of the Discalced Carmelites in Ghent (cat. 42) sculpture, painting and decorative techniques combine to form a dramatic setting.⁷ Real stone statues backed by applied brocade cloths of honour interact with painted 'statues' with bases and canopies in grisaille, and a painted Crucifixion takes place against a red background strewn with local applied brocade rosettes. These various elements must have created a great impression of depth, blurring the distinction between appearance and reality and expanding the three-dimensional space of the viewer.

In the stone relief epitaph of Jacobus Bogaert, a canon and professor of medicine, in the Chapel of St Luke in St Peter's Church in Leuven (cat. 46), angels hold back curtains to reveal the crucified Christ.⁸ Like altar curtains that are only opened during certain services, they have a metaphysical revealing function and represent the border between the real and the fictive, the profane and the sacred worlds.⁹ Angels unfold the cloth of honour in the St James Chapel in St Saviour's Cathedral in Bruges (cat. 12), where wall painting, sculpture and an imitation textile wall covering are synthesized in an original composition. The subtle illusionistic manipulation of different media with their diverse depths and varying reflections of light befools the beholder, turning the wall decoration into not a replica but a replacement silk textile. The curtains are a concrete expression of the imaginary border between the twin realities of the viewer and the sacred object.

Immense imitation textile hangings, on which clear though badly worn traces of applied brocade can still be seen, adorn three of the south piers of the nave in the Church of Our Lady in Breda (fig. 118).¹⁰ Here the real textiles that were normally hung only on certain feast days were supplemented by permanent simulated hangings that created an impression of splendour at a fraction of the cost of the real thing. On a monumental scale these illusory textiles play an active part in the division of the interior. In St Peter's Church in Leiden (County of Holland) the twelve piers in the choir also support hangings in applied brocade (fig. 119-119a).¹¹ The diverse 'cloths of honour'

(c.2.80 × c.1.20 m), whose patterns differ from pillar to pillar, served as the background for statues of the apostles.¹² Edged with a wide border in relief, they structured the space and emphasized the importance of the apostles as pillars of the Church. In the Cathedral of Our Lady in Antwerp (cat. 11) a crossing pier still bears a few vestigial traces of what must also have been an isolated cloth of honour. Indeed, applied brocades were used in several ways in the cathedral, and on a colossal scale.

The examples of independent applied brocade-covered cloths of honour found in the Low Countries – those that served as decorative 'hangings' in their own right – reflect the importance accorded to sumptuous Italian silks used as interior furnishing textiles.¹³ This predilection had already existed for some time and was expressed by silk-simulating wall paintings. The painted silk imitations patterned with diverse animal and plant motifs on the pillars in the choir of Utrecht Cathedral date from 1401 at the latest.¹⁴ Subsequently, probably towards the end of the fifteenth century, new 'silks' were painted on a number of the pillars. The drawings and paintings of Pieter Saenredam show what the wall decoration must have looked like originally (fig. 117).¹⁵ Apparently the same kind of decorations were added in the now demolished Church of Our Lady in Utrecht, here with flower and thistle motifs, and also in the choir of St Bavo's in Haarlem, and in the Old Church in Amsterdam, although these are of later date. No comparable wall decorations are known in the Southern Netherlands.

In the sacristy of the former Dominican monastery known as 'Het Pand' in Ghent (cat. 41) applied brocades are found, rather surprisingly, on the ribs of the vaulted ceiling. In Mechelen, on two ceiling boards from the former palace of Margaret of Austria (cat. 56), brocades incorporate the Regent's monogram. Initials were frequently woven or embroidered into textiles used to furnish interiors, thus associating the textile's owner with the richness of the fabric. Both techniques were employed in Margaret's palace – the applied brocades on the ceiling boards reprise the pattern of an embroidered wall covering of silk velvet

Fig. 118. ▶ Cloths of honour, first half of the 16th century; Breda, Church of Our Lady

⁷ DE CLERCQ 1996: 38.

⁸ DE CLERCQ 1998: 95-97.

⁹ DE CLERCQ 1996: 37. On the origin and symbolism of the curtain motif, and the complex idea of *revelatio*, see EBERLEIN 1981; EBERLEIN 1983: 65.

¹⁰ Applied brocades were also found elsewhere in the church. *De Onze-Lieve-Vrouwekerk* 2003: 355. On the north wall of the choir is a mural decorated with lozenge-shaped local applied brocades.

¹¹ FRIEDRICHS 2003: 79-85.

¹² The statues themselves were destroyed by Calvinist iconoclasts in 1566.

¹³ From 1476 Venetian citizens were forbidden to use cloth of gold or silver, silk brocade, silk velvet and silk damask as a wall covering. The law was re-enacted in 1562: 'Le spalliere et ogni sorte de tapezar: con oro a[o] con argento, over di seda d'ogni altezza siano del tutto devedate ...; non si potendo alle mure ... panni di seda d'alcuna sorte', THORNTON 1991: 52.

¹⁴ HASLINGHUIS, PEETERS 1965: 344-347.

¹⁵ UTRECHT 2000: 60, 82-84, 114-115, 118-119, 132-133, 153-156, 232-234, 235-237.





Fig. 119.
Cloths of honour,
late 15th century;
Leiden, Church
of St Peter
© Rijksdienst voor
Cultureel Erfgoed,
Amersfoort

Fig. 119a.
Applied brocade
on choir pier,
late 15th century;
Leiden, Church
of St Peter
© Rijksdienst voor
Cultureel Erfgoed,
Amersfoort

and damask, referred to in the inventory taken in 1523: 'sept pieces de tapisseries fetes à losainges de velours verd et damas blanc, couvert de semblable M et petiz A de bordure'.¹⁶

In the former mansion of the Lords of Gruuthuse in Bruges is a truly impressive interior in whose decoration applied brocade plays a major role (fig. 120).¹⁷ In 1472 Lodewijk van Gruuthuse (often known as Louis of Bruges), knight of the Golden Fleece and councillor to Charles the Bold, had an oratory built to connect his residence with the immediately adjacent parish Church of Our Lady. The wood-panelled oratory, which is entered from an upper floor of the Gruuthuse mansion, is let into the north choir ambulatory and overlooks the high altar. A stair gives direct access to the choir. Entering this intimate and splendidly ornamented space must have seemed like entering another world. Five webs of the wooden vault were bordered with a decorative garland (with three different floral motifs) whose ends came together at the apex in entwined stemwork (fig. 120a). It is worth noting that these applied brocades were glued onto paper, which was probably meant to reinforce them.

¹⁶ MICHELANT 1870-1871: 73; EICHBERGER 2002: 97.

¹⁷ It was not possible to make a thorough examination of the interior of the Gruuthuse oratory before the publication of this book. An extensive study that incorporates technical and stylistic data can, however, be anticipated in the near future. We thank Kristel Van Aedenaeren, Stedelijke Musea Brugge, Museum Gruuthuse and Sofie Baert, Dienst Monumentenzorg Brugge.

The tin foil served not only as a technical component but also fulfilled an aesthetic role. For instance, certain elements of the motif, such as the edges were not gilded, leaving the bare tin to contrast with the adjacent gold leaf. The vault ribs, which are supported by polychromed wooden angels, and the beam above the extended kneeler were clad with a floral and foliate applied brocade braid. Another braid with the Gruuthuse motto 'Plus est en vous' and the entwined initials of Lodewijk van Gruuthuse and Margaretha van Borsele, all in gilded letters, runs the length of the moulding just below the vault webs (fig. 120a).¹⁸ The tin foil of the braids was apparently not glued to paper, although closer examination is needed to be quite certain of this.

Few examples of applied brocade in late-medieval interiors are known outside the Low Countries. In Switzerland, in the abbey church of Payerne,¹⁹ the wall paintings in the Grailly Chapel date from the second half of the fifteenth century: here applied brocade enriches the cloths of honour behind the painted saints and garnishes their garments. In Tyrol, in the old sacristy in the Augustinian monastery at Neustift (c.1470-1475, Augustiner-Chorherrenstift) the workshop of Michael Pacher depicted the Latin Doctors

¹⁸ DEVLIEGHER 1986. In 1986 Luc Devliegheer also discovered slight traces of a painted Last Judgment. Nothing seems to remain of this now.

¹⁹ PANCELLA, FURLAN 1983.



Fig. 120.
Oratory, Gruuthuse mansion, 1472, Bruges

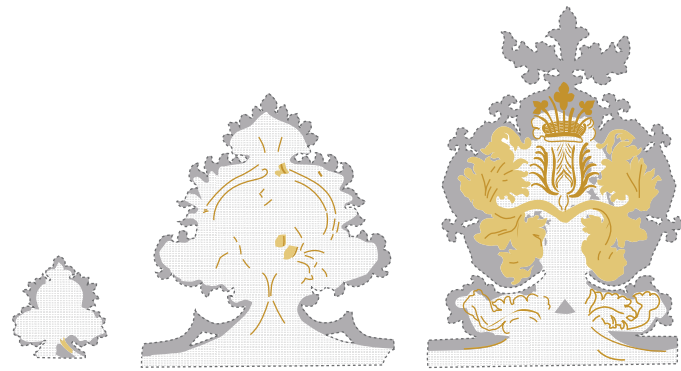
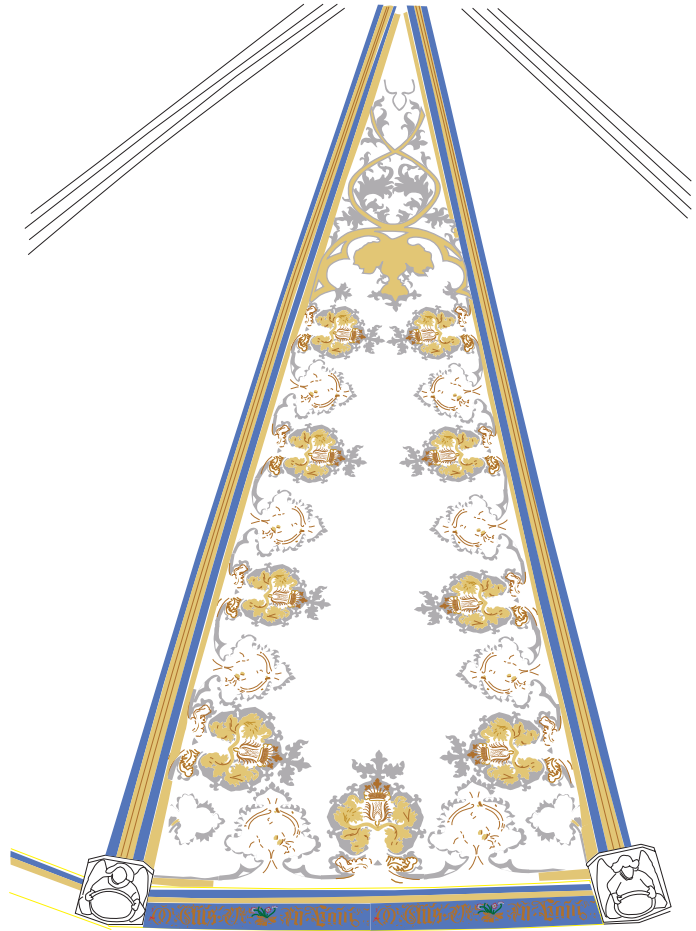


Fig. 120a.
Applied brocades on the vault, braid with Gruuthuse motto 'Plus est en vous'

of the Church seated on applied brocade-embellished thrones in the quatrefoils in the vaulting.²⁰ In Germany the bosses of the cross vaults of the monastery church at Blaubeuren were also decorated with applied brocade (c.1490; Ulmer Museum).²¹ Pisanello was arguably one of the first artists to master the technique in Italy: he integrated what are possibly applied brocades into the surcote of the Princess of Trebizond in the Pellegrini Chapel in the church of St Anastasia in Verona (1436-1438), a wall painting subsequently transferred onto canvas.²² And the Master of the Balbo Annunciation enriched the garments of both the Virgin and the annunciatory archangel with applied brocade in his *Annunciation* fresco (1469; Chieri, Sanctuary of Santissima Annunziata).

There is no discernable difference between the applied brocades used in architectural decoration and those employed in panel painting. Continuous applied brocade occurs most frequently, principally for the composition of cloths of honour; brocade braid appears as a strip along the secondary joists of the Oosterlingenhuis ceiling (cat. 17); while the only examples of local applied brocade are Margaret of Austria's monogram in Mechelen, which mimics embroidery, and the rosettes in the Convent of the Discalced Carmelites in Ghent (cat. 42.2). The size of the sheets of tin used is comparable in both architecture and panel painting. In the *St Agnes* (cat. 38), the decorations of the Church of Our Lady of the Chapel (cat. 33), the Convent of the Discalced Carmelites (cat. 42) and Zoutleeuw (cat. 65) the measurements of the sheets never exceeds 20 centimetres on any side, and this is also the case in the panels in Geel (cat. 35), Oudenaarde (cat. 58) and Ghent (cat. 37), for example. In monumental applications the size of the tin sheet and therefore also the motif may be adapted, as in 'Het Pand' in Ghent (cat. 41) and in Leiden, where the sheets reach 30 centimetres.²³ But in panel painting, too, a tin foil sheet of 30 centimetres is by no means exceptional, witness the background of Robert Campin's *Crucified Thief* (27 × 29 cm) and many German applied brocades. As to relief, the greater the number of striations per centimetre, the more successful the imitation of textile, although the maximum twelve striations per centimetre in historic interiors is slightly lower than in many brocades on statues and panels. In structure – adhesive and filler – there is little appreciable difference whether the applied brocade was to be used on wood or stone sculpture,

on panel, or in interiors. Painters and polychromers therefore used applied brocades without making any essential changes, no matter what they were to be applied to.

In the niches in the Church of Our Lady of the Chapel in Brussels and the Chapel of St Luke in Antwerp Cathedral, and on the piers of St Peter's in Leiden, the ceiling boards from Margaret of Austria's palace in Mechelen and the ceiling of the Oosterlingenhuis in Bruges, there is gold leaf on the applied brocades. There are also minute remnants of gilding on the borders above the red painting in Antwerp Cathedral. No trace of gold leaf was found on the other brocades mentioned here. The surface of the cloths of honour in St Peter's in Breda has been closely examined. Samples reveal a 'thin, red, transparent layer', which can be identified as a gold-imitating glaze, on top of the tin foil.²⁴ The orange fluorescence under ultra-violet light suggests that it is a natural resin.²⁵ The applied brocades on the Anderlecht wall paintings are so damaged and over-painted that their original appearance is entirely lost. None the less, on the cloth of honour behind 'St Bruno' a few traces of the original red highlighting do survive. Underneath is the grey-black layer of tin foil. The cross section reveals a glaze on the tin foil. As at Breda, this fluoresces orange under ultra-violet light. Probably this glaze would originally have given the tin foil a gilded appearance. The same transparent glaze is present on the tin foil of 'Het Pand' in Ghent and the cloth of honour in the St James Chapel in Bruges.

On the applied brocade cloths of honour in Leiden a thin transparent organic layer was found between the tin foil and the mordant used to fix the gold leaf.²⁶ The purpose of this layer, which also fluoresces orange under ultra-violet light, is not yet entirely clear. It may be a protective coating applied to prevent corrosion of the tin foil (see Chapter Ten).²⁷

That a gold-imitating glaze should be used in preference to gold leaf is probably explained by its very much lower price. Various medieval documents describe how gold leaf could be mimicked by a coloured glaze on tin foil (see Chapter Three). Guild regulations were strict in banning such deceptive practice,²⁸ however, and in many towns it was punishable with a fine – in Cologne as early as 1371, although the regulations of the Antwerp St Luke's Guild an exception was made for relief decorations.

²⁰ NEUSTIFT 1998: 229-232.

²¹ BRACHERT 1964: 38.

²² FRINTA 1963: 147, n. 7.

²³ Measured by Angélique Friedrichs, FRIEDRICHS 2003: 84.

²⁴ FRIEDRICHS 1999-2000: 167.

²⁵ Idem. DARRAH 1998: 51, 53.

²⁶ FRIEDRICHS 1999-2000: 167; FRIEDRICHS 2003: 80-82.

²⁷ DARRAH 1998: 72.

²⁸ VANDAMME 1982: 151 ff.; BILLINGE et al. 1997: 8-9.

There is no doubt that many applied brocade decorations have been lost with the removal of later plaster from the walls. Others are probably still hidden under successive overpaints. The applied brocades that do survive are very badly damaged and retain only minimal traces of their original appearance, a factor that has more than once hampered the interpretation of data. Even so, these traces still evidence an intense interaction between several different disciplines, between wall painting and panel painting, a variety of polychromy techniques, and sculpture.

I.G., D.S.

St Mark, 1480-1500, Brabant(?), Brussels(?), Picardy(?); Loppem, Loppem Castle (cat. 52) ▶
Detail of the applied brocade on the cloth of honour behind St Mark



PART 2



Fig. 121.
Fragment of white silk lampas with gold pattern weft; design with banderole, leopard, griffon, birds and foliage, Italy, 14th century; Brussels, KMKG-MRAH

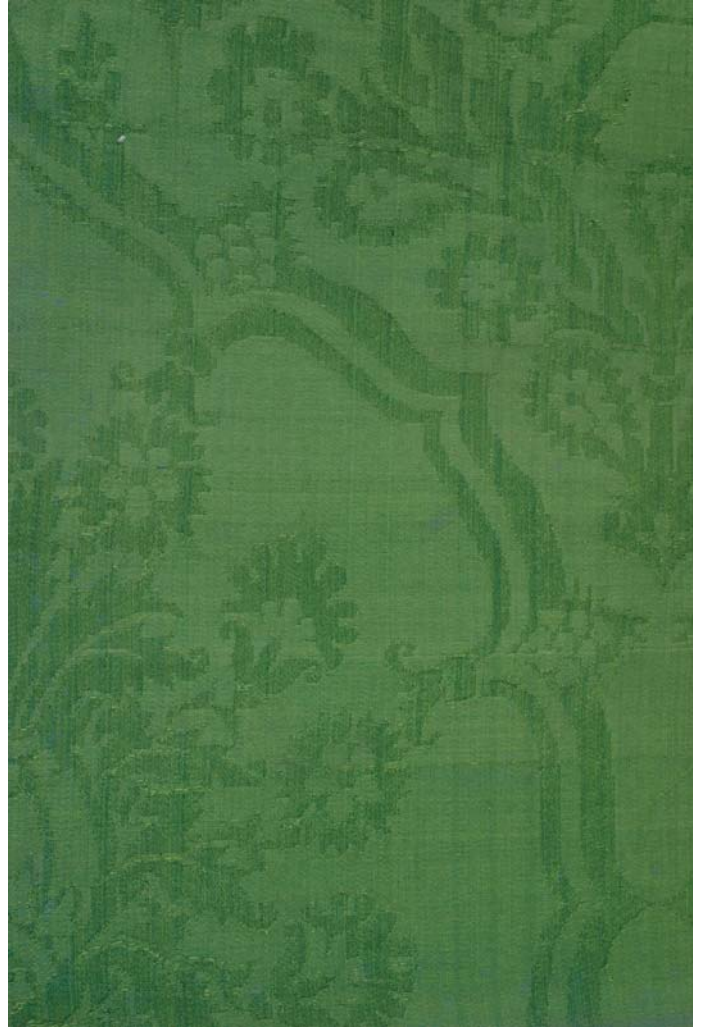


Fig. 122.
Fragment of green silk damask, Italy, 15th century; Brussels, KMKG-MRAH

LAMPAS, VELVET AND CLOTH OF GOLD

CRITERIA FOR INTERPRETING THE REPRESENTATION OF TEXTILES BY APPLIED BROCADE

Wivine Wailliez

The study of a work of art's material, described by Cesare Brandi as that which 'transmits the epiphany of the image' in two ways, which can be defined as structure and appearance,¹ provides both the conservator-restorer and the art historian with a tool for historical criticism. The study of polychromy is a rich source of aesthetic, historical and technical information on the characteristic features of its time and place of production.²

At the end of the Middle Ages the taste for naturalism manifest in the late Gothic style brought about an evolution in the representation of fabrics in works of art and interior decoration, culminating in the technique we call applied brocade. This chapter examines these textile imitations with a view to identifying their real textile models, their origin and period, and the techniques and devices employed in their manufacture, such as the most widely used ways of evoking a particular textile and the inventiveness displayed in the process. The aim is to show the technical and stylistic evolution of applied brocade in relation to the textile innovations of the day.³ We begin with a brief overview of the luxury textiles in use at the time. Then, three typological criteria will be defined that allow a more detailed interpretation of the textile techniques that were imitated in applied brocade. This is followed by a short survey of the possibilities and limitations of applied brocade in simulating specific types of fabric.

The textiles

In the late Middle Ages the prestige cloths most highly prized tended to be Italian figured silks – lampases (fig. 121), damasks (fig. 122) and velvets – shot with gold and silver thread and generally referred to as brocades (see also Chapter Four). Cloths of gold, *alluciolato* velvet, and *bouclé* weft velvet are mentioned in account books and inventories under such evocative names as *panno d'oro*, *riccio d'oro* and *riccio sopra riccio*.⁴ Embroidery was also highly valued, particularly on orphreys. It was produced entirely by hand and as such was extremely expensive. This is not the place to dwell on the general evolution of Italian textiles; there is an abundance of specialist literature available to the interested reader, including technical glossaries.⁵ Here, we deal simply with velvets.

We know that Italy was already producing velvet in the thirteenth century.⁶ By the fourteenth century its manufacture was flourishing; and in the fifteenth century it reached its technical apogee and the zenith of its glory with the arrival of *a griccia* velvets.⁷ The end of the fourteenth century saw the appearance

¹ BRANDI 2005: 51.

² The present contribution, submitted in 2007, is the outcome of research begun in 1997-98 (WAILLIEZ 1998) and continued in 2001-2002 (WAILLIEZ 2002) and after. Fruitful exchanges with the authors of the present catalogue have enabled the initial results to be refined. I thank the authors and institutions who have lent photographs and R.V. Martins for the original diagrams.

³ This chapter necessarily gives only a first glimpse of the topic; a more comprehensive discussion requires a much longer and more detailed development.

⁴ MONNAS 1987a: 69-80.

⁵ See in particular good summaries in TIETZEL 1984; TIETZEL 1988; WARDWELL 1976-1977; LECLERCQ 1997; DESROSIERS 1999 and the CIETA glossary 1971.

⁶ MONNAS 1986: 64, n. 8.

⁷ The term used at the end of the fifteenth century for velvet with a multi-lobed palmette, improperly referred to as 'pomegranate pattern' by nineteenth-century art historians. SCHORTA 1991: 57-83.

of figured velvets, with a local voided velvet effect on a satin ground (*zetani vellutati*) or a tabby ground.⁸ The invention of pile-on-pile velvet, with two or three different pile heights, also dates from these years.⁹ Towards the end of the 1420s¹⁰ the evolution of brocading techniques gave rise to a new kind of ornamentation based on loops of gold thread, called *alluciolato*, leading around 1440-1445¹¹ to the gold *bouclé* weft,¹² which reached its high point in the 1480s.¹³ In the 1460s cloths of gold with fine linear designs in cut silk pile (fig. 123, 123a) began to be produced. These velvets were particularly sought after in the Low Countries, as evidenced by the countless depictions of them in tapestries, paintings and sculptures. Their complex weaving made them extremely expensive.¹⁴ Some parts of the pattern might be filled in with loops of gold or silver thread or uncut velvet, while *alluciolato* loops glistened in areas of plain velvet.¹⁵ The third quarter of the century also saw the invention of a *inferriata* or *ferronnerie* velvet (fig. 124), which, like pile-on-pile velvet and damask, was generally *ton sur ton* and achieved its effect through the contrast of two weaves in the same colour, with precious metal threads added only very rarely.

Northern Europe eagerly welcomed the new fashions, which arrived via the large Italian entrepôt at Bruges. The rapid evolution of textiles, and particularly of raised pile weaves such as velvets, stimulated the development of painting and polychromy techniques by which they could be represented in art, as evidenced in the works of the Early Netherlandish painters in the Low Countries and German lands. By the 1420s applied brocade, the ultimate plastic imitation of richly figured fabrics, was already in use (see Chapter One and cat. G2). Employed by polychromers in various centres, it would undergo technical changes while keeping stylistic pace with fashion.

⁸ MONNAS 1986: 98

⁹ MONNAS 1999: 169; TIETZEL 1988: 146.

¹⁰ MONNAS 2000: 149.

¹¹ Ibid. 149-150. Monnas's identification of *bouclé* weft in paintings by Jan van Eyck from c.1435 leads her to date this new technology even earlier. The earliest extant textiles with a *bouclé* weft date from 1440-1445 (Warwick chasuble, V&A; chasuble of Nicholas V, Museo del Bargello). See also MONNAS 1987b: 418.

¹² The *alluciolato* loops are distributed over a cut velvet ground whereas '*bouclé* weft' is formed by tight rows of gold loops on the ground weave.

¹³ MONNAS 1983, 1986, 1987a, 1987b: 422-423 (altar frontal of the Basilica of St Francis at Assisi).

¹⁴ ORSI LANDINI 1999: 46.

¹⁵ In a *griccia* velvets, the sinuous stem and the centre of the palmette are brocaded with gold, with cut silk pile details in outlined pattern on the gold background. They are, however, often surrounded by a broad zone of plain velvet, and it is in this part that the *alluciolato* gold loops rise from the cut velvet background.



Fig. 123.

Fragment of crimson pile-on-pile velvet cloth of gold with gold *bouclé* weft and *alluciolato* loops, Italy, 15th century; Brussels, KMKG-MRAH



Fig. 123a.
Detail of tight gold *bouclé* weft loops and scattered *alluciolato* loops, two heights of cut pile (pile-on-pile) and voided velvet design
© KMKG-MRAH, Brussels



Fig. 124.
Chasuble, crimson *a inferrata* pile-on-pile velvet, Italy, 15th century; Brussels,
KMKG-MRAH
© KMKG-MRAH, Brussels

The representation of textiles by applied brocade: three typological criteria

In addition to the classification criteria already in use (size, arrangement, striation density, 'fatty' and 'lean' composition)¹⁶ the distinction made by Mojmir Frinta in 1963 should be recalled. It was based on his own observations and has apparently not been taken up since. He distinguishes one kind of applied brocade in which the flat 'recessed' background plays a significant role in the design, and another in which there is little flat ground and the design consists predominantly of striations. He also notes raised borders that define the various parts of the pattern.¹⁷ Here, Frinta's classification has been adopted and adapted, for it offers a way to an interpretation of the real textile model. I propose three typological criteria: the **pattern**, the sort of **texturing** used to fill elements of the motif, and the number of different **heights of relief**.¹⁸

*Pattern*¹⁹

There are three categories of pattern, the Tegernsee type pattern, the relief pattern and the mixed pattern. Not every applied brocade falls into one or other of these categories, however; they apply primarily to continuous applied brocade.

Tegernsee type pattern

The Tegernsee type pattern (fig. 125) is made up of high, striated, zones, mostly gilded, and low flat zones, often highlighted with colour (the 'background', or 'channels' as Frinta calls them; the Tegernsee Manuscript's *feldungen*). The motif is perceived through the contrast between flat tints.

Relief pattern

A distinction can be made between two types of relief pattern. The 'outlined relief pattern' (fig. 126), which is by far the most common, consists of a contour line highlighted in colour which stands out against a fully striated and gilded background. The alignment of the striations may vary from zone to zone. The 'plain relief pattern' (fig. 127), which is encountered much

¹⁶ See also Chapter Four.

¹⁷ FRINTA 1963: 143-144.

¹⁸ See also WAILLIEZ 2002: 58.

¹⁹ As regards textiles, their pattern is relatively flat between 1400 and 1430. In the next years an outline technique using very fine lines develops, and in the cloths of gold of the second half of the century a sense of depth is created by the suggestion of several planes in the design. DESROSIERS 1999: 459; MONNAS 1999: 170.

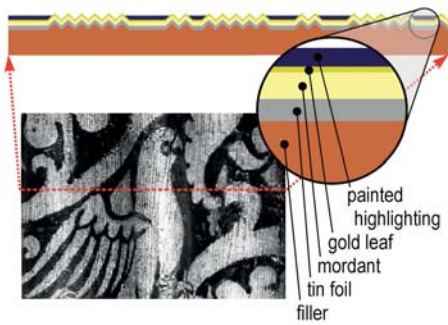


Fig. 125.
Diagram of Tegersee type pattern
Diagram © R. V. Martins / W. Wailliez
Photograph © E. Oellermann

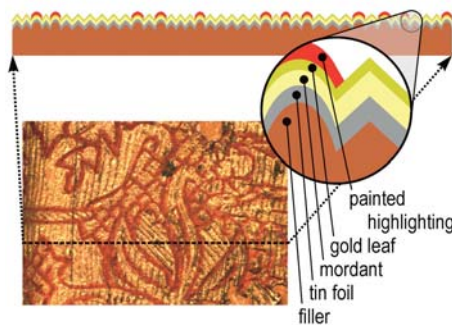


Fig. 126.
Diagram of 'outlined relief pattern'
(The zigzag represents the striations and the rounded line the contour line)
© R. V. Martins / W. Wailliez

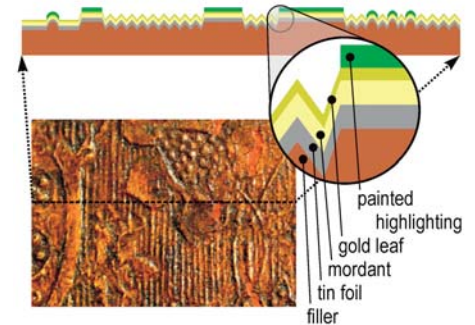


Fig. 127.
Diagram of 'plain relief' pattern
© R. V. Martins / W. Wailliez

more rarely, has raised flat zones or plateaus in addition to the contour line and striations of the 'outlined relief pattern'.

It should be noted that these definitions depend on the pattern's relief – those elements actually cut in the mould – as appearance alone can be misleading, in particular when the flat zones of a Tegersee type pattern are so narrow (Frinta's 'channels') that they could almost be taken for a contour of a relief pattern.

Mixed pattern

The mixed pattern is a combination of Tegersee type elements (i.e. with recessed flat zones) and outlined relief pattern elements (i.e. with relief contour lines).

Texturing

The second typological criterion is the sort of texturing that fills the various parts of the motif. This generally consists of parallel **striations**, which may vary in direction. Some elements of the motif may also be filled with tiny, more or less tightly packed **raised dots**.²⁰ These can be interpreted in terms of textile technology.

Heights of relief

In the Tegersee type pattern, the outlined relief pattern, and the mixed pattern the relief is generally all the same height – although very occasionally there are two different heights, with the contour line being higher than the striations. In applied brocades in which the outlined relief pattern and plain relief pattern are combined, there may be more than one height

of relief: the striations and contour lines are all the same height but the plateaus are higher.²¹ These can be interpreted in terms of textile technology.

The textiles represented...

The applied brocades of the 1420s and 1430s tended to be imitations of lampases and velvets. Their patterns were generally the Tegersee type (see cat. 37, cat. G2, cat. G3, for example). In the second half of the fifteenth century, between 1465 and 1480 we see new textiles emerging and these were mirrored by the development of the outlined relief pattern, which simulated cloths of gold decorated with fine linear designs in raised velvet pile, for example at Châteaudun and Ferrières-en-Gâtinais (Loire Valley).²² Although this novel pattern was ideal for evoking these kinds of textiles, lavishly shot with gold thread and with a design worked in cut silk pile, the Tegersee type pattern was also used to suggest them. Shortly before 1460 patterns appeared that featured elements filled with raised dots, intended to represent the gold loops of *bouclé* weft velvet.²³

Brabantine and Flemish workshops met the challenge of representing the *alluciolato* effect on a plain cut pile velvet background with tiny metal cupules²⁴

²¹ As can be seen, for example, on the console of one of the sculptures in the Sainte-Chapelle of Châteaudun Castle (c.1465), WAILLIEZ 1998: 36 and Appendix 2. See also cat. 17.1, cat. 56.1, cat. G.I.1, cat. S4.1.

²² WAILLIEZ 1998; WAILLIEZ 2001; WAILLIEZ 2002.

²³ *Passion Altarpiece* (1455-1460), Brussels workshop, Church of St Roch and Our Lady of the Assumption, Ternant (Nièvre, France). WAILLIEZ 2002: 58, 131. In KAGAN, GÉRARD, GÉRARD-BENDELÉ 2002: 246 and fig. 18, the raised dots of the continuous applied brocade are erroneously described as 'little hemispherical metal applications'. We thank Sophie Guillot de Suduiraut for making photocopies available, thus allowing the verification of this hypothesis.

²⁴ Technique described by Marcelis and Serck in BRUSSELS 2000a: 47 and CASCIO, LÉVY 2002: 131-132, 150 (fig. 5).

²⁰ Latticing and zigzags are also encountered. See Chapter Four.

Fig. 128.
Vierge Bulliot (detail),
 c.1450, Autun;
 Autun, Musée Rolin
 Applied brocade on
 the robe
 © J. Délivré

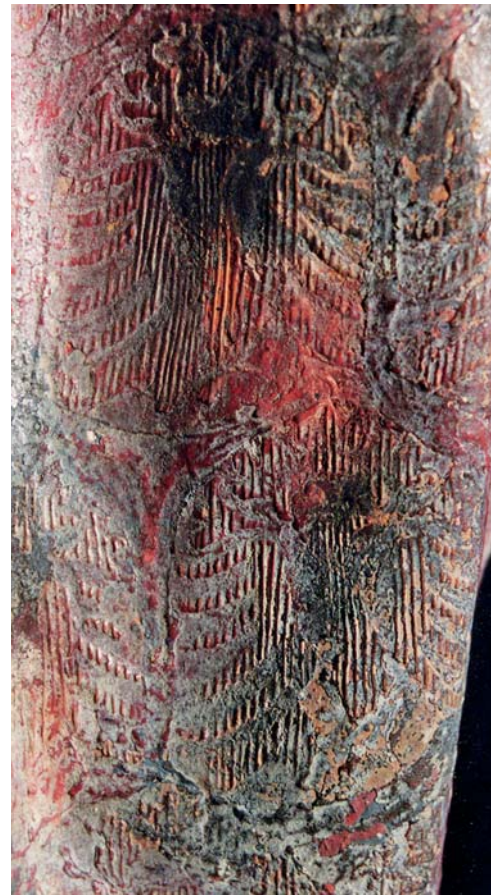
combined with local applied brocades; we see this for the first time around 1470–1490 (see cat. 20).

This period is rich in invention. It is at this time that we also find applied brocades braids²⁵ being used to represent embroidered or woven orphreys,²⁶ as well as the ‘applied embroidery’ at Châteaudun (1465) and Ferrières-en-Gâtinais (c.1480).²⁷ The final production period, from 1490 to 1530, sees little technical innovation but a stylistic evolution.

...and the applied brocades that represent them

Although most applied brocades can be identified – in particular by their designs – as reproductions of fabrics,²⁸ the direction of the striations can be puzzling.²⁹ It has often been said that the striations of the applied brocades represent the textile’s gold threads. But these are very rarely incorporated in the direction of the warp (i.e. vertically), being almost always inserted horizontally as an additional weft. Yet from the start vertical and oblique striations were by far the most usual in applied brocade.

While the horizontal striations can be assumed to represent floats of weft threads, brocaded or *lancé* (i.e. running selvedge to selvedge), the interpretation of the vertical striations is less straightforward, as there is no sort of binding weave that produces this impression.³⁰ The oblique striations³¹ can be read as the rendering of a gold pattern weft bound in twill by a binding warp.³² Perhaps the sometimes fantastic orientation of the striations (which would never be found in a real woven fabric) was deliberately allusive. Like the tooling on burnished gilding it allowed the applied brocade to reflect light from several angles, tempering the brilliance of gold leaf that would otherwise be too bright to convincingly evoke the textile model. The direction of the striations should not, therefore, be



taken into account when identifying the weave represented or when distinguishing woven from embroidered motifs, for example.

Woven or embroidered motif on plain silks

It is not always easy to say whether a local applied brocade set on a painted background represents a woven or an embroidered motif.

The *Vierge Bulliot* or *Virgin of Autun* (c.1450; Autun, Musée Rolin) wears a blue gown adorned with large two-headed eagles with a simplified lily motif between the heads (fig. 128).³³ The repetitive pattern and large size of the motif make it highly improbable that the represented textile would be an embroidery; more likely it simulates a design achieved by means of a *lancé* or brocading weft. The decoration is made up of sheets of more or less hexagonal quasi-continuous applied brocade. The vertically-striated gilded motif occupies the centre of the sheet; the flat tin around it is painted with the background blue of the gown. This produces the effect of a local applied brocade, as the size and shape of the complete tin foil sheet are camouflaged by the covering paint, leaving only the gilded

²⁵ See cat. 14.1, cat. 19.10.

²⁶ The orphreys are either embroidered or woven (lampases or brocadelles made in Florence between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries), or else produced in a mixed technique at Cologne, where the holy figures are embroidered separately and then applied to a stereotyped woven architectural background. See LINSCHOTEN, STAM 1994; DE JONGHE 1995 and BONITO-FANELLI 1997: 19.

²⁷ On ‘applied embroidery’, a variant of applied brocade imitating high relief embroideries, see WAILLIEZ 1998: 49; WAILLIEZ 2001: 123–125.

²⁸ See esp. KLESSE 1967.

²⁹ Unlike embroidery, in weaving the direction of the threads cannot be changed at will.

³⁰ The vertical striations rather evoke vertical laid work of gold thread in *or nué* (shaded gold) or *Lazurtechnik* embroidery, which is contradicted by the type of textile represented, which is in most cases a woven material.

³¹ Sometimes, the short oblique striations are reversed on the two sides of an axis to form chevrons.

³² See also MONNAS 2000: 150.

³³ DÉLIVRÉ 1999: 295–296 and fig. p. 279.

motif to stand out. Working this way had the added advantage of avoiding complicated trimming, which could render the applied brocade perilously fragile. It also made it simpler to achieve a regular spacing of the motifs. This is less easy when local applied brocades have to be arranged on a background with no points of reference, the red bed cover in the *Saluzzo Altarpiece* Annunciation (cat. 19.3) being a case in point. Here, however, the eagle motif probably was meant to imitate embroidery, as the sort of texturing used to render the eagle's body clearly mimics embroidery stitches.³⁴

Another example comparable to the *Bulliot Virgin* is the carved figure of St Remigius in the *St Leonard Altarpiece* in Zoutleeuw, who is clad in an alb decorated with large gilded foliate motifs (cat. 62.1). The edges of the square sheets and the unstriated tin around the motif disappear beneath the white background paint, leaving only the gilded relief visible and so suggesting a plain fabric that is *lancé* or brocaded with gold.

Lampas represented by the Tegernsee type pattern

Once the paint has been applied to the flat zones of a Tegernsee type pattern the difference in height between those zones and the gilded striations is barely perceptible, suggesting that what was sought was not so much three-dimensionality – inevitable in something cast in a mould – as an evocative texture. This is borne out by the fact that the early applied brocades often represented lampas, a fabric with no great variation in relief.

The Tegernsee type pattern often imitates fourteenth- or early fifteenth-century lampas silks ornamented with *saynettes*. Lampas has no very typical characteristics other than the floats of pattern weft, which are more visible as the weft is less bound by the binding warp. It is this effect that is evoked by the parallel (horizontal) gilded striations of the applied brocade, which represent the areas where the pattern wefts – of precious metal thread or coloured silk – create a motif.

Limitations of the technique: a single pattern weft

As a rule, applied brocade is highlighted with only one colour, so if the silk to be simulated was woven with two or more colours in addition to details in gold the polychromer had to make a simplifying transposition, representing in gilded relief the entire motif created by the different pattern wefts.

³⁴ For another example of the imitation of embroidery stitches, see FRINTA 1963, fig. 11: middle or upper Rhenish sculpture, c.1500.

We find a good example of this if we compare the same model represented in painting and in applied brocade. The painted textile that hangs behind Robert Campin's *St Veronica* (c.1430-1432; Frankfurt, Städel Museum) (see fig. 103) and the applied brocade cloths of honour on the altarpiece wings depicting St Lawrence and St Leonard by the Master of Arguís (1465, Aragon; Baltimore, Walters Art Museum)³⁵ both feature an almost identical design (see fig. 38). On Campin's hanging the curving stem, parrot-like bird, palmette and rays are in gold thread bound in twill, while pale and dark flowers blooming on leafy green tendrils punctuate the light background of the fabric. This lampas therefore has four pattern wefts, including one in gold. The palette of the Spanish applied brocade, on the other hand, is reduced to black and gold (vertically striated), with all the elements of the design rendered in the same gilded relief.³⁶

This indicates that the Tegernsee type pattern was unsuited to the exact imitation of multi-coloured lampas. Nor could damasks, *zetani veluti* velvets, pile-on-pile velvets or *a inferriata* velvets, even when brocaded or *lancé* with gold, be represented by applied brocade alone; they required additional freehand work, which will be discussed below. This limitation would lead to the development of the outlined relief pattern, in response to the new needs of imitation and illusion.

Gold-brocaded figured silk represented by applied brocade and Lüsterfarbenmalerei

The green bed hangings in the *Saluzzo Altarpiece* Annunciation (see cat. 19) provide an example of local applied brocade combined with freehand painting, aimed at imitating a *ton sur ton* figured silk enhanced with an additional gold pattern weft. While the local applied brocades – there are no fewer than four different models – very likely represent brocaded motifs, the silk cloth itself is more difficult to interpret. The play of the dark green thistle-like motifs on the lighter green background suggests the simulation of either a damask (in which the local inversion of the satin ground weave generates a matt motif on a brilliant background) or a pile-on-pile velvet (in which the motif is produced by the high dense piles in a darker shade contrasting with the shorter silkier piles). This

³⁵ See FRINTA 1963, fig. 1. See also fig. XX in this publication. Applied brocades with a very similar motif can also be found on the Herlin altarpieces at Nördlingen (c.1462) and Rothenburg (1466) and the Ternant *Passion Altarpiece* (1455-1460). See BACHMANN et al. 1970: 327-369; OELLERMANN 1993: 211, 221 (fig. 11) (Rothenburg and Nördlingen); KAGAN, GÉRARD, GÉRARD-BENDELÉ 2002: 246 (Ternant).

³⁶ The same is true of the altarpieces mentioned in the previous note, where this motif also occurs.

Fig. 129.
St Stephen Altarpiece
 (detail), early 16th
 century, Friuli,
 Giovanni Martini;
 Remanzacco,
 Church of St Stephen
 Detail of the applied
 brocade
 © T. Perusini

second possibility may seem unlikely at first sight, given the absence of relief in the painting. Yet on the *Passion Altarpiece* formerly in the Brimo de Laroussilhe collection (cat. 20) we find an example of velvet suggested by glaze alone. That velvet is intended can hardly be doubted, given the imitation gold loops that mimic the *alluciolato* effect, for this was seen only on velvets at that time.³⁷ As applied brocade was more illusionistic than naturalistic no definite identification can be made of the textile represented in the *Saluzzo Altarpiece*, but its function as a bed hanging suggests a velvet.

Cloth of gold with a linear velvet pattern represented by applied brocade with an outlined relief pattern

Applied brocade with an outlined relief pattern was particularly employed for evoking cloth of gold with a linear design in cut silk pile.³⁸ There is evidence that this new type of pattern was being used to represent this kind of fabric in 1465-1480, at least in France, though it may well have appeared earlier.³⁹ In contemporary textile models the various parts of the pattern and the gold background have a different appearance depending on their binding weave: strong oblique lines where the binding is twill, a reinforced horizontal effect where the background shows weft-floats, *bouclé* weft in certain areas of the motif, and so on. The applied brocade versions of these cloths of gold simulate the real textile by changes in the direction of the striations, at least between the interior of the motif and the ground of the fabric, and perhaps by incorporating other sorts of texturing – such as zigzag or latticing – to represent loops or particular binding effects in the pattern weft.

The mixed pattern applied brocade of the *Remanzacco Altarpiece*⁴⁰ (1502, Basilica of Aquileia, Friuli) (fig. 129) features a large circular design. The unstriated zone around the central motif is glazed and represents an area of plain cut velvet; the rest of the design, outlined with raised contours, is highlighted with red glaze, representing the linear velvet design on a gold lamé background, the gilt-metal strip being suggested by wider horizontal striations. The zigzags,



highly unusual in an applied brocade,⁴¹ can be read as an attempt to mimic zones of *bouclé* weft.

A parallel has been drawn between the I*T Master's continuous outlined relief pattern applied brocade on the *Saluzzo Altarpiece* and a brocatelle now in Barcelona's Museu Tèxtil i d'Indumentària (see cat. 19.1), though it is also possible that the *Saluzzo* applied brocade imitates a cloth of gold with a linear design in velvet pile.

Alluciolato velvet represented by a combination of local applied brocade and metal cupules

We find the *alluciolato* effect in the plain cut pile velvet zones of cloths of gold with a linear velvet design. The local applied brocade set on the red- or green-glazed background of the garments of several figures on the *Passion Altarpiece* formerly in the Brimo de Laroussilhe collection (cat. 20), is combined with tiny metal cupules intended to represent this sort of gold loop.

Limitations of the technique

To a certain extent this ingenious combination of techniques made it possible to represent a *griccia* velvets shot with gold thread and *alluciolato* loops,

³⁷ From the early sixteenth century *alluciolato* and *bouclé* weft also ornament Spanish and Italian brocatelles. See AVIGNON 1997: cats. 28, 29, 51, 56, and pp. 34, 37.

³⁸ The gold background (*contrefond*) is achieved by a metal thread weft which is either *lancé* or brocaded, without any difference being made to the appearance of the fabric.

³⁹ Brabantine examples of this type of applied brocade appear only around 1500. See cat. 19.1, cat. 40.2, cat. 41.2, cat. 48.1.

⁴⁰ See PERUSINI, PERUSINI 1983.

⁴¹ This technique is usually reserved for the engraving of the ground under burnished gilding. It is used here both vertically – which is exceptional – and horizontally. In the catalogue there is only one example of an applied brocade incorporating this kind of zigzag; see cat. 63.1.

although in a simplified form created by selecting only the main thistle or pomegranate and its velvet surround. The background of the polychromed garment is completely covered with glaze and decorated with cupules, representing an area of plain velvet that is over-large compared to the real models. While the local applied brocade represents the 'core' of the motif, this imitation omits both the rest of the pattern and the cloth of gold background.⁴²

Bouclé weft represented by raised dots

It was not until around 1445-1450 that the *bouclé* weft appeared in Italian centres of production but it rapidly developed and by the end of the century was executed with considerable virtuosity.⁴³ Velvet cloths of gold locally highlighted with massed gold or silver loops were imitated by applied brocades whose patterns included elements filled with raised dots. The appearance of such brocades in sculpture seems to date from around 1460, occurring in Brussels on the *Passion Altarpiece* Philippe de Ternant had made there (1455-1460, Church of St Roch and Our Lady of the Assumption, Ternant) (fig. 44) and a little later in Germany, on Friedrich Herlin's altarpiece at Nördlingen (1462; Church of St George and Stadtmuseum) (fig. 130).⁴⁴ In both cases the raised-dot applied brocade adorns the garment of Mary Magdalene, a figure often dressed in the latest fashion. The Nördlingen applied brocade has the Tegernsee type pattern, with large painted flat zones surrounding a motif made up of gilded striations and areas of raised dots. The textile represented is therefore not a cloth of gold but a simple velvet brocaded or *lancé* with a large *a griccia* motif. But this kind of velvet only rarely included a *bouclé* weft,⁴⁵ which was usually combined with a gold background to form the sumptuous *riccio sopra riccio*.⁴⁶ Perhaps the polychromer was intent on achieving a particular aesthetic effect and so (con)fused two kinds of velvet.

Sometimes the thistle or pomegranate is surrounded by a contoured zone enclosing tiny and quite widely-spaced raised dots, which may be intended to represent *bouclé* weft. We find such an applied brocade

⁴² This is also true of the examples published by GUILLOT DE SUDUIRAUT, LÉVY 2007: 98.

⁴³ See esp. MONNAS 1983; MONNAS 1987b.

⁴⁴ OELLERMANN 1993: 219-220, figs. 7, 10. Other examples are known in Swabia, from 1465 onwards, according to the surveys in *Graviert, gemalt, geprest* 1996: 168.

⁴⁵ Examples illustrating the contrary can be found, in particular in the collections of the MRAH-KMKG in Brussels, with a green pile-on-pile velvet, *alluciolato* and with *bouclé* weft, with only the motif in gold thread. ERRERA 1907: 115 (no. 131A).

⁴⁶ As the areas filled with raised dots are gilded they cannot be interpreted as uncut velvet.



Fig. 130. *Altarpiece with Calvary and Saints*, 1462, design, painted wings: Friedrich Herlin, carving: Nikolaus Gerhaert von Leiden(?); Nördlingen, Church of St George © E. Oellermann, Heroldsberg

on the abovementioned *Passion Altarpiece* formerly in the Brimo de Laroussilhe collection (cat. 20). This interpretation is supported by the location of these raised dots and the presence of cupules in the red-glazed zones surrounding the local brocade, for in this period *bouclé* weft was frequently associated with *alluciolato*. Similarly, on the outlined relief pattern brocade on the armour of the *St Michael* (c.1480; Montargis, Musée Girodet) from the abbey of Ferrières-en-Gâtinais, a double circle surrounding the central seven-lobed leaf encloses tiny raised dots suggesting, if somewhat summarily, a *bouclé* weft.⁴⁷

Bouclé weft cut pile velvet represented by applied brocade with two heights of relief, with a plain relief pattern and raised dots

A number of works dating from between 1490 and 1500 (see cat. 35.1, cat. 52.1, for example) reproduce the same design rendered in various techniques, particularly in the form of applied brocade in both outlined and plain relief pattern with two heights of relief and raised dots. Thanks especially to the plateaus these applied brocades produce a highly realistic imitation of plain cut velvet motifs on a brocaded or *lancé* gold

⁴⁷ WAILLIEZ 1998: 31; WAILLIEZ 2002: 124, 131.

background. But the interpretation of the raised dots is rather difficult: the presence of coloured highlights on the raised dots (see cat. 52.1, cat S4.1) suggests uncut velvet loops, thus *ciselé* velvet.⁴⁸ However, the fact that these highlights do not entirely cover the underlying gilding constitutes the textile anomaly of warp pile loops standing out against a gold background, so these raised dots, even coloured, cannot be interpreted as uncut velvet. Moreover, the rest of the applied brocade – in an outlined relief pattern representing low velvet defining details of the motif on the (brocaded) gold background – suggests that these raised dots should be read as gold *bouclé* weft, or even *alluciolato* in those places where they are a little more widely spaced. Indeed, the gold grounds of this period are associated more often with gold *bouclé* wefts than with uncut velvet.

A inferriata velvet represented by line gilding on glazed burnished silver leaf

A inferriata or *ferronnerie* velvet – which was rarely enriched with *filé* threads – was a highly sought-after textile but it was not often represented in late-medieval polychromy. The linear *ton sur ton* design was produced by exposing the weave ground – generally satin – in the surrounding plain cut pile. This, apparently, could not be imitated in applied brocade, and so a different, flat polychromy technique, specific to Brussels and appearing around 1470–1480,⁴⁹ seems to have been devised to mimic this textile novelty. It has been termed line gilding and was achieved by drawing a design in mordant with a fine brush then laying on gold leaf, which adhered solely to the mordant and thus produced a linear pattern (see also Chapter Six). This technique was used for simulating only brown *a inferriata* velvet – not green, crimson or even blue or black.⁵⁰ The need to suggest the motif with a line lighter and more brilliant than the background very likely made it difficult to evoke the sheen of *a inferriata* velvets in other colours, whereas the *ton sur ton* of a light brown velvet on a bronze or yellow ground weave is easily transferable in polychromy into a brown and gold equivalent.

⁴⁸ *Ciselé* velvet combines cut pile velvet and uncut velvet. GALIZIA, RINUY, VALANSOT 2001 discusses two cases of embroidery velvet, a similar type of velvet dating from around 1420.

⁴⁹ Technique described by CASCIO, LÉVY 2002: 133.

⁵⁰ A variant of the technique on a matt blue background, for example on the Virgin's robe in the *Passion Altarpiece* formerly in the Brimo de Laroussilhe collection (cat. 20.3) and in Antwerp altarpieces from 1475–1480 (KOLLER 2002: 482 (fig. 6); WENIGER 2002: 493), is more evocative of embroidery, as the motifs are fairly widely spaced and without pattern match. See also the letter-borders cited by CASCIO, LÉVY 2002: 152 (fig. 9); PÉRIER-D'ETEREN 2002: 319.

It should be noted that although the technique used and the effect produced may well mimic an *a inferriata* velvet, the motif itself might have a different origin. The floral textile design reproduced in applied brocade by the Master of the View of St Gudule is also rendered in line gilding on burnished and brown-glazed silver leaf (see also Chapter Five). It incorporates a scattering of small light-coloured spots, giving a graphic, two-dimensional translation of *bouclé* weft. Though they appear in polychromy these effects – gold loops or scattered spots reserved in the velvet background – are never found in actual *a inferriata* velvets.

Although the identification of the textile motif can indicate the approximate date of an applied brocade the criteria so far employed to categorize them seem to have obscured an evolution in their production. The introduction of criteria such as the type of pattern and the sort of texturing used to fill its various parts allows different sub-groups to be distinguished, and reveals a parallel development between textile innovations and the appearance, a few years later, of their polychromy equivalents.

These criteria can also help in the dating of small remaining traces of applied brocade such as those frequently encountered on sculpture or in architecture, as well as the better conserved examples. This also makes them useful tools for historical criticism. They should, of course, be used with caution, given the difficulty of attributing most of the works on which they appear with certainty, which also makes it hard to demonstrate a clear evolution in workshop practice. It should also be borne in mind that an artist, workshop or production centre may turn to an innovative technical solution while less advanced techniques continue to be used elsewhere.

In conclusion, knowledge of the polychromy reveals the work in its aesthetic value, taking into account iconography in all its aspects, even if of secondary order. The textiles represented and their motifs have an intrinsic value – the symbolism of the motif – and an extrinsic one – the choice of the quality of the textile – which should also play their part in the understanding of the sculpture as a global work and not merely as a plastic expression.



Fig. 131.
Saluzzo Altarpiece, 1500-1510, Brussels; Brussels, Broodhuis-Maison du Roi
Translucent ochre filler, mixture of beeswax and pine resin (cat. 19.8)



Fig. 132.
St Remaclus, c.1530, Meuse region, Liège(?); Spa,
Church of Our Lady and St Remaclus
Filler in two layers (cat. 59.1)

A TECHNOLOGICAL STUDY OF APPLIED BROCADE THE LABORATORY EXAMINATION OF THE APPLIED BROCADES IN THE CATALOGUE

Delphine Steyaert, Jana Sanyova, Steven Saverwyns, Ingrid Geelen and Cécile Glaude

This chapter focuses primarily on the applied brocades in the catalogue. It covers the structure of the brocades and the materials used and presents all the variations encountered.¹ The research was carried out on two complementary levels; by the systematic visual observation of the applied brocades in the catalogue on one hand and, on the other, the analysis of the stratigraphy and the chemical composition of their constituents.

The applied brocades studied in this chapter are representative of the work produced in the Low Countries. They include 66 works in Belgium (23 wooden and stone statues, 27 altarpieces, 3 sets of painted wing-panels, 2 panel paintings, 11 wall paintings and examples of architectural polychromy) and 20 altarpieces, altarpiece fragments and altarpiece wings in several countries outside Belgium. Forty of the works in Belgium have been studied at the KIK-IRPA laboratory by means of around 200 samples. This large quantity of data has enabled us to draw significant conclusions. In this chapter we have set out first to describe the different layers of the applied brocades, from the filler to the highlighting; then how they adhere to the support; and finally how the already-made brocade was finished.

In each entry in the catalogue the stratigraphy of each model of applied brocade is described – from support layer to highlighting – in a table. This description is based on visual observation combined with the study of the available micro-samples presented as cross sections that have been prepared and analysed by the laboratory. These cross sections were indispensable not only for the detection of extremely thin layers invisible to the naked eye, but also for the identification of a series of inorganic materials using a range of advanced methods in the laboratory (described in

Appendix I). For the identification of organic matter, binders and colouring agents, around eighty additional scrapings were analysed, to ensure the representativeness of the whole.

The state of conservation of the applied brocades is often extremely poor, which complicated the technical research. Nevertheless, in the majority of cases enough material remains to identify most of the layers present by *in situ* examination. And as Elisabeth Ravaud has shown, radiography can also help to improve our understanding of the applied brocades (see Chapter Eleven). For laboratory examination, obtaining micro-samples with a complete stratigraphy proved a recurrent problem. It was also sometimes difficult to find a suitable place to take them (for instance, if the state of conservation is excellent and the applied brocades are in clearly visible places, without losses). The difficulty increased when the samples had to be taken *in situ*, often in churches. The observation of the cross sections was combined with macroscopic visual study of the object with a binocular microscope or with magnifying glasses. For the analysis of the organic binders the main difficulty was the separation of the layer to be analysed without contamination, either by adjacent layers, or by diverse components originating from overpainting or restoration materials, or by pollution.

The Filler

The presence of a fill material intended to reinforce the relief of stamped tin foil is a common characteristic of applied brocade. None the less, its absence has been noted several times in the catalogue, for instance

¹ We thank Christine Cession, Emmanuelle Mercier, Erika Rabelo, and Cécile Van Seymourtier of the KIK-IRPA Polychromed Wood Sculpture Workshop for their support throughout the project and in particular for this aspect of the study. This chapter has benefited from their critical reading as well as suggestions made by Myriam Serck-Dewaide.

in the kettle-shaped relief in Antwerp Cathedral (cat. 11.5) and a number of applied brocades from the I*T workshop. The applied brocades produced by Master I*T (see Chapter Six) generally present a very thin filler with a waxy appearance. However, this was not always detected during visual examination, which suggests that some applied brocades may have been affixed without any filler.

Visual examination of the filler

The fill materials of the applied brocades were divided into different categories, according to their visual appearance:

- fillers with a waxy translucent or transparent appearance (probably based on wax or wax-resin, with or without the addition of pigments and oil)
- opaque fillers with a waxy or oily appearance (probably based on wax, resin, and/or oil substantially thickened with pigments)
- opaque fillers with a whitish appearance (large quantities of what is presumed to be chalk bound with size and/or oil, possibly with added pigments).

The distinction between whitish fillers and fillers based on wax or wax-resin has been made since Mojmir Frinta's publication in 1963.² Frinta thought that most fillers were composed of gesso and that the others were exceptions. Below it will be shown that in fact the contrary is true. Myriam Serck-Dewaide makes a distinction between 'fatty' and 'lean' types.³ The fatty type is mainly composed of wax with added resin and/or oil, and sometimes with added pigments. The lean type is based on proteinaceous glue (animal glue or egg white), sometimes emulsified with a little oil and containing mostly chalk, possibly coloured. To this we have added the notion of translucence or transparency and opacity, which several authors take into account in their descriptions.⁴

The waxy, chalky, translucent/transparent or opaque appearance has been left to the researcher's assessment as far as visual examination of the object is concerned, since the presence of wax and other constituents has to be verified by laboratory analysis. As to the works in the catalogue, the vast majority of the fillers have a translucent or transparent waxy appearance (without pigments or with a very small quantity) (fig. 131).

These fillers have various tones: ochre, ochre orange, brown, reddish brown. The colour may depend on the nature of the wax itself, impurities, pigments (often in a very low concentration: sparsely distributed particles), the addition of resin⁵ and/or oil, but also on the state of conservation of the wax, which may have become darker or lighter with age. The colour of the layer underneath may also have a significant impact on the appearance of the translucent filler.⁶ The advantage of so-called waxy fillers is the increased malleability of the applied brocades, which made it easier to shape them to the curved and irregular surfaces of sculpture.⁷ They nevertheless had to be warmed slightly to make them more pliable and easier to adhere to the support.⁸ Sometimes, a large quantity of pigment (mainly ochre, lead white or red lead with red and black pigments) was added to the wax, resin and/or oil to thicken the filler and, consequently, to colour it and make it opaque. In our catalogue, this type of filler is either beige or orange in colour (fig. 132-133).

Fig. 133. *St Helena* (from the *Altarpiece of St Anne with SS Helena and Giles*), c.1530, Brabant; Zoutleeuw, Church of St Leonard. Opaque orange filler (there is a translucent substance between the orange filler and the grey tin foil, but this cannot be seen in the picture) (cat. 61.1)



⁵ RICHARDSON 1991 has shown that resin has a tendency to darken the wax-resin mixture.

⁶ On burnished gilding, for instance, the waxy fillers have a yellow-orange translucent appearance that is different from that of applied brocades fixed on an ochre brown adhesive, where the waxy filler becomes browner and looks less translucent.

⁷ Noted by Frinta in 1963. FRINTA 1963: 138.

⁸ RICHARDSON 1991: 38.

⁹ See cat. 17.1, cat. 41.1, cat. G2.1, cat. G2.2, cat. G2.3, cat. G2.4, and perhaps also cat. 37.1, cat. 37.2.

² FRINTA 1963: 136.

³ SERCK-DEWAIDE 1989: 91; SERCK-DEWAIDE 1990: 37.

⁴ See SANYOVA 2002: 85-87, 90-91. The article contains a detailed technological and scientific study of the polychromy of two Brussels altarpieces on which are a whole range of applied brocades (*Altarpiece of Claudio de Villa and Gentina Solaro*, 1470-1480, cat. 21; *Holy Kinship Altarpiece*, c.1500, cat. 24).

Fig. 134.
Altarpiece of the Virgin with SS Barbara and Catherine, 1500-1510, Brussels; Antwerp, Mayer van den Bergh Museum (cat. 6)
 The filler is translucent ochre in some places, translucent white in others



Fillers with a chalky appearance have been identified in only three works in the catalogue.⁹ In these cases the applied brocades were affixed to surfaces that were flat (panels) or with few irregularities (vault ribs or ceiling joists).

The same filler can sometimes appear whitish, chalky and opaque in certain areas, and translucent white or waxy and translucent ochre in others (fig. 134). The whitish appearance is in fact the result of the alteration of the supposedly waxy filler through contact with tin (see section 2 on the alteration of the tin).¹⁰ It is sometimes visible on cross sections. Chemical imaging by SEM-EDX sometimes shows the migration of damaged tin into the filler. We still have some doubt about the nature of the filler in the applied brocades on two statues of the *Virgin and Child* carved in Mechelen and polychromed by Master I*T (cat. 27.1, cat. 28.1). A white filler with a chalky appearance was noted in situ. Is this white, chalky appearance original or is it the result of an alteration? This question is also prompted by the fact that the fillers in all the other brocades made by Master I*T included in the catalogue have a waxy appearance.

As a rule the fillers of applied brocades are applied in a single layer. Occasionally, however, two fillers have been applied, though this does not often occur in our catalogue. In nearly every case an opaque beige or orange filler reinforces the first very thin ochre or brown translucent or transparent layer, which is in contact with the tin foil and makes the relief

¹⁰ This type of alteration has been noted in particular on the *Altarpiece of the Virgin with SS Barbara and Catherine* in Antwerp (cat. 6.1, cat. 6.2), the statue of *St Margaret of Antioch* in Bruges (cat. 15.1), and the *Passion Altarpiece* in Zoutleeuw (cat. 64.2, cat. 64.3).

(figs. 131-134). This has been found in around a dozen applied brocades, mainly on carving.¹¹

The purpose of the additional opaque filler is puzzling. Is it really a second filler, added to reinforce the applied brocade and to make it thicker, so as to enhance the relief on the surface to be decorated? Or is it an adhesive applied to the back of the brocade? Could some of these layers have had a double function: reinforcement and adhesion?¹² Where these applied brocades have been fixed to their support with a specific adhesive, the second filler is presumably intended as reinforcement (see cat. 14.1, cat. 31B.2).

In order to show trends in the appearance of the fillers, a statistical approach has been applied to the whole catalogue (Table A). Each model of applied brocade on each work has been taken into account.

Table A. The different types of filler

	142 applied brocades
Translucent or transparent fillers with a waxy appearance	112 (84%), about ten of which have a second opaque filler
Opaque fillers with a waxy or fatty appearance	18 (14%), about ten of which have a primary translucent or transparent filler with a waxy appearance
Opaque fillers with a chalky appearance	7 (5.2%)
Without fillers	2
Unidentified	3 (2.2%)

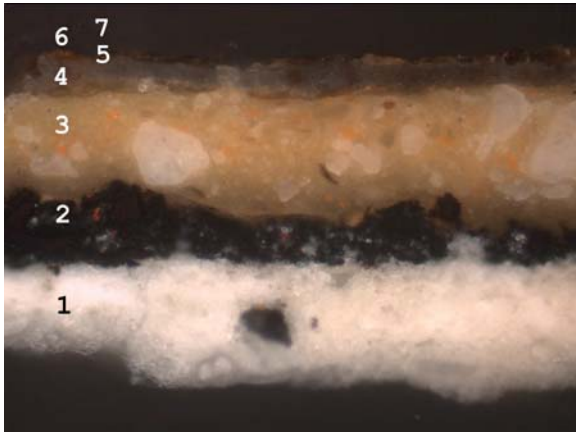
Chemical analyses of the filler

The methods of scientific examination used to analyse the pigments, waxes, oils, resins, and proteins are described in Appendix I. This covers the protocol followed and instruments used, as well as the problems regarding the analysis of organic matter in fillers and adhesives.

¹¹ See cat. 14.1, cat. 24.5, cat. 31B.2, cat. 43.1, cat. 48.1, cat. 50.1, cat. 59.1, cat. 61.1, cat. 61.2, cat. 64.2. In these cases the first translucent filler, which is in contact with the tin foil, is so thin that it has not always been identified as a filler in the past. In practical terms, this first thin layer must have been applied to the tin foil when it was still in the mould then scraped off with a tool so that it filled only the hollow parts.

¹² Unresolved cases: cat. 43.1, cat. 48.1, cat. 64.2.

Fig. 135a.
normal light



- 7 gold leaf
- 6 thin organic adhesive layer
- 5 grey degraded tin foil
- 4 filler 1: thin transparent brown layer, strong fluorescence in UV light: beeswax
- 3 filler 2: ochre opaque layer: lead white, red lead, ochre, beeswax and oil
- 2 black underlayer
- 1 white chalk ground

Fig. 135b.
UV light

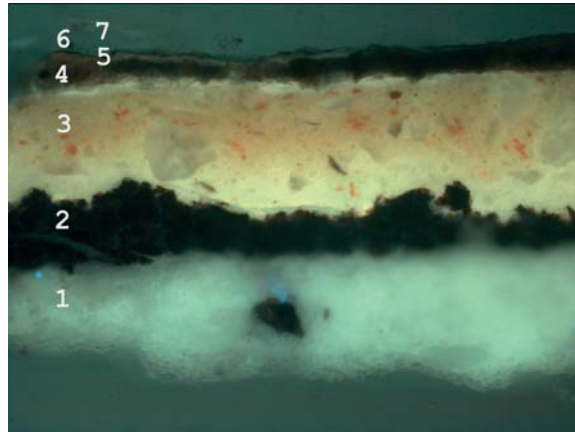


Fig. 135a-b.
St Remaclus; Spa
Cross section of the
local applied brocade
on the chasuble
(cat. 59.1)

Fig. 136a.
normal light



- 4 gold leaf (not visible in this cross section)
- 3 greyish degraded tin foil
- 2 filler 2: ochre transparent matter, not analysed
- 1 filler 1: orange layer (in two applications): red lead, oil of *Brassicaceae* seeds (and a second oil?), traces of beeswax

Fig. 136b.
UV light

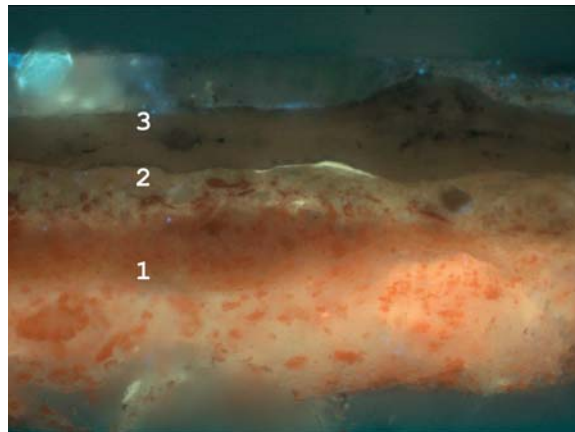


Fig. 136a-b.
St Helena; Zoutleeuw
Cross section of the
continuous applied
brocade on the over-
gown (cat. 61.1)

The results yielded by the analysis of organic and inorganic material present in the fillers (and adhesives) have been compiled in Table B. The published data on works from the Low Countries have also been incorporated.

The analyses confirm the presence of beeswax in most of the samples. In most cases the beeswax was mixed either with oil (often linseed oil, see Appendix I) and/or resin. In a few cases a second wax was also present; this was identified as paraffin. This hydrocarbon wax originates from restorations and was not further taken into consideration. Sometimes the filler contained no wax, but a mixture of linseed oil and pine resin (cat. 65.1, Isières) or oil alone (cat. 14.1 filler 2, Autun). A sample from a chalk-rich filler in the sacristy of 'Het Pand' in Ghent (cat. 41.1) contained a mixture of linseed oil and (bovine) collagen.

The resin found in the filler could almost exclusively be identified as pine resin. In a single sample, larch resin (Venetian turpentine) was found, mixed with beeswax (cat.10.1). The pine resin was never found pure but always in a mixture with either beeswax, oil (linseed?), or both. The degradation products of pine resin were present in a very high concentration or formed the main constituents in only six (of over fifty) samples analysed (cat. 19.8, cat. 5.3, cat. 11.1, cat. 11.2, cat. 63.2, cat. 63.3). In the other cases they were present as minor or trace compounds, or completely absent. The resin can be found in both the filler and the adhesive layer.

If the oil could be analysed, it was identified as linseed oil. In a small number of cases the presence of oil from *Brassicaceae* seeds, such as rapeseed oil, was detected. In two cases this oil is present in a fairly high concentration in the filler, pure (cat. 61.1), or mixed with beeswax (cat. 11.1, cat. 11.2), while in two other cases it is present in a trace concentration (cat. 2.1, cat. 14.1).

As mentioned above, the filler was sometimes applied in two layers, implying that these fillers need to be separated prior to analysis. For practical reasons

– too limited amount of sample, no possibility of re-examination of the work of art for additional sampling, or just the impossibility of separating the layers – the analysis of both layers was feasible on only two applied brocades, on the figures of *St Remaclus* in Spa (cat. 59.1) and *St Cornelius* in Bruges (cat. 14.1). The first, translucent or transparent fillers contain only beeswax. The second, opaque fillers contain, besides a large amount of pigment, respectively oil (probably linseed) and beeswax, or just linseed oil.

Results of the analyses of the waxes may vary according to the location of the applied brocade. In the case of the *Altarpiece of the Holy Family with St Catherine* in Zoutleeuw the filler of the applied brocade on the rear wall of the altarpiece case (cat. 63.1) differs from the filler of the applied brocades on the statues (cat. 63.2, cat. 63.3), suggesting that the altarpiece case and the statues were polychromed in different workshops.

Study of the cross sections often shows a limited quantity of pigments. The translucent fillers with a waxy appearance are pure and have no pigments at all or show only some sparsely distributed pigments that are black and/or white, red, or orange in colour. The opaque fillers with a waxy or fatty appearance mainly contain a large quantity of ochre and lead-based pigments (lead white, red lead) often coarsely ground, to which black and red pigments are added (in cat. 61.1 there is only red lead). When mixed mainly with oil, the lead-based pigments were probably chosen for their siccative power.

On the cross sections many of the translucent or transparent fillers fluoresce quite strongly under ultraviolet light, regardless of the mixture analysed. This fluorescence is distinctly weaker for the opaque fillers, no doubt because of the presence of inorganic pigments that do not react to UV light.¹³

Finally, there seems to be no correlation between the identified filler (mixtures) and the date or place of production, or with the type of support.

¹³ On the fluorescence of the stratigraphic layers, see PLAHTER, WHITE 2004: 167-168.

Table B. Fillers and adhesives

Data from the KIK-IRPA laboratory (selection) and published results/data pertaining to works from the Low Countries.

Applied brocade		Filler		Adhesive binder (colour of the layer: pigments)
		Organic matter ¹⁴	Pigments, inorganic constituents ¹⁵	
cat. 2.1	<i>St Wilgefortis, male saint (St Bruno?) and St Guy</i> wall painting	beeswax, oil (linseed?), traces of oil from <i>Brassicaceae</i> seeds, such as rapeseed oil	a few black, white and red particles	no laboratory analysis
cat. 3.2	<i>Circumcision</i> carved group from an altarpiece	linseed oil and probably a small quantity of beeswax (hydrocarbon wax) ¹⁶	no pigments	no laboratory analysis (reddish brown layer)
cat. 4.1	<i>Annunciation Altarpiece</i>	wax and resin ¹⁷	a few black particles (impurities?)	linseed oil (yellow ochre layer)
cat. 5.1 cat. 5.2 cat. 5.3	<i>Passion Altarpiece</i>	beeswax (cat. 5.3)	no pigments	linseed oil (cat. 5.1) (orange ochre layer); linseed oil and pine resin (cat. 5.2) (orange ochre layer)
cat. 7.1	<i>Burial of St Andrew</i> carved group from an altarpiece	beeswax	no pigments	linseed oil (orange ochre layer)
cat 10.1	<i>Three Blind Arcades</i> wall painting	beeswax and larch resin (Venetian turpentine)	no pigments	oil (brown ochre layer)
cat. 11.1 cat. 11.2	<i>Architectural Polychromy</i>	beeswax, oil from <i>Brassicaceae</i> seeds large quantity of pine resin, linseed oil or low quantity of beeswax and traces of oil from <i>Brassicaceae</i> seeds	a few black particles	no adhesive
cat. 12.1	<i>Two Angels supporting a Cloth of Honour</i> wall painting	beeswax and some pine resin	no pigments	no laboratory analysis (yellow layer)
cat. 14.1	<i>St Cornelius</i> wooden statue ¹⁸	filler 1 ¹⁹ (translucent brown): beeswax, (hydrocarbon wax) filler 2 (opaque beige): linseed oil, traces of oil from <i>Brassicaceae</i> seeds	filler 1 (translucent brown): small sparsely distributed orange, white and black particles filler 2 (opaque beige): considerable amount of pigment; large particles of lead white, small black and orange particles	no laboratory analysis (fine pink ochre layer)
cat. 19.1 cat. 19.4 cat. 19.8	<i>Saluzzo Altarpiece</i>	beeswax and pine resin (cat. 19.8)	sparsely distributed particles of ochre and chalk (cat. 19.4) or no pigments (cat. 19.8)	linseed oil (orange ochre layer: coarse particles of lead white, ochre, quartz) (cat. 19.1)
cat. 20.3	<i>Passion Altarpiece</i>	beeswax, (hydrocarbon wax)	no pigments	no laboratory analysis of the binder (ochre layer: ochre, lead white, CaCO ₃)
cat. 24.6	<i>Holy Kinship Altarpiece</i>	beeswax ²⁰	a few sparsely distributed black particles	no adhesive

¹⁴ The unreferenced analyses of the organic constituents of the fillers and adhesives were carried out by Steven Saverwyns.

¹⁵ The unreferenced analyses of the inorganic constituents and organic dyestuffs were carried out by Jana Sanyova and Cécile Glaude (see also the 'Highlighting' and 'Adhesion of applied brocade' sections of this chapter, and the tables in the individual catalogue notes in Part Three).

¹⁶ As mentioned in the text, hydrocarbon wax points to the presence of paraffin originating from later interventions and was not further taken into consideration.

¹⁷ See MASSCHELEIN-KLEINER, HEYLEN, TRICOT-MARCKX 1968: 113.

¹⁸ DIDIER et al. 1984-1985: 124, 133 (analyses by Léopold Kockaert).

¹⁹ Filler 1 is in contact with the tin foil.

²⁰ SANYOVA 2002: 86 (analysis of the wax by Marina Van Bos).

Applied brocade		Filler		Adhesive binder (colour of the layer: pigments)
		Organic matter	Pigments, inorganic constituents	
cat. 31a.1	<i>St Sylvester</i> wooden statue ²¹	beeswax (and greasy matter?)	sparsely distributed red, white and black particles	greasy matter? (brown ochre layer)
cat. 33.1	<i>Niche</i> wall painting	beeswax and possibly a small quantity of oil	no pigments	linseed oil (orange brown layer: red earth, red lead, CaCO ₃ , some lead white)
cat. 39.1	<i>Virgin and Child with Saints and Donors</i> panel painting	linseed oil, a small quantity of beeswax and pine resin	no data	no laboratory analysis
cat. 41.1	<i>Vault Ribs</i> architectural polychromy	linseed oil, (bovine) collagen	large quantity of calcium	no laboratory analysis of the binder (brownish green layer: ochre, earth, lead white)
cat. 50	<i>St Marcoul</i> wooden statue ²²	filler 1 ²³ (translucent brown, not analysed) filler 2 (opaque ochre layer: not analysed)	filler 1 (translucent brown): contains gypsum filler 2 (opaque ochre layer): lead white, ochre, chalk, silicon oxide	no data
cat. 56.1	<i>Two Polychromed Boards</i>	beeswax, some pine resin	no pigments or coarse white particles, small black and red particles	no adhesive
cat. 59.1	<i>St Remaclus</i> wooden statue	filler 1 (translucent brown): beeswax ²⁴ filler 2 (opaque beige): beeswax and probably linseed oil	filler 1 (brown): no pigments filler 2 (opaque beige): large quantity of pigments; red lead, ochre and large particles of lead white ²⁵	no adhesive
cat. 61.1	<i>St Helena</i> wooden statue	filler 1 (very thin, translucent ochre, not analysed) filler 2 (opaque orange): oil of <i>Brassicaceae</i> seeds (and a second oil?), traces of beeswax	filler 1 (very thin, translucent ochre): contains pigments filler 2: (opaque orange) large quantity of red lead	no laboratory analysis (yellow layer)
cat. 63.1	<i>Altarpiece of the Holy Family</i> rear wall of the altarpiece case	beeswax and linseed oil	no pigments apparently	no laboratory analysis of the binder (yellow layer: lead white, iron oxide)
cat. 63.2 cat. 63.3	<i>Altarpiece of the Holy Family</i> garments of St Mary and St Catherine	unidentified oil, pine resin, small quantity of beeswax	a few particles of red earth, more or less sparsely distributed	oil, pine resin, a trace of beeswax, (hydrocarbon wax) (ochre layer: white lead, ochre, charcoal black, CaCO ₃)
cat. 65.1	<i>Four Saints</i> wall painting	linseed oil and a small quantity of pine resin	a few particles	no laboratory analysis (sample too small)

²¹ Unpublished analysis by Liliane Masschelein, 1968, KIK-IRPA file: 2L/47-1968/00711.

²² NAMUR-GHENT 1995: 76 (analyses by Jana Sanyova).

²³ Filler 1 is in contact with the tin foil.

²⁴ See DIDIER, OTJACQUES-DUSTIN, SANYOVA 1995: 28 (analysis by Jana Sanyova).

²⁵ Idem.

Applied brocade		Filler		Adhesive binder (colour of the layer: pigments)
		Organic matter	Pigments, inorganic constituents	
Autun	<i>Dormition and Coronation of the Virgin</i> carved fragment of an altarpiece	mordant ²⁶	pigments (not specified in the publication)	mordant
Bruges Gruuthuse Museum, Oratory	Vault decoration	beeswax ²⁷	small sparsely distributed black particles	no data
Isières Chapel of Our Lady	carved Crucifixion	oil and resin ²⁸	lead white, a little malachite (and ground glass?) ²⁹	no data
Leiden St Peter's Church	'cloths of honour'	wax and resin ³⁰	red lead and a small quantity of black and white pigments ³¹	
Paris Musée du Louvre	<i>Entombment</i> carved fragment from an altarpiece	beeswax with some oil and pine resin ³²	red lead, lead white and ochre ³³	no data
Paris Musée du Louvre	<i>Descent from the Cross</i> carved fragment from an altarpiece	resin and/or oil ³⁴	calcium carbonate, calcium sulphate, lead pigments (lead white and/or red lead), clay and ochre ³⁵	
Ternant Church of St Roch and Our Lady of the Assumption	<i>Passion Altarpiece</i>	wax ³⁶	pigments (not detailed in the publication)	an underlayer based on red lead serves as the adhesive ³⁷
Vienna Votive Church	<i>Passion Altarpiece</i>	pure wax ³⁸	no data	no data

The constituents analysed in applied brocades produced in the Low Countries, as well as the types of mixtures, can also be found in applied brocades made in other regions. Table C presents the constituents identified in the fillers, all countries combined. The exact references, including each publication's information on the fillers, appear at the end of the chapter (see Appendix II).

Fillers based on calcium carbonate or calcium sulphate seem to be more common in Spain, Italy, and Germany than in the Low Countries.³⁹ The fillers of Spanish applied brocades analysed by Ainhoa Rodríguez-López and Fernando Bazeta Gobante, based on calcium sulphate are generally proteinaceous and most often contain oil.

A mixture of oil, natural resin and lead white, similar to that described in the *Liber illuministarum*, or 'Tegernsee Manuscript' (see Chapter Three) appears in an applied brocade in Poland (workshop of the Master of 1486-1487).⁴⁰ Sylvie Colinart and Martine Eveno have also analysed mixtures based on resin, oil, and pigments without wax for German sculptures in France.⁴¹

The fillers of applied brocades produced outside the Low Countries principally contain lead-based pigments (lead white and red lead, but also yellow lead monoxide) among various other pigments. This is also true of the opaque fillers in brocades made in the Low Countries (though not the yellow lead monoxide).

Mojmir Frinta, Josephine Darrah, Ainhoa Rodríguez-López and Fernando Bazeta Gobante have also noted that the fillers could be applied in one or

²⁶ GUILLOT DE SUDUIRAUT 2002b: 214 (analysis by Sandrine Pagès-Camagna).

²⁷ Unpublished analysis by Marina Van Bos, KIK-IRPA file 2010.10583, May 2010.

²⁸ *Chronique* 1966-1967: 209-210, 240-241.

²⁹ The presence of ground glass identified in the 1960s must be verified (the cross section used for the analysis is lost).

³⁰ FRIEDRICHS 2003: 81 (analysed in 1983 by the Centraal Laboratorium in Amsterdam).

³¹ Idem.

³² PAGÈS-CAMAGNA 2002: 109 (analysis of organic material by Martine Regert).

³³ Idem.

³⁴ GUILLOT DE SUDUIRAUT, LÉVY 2007: 98.

³⁵ Idem.

³⁶ KAGAN, GÉRARD, GÉRARD-BENDELÉ 2002: 245 (analysis LRMH).

³⁷ Idem.

³⁸ ZYKAN, ZEHETMAIER 1966: 146.

³⁹ FRINTA 1963; PERUSINI, PERUSINI 1986: 82; COLINART, EVENO 1993: 163-164; RODRÍGUEZ-LÓPEZ, BAZETA GOBANTES 2008.

⁴⁰ FLIK, OLSZEWSKA-SWIETLIK 2001: 54.

⁴¹ COLINART, EVENO: 1993 163-164.

Table C. Fillers in applied brocades
Published analyses of applied brocades produced outside the Low Countries (see also Appendix II)

Organic constituents	Inorganic constituents, pigments
Beeswax	no pigments calcium carbonate / considerable amount of red lead / yellow lead monoxide / red lead tetroxide / few and small inclusions of red lead and sometimes red fibres / calcium carbonate with a little lead white and ochre
Wax (unidentified)	pigments?
Beeswax and resin/ beeswax and a little resin	no pigments chalk
Wax and resin / wax (probably beeswax) and perhaps some pine resin	no pigments some lead pigments
Beeswax (more than 80%) and rosin	pigments?
Oil and probably resin	ochre / red lead and calcium carbonate
Oil, natural resin, egg white	chalk
Oil and proteins ⁴²	small inclusions of lead white, vermilion, azurite and iron red oxide / lead white, red lead and iron red oxide / calcium sulphate / calcium sulphate and calcium carbonate / earth pigments, vermilion and organic red / calcium sulphate and lead white
Proteins	large proportion of calcium and high percentage of red lead
Glue	no pigments with probably aluminium / calcium sulphate / calcium sulphate and earth pigments / few lead white particles
Glue and probably resin	chalk
Glue?	chalk and yellow ochre / calcium carbonate
?	gesso / calcium carbonate / calcium with foraminifera / dolomitic limestone

two layers for works from various origins (Germany, Austria, Spain, France, Italy).⁴³ The layers of the two-layer fillers may either be identical or contain the same binder but with different pigments, or have different binders – for instance, wax for the first layer and size for the second.⁴⁴

⁴² In their study of applied brocade in the province of Gipuzkoa, Fernando Bazeta Gobantes and Ainhoa Rodríguez-López regularly identify the concurrent presence of oil and proteins in fillers essentially containing calcium sulphate. Wax was identified in a single case, where the filler contains no proteinaceous additives. The analytical methods used are described in their article, see www.ndt.net/search/docs.php3?MainSource=65.

⁴³ FRINTA 1963; DARRAH 1999; RODRÍGUEZ-LÓPEZ, BAZETA GOBANTES 2008. Darrah provides several examples of fillers with two layers (half of those listed in her summary table). Both fillers generally have distinct colours. They are mostly wax, with or without pigments. The wax may be coloured red, grey, white, beige, or brown. The oily or resinous additives have not been identified. The results are mainly based on cross sections and coloration tests.

⁴⁴ FRINTA 1963; MILLS, PLESTERS, 1963; BROEKMAN-BOKSTIJN et al. 1970; DARRAH 1998; RODRÍGUEZ-LÓPEZ, BAZETA GOBANTES 2008.

Tin foil

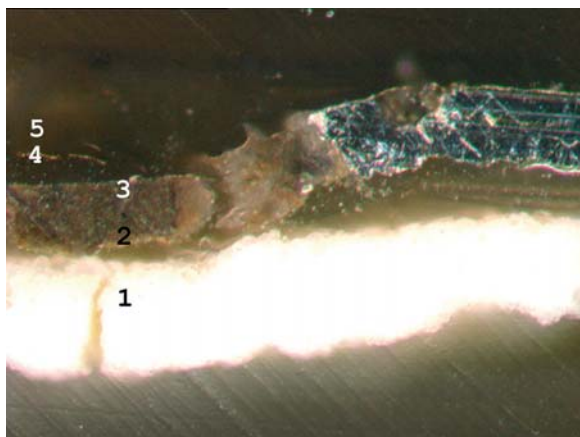
Together with the filler, tin foil is an essential part of an applied brocade. Only one attempt at producing applied brocade without the use of tin foil has been identified, that being an example of architectural polychromy in Antwerp Cathedral.⁴⁵ Here the brocade is made of a waxy-looking brown substance, with a yellow layer and black highlighting on top. These brocades have survived less well than those produced in the traditional way; perhaps they evidence an unsuccessful technical innovation.

In good condition, tin foil has a white metallic appearance, like silver (fig. 137). It is harder to polish than gold or silver leaf but has the advantage of being cheaper, easier to manipulate by hand, and of retaining its given shape. Tin cannot be beaten as fine as gold or silver because of its lower ductility. According to the data collected by Jilleen Nadolny, its thickness can vary between 5 and 80 microns.⁴⁶ In comparison, the thickness of gold and silver leaf is rated between 0.2 and 0.5 microns. The thickness of the tin in the

⁴⁵ DE CLERCQ, SCHUDEL 1989-1990, vol. 0 (*Repertorium*: O1), vol. 1 (nos. 82, 84); GHISDAL, VAN DIJCK 2002: 63. See cat. II.1.

⁴⁶ NADOLNY 1999: 144.

normal light



- 5 gold leaf
- 4 thin organic adhesive layer
- 3 tin foil, its metallic shine partially preserved
- 2 ochre transparent filler: beeswax and pine resin
- 1 white layer: lead white

Fig. 137.
Saluzzo Altarpiece;
Brussels
Cross section of a
local applied brocade
(cat. 19.8)

applied brocades in our catalogue is generally around 25-50 microns. It is, however, hard to measure the thickness of the tin foil with any precision as the applied brocades are almost always damaged. The cases where we have intact tin foil are extremely rare.

The colours white, grey, and black indicate the deterioration of the tin either through oxidation or interaction with adjacent layers, or by conversion from one crystalline form to another (fig. 136). Metallic tin exists in three crystalline (allotropic) forms known as grey tin (alpha tin), white tin (beta tin) and gamma-tin. White tin, the metallic form in non-damaged applied brocades, is stable between 13°C and 161°C. Below 13.2°C, pure 'white tin' slowly undergoes the autocatalytic transformation to the brittle alpha-tin 'grey tin'.⁴⁷ This process is slow and is catalysed by humidity. It is accompanied by an increase in volume (+26%), which contributes to the loss of cohesion and adherence of the tin foil. It is interesting to note that this process is reversible; when the temperature increases, the alpha-tin turns into beta-tin. This is probably why we sometimes observe both allotropic forms on applied brocades.

Not all alteration of tin is due to the transition between allotropic forms. Tin might also be affected by certain forms of corrosion.⁴⁸ As tin is an amphoteric substance⁴⁹ its reactivity depends on the pH of



Fig. 138.
Holy Kinship Altarpiece,
c.1500, Brussels; KMKG-
MRAH (cat. 24)
Degraded tin foil
with a black-grey
or a white appearance

its environment. The alloying element (copper, lead, antimony, bismuth) and the corrosive agent (pollution) influence the behaviour of the tin.⁵⁰

In almost 30% of the works studied in the laboratory (12 out of 41) a very thin organic layer with orange fluorescence has been observed (in natural light, on the cross sections, it has a brown or reddish colour) (figs. 139-141). Notably, it always appears on the surface of the tin, not the underside. This layer may be hidden under gold leaf and its function is not entirely clear. However, we think it is probably a glaze intended to imitate gold leaf. It may also be a protective layer, meant to avoid degradation of the tin foil. This glaze always has a regular surface that follows the tin foil perfectly. It must have been applied to the metal before the foil was used (and indeed, tin foil was also sold in this way, see below). Josephine Darrah encountered

⁴⁷ The phenomenon known as 'tin disease' or 'tin pest'.

⁴⁸ The problems related to the deterioration of tin foil will be studied in more depth in the project carried out by the KIK-IRPA laboratory *The Mystic Lamb in the Laboratory 60 Years after Paul Coremans: The Contribution of New Analytical Techniques* (2011-2014, directed by Jana Sanyova) as part of the NACHO (Non-Destructive Analysis of Cultural Heritage Objects) project in collaboration with the University of Liège.

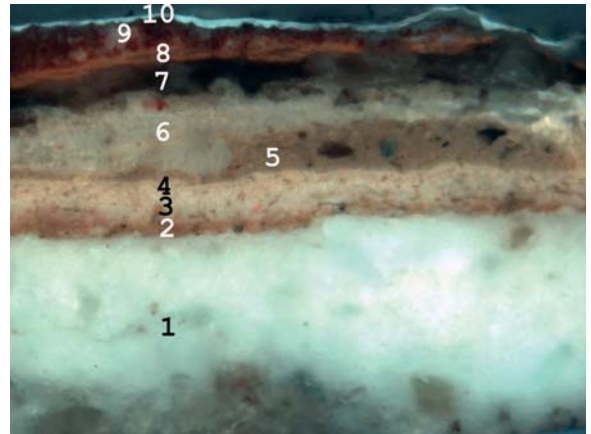
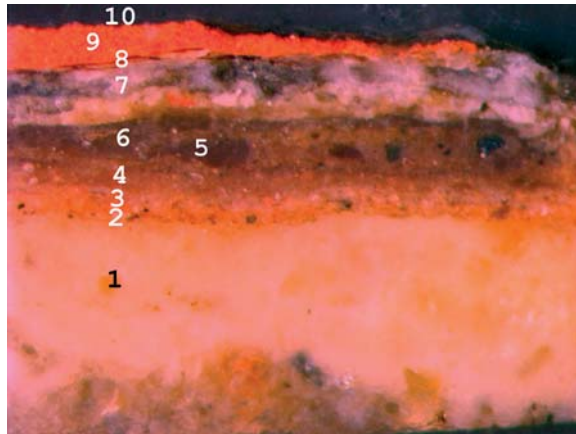
⁴⁹ An amphoteric substance is a compound that can react as an acid or as a base.

⁵⁰ DE RYCK et al. 2004.

Fig. 139a.
normal light

Fig. 139b.
UV light

Fig. 139a-b.
Three Saints (cross section), 1450-1460; Anderlecht, Church of St Peter and St Guy
Cross section of continuous applied brocade on 'St Bruno's' cloth of honour (cat. 2.1)

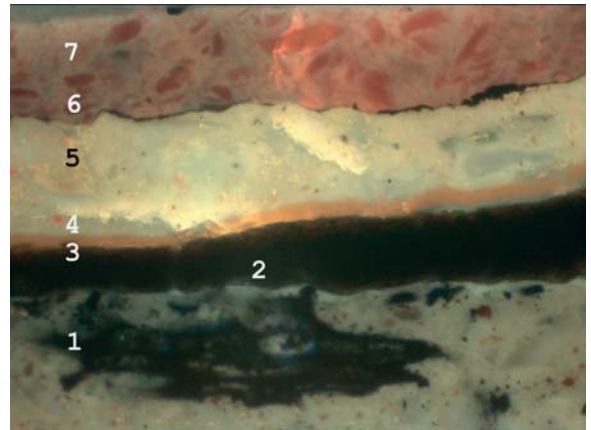
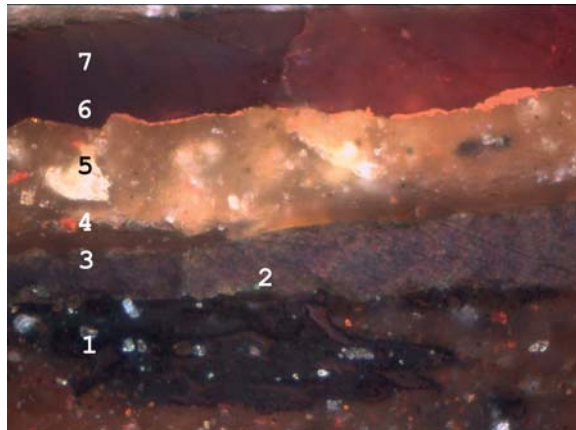


- 10 grey layer, strong fluorescence in UV light (product of consolidation?)
- 9 highlighting, matt red layer
- 8 thin organic layer, orange fluorescence in UV light, gold imitating glaze(?)
- 7 greyish degraded tin foil
- 6 ochre brown translucent filler, a few pigment particles: beeswax, oil (linseed?), traces of oil from *Brassicaceae* seeds
- 5 ochre adhesive layer
- 4 thin ochre red layer
- 3 thin whitish layer
- 2 thin ochre-orange layer
- 1 several layers of lime mortar

Fig. 140a.
normal light

Fig. 140b.
UV light

Fig. 140a-b.
Life of the Virgin
Altarpiece, c.1470, case: Brussels(?); carving and polychromy: Hainaut(?); Ham-sur-Heure, Church of St Martin Presentation in the Temple, robe of the prophetess Anna, continuous applied brocade (cat. 44.1)



- 7 highlighting: red madder lake
- 6 gold leaf
- 5 ochre adhesive layer
- 4 thin organic layer with orange fluorescence in UV light
- 3 greyish degraded tin foil
- 2 filler 1: thin brown transparent layer, strong fluorescence in UV light
- 1 filler 2: thick brown layer with large particles of black pigment and red, orange and white particles

this orange-fluorescing glaze in two thirds of the applied brocades she studied (10 out of 15). This glaze found on the applied brocades of the Arundel effigies in England (c.1462, limestone effigies of William Fitzalan, ninth Earl of Arundel, and his

wife, Joan Neville, Fitzalan Chapel, Arundel) was analysed. It is composed mainly of pine resin.⁵¹ Table D presents the various works of art whose applied brocade has this orange-fluorescing layer.

Table D. Applied brocades with glazed tin foil
(gilded with mordant, gilded without mordant; highlighted, unhighlighted)

Applied brocades with glazed tin foil		Mordant	Gold leaf	Highlighting
cat. 2.1	<i>male saint (St Bruno?)</i> wall painting 1450-1460			+ (opaque red)
cat. 11.5	<i>Architectural Polychromy</i> between 1500 and 1533			+ (matt black)
cat. 12.1	<i>Two Angels supporting a Cloth of Honour</i> wall painting late 15th century			+ (matt black)
cat. 14.1	<i>St Cornelius</i> wooden statue Bruges, first overpainting, probably from the 1470s	+	+	
cat. 31a.1	<i>St Sylvester</i> wooden statue c.1480	+	+	+ (red glaze)
cat 40.1	<i>Altarpiece of St Anne with the Virgin and Child</i> Brabant or Northern Netherlands, Utrecht? c.1500-1510	+	+	+ (matt black)
cat. 41.1	<i>Vault Ribs</i> architectural polychromy 2nd half 15th century			+ (matt black)
cat. 43.1	<i>Triumphal Cross</i> wooden statue Brabant, first overpainting, second half 15th or 16th century	+	+	+ (red glaze)
cat. 44.1	<i>Life of the Virgin Altarpiece</i> Hainaut? c.1470	+	+	+ (red glaze)
cat. 60.1, cat. 60.2	<i>Virgin and Child 'Causa Nostrae Laetitiae'</i> wooden statue Meuse region, c.1479	+	+	+ (red glaze)
cat. 64.1, cat. 64.2	<i>Passion Altarpiece</i> Leuven(?) early 16th century		+	+ (red glaze)

⁵¹ DARRAH 1998: 63 (analyses by the National Gallery, London). This layer with orange fluorescence was already mentioned in BRODERICK, DARRAH 1986: 77-79, 89, 92.

Applied brocades with glazed tin foil		Mordant	Gold leaf	Highlighting
Breda Church of Our Lady	'cloth of honour' between 1460 and 1490 ⁵²			+ (red glaze / green glaze)
Soignies Church of St Vincent	<i>Entombment</i> carved stone 1440-1460 ⁵³	+	+	+ (red glaze / green glaze / matt blue)

Glazed tin foil

It is only in wall paintings and architectural polychromy that the glaze, presumably intended to imitate gold, was not concealed beneath real gold leaf.⁵⁴ The fact that the coloured highlighting on the glazed tin is generally matt or opaque was also noted: opaque red in Anderlecht (cat. 2.I, cross section 2.I) and matt black in Antwerp (cat. 11.5, cat. 12.I, cat. 41.I). In Anderlecht an opaque red may have been preferred to a red glaze for reasons of economy, but also because it would contrast better with the 'gold' surface of the glazed tin (fig. 139).⁵⁵

Glazed tin foil covered with gold leaf on thick mordant

The works whose applied brocades include a glazed tin foil that was mordant gilded are a wooden statue (cat. 14.I), monumental wooden and stone sculptures (cat. 31a, cat. 43.I), and two altarpieces (cat. 40.I, cat. 44.I) (fig. 138-139). An example of architectural polychromy (St Peter's Church, Leiden⁵⁶) can probably be

included as well. These works were produced in diverse places but it should be noted that this type of glaze has not been found on any sculpture or altarpiece from Brussels. As the polychromy of the *Life of the Virgin Altarpiece* at Ham-sur-Heure (cat. 44) also incorporates this layer of gold-imitating glaze (concealed by gold leaf) we can be reasonably certain that it was not carried out in Brussels (this was questioned as the case and the architectural decoration seem to be from Brussels, whereas the sculpture may be from Hainaut).⁵⁷ The applied brocade on the loincloth of the Christ at Halle is perhaps an exception to this rule. The figure of Christ was probably carved and polychromed in the second quarter of the fifteenth century in Brussels, but the applied brocades date from the first overpainting and we have no information on the origin this new polychromy.

Glazed tin foil covered with gold leaf without a mordant

In the applied brocades of the *Zoutleeuw Passion Altarpiece* (cat 64.1, cat. 64.2) the orange-fluorescing layer is immediately covered by gold leaf, without any intermediate mordant.⁵⁸ A question arises as to the adhesion of the gold leaf. A very thin layer of diluted drying oil invisible on the cross sections may have been spread on the tin foil to restore the adhesive properties of the glaze and allow the gold leaf to stick. Tin foil is also used elsewhere on this retable, not in the form of applied brocade but as flat sheets decorating the backs of the four narrow niches in the predella. Here, however, the tin foil shows no sign of gilding with gold leaf. A glaze, perhaps that encountered on the tin foil of the applied brocades, would nevertheless have given them a gold appearance that has now disappeared due to the alteration of the tin.

The time margin in which the listed works are situated is rather wide: from around 1450 to the early

⁵² FRIEDRICH 1999-2000.

⁵³ Jana Sanyova, KIK-IRPA laboratory report: 2007.09471. The *Entombment* was restored by the KIK-IRPA for the *Master of Passions* exhibition that focused on Rogier van der Weyden, held in Leuven in 2009. LEUVEN 2009: 523-527 (cat. 80). We thank the KIK-IRPA Stone and Stone-like Materials Workshop, particularly Judy De Roy, for the information on this work of art.

⁵⁴ See FRIEDRICH 1999-2000; GEELLEN, STEYAERT 2003: 67; FRIEDRICH 2003: 79-86; GEELLEN, STEYAERT 2005: 17-18 (study of the cross section by the KIK-IRPA laboratory).

⁵⁵ DARRAH 1998: 76-77. In the examples given by Josephine Darrah there is indeed highlighting in red and green glaze on the surface of the coloured tin. However, these are statues and altarpieces rather than wall paintings or architectural polychromy.

⁵⁶ There is a thin translucent layer between the tin foil and the mordant of the gilding on the applied brocades on the cloths of honour on the columns. FRIEDRICH 2003: 81-82.

⁵⁷ MERCIER 2000.

⁵⁸ In some places in the upper part of the altarpiece (in less visible areas) are pieces of continuous applied brocade that were affixed without being covered with gold leaf. The layer with orange fluorescence must have given the tin a gold appearance.

Fig. 141a.
normal light

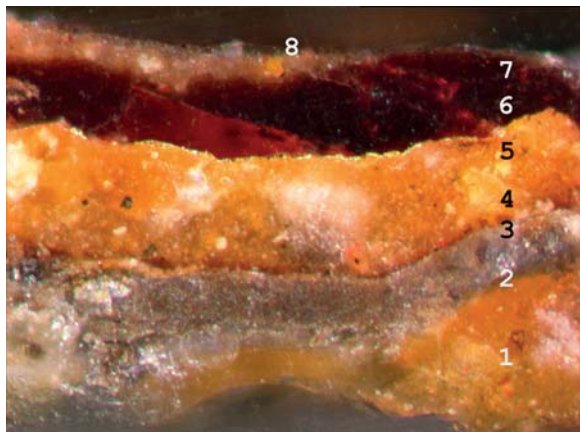


Fig. 141b.
UV light

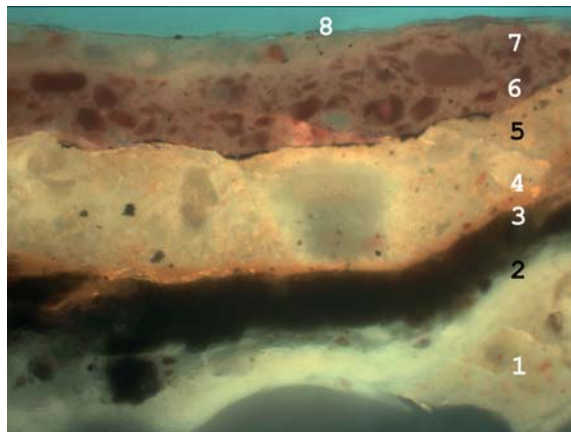


Fig. 141a-b.
St Sylvester, c.1480,
Mechelen(?), attributed to
Andries I Keldermans; Brus-
sels, KMKG-MRAH
Chasuble, continuous
applied brocade
(cat. 31.A1)

- 8 grey layer, dust(?)
- 7 highlighting: red glaze
- 6 gold leaf
- 5 thick ochre adhesive layer
- 4 thin organic layer, orange fluorescence in UV light
- 3 greyish degraded tin foil,
- 2 ochre transparent filler, strong fluorescence in UV light: beeswax (and greasy matter?)
- 1 ochre adhesive layer: greasy matter?

Fig. 142a.
normal light

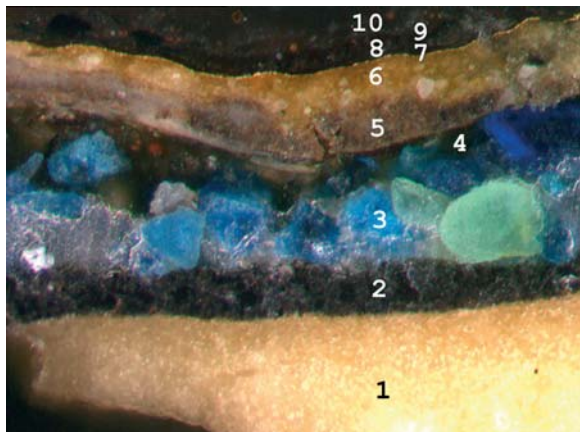


Fig. 142b.
UV light

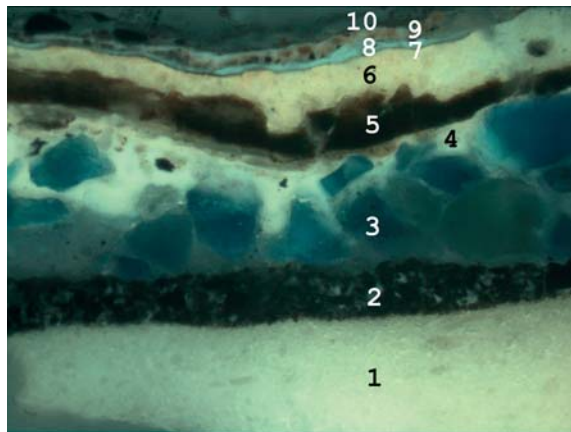


Fig. 142a-b.
Passion Altarpiece,
c.1490, Brussels;
Geel, Church of
St Dymphna
Crucifixion, local
applied brocade on a
soldier's garment:
gold leaf on thick
ochre mordant
(cat. 35.2)

- 10 grey layer, dust
- 9 grey-black layer
- 8 thin layer with strong fluorescence in UV light (product of consolidation?)
- 7 gold leaf
- 6 ochre adhesive layer
- 5 greyish degraded tin foil
- 4 filler: brown transparent, strong fluorescence in UV light
- 3 blue-green layer
- 2 black underlayer
- 1 white ground

sixteenth century. Therefore the presence of this layer with orange fluorescence does not provide a precise chronological reference.

Archival references indicate that the tin foil could be supplied in its natural state or already coated with a gold-imitating glaze.⁵⁹ These imitations were prohibited in most of the main centres in the Low Countries but may have been allowed in specific cases, such as wall paintings or temporary decorations (see Chapter Three). We can imagine that the polychromer had a stock of these glazed tin foil sheets in his workshop, to be used even though they were eventually to be covered with gold leaf.⁶⁰

Gold leaf gilding

Apart from a few examples in wall paintings, the surface of the applied brocades in the catalogue is invariably gilded with real gold leaf. In just over half the works analysed in the laboratory, gold leaf is applied on a fairly thick ochre-coloured mordant containing pigments (fig. 142). This mordant generally lies directly on the tin but may also have been applied to the thin organic intermediate layer with orange fluorescence described in the previous section (see figs. 140-141).

The gold leaf may also adhere to an extremely thin adhesive that is apparently unpigmented so as to avoid spoiling the fine relief of the applied brocade (in fewer than half of the works for which cross sections are available). This thin adhesive is therefore invisible to the naked eye, through magnifying glasses, or under the binocular microscope. It can only be distinguished in the cross sections, where we note the presence of a translucent film which we have been unable to isolate and analyse. None the less, ultraviolet light yields interesting information, in particular for the *Saluzzo Altarpiece* (cat. 19) and the *Holy Kinship Altarpiece* (cat. 24). These were both polychromed by Master I*T and their applied brocades are amongst the finest in the catalogue. This thin organic layer shows clearly marked light blue fluorescence in both works (fig. 143). More targeted analyses should nevertheless be carried out at a later stage to determine more precisely what material it is.

Highlighting

The gilding of applied brocades is highlighted in various colours with glaze or matt/opaque paint. Table E provides an overview of this highlighting.

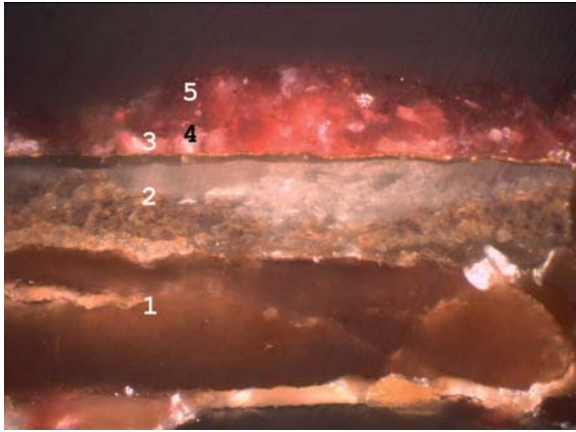
Table E. Colour of the highlighting on applied brocades

Highlighting, colour 161 applied brocades	continuous	local	braid
Red glaze: 54 (33.5%)	61%	33%	6%
No highlighting: 39 (24%)	16%	79%	5%
Blue: 27 (17%)	40%	30%	30%
Green glaze: 15 (9.5%)	25%	75%	0%
Black: 13 (8%)	77%	15%	8%
Multicoloured: 5 (3%)	20%	40%	40%
Opaque red: 4 (2.5%)	100%	0%	0%
White: 2 (1.3%)	0%	100%	0%
Opaque green: 1 (0.6%)	100%	0%	0%
Purple: 1 (0.6%)	100%	0%	0%

⁵⁹ VANDAMME 1982: 151-157.

⁶⁰ The practice of glazing tin foil to imitate gold had existed since the ninth century at least, as evidenced by the *Compositiones variae* or 'Lucca Manuscript', see Chapter Three.

143a.
normal light



143b.
UV light

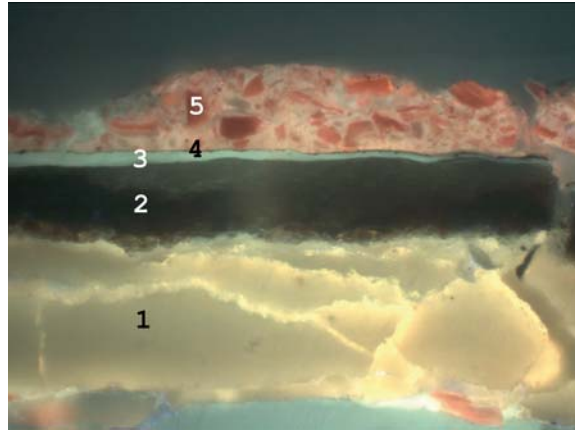


Fig. 143a-b.
Holy Kinship
Altarpiece
Cleophas, garment,
continuous applied
brocade: gold leaf on
a very thin organic
layer (cat. 24.1)

- 5 highlighting, red glaze layer
- 4 gold leaf
- 3 thin organic adhesive layer, strong fluorescence in UV light
- 2 greyish degraded tin foil
- 1 brown translucent filler: probably beeswax, as in cat.24.6



Fig. 144.
Saluzzo Altarpiece
Local applied brocade with green glaze highlighting (cat. 19.5)

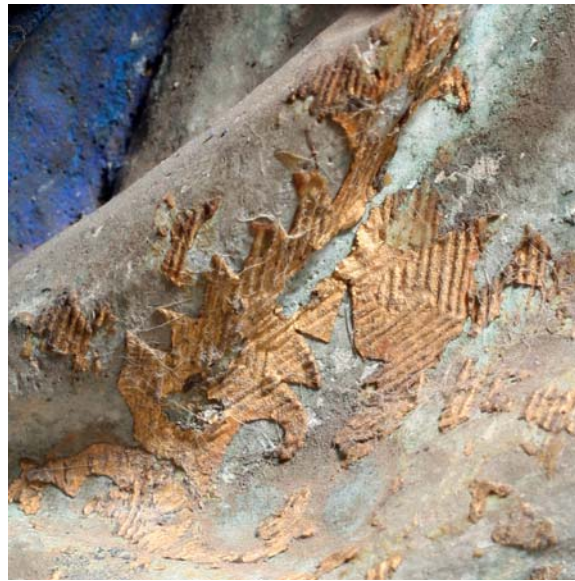


Fig. 145.
Saluzzo Altarpiece
Gilded applied brocade with no highlighting but an excision in
the centre (cat. 19.7)

The palette corresponds to that generally seen in polychromy of the period. Red glaze is the most common. In the works where glazes could be taken for HPLC analysis (for the methodology, see Appendix I) we mostly find madder-based lake (*Rubia tictorum* L).⁶¹ These results are not at all surprising, for madder was the most important dye used in northern Europe in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. In the South, on the other hand, kermes lakes (*Kermes vermilio* Planchon) were more prevalent – this was as costly as lapis lazuli in the North.⁶² In a single instance, that of the gown of the donatrix on the *Altarpiece of Claudio de Villa and Gentina Solaro* (cat. 21.2), a kermes lake was found together with the madder (in the support layer). The presence of kermes may be explained either by an early retouch, perhaps after the altarpiece was transported to Italy, or by the artist's decision to add extra value to the donatrix's garment by using a colouring agent that was expensive in northern Europe.⁶³ Indigo added to madder lake was found in the dark red highlighting on the brocade on the Virgin's undergown in the Master of the Piétrebais Madonna's *Virgin and Child* (cat. 48.2).

It is also very common to find no highlighting on the gold of the applied brocades, though it is predominantly local brocades that are left unhighlighted. Many of these unhighlighted local brocades have a relief pattern structure, which is to say a fully striated surface with no flat zones (see also Chapter Four). In third and fourth place are blue⁶⁴ and green (fig. 144),⁶⁵ followed by black, multicoloured, opaque red, white, opaque green, and finally purple. The narrow applied brocade braids are most often highlighted with blue but may also have a red glaze finishing. Local applied brocades may sometimes incorporate excised zones, through which the coloured background can be seen, which also adds contrast between gold and colour (fig. 145). This technique is found particularly in the early-sixteenth-century Brussels altarpieces polychromed by Master I*T.⁶⁶

The highlighting is generally applied in a single layer on the gold of the applied brocades; however, the red glaze, and the blue and purple highlighting was sometimes applied in two layers, probably to add intensity to the coloured areas and accentuate the contrast between colour and gold (figs. 146-147). Most of the cases presented here are confirmed by cross sections. By and large, two-layer highlighting occurs on altarpieces made in Brussels in the early sixteenth century: the *Saluzzo Altarpiece* (cat. 19) and *Holy Kinship Altarpiece* (cat. 24), both polychromed by Master I*T; and the *Passion Altarpiece* now in Antwerp (cat. 5). The list includes the older Brussels *Altarpiece of the Life of the Virgin and the Infancy of Christ* now in Rouen (cat. F3.2, polychromy dated c.1485-c.1490) as well as a statue (cat. 48.2) and an altarpiece (cat. 64.1 and 64.2) thought to have been produced in Leuven. The following combinations are possible:

- red glaze on
 - a matt red underlayer: cat. 19.1, cat. 48.2, cat. 64.1
 - a pink underlayer: cat. 24.1 (mixture of lead white and red glaze)
 - a white underlayer: cat. 5.2, cat. 19.1, cat. 24.1, cat. 64.1 (this last case contains lead white with a few particles of red glaze)
- matt blue on
 - a white underlayer: cat. 19.10
 - a grey underlayer: cat. 24.6 (fig. 146)
 - a black underlayer: cat. 50.1 (azurite blue on black charcoal with gypsum⁶⁷)
- matt purple on
 - a white underlayer: cat. 5.1 (fig. 147)

In the same work, the same model of applied brocade may have been highlighted in different colours depending on its location, as exemplified by the continuous applied brocade with a design of a posy of flowers and lanceolate leaves in a basket so often used by Master I*T (see cat. 19.1).⁶⁸ The highlighting is either red or blue, with the blue being used mainly for the Virgin's gown.

⁶¹ See cat. 24.2, cat. 44.1, cat. 63.2, cat. 64.1. See also SANYOVA 2002; DIDIER, OTJACQUES-DUSTIN, SANYOVA 1995: 27-28. We thank Christophe Snoeck for his help with the HPLC analysis of the red colouring agents.

⁶² KIRBY, WHITE 1996.

⁶³ See SANYOVA 2002: 89-91 and cat. 21 in the present publication. The altarpiece was commissioned by an Italian family for use in Italy.

⁶⁴ *Saluzzo Altarpiece*, Brussels, Broodhuis-Maison du Roi: azurite on a lead white underlayer (see also cat. 19.10); *St Remaclus*, Spa: azurite on a black underlayer (See DIDIER, OTJACQUES-DUSTIN, SANYOVA 1995: 27-28 and cat. 59.1 in the present publication).

⁶⁵ See cat. 19.4, cat. 19.5: verdigris.

⁶⁶ See cat. 19.4, cat. 19.5, cat. 19.7, cat. 510.3. Two other Brussels altarpieces from the same period also have applied brocades with similar excisions (cat. 5.3, cat. 22.1).

⁶⁷ See NAMUR-GHENT 1995: 75-76 (analyses by Jana Sanyova), *Altarpiece of the Life of the Virgin and the Infancy of Christ* (cat. F3.2).

⁶⁸ *Saluzzo Altarpiece* (cat. 19.1), *Holy Kinship Altarpiece* (cat. 24.1).

Fig. 146a.



- 6 highlighting: azurite blue
- 5 grey underlayer, black and white pigment particles
- 4 gold leaf
- 3 thin adhesive layer
- 2 whitish degraded tin foil
- 1 filler: brown translucent and whitish in the upper part of the layer (contamination by the tin): beeswax

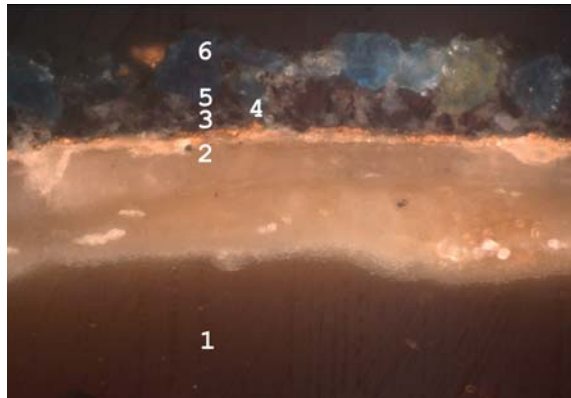
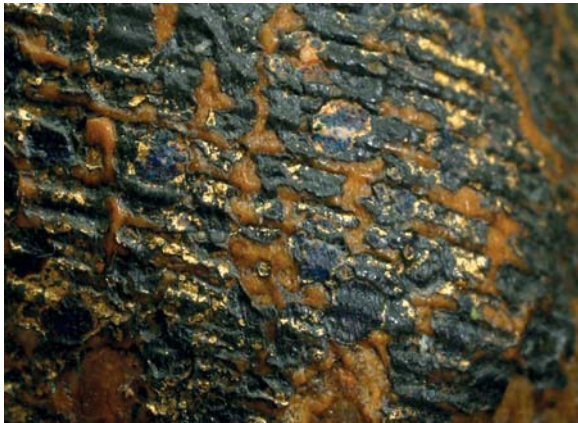
Fig. 146b.
normal light

Fig. 146a-b.
Holy Kinship Altarpiece
(cross section)
St Anne's cloak,
applied brocade
braid: highlighting in
two layers (cat. 24.6)

Fig. 147a.



- 7 highlighting, matt purple, blue and red lake particles
- 6 white underlayer
- 5 gold leaf
- 4 thin organic adhesive layer
- 3 grey degraded tin foil
- 2 filler: probably beeswax, as in cat. 5.3
- 1 orange ochre adhesive: linseed oil

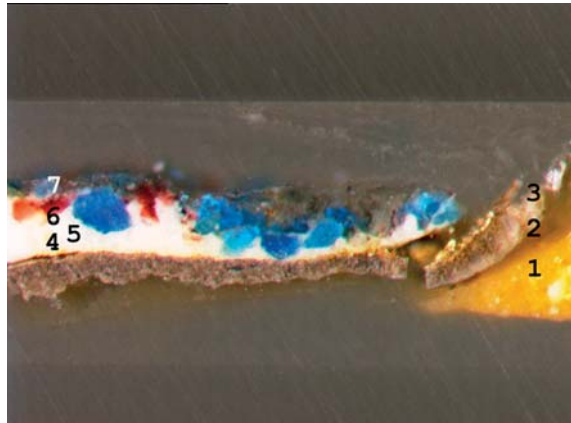
Fig. 147b.
normal light

Fig. 147a-b.
Passion Altarpiece,
Brussels, c.1500;
Antwerp, Mayer van
den Bergh Museum
Carrying of the
Cross, Christ's robe,
continuous applied
brocade: highlighting
in two layers (cat. 5.1)

The colour of the highlighting on local applied brocades generally depends on that of the background. If the background is covered with a red glaze, the highlighting is in red glaze; if the background is green glaze, the highlighting is in green glaze, and so on. There are exceptions, however. For instance, one of the applied brocades of the *Holy Kinship Altarpiece* (cat. 24.2) has red highlighting (madder lake), whereas the background is green (glaze based on oil and green copper pigments).⁶⁹ The red cloak of the *St Ursula* in Bruges (cat. 16) is decorated with applied brocades highlighted with green, whereas the background is red glaze – and the flat edges of these applied brocades are also covered in red glaze to correspond to the background. Multicoloured highlighting is rare. The Dortmund *Passion Altarpiece* has applied brocades highlighted in various colours (cat. G2.1, cat. G2.2). The figures of saints standing in niches on the applied brocade orphrey on the Archangel Gabriel's cope on the *Saluzzo Altarpiece* (cat. 19.10) and the applied brocades adorning the dorsers behind the three main figures of the Van Eyck brothers' *Adoration of the Lamb* altarpiece are also multicoloured (cat. 37.1 and cat. 37.2).

Adhesion of applied brocades

Adhesion of the applied brocades was achieved either with or without a specific adhesive. In the latter case, the support layer itself acted as the adhesive, sometimes helped by the filler. Applied brocades glued with an adhesive seem to be as common as those affixed without one (see Table F). In the examples thought to be without an adhesive, some doubt remains, as the adhesive may not have been seen. If we look only at the cross sections, which reveal layers not identified in situ, the proportion of applied brocades affixed with an adhesive increases.

Table F. Adhesion of applied brocades

	by visual observation 131 applied brocades	by cross section 58 applied brocades
With adhesive	61 (47%)	31 (53.5%)
Without adhesive	62 (47%)	22 (38%)
Uncertain	8 (6%)	5 (8.5%)

⁶⁹ SANYOVA 2002: 86.

Applied brocades affixed with an adhesive

The *Liber illuministarum* or 'Tegernsee Manuscript' mentioned in Chapter Three explains that the adhesive material should be applied to the relief decorations.⁷⁰ However, examination of the works in the catalogue shows that the adhesive may indeed be applied to the reverse of the applied brocade but also to the support – this is evidenced by the brush strokes (fig. 148). When using continuous brocades the adhesive is generally applied to the support (there are probably exceptions), whereas for local brocades the adhesive, when it exists (see below), seems mostly to have been applied to the back of the decoration.

The Tegernsee Manuscript gives various recipes for the composition of adhesives, such as wood glue, a mixture of flour and resin, or a mixture of chalk with oil and varnish.⁷¹ The text also mentions a golden varnish, but it is unclear whether it was used as an adhesive or to gild the surface of applied brocades.

The adhesive of the applied brocades in the catalogue is either ochre-beige, like a classic mordant, or, more often, a darker colour closer to orange (brown or orange ochre, reddish brown, brown), or even red (red ochre). A very clear yellow colour has also been noted.⁷²

The adhesive layer of one local and seven continuous applied brocades almost always contained oil (linseed?), to which pine resin was sometimes added. In some cases traces of beeswax were found, but it is believed that this is a contamination from the filler (see Table B). Neither FTIR analysis, nor LCMSMS analyses of the few adhesive samples run proved the presence of proteins in the adhesive layer.

The adhesive is generally added in a layer that is thicker than a simple mordant. Sometimes it also forms a rather gritty layer, as the pigments are much more coarsely ground. This is particularly the case for the continuous applied brocades on the *Saluzzo Altarpiece* (fig. 148) and one of the brocades in the choir of Antwerp Cathedral (cross section 10.1).

Continuous applied brocades are almost always affixed by means of an adhesive. Local brocades are glued much less frequently, the still-tacky paint layer itself serving as an adhesive. When local applied brocades are positioned on the final paint layer adhesives may be identified, but this is extremely rare – in the

⁷⁰ BERGER 1912: 195; HECHT 1980: 28-29; GONZÁLEZ LÓPEZ 2002: 70-71.

⁷¹ BERGER 1912: 195.

⁷² Rear wall of the case of the *Altarpiece of the Holy Family with St Catherine* (cat. 63.1), *Two Angels supporting a Cloth of Honour* (cat. 12.1), *St Helena* from the *Altarpiece of St Anne with SS Helena and Giles* (cat. 61.1).

catalogue there are only two examples (cat. 32.1, cat. 36.2).

Local applied brocades are sometimes glued onto the ground rather than the paint layer. In these cases a specific adhesive is always used.⁷³

Applied brocade braids most often appear to adhere to the gilding without any specific adhesives. However, in the Swedish examples, there seems to be a very thin orange transparent layer on the gold beneath the filler of the applied brocade braids (fig. 149). Is this in fact an additional adhesive? Or is it a very thin layer of the filler, which owes its orange transparent appearance to the reflection of the gold beneath?

Applied brocades affixed without a specific adhesive

Generally speaking, it is local brocades that are applied directly onto the final paint layer (or coloured underlayer) without an adhesive. The narrow applied brocade braids also tend to adhere to the burnished gilding without a specific adhesive, though it should be pointed out that the translucent matt layer which we think was sometimes applied to burnished gold to reduce the shine may also have played a role in adhering applied brocade braids (this remains to be verified).⁷⁴ Myriam Serck-Dewaide supposes that the burnished gold on the *Saluzzo Altarpiece* was covered with such a translucent layer.

The final paint layer on which local brocades were applied generally consists of red or green glaze, but also of layers in matt/opaque colours (blue, black, purple, pale blue, white, beige, pink, etc.). Most of the layers appear to be oil-based, but some are aqueous (blues, blacks).

The adhesion of local applied brocades poses no problems when they are on a glaze: the brocades are simply pressed into the glaze before it is completely dry. For matt layers, especially for those that contain less binder and are therefore less adherent, such as the velvety azurite blues, things are a little more complicated. Warming up the wax slightly in order to increase its adhesive properties would have helped the process along.

Finally, where we find fillers in two layers and no adhesive, the second filler applied to the back of some local applied brocades may also have played a role in attaching the decorations.



Fig. 148.
Saluzzo Altarpiece
(detail) (cat. 19)
Adoration of the
Magi, the Virgin's
cloth of honour,
continuous applied
brocade



Fig. 149.
Passion Altarpiece,
c.1515-1520, Brussels;
Villberga, Parish
Church
Applied brocade
braid on burnished
gold (cat. S10.4)

⁷³ See cat. 20.1, cat. 20.2, cat. 20.3, cat. 31, cat. 36.1, cat. 62.1, cat. 63.2, cat. 63.3.

⁷⁴ We thank Christine Cession for drawing our attention to this point.

Affixing the local applied brocades directly onto the final layer avoided the need to paint around the edges of complicated models. A truly successful tactile effect was obtained when the tin foil sheet was trimmed close to the motif in relief, leaving clear borders in slight relief that contrast with the coloured background (fig. 144). When the sheet is left untrimmed the flat margins around the motif receive the same paint as the background (fig. 150).⁷⁶ This nevertheless reduces clarity, as the thickness of the tin foil, even though flat, is still detectable through the glaze, as is well illustrated by the local brocades on the *Passion Altarpiece* formerly in the Brimo de Laroussilhe collection (cat. 20.1), the Bruges *St Ursula* (cat. 15.1) and the Dortmund *Passion Altarpiece* (cat. G2.2, cat. G2.3, cat. G2.4, cat. G2.5).

On four statues the local brocades were applied onto the matt red or matt black underlayer rather than the final layer (see cat. 15.1, cat. 48.2, cat. 50.1, cat. 59.1). The matt red of the cope worn by the *St Remaclus* at Spa contains vermilion bound with proteinaceous glue (cat. 59.1). The black underlayer of the dalmatic and mitre is likewise bound with an aqueous binder.⁷⁷ The final paint layers, respectively red glaze (red wood-colouring agent bound with a mixture of nut oil and pine resin) and azurite blue were applied afterwards, being worked round the applied brocades. The

applied brocades in question are often small or medium formats: the amount of glaze or pigment saved is in fact relatively small.

Finishing the already-made brocade

Applied brocade is prefabricated, though its finishing may be completed once it is affixed to its support. It may be wholly finished, complete with gilding and coloured highlighting; or partially finished, gilded but not highlighted; or wholly unfinished, being gilded and highlighted only after it has been glued in place.⁷⁸ Each type of applied brocade may be treated differently, largely depending on whether it is used on a two or three dimensional support, on a painted panel, a statue or the carved parts of an altarpiece.

The continuous applied brocades on the *Saluzzo Altarpiece* were wholly finished before being attached.⁷⁹ On the flat surfaces of the canopy hangings the tin foil sheets were carefully set side by side so the continuity of the motif was respected (fig. 148). On the irregular surfaces of the clothing of the carved figures, on the other hand, the applied brocades overlap. In these two cases no retouches (or very few) seem to have been carried out where the sheets meet. The powdery blues of the adjacent surfaces seem to have been applied before the brocades were placed, which would have avoided the attachment of blue particles to the ridges of the relief. Similarly, the surrounding burnished gold surfaces were also prepared before the brocades were affixed. However, the white and pale blues of the veils, and the pinkish white of the flesh tones encroach slightly onto the continuous applied brocades, showing that they were painted at a later stage. On the *Burial of St Andrew* fragment (cat. 7), which was also polychromed by Master I*T, the continuous applied brocades on the manservant's undergarment were fixed to their support only after the green glaze was painted on the lining of his adjacent cloak.

Fig. 150.

Passion Altarpiece (former Brimo de Laroussilhe collection), 1470-1490, Brussels(?), Antwerp(?); Brussels, KMKG-MRAH Untrimmed flat margins around the motif, highlighted with the same red glaze as the support layer (cat. 20.1)



⁷⁶ Cat. 16.1, cat. 20.1, cat. 20.2, cat. 20.3, cat. 59.1, cat. F3.3, cat. G2.2, cat. G2.3, cat. G2.4, cat. S4.2.

⁷⁷ DIDIER, OTJACQUES-DUSTIN, SANYOVA 1995: 27-28 (analyses by Jana Sanyova).

⁷⁸ SERCK-DEWAIDE 2000: 91.

⁷⁹ Study of the Herlin altarpiece shows that the applied brocades had been wholly finished before application. There are no connections between the paint of juxtaposed applied brocades. The areas intended to be covered with applied brocade were marked with incisions. Those parts of the brocade that overlapped these areas were trimmed away with a knife, except for the pieces that were already too solidly fixed. BACHMANN, OELLERMANN, TAUBERT 1970: 357.

The continuous applied brocades on the *Passion Altarpiece* in Zoutleeuw (cat. 64.1) were not produced or placed with the same care as those of the *Saluzzo Altarpiece*. The brocades seem to have been gilded before they were attached. There are also parts of applied brocades that have been left ungilded in less visible corners (fig. 151).⁸⁰

The procedure for attaching and finishing applied brocades on painted panels appears quite specific and distinct from that used for altarpieces. Continuous applied brocades were attached to the panel ungilded, once the underdrawing had been completed. This has been noted on several panels in the catalogue.⁸¹ Incisions in the ground to mark the areas to be covered have not been observed. The applied brocades were fixed onto the ground with an adhesive. The excess tin foil sheet may have been trimmed away with a sharp tool, as evidenced by the cut marks noted in several instances (fig. 152). Then the gold leaf was glued to the applied brocade. Sometimes it was also used to fill small uncovered zones. In general, the gold leaf slightly overlaps the edge of the applied brocade. These overlaps are covered with paint, which enhances the connection between the brocade and the painted area. The painting may also be extended onto more or less important parts of the applied brocade (fig. 153).

When used on statues it would seem that continuous applied brocade could be gilded either before or after it was affixed. On the *St Helena* in Zoutleeuw, for example, the gold leaf was clearly added afterwards, as evidenced by the overlapping areas (cat. 61.1). In many cases, such as the small Mechelen statue of the *Virgin and Child* now in Leuven (cat. 47.1), it has been impossible to determine whether the gilding was applied before or after the applied brocades were attached, though the red highlighting was obviously added afterwards.

Local applied brocades, on the other hand, were gilded before being attached (there is no overlapping of the gold leaf onto the paint layer), though the highlighting may have been added afterwards, as was the case for some local brocades on the *Saluzzo Altarpiece* (cat. 19.4, cat. 19.5) and the *St Remaclus* in Spa (cat. 59.1). The narrow applied brocade braids



Fig. 151.
Passion Altarpiece,
early 16th century,
Brabant, Leuven(?);
Zoutleeuw, Church
of St Leonard
In the unseen areas
the applied brocades
have been left
ungilded (cat. 64.1)



Fig. 152.
Passion Altarpiece
called Strängnäs II,
c.1500, Brussels;
Strängnäs, Cathedral
The excess tin foil
sheet trimmed away
with a sharp tool
(cat. S4.1)

were obviously completely finished before being placed, though whether or not the orphreys were treated likewise is less clear.

The huge amount of data on applied brocades compiled in this detailed study has allowed us to draw a number of quite representative conclusions.

The applied brocades have been comprehensively studied by bringing together information acquired

⁸⁰ The coloured glaze with orange fluorescence under the gold leaf, identified in the cross section, may have given the appearance of gilding to the areas not covered in gold.

⁸¹ See cat. 35.1, cat. 52.1, cat. 52.2, cat. G.1.1, cat. S4.1. On some of the other panels in the catalogue the presence of over-painting has limited our observations (cat. 37.1, cat. 37.2, cat. 39.1).

Fig. 153.
Passion Altarpiece,
 c.1490, Brussels;
 Geel, Church of
 St Dymphna
 Details of the hair
 painted on the gold
 of the continuous
 applied brocades
 (cat. 35.1)



by various methods, combining in situ study with laboratory examination of cross sections and analyses of fillers, binders, and organic and inorganic pigments. This has allowed us to compare the results and formulate accurate interpretations.

With regard to the composition of fillers it has been noted that the applied brocades produced in the Low Countries generally have an ochre or brown translucent or transparent filler containing few if any pigments. These fillers mostly contain beeswax, either pure or combined with oil (linseed?) and/or pine resin. Sometimes a second, beige or orange opaque filler was added, containing ochre and lead-based pigments. These opaque fillers contain oil (linseed?), sometimes with added wax (two of the cases studied). The identification of oil of *Brassicaceae* seeds (such as rapeseed oil) in a number of samples was most surprising, as this has never been detected in applied brocades before. There seems to be no correlation between the identified filler (mixtures) and either the date or place of production or the type of support. Fillers based on chalk are rare. For this type of filler, analysis has shown the presence of linseed oil as well as protein (bovine, animal glue).

Another interesting finding is the existence of a very thin organic layer with orange fluorescence on the surface of the tin foil in nearly 30% of the works studied here. It probably indicates a glaze that imitated real gold gilding. This glaze is often hidden beneath gold leaf. It is apparently never present in Brussels polychromy.

The questions arising from the deterioration of tin foil and its migration into the filler will be studied at the KIK-IRPA in the years ahead.

The gold leaf of applied brocades adheres to a classic mordant but may also lie on a very thin organic

layer. In this case the aim was presumably to avoid filling up and thus obscuring the relief, which is sometimes extremely fine.

The pigments of the highlighting correspond to the palette of medieval polychromy. In general we find azurite, verdigris, vermillion, red lead and lead white. The red glazes mostly contain madder lakes.

As regards adhesion to the support, differences can be noted depending on the type of applied brocade: continuous applied brocade is almost always affixed by means of an adhesive; local brocades usually adhere to the surface of the paint layer or the underlayer (there are some exceptions). When local brocades are attached to the paint layer, they are generally trimmed to the contour of the motif, which produces a better tactile effect. Where local brocades have been left untrimmed the flat edges are always somewhat noticeable under the layer of paint intended to camouflage them, which diminishes the illusionistic effect of these imitation textile motifs.

Great care was generally taken in the production and use of applied brocades, even by the larger, highly productive workshops of the early sixteenth century, such as that of Master I*T, which may have prefabricated these relief decorations in serial mode but none the less produced and applied them with meticulous craftsmanship.

Future research may focus on the practices of polychromers or polychromy workshops that have been identified thanks to the study of applied brocades (see Chapter Six). Extensive work on the reconstruction of the applied brocades included in this catalogue (from the mould to the painted finishing and methods of adhesion) could be systematically undertaken in the light of new information brought together in this chapter.

Appendix I

METHODOLOGY FOR THE ANALYSIS
OF INORGANIC AND ORGANIC MATTER**Methodology for the analysis of inorganic matter**

The inorganic composition of the different layers was studied on the cross sections using different analytical methods, such as scanning electron microscopy (SEM Jeol 6300, 15 kV accelerator voltage) coupled to an energy dispersive micro-fluorescence X-ray detector (EDX; Si[Li] detector, Pentafet, Oxford Instruments), and micro-Raman spectroscopy (inVia, Renishaw, equipped with a red diode laser at 785 nm and a green Ar-ion laser at 514 nm).

Table B contains only a part of the research carried out on inorganic materials. The results are also included in the tables in the catalogue.

Methodology for the analysis of the organic compounds of the fillers and adhesives

All samples taken for the analysis of the organic matter – filler and adhesive layer – of the applied brocades were first screened by Fourier-transform infrared (FTIR) spectroscopy. FTIR gives a general idea of the organic class to which the organic matter belongs (oil, wax, resin, protein). The samples were subsequently analysed with gas chromatography interfaced to mass spectrometry (GCMS), a very sensitive technique requiring only tiny samples and offering very specific information as to the type of oil, wax, resin and protein. A two-step analysis procedure was applied on each sample: in the first step the oils, resins and waxes were identified, while the second step allowed the identification of proteins. Additionally, to further refine or confirm protein results, a few samples were run on a liquid chromatography tandem mass spectrometry system (LCMSMS).¹ Only minute sample quantities are needed and the technique can provide species-specific information.²

Experimental procedures

A Fourier-transform infrared (FTIR) spectrometer (Nicolet 5 DCX, USA) equipped with an IR microscope (SpectraTech, USA) was used to classify the

organic compounds in the applied brocade samples. Powder samples were placed on a diamond disc under the IR microscope and spectra registered in transmission mode. 64 scans per sample were collected with a resolution of 16 cm⁻¹ and the intensity (% transmittance) versus wave number (cm⁻¹) was measured between 650 and 4000 cm⁻¹.

The GCMS analyses were carried out on a Thermo Trace GC interfaced to a PolarisQ ion trap mass spectrometer (Interscience, Belgium). Prior to analysis the samples were derivatized in order to reduce their polarity and facilitate chromatographic separation. A dual derivatization protocol was followed. The first derivatization was carried out using a 1:2 (v/v) mixture of (trifluoromethylphenyl) trimethylammoniumhydroxide (MethPrepII, Grace Davison) and toluene for one hour at 60°C. After cooling down the reaction vial was centrifuged and 1 µL of the sample solution was injected into the GC equipped with an AT-5ms column (30 m + 5 m integrated guard column, 0.25 mm i.d., 0.25 µm film; Grace Davison). This allows the identification of oils, waxes and resins. In order to identify proteins in the same sample, a second derivatization step was applied. After evaporation to dryness of the remaining sample, it was hydrolysed for 24 h at 110°C with 6 N HCl to break down any proteins present into amino acids. After some cleaning steps the amino acids were derivatized with ethyl chloroformate. The derivatized amino acids were extracted with chloroform, and concentrated by evaporating the chloroform to dryness. 20 µL toluene was added to the vial to dissolve the derivatives prior to injection on the same analytical column as previously described. More detailed information on this procedure can be found in the publication by Schilling et al. 1996.³ The LCMSMS method was applied on a limited number of samples to confirm the presence of proteins and to further refine the protein species source. The method is based on the identification of peptides after tryptic digestion of the corresponding proteins. For the analysis an Ultimate 3000 Dual nano-HPLC system (Dionex) was connected to a Waters Micromass ESI QTOF Ultima mass spectrometer. Details of the instrumental set-up and the

¹ The LCMSMS analyses were carried out by Wim Fremout as part of his doctoral research, which was funded by the Belgian Science Policy (Federaal Wetenschapsbeleid-Politique scientifique fédérale).

² FREMOUT et al. 2010.

³ SCHILLING, KHANJIAN, SOUZA 1996: 45-59.

tryptic digestion procedure are published in Fremout et al. 2010.

Problems related to the analysis of the organic compounds of the fillers and adhesives

The identification of the organic compounds of the fillers and adhesives by FTIR or GCMS on sample scrapings assumes the layer-by-layer sampling of the materials used to build up the applied brocades. Only pure scrapings can lead to unambiguous results. Taking samples is a delicate task, however: the layers can be very thin (as is often the case for the adhesive layer) and/or hard to distinguish. Moreover sampling is often done in situ in badly lit churches, further complicating this crucial step in the analysis scheme. To avoid loss of sample, the smallest samples were transferred from the object directly into reaction vials, making it impossible to check in the laboratory if only one layer has been sampled. The larger samples (paint chips) were stored in sample holders so that their purity could be checked in the laboratory prior to analysis. In some cases more than one layer was present and attempts were then made to separate them. This implies that the analysis results needed to be interpreted with care to avoid misrepresentation. Finally, because of the delicate nature of most of the applied brocades and the limited sampling possibilities, no multiple samples could be run.

The high concentration of palmitic acid (C16: 0) in beeswax often makes it impossible to identify or even confirm the presence of oil in the filler. Oils are identified on the basis of the palmitic to stearic acid (C18: 0) ratio,⁴ both fatty acids originating from the oil. Since beeswax forms a second source of palmitic and (to a lesser extent) stearic acid, this ratio is disturbed and identification of the oil is no longer possible. The presence of a drying oil can be confirmed by an azelaic to palmitic acid (Az/P) ratio of at least 1. Again this ratio is disturbed by the presence of palmitic acid originating from beeswax. In cases where the concentration of beeswax is rather low, or the concentration of oil high, the presence of oil can be assumed when a relatively high concentration of azelaic acid is observed. In these cases and also when no beeswax was present (e.g. in the adhesive layer) the oil could be identified as linseed oil. In a few cases erucic and gondoic acids were detected, biomarkers that point to the presence of oil from *Brassicaceae* seeds, such as rapeseed oil.

Although linseed oil is a drying oil, the Az/P ratio was often below 1. In a drying oil non-saturated fatty

acids are present, which react away during drying, forming degradation products such as azelaic acid. The often low concentration in azelaic acid and the presence of non-saturated fatty acids like oleate (C18: 1) indicate that the oil has not completely dried, even after more than 500 years. A possible explanation for this is the presence of the tin foil that forms a barrier for light and to some extent oxygen, slowing down the oxidation reactions with non-saturated fatty acids that lead to the formation of small molecules like azelaic acid.

Egg (yolk) also contains fatty acids, including palmitic and stearic acid. The Az/P ratio for egg is normally below 0.5 so a low value could also point to the presence of egg (yolk). Since egg also contains proteins, the presence of egg should be confirmed by protein analyses as well. Neither with GCMS nor LCMSMS, however, was the presence of egg validated.

Methodology for the analysis of the organic dyestuffs of lake pigments from red glazes

The colouring agent of the red glazes occurring under and/or on the brocade patterns is usually a red lake. The red lake is an organic pigment composed of natural dyestuffs, which are fixed on an inorganic or organic substrate. Most of the natural dyestuffs used for the preparation of organic pigments are of the mordant type, which means they are complexed with a metallic cation, typically aluminium. For their analysis by high performance liquid chromatography with diode array detection (HPLC-DAD, Spectratech, Finnigan), the dyestuffs should be extracted from its complex (lake pigment) present in the glazes.

The samples taken from the glazes of brocades (typically less than 0.1 mg), were extracted in mild conditions, hydrofluoric acid 2M in water: methanol: dimethylformamide, 2: 1: 1, at ambient temperature.⁵ These conditions prevent the degradation of weak molecules (e.g. glycosides and pseudopurpurine) and also reduce the size of the sample necessary for the analysis. After evaporation, the recovered dyestuffs were redissolved in the mixture of methanol: acetonitril: water 1/1/2, and injected into the HPLC system. The system consists of a Proo0XR quaternary pump, an AS3000 autosampler equipped with 'pushloop' option and a UV6000LP UV/Vis DAD detector equipped with a 50 mm detector cell, all from Thermo Separation Products. The analytical column was an Alltima RP C18, 5 μ m, 250 \times 4.6 mm (Alltech), and the guard column a Nova-Pack C18, 4 μ m, 3.9 \times 10 (Waters).

⁴ MILLS, WHITE 1999.

⁵ SANYOVA 2008.

CONSTITUENTS OF FILLERS AND ADHESIVES

Old recipes (see also Chapter Three)

Reference	Written source	Filler	Adhesive
BERGER 1912: 195. HECHT 1980. GONZÁLEZ LÓPEZ 2000. BARTL 2005.	<i>Liber illuministarum</i> or 'Tegernsee Manuscript', late-fifteenth-century recipe	For the filler the Tegernsee Manuscript recommends rubbing chalk and resin in glue water ('reib kreyden', 'pech' 'in leimwasser')	Various materials and mixtures are recommended in the Tegernsee Manuscript. – for every type of surface (statue covered with a white ground, wall or cloth, oily surfaces): wood glue ('holz leim') or a paste of flour and resin powder ('ein cleÿstern von mel vnd misch dar ein pulver von pech als vil') – for walls: a mixture of chalk with resin and varnish ('kalisch vnd reib den mit öl vnd mit firniß') – gold paint ('golt varb') can apparently also be used as an adhesive, but the support must be coated with oil beforehand

Analyses, works of arts produced outside the Low Countries (selected publications)

Reference	Work of art	Filler analysed	Adhesive analysed
FRINTA 1963. MILLS, PLESTERS 1963.	Baltimore, <i>St Lawrence</i> , painted wing of a carved altarpiece, c.1465 (Aragon, Master of Arguís)	brown wax-resin compound	no data
	New York, <i>Lamentation group</i> , carved scene in a shrine, c.1480 (Hispano-Flemish)	brown wax-resin compound	no data
	New York, <i>Nativity of the Virgin</i> , carved group, c.1480 (Lower Franconia)	gesso	no data
	New York, <i>Reliquary Bust of St Barbara</i> , carved bust, c.1465 (workshop of Nikolaus Gerhaert von Leiden)	filler in two layers: 1: more yellowish matter (layer in contact with the tin foil) 2: beeswax containing a considerable amount of red lead	no data
	Aachen, <i>Madonna</i> , statue from an altar shrine, before 1500 (Swabia, attributed to Ivo Strigel)	filler in two layers: 1: beeswax with red lead tetroxyde (layer in contact with the tin foil) 2: beeswax with yellow lead monoxide	no data
	Zürich, <i>Adoration of the Magi Altarpiece</i> , carved altarpiece, c.1500 (eastern Switzerland? Swabia?)	filler in two layers: 1: beeswax with red lead tetroxyde (layer in contact with the tin foil) 2: beeswax with yellow lead monoxide	no data
MASSCHELEIN-KLEINER, HEYLEN, TRICOT-MARCKX 1968: 113.	Brussels, <i>Adoration of the Magi Altarpiece</i> , carved altarpiece with carved and painted wings, 1496 (Tyrol)	beeswax and calcium carbonate (no resin)	no data

Reference	Work of art	Filler analysed	Adhesive analysed
BROEKMAN-BOKSTIJN et al. 1970: 392.	Rothenburg, <i>Herlin Altarpiece</i> , carved altarpiece with painted wings (Friedrich Herlin and workshop, Nördlingen)	wax-resin	oil, resin, glue, a little chalk
	<i>St Wolfgang, Altarpiece</i> , carved altarpiece with double painted wings, 1471-1481 (Tyrol, Michael Pacher)	beeswax-resin	no data
	Utrecht, <i>St Anne Altarpiece</i> , carved monument, c.1500 (Utrecht)	wax	no data
HECHT 1980: 32-33.	<i>St Wolfgang, Altarpiece</i> , carved altarpiece with double painted wings, 1471-1481 (Tyrol, Michael Pacher)	beeswax (more than 80%) and rosin	lead white and red lead bound with animal glue
	Blaubeuren, <i>Altarpiece with Virgin and Child and Saints</i> , carved altarpiece with painted wings, 1493-1494 (Ulm, Bartholomeüs Zeitblom, Bernhard Strigel, Michel and Gregor Erhart)	chalk, glue, and probably resin	wax with perhaps some oil and blue, green, and red crystals
	Meesburg, <i>Annunciation Altarpiece</i> , carved altarpiece, c.1490 (Lake Constance, attributed to the Master of the Hohenlandenbergr Altarpiece)	chalk, (glue) and yellow ochre	no data
BRODRICK, DARRAH 1986.	Arundel, effigies of William Fitzalan and Joan Neville, carved monument, c.1462	– applied brocade of Joan Neville's gown: red wax (probably beeswax) and perhaps some pine resin, plus some lead pigment – applied brocade on the effigy of the Earl: chalk in beeswax (plus a little resin)	adhesive of the applied brocade of the Earl's effigy: oil size with linseed oil and protein
PERUSINI, PERUSINI 1986: 82.	Remanzacco, <i>St Stephen Altarpiece</i> , carved altarpiece, early sixteenth century (Friuli, Giovanni Martini)	high percentage of calcium (c.90%), proteinaceous binder, high percentage of lead (red lead)	no data
COLINART, EVENO 1993: 163-164.	Paris, <i>Nativity</i> , bas-relief, c.1510 (Upper Rhine, Colmar?)	white filler: white, based on calcium carbonate	no data
	Azay-le-Rideau, <i>St James</i> , statue, early sixteenth century (Upper Rhine)	white filler: based on calcium with foraminifera	no data
	Lille, <i>St George Altarpiece</i> , carved altarpiece (Southern Tyrol)	white filler: dolomitic limestone	no data
	Langeais, <i>Virgin and Child</i> ; Marseille, <i>St Anne with the Virgin and Child</i> ; Amiens, <i>St Barbara</i> , statues from an altarpiece, 1510-1520 (circle of Daniel Mauch)	orangey brown filler: ochre mixed with oil and probably resin	no data
	Paris, <i>St Anne with the Virgin and Child</i> , bas-relief, early sixteenth century (Swabia, Ulm?)	orangey brown filler: mixture of red lead and calcium carbonate with oil and probably resin	no data
	Saverne, <i>Virgin and Two Angels</i> , carved fragment, c.1480 (Strasbourg)	pure beeswax	no data
COLINART, GUILLOT DE SUDUIRAUT 1998.	Paris, <i>The Nativity</i> , bas-relief, c.1510 (Colmar)	filler composition identical to that of the ground: calcium carbonate with a proteinaceous glue (?)	no data

Reference	Work of art	Filler analysed	Adhesive analysed
DARRAH 1998: 60-77.	Study of applied brocades on sixteen works in Great Britain, mainly at the V&A London, various origins – England, Italy, Germany, and France – dated between 1462 and 1520.	Almost all the applied brocades presented have waxy fillers whose colours vary depending on the pigment concentration (in one or two layers). Darrah does not specify whether it is beeswax or another kind of wax. She also identified a number of cases where the filler is composed of paint and apparently contains no wax. She seems to have worked mainly with cross sections studied under natural and UV light, and coloration tests. Commentary on the Arundel effigies is more explicit. The laboratory at the National Gallery in London has detected beeswax in the filler	Arundel effigies: the adhesive is a yellow size of linseed oil and glue.
FLIK, OLSZEWSKA-ŚWIETLIK 2001: 54.	Warsaw, Wrocław and Thorn, <i>Strzegom Polyptych</i> , six painted panels (Silesia, workshop of the Master of 1486-1487)	On the Crucifixion panel: white, chalky filler: chalk, oil, natural resin, egg white, similar to the recipe described in the Tegernsee Manuscript	ochre layer: oil and added stone gum, ochre, red lead, lead white
MARTIN, VILLELA-PETIT 2008: 45.	Laon, <i>Altarpiece of Pierre de Wissant</i> , painted panel, c.1410 (Paris)	uncoloured beeswax	no data
RODRIGUEZ-LOPEZ, BAZETA GOBANTES 2008.	Study of applied brocades on six altarpieces in the province of Gipuzkoa.	The constituents identified in the fillers are the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – oil and proteins with minor inclusions of lead white, vermilion, azurite and iron red oxide – beeswax with a few small inclusions of red lead and sometimes red fibres – glue and probably aluminium (the presence of aluminium has to be confirmed) – lead white, red lead and iron red oxide bound in oil and a proteinaceous material - calcium sulphate in oil and a proteinaceous material – calcium sulphate and calcium carbonate bound in oil and a proteinaceous material - calcium sulphate, earth pigments, vermilion and organic red in oil and a proteinaceous material – calcium sulphate and glue – calcium sulphate and lead white bound in oil and a proteinaceous material – glue with some calcium sulphate and earth pigments – glue and a few lead white particles – glue 	unclear
PINGAUD, GUILLOT DE SUDIRAUT 2009: 200-204. Additional information supplied by Natalie Pingaud and Witold Nowik.	Sculpture in the chapel of St Anglibert in Saint-Riquier (France)	beeswax and calcium carbonate, with a little lead white and ochre	no adhesive, the brocade being attached to a layer of azurite

THE CONTRIBUTION OF X-RADIOGRAPHY TO THE STUDY OF APPLIED BROCADE

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The applied brocades we have seen embellishing panel painting, architecture and sculpture are all too often worn flat, illegible or entirely lost. Their very three-dimensionality renders them increasingly fragile as time goes by. Abrasion, wear, cleaning and repeated overpainting alter the surface, causing the deterioration of the original pattern. A lack of knowledge about the manufacturing process, which has been forgotten over the centuries, is another likely cause of inappropriate intervention. In this specific framework X-radiography can help us to understand the original state of a work. This simple technology, which provides information on every layer of the object studied and takes account of the nature of the materials used, is particularly valuable in the study of applied brocade.

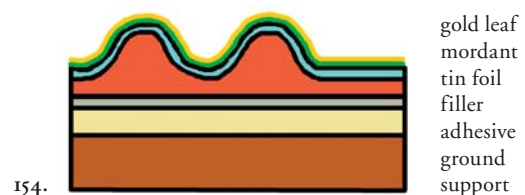
Production technique and X-radiographic images

How applied brocade is made is explained in Chapter Three. None the less, a brief reminder of the various stages in its production may be useful here. An ornamental design, generally made up of striations aligned in various directions, is engraved in reverse into a block of wood, or possibly metal, to form the mould. A sheet of tin foil is then pressed into the mould, so taking on the design in relief. A fill material is added to fill up the hollows and give the back of the sheet a flat surface. While the filler is still malleable the tin foil sheet is lifted out of the mould by the edges. When the sheet is turned over the pattern in relief becomes visible. Before (or sometimes after) being glued to the surface of the panel, sculpture or wall, the tin foil is mordant gilded.¹ Various parts of the pattern, such as the flat zones around the striated sections of the design or the furrows between the striations themselves, may then receive the addition of coloured highlighting, generally red or green glaze though occasionally blue or black paint, while the striations themselves remain gold, thus producing the illusion

of a richly dyed textile sumptuously woven with gold thread.²

A knowledge of this production process and of the specific stratigraphy of applied brocade (fig. 154) explains the particular features of the X-radiographic images of this form of decoration. X-rays are electromagnetic waves which are transmitted in a straight line and are absorbed by the material they strike in proportion to its thickness and the atomic number of its constituent elements.

The X-radiographic image of an applied brocade is obtained from the variations in the absorption of the radiation, owing firstly to the thickness of the relief and secondly to the nature and angle of the different layers making up the relief.

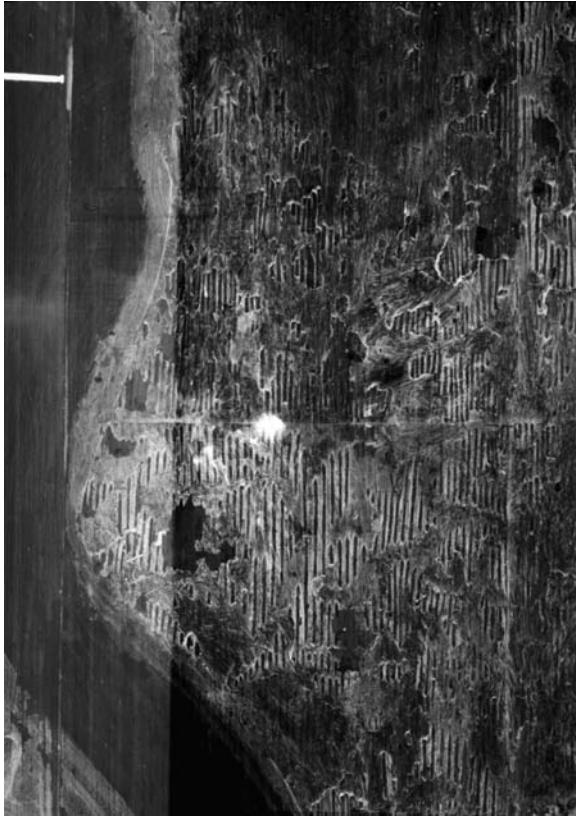


154.

Fig. 154.
The section of an
applied brocade
© E. Ravaud-
C2RMF

¹ In very rare cases the applied brocade is covered with silver leaf, see FRINTA 1963: 136-146, figs. 2, 3. The tin foil surface may also be 'gilded' with a gold-imitating glaze. See Chapters Three and Ten.

² Brigitte Hecht has attempted to recreate this production method using the data in the Tegernsee Manuscript as a basis and revealing in the process the demoulding role of the tin foil sheet. HECHT 1980: 22-49.



155.

The various layers of applied brocade, including the metals, show up as more opaque than the surrounding painted zones.

The varying thickness and composition of the fill material is the reason for the different absorption of the X-rays, allowing us to obtain an image of the lines in relief in the form of striations that are alternately opaque (white) and radio-transparent (dark). Careful observation of the brocade itself together with its X-radiograph allows us to distinguish the striations from the furrows or flat zones separating them.

The surface layers of a well-preserved applied brocade are, from bottom to top: the tin foil sheet, the mordant of the gilding, and the gold leaf (and possibly a glaze, whose effect is negligible). Given its relatively non-ductile character, the tin foil sheet is generally fairly thick, around 20 to 30 microns. The mordant varies in thickness and nature, being either organic or thickened with mineral pigments. The gold leaf is much thinner than the tin foil sheet, being just a few microns. In the flat zones of the applied brocade these layers produce a moderate, fairly consistent opacity. On the curve of the striations the layers considerably weaken the orthogonal X-radiation, given the much greater thickness traversed. The striations are therefore outlined with an opaque or white edge (fig. 155). In oblique X-radiographs of sculptures and carvings, this opaque edge is also discernible in the convex part of the striations (fig. 156).



156.

X-radiographic examination of a sculpture or painting on which traces of applied brocade are preserved or suspected therefore offers many advantages.

Identifying the technology

When abrasion or overpainting has made identification by the naked eye difficult or uncertain X-radiographs can confirm the presence of applied brocade. The diagnosis is based on two signs:

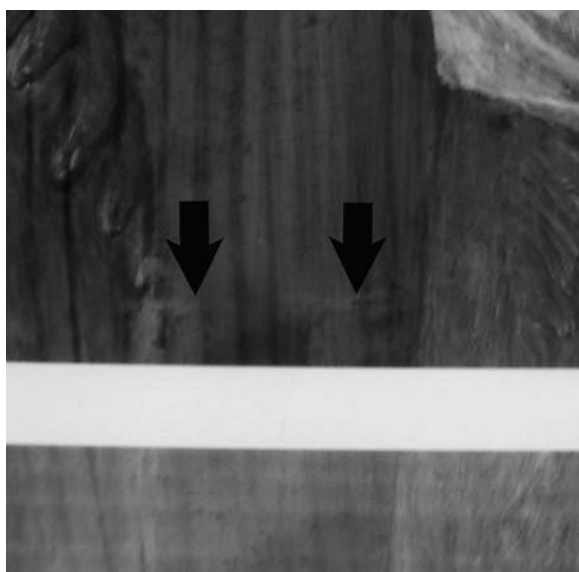
A) Groups of fine, straight, parallel striations, each around 1 millimetre wide, are sure signs of an applied brocade. Such striations can be sought on garments, hangings, and any other part of the work where the artist may have intended to represent a brocaded textile. In wood and stone carvings, the remains of applied brocade are more probably to be found in the depths of folds or on the edges of garments or draperies, where they are less likely to have been scratched off (fig. 156).

These X-radiographic images have the advantage of showing more information than a simple examination of the object can reveal, particularly where the brocade itself is badly damaged:

- The characteristic striation is revealed even where thick overpaint has smothered the relief and destroyed the perception of the brocade. This is

Fig. 155.
Family of Jouvenel des Ursins, 1444-1449,
Paris; Paris, Musée National du Moyen Âge-Thermes de Cluny
X-radiograph of the applied brocades
The thin horizontal line corresponds to the edges between two sheets of applied brocade. The curving line corresponds to the trimmed edge of the sheets
© E. Ravaut-C2RMF

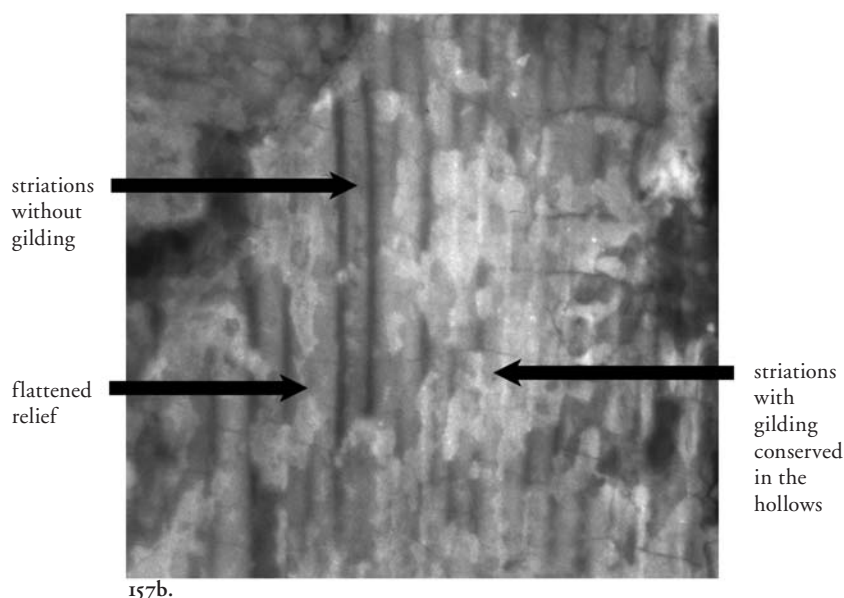
Fig. 156.
Carrying of the Cross, late 15th century,
Antwerp; Paris, Musée du Louvre
X-radiograph of the applied brocade on the garment of a soldier
© T. Borel-C2RMF



157a.

Fig. 157a.
Crucifixion Triptych,
15th century, Rhine-
land(?), Aragon(?);
Roanne, Musée des
Beaux-Arts et
d'archéologie Joseph
Déchelette
X-radiograph of the
centre panel
The opaque horizon-
tal line corresponds
to the edge of a sheet
of applied brocade
© E. Ravaud-
C2RMF

Fig. 157b.
Crucifixion Triptych;
Roanne
X-radiograph of the
applied brocade on
the left wing
In the upper part
where there is no
gilding the striations
look fairly opaque.
In the lower part
where the gilding is
conserved in the
hollows, the contrast
is inverted. At the
bottom left the relief
is flattened
© E. Ravaud-
C2RMF



157b.

the case in the panel portraying the *Family of Jovenel des Ursins* (1444-1449; Paris, Musée national du Moyen Âge-Thermes de Cluny), in which a hanging decorated with applied brocade was completely overpainted in thick beige paint.³

- Where the relief has been partially abraded,⁴ detection of the variations in thickness of the filler and the heavy absorption of the X-rays by the tin foil sheet in the vertical parts of the relief, even where diminished, helps preserve a characteristic image.
- Where the brocade has been crushed flat, the striation remains visible in the X-radiograph, albeit with wider individual striations and narrower furrows, which may even disappear completely in places.

X-radiographic diagnosis can sometimes be difficult. The grain of an oak support appears as fine, alternately opaque and transparent lines,⁵ very similar to the striations of the applied brocade but with much less contrast and continuing beyond the edges of the brocade (fig. 155). Other techniques for imitating richly woven textiles, such as lines incised directly into the ground, can also produce misleading images.

B) Identification of the edges of the tin foil sheet is a key criterion and indispensable in diagnosing the presence of applied brocade, evidencing the repetitive nature of the decorative process. In most cases these edges are clearly visible on the X-radiograph. In the case of a continuous brocade, where the sheets are

rectangular and contiguous, the edges can be identified by the matter that has accumulated in the interstices (fig. 155). Where local brocades have been applied, or where the sheets have been trimmed to accommodate the composition, the edge can often be perceived in the form of a thin, clean, opaque, incision-like line (fig. 157a).

This edge may sometimes be the only sign of the presence of a completely abraded applied brocade. The *Crucifixion Triptych* now in the Musée des Beaux-Arts et d'archéologie Joseph Déchelette in Roanne has two wings representing saints against an applied brocade background and a centre panel in which the Crucifixion takes place before a background embellished with a painted brocade motif in which fine vertical striations are incised into the paint.⁶ A sample of this background showed that the surface layer had been completely repainted. However, the X-radiograph of the centre panel revealed a number of opaque horizontal lines⁷ whose position and spacing match the position and measurements of the applied brocade sheets on the wings (fig. 155a). These horizontal lines are undoubtedly the edges of sheets. Moreover, the layer directly beneath the overpaint is very close in colour and composition to the filler of the applied brocade on the wings, but regular in thickness. These observations confirm the existence of an original applied brocade background on the centre panel which would have continued the brocade background

³ A complete study on the examination of the applied brocades in this painting has been published by the author. See RAVAUD 1999: 179-189.

⁴ These images are of course weaker and weaker according to how badly worn the brocade is.

⁵ RAVAUD 2001: 391-397.

⁶ Stylistic analysis places this late-fifteenth- or early-sixteenth-century triptych (MPR 8889) in the German or Swiss rather than the Flemish school. On arrival in the laboratory prior to restoration, the painting presented major deterioration, with extensive losses in the background of the centre panel.

⁷ Identification of the vertical edges was impossible owing to the grain of the oak and the finely incised vertical decoration.

of the wings. They also explain why, when this background was repainted, the surface was incised with striations – to imitate the original decoration.

Radiographic contrast of the reliefs and the type of filler

Given that X-radiation is absorbed in proportion to the atomic number of the material it traverses, the degree of a relief's opacity can indicate the type of fill material used. Generally, two types of filler were employed, either mineral (calcium-based) or organic (generally wax), the first being opaque and the second transparent to X-radiation. Interpretation can be difficult, depending as it does on how well the surface layers, the tin sheet and the gilding are preserved. The gilding can be very opaque where the mordant is rich in lead pigment. In the case of a partially abraded brocade, the disappearance of the tin and gilding from the top of the striations and their conservation in the furrows increases the contrast between the striations, which appear dark, and the furrows, which are more opaque. In this way, the basic identification of the presence of applied brocade is possible, even where it is severely abraded. Detailed reading, however, depends on the relative preservation of the various elements and requires considerable expertise.

- In the brocades of the Roanne *Crucifixion Triptych* the striations are opaque in the parts where there is no gilding. The filler, which is reddish in colour, consists of lead white or red lead with a little red ochre and calcium carbonate added.⁸ In this case the opaque edge (of the metal foil) is not easily distinguished from the filler (fig. 157b).
- In the brocades on the *Family of Jouvenel des Ursins* panel in Paris striations are radio-transparent, outlined by the opaque edge of the tin sheet. Direct observation and examination of the samples have shown the almost total disappearance of the gilding. The filler consists of a mixture of mainly beeswax and a diterpenic pine resin.⁹ These very low-density materials are particularly transparent to X-radiation (fig. 155).

Reconstructing the design of damaged brocades

The design of a damaged brocade can be recreated from X-radiographs where the decorated surface is

⁸ The sample has been analysed under the SEM by Myriam Eveno at the Centre de Recherche et de Restauration des Musées de France.

⁹ Analysis of the filler was carried out by Christine Benoit, using gas phase chromatography and chromatography coupled with mass spectrometry.

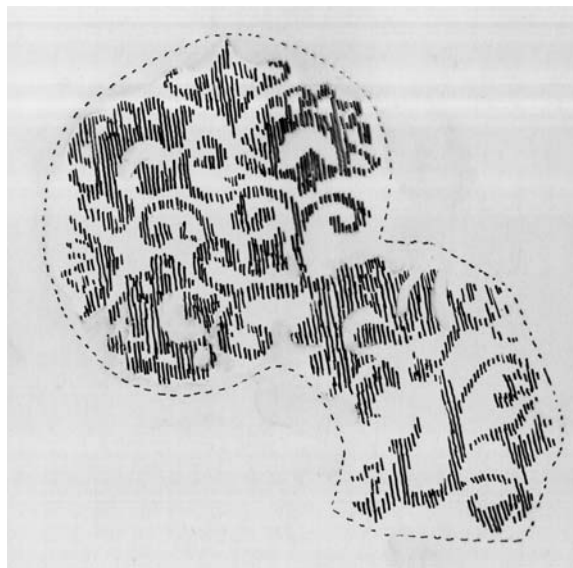


Fig. 158.
Trinity of the Canons of Notre Dame, 1440-1450, Paris, attributed to the Master of Dunois; Paris, École nationale supérieure des Beaux-Arts
Reconstruction of the local applied brocade on the background. The irregularly-shaped motifs are randomly distributed on the background.
© E. Ravaud-C2RMF



Fig. 159.
Last Judgement, c.1443, Rogier van der Weyden; Beaune, Hôtel Dieu
Reconstruction of the applied brocade based on X-radiographs
© E. Ravaud-C2RMF

sufficiently large. By tracing the striations and combining the data obtained from several individual sheets the original design can be reconstructed. In the case of sculpture this procedure is more complex as it requires multiple X-radiographs taken from different angles.

Usually a single design was used, whether in the form of a local brocade (fig. 158) or a continuous brocade. In the latter case the sheets were arranged in regular or staggered rows. In the few instances where two (or more) designs were used they were positioned in a chequerboard or quincunx pattern. It was possible to reconstruct the cloths of estate that hang behind the donors in Rogier Van der Weyden's *Last Judgement* altarpiece in the Hôtel Dieu in Beaune (fig. 159). The reconstruction reveals an elegant pomegranate motif surrounded by delicate tendrils. In the *Family of Jouvenel des Ursins* panel two motifs have been found, arranged in a chequerboard pattern (fig. 160).

Fig. 160.
Family of Jouvenel des Ursins, 1444-1449,
 Paris; Paris, Musée National du Moyen Âge-Thermes de Cluny
 Reconstruction of the checkerboard arrangement of the applied brocade
 © E. Ravaud-C2RMF



X-radiography provides further details on the condition of the brocade

By producing a precise mapping of the remaining patches of applied brocade, the X-radiograph allows us to assess how much of the brocade survives and how well it is preserved, as well as to locate restorations that either reconstitute or imitate applied brocade. Because the materials used in these interventions are different in nature from those used originally they have a different opacity in X-radiography. This is clearly visible in the Van Eycks' *Adoration of the Lamb* altarpiece, on the X-radiograph of the magnificent lampas d'or behind the Virgin, where the threads have been reconstructed using a material that shows up more densely than the original parts.¹⁰

Finally, by locating the original parts of the applied brocade and distinguishing them from restorations, X-radiography can guide the taking of samples for a more precise examination of the brocade's stratigraphy.

When a work has damaged applied brocade or signs that suggest the presence of such decoration, X-radiography can supply images confirming its use. It can also provide data for reconstructing the design, indicate the state of preservation, and guide sample-taking.

¹⁰ COREMANS, GETTENS, THISSEN 1953: fig. 1, pl. XIII.

Saluzzo Altarpiece, 1500-1510, carving: Brussels: attributed to the Borman workshop or circle; ►
polychromy: workshop of Master I*T; painted wings: Valentijn van Orley (cat. 19)
Annunciation, bed hanging



PART 3

A WORD ABOUT THE CATALOGUE

In this catalogue of applied brocade produced in the Low Countries in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the works of art in Belgian collections are listed first, followed by those in collections outside Belgium, namely in France, Germany, Sweden and one private collection. The catalogue is organized alphabetically, according to the geographic location of the works.

The notes are comparatively short. The first part gives a brief description of the statue, figurative group, altarpiece, panel painting or wall painting and outlines its historical and art-historical context, its iconography, style and technique. New observations are added to data drawn from the literature and unpublished KIK-IRPA files.

The second part of the note describes the applied brocades on the work, which may be embellished with more than one type and several different models. The technical examination of the brocades was carried out using magnifying glasses or the binocular microscope, either in situ or in a restoration workshop. Each model has been studied, measured and photographed. Using the best preserved example of this model as a basis an archaeological drawing has been produced, which together with a photograph helps the reading and interpretation of the design. Grey dots indicate damage and losses. In many cases the combination of diverse data or cautious extrapolation has allowed us to reconstruct the applied brocade either partially or completely. We have usually opted for a black and white reconstruction of the relief, so as to show clearly how this is built up. We have tried to be as systematic as possible: a grey dotted line represents the circumference of the tin foil sheet; unbroken black lines or fields indicate the relief (striations, contours, plateaus or raised dots). Most of the drawings are on a 1:1 scale. They were created with Adobe Illustrator.

The characteristics and layer structure of each model are synthesized in a table, under various headings. 'Location' describes the exact position of the applied brocade on the work of art. This is followed by the 'type', 'design', 'measurements' and 'relief' – categories which are fully discussed in Chapter Four. After 'condition' and 'overpaint', the 'highlighting' of the brocade is noted: this describes the coloured paint or glaze that masks the gilded or glazed tin foil and so allows the striations to stand out like gold thread. Below this are listed the remaining components of an applied brocade – 'tin foil', 'filler' and 'adhesive'. Then the 'support layer' is mentioned, followed, finally, by reference to the cross sections provided by the KIK-IRPA laboratory. These were compared with and checked against the personal observations already made. The detailed analysis of the various components is set out in Chapter Ten.

An important aspect of the catalogue is the reference to 'identical', 'possibly identical' and 'comparable' applied brocades. The works of art listed under 'Identical applied brocades' are decorated with an applied brocade that exactly matches the model in question. Those listed under 'Possibly identical applied brocades' are decorated with a brocade model that is almost certainly identical but the exact measurements needed to confirm this are lacking. Listed under 'Comparable applied brocades' are brocades whose patterns are similar, for which different moulds were used. Some of these are necessarily based on minute fragments and also on photographs, and due to a lack of technical data they could not be identified with absolute certainty with other applied brocades.

At the end of the book is an Index of Works. This is a practical resource which provides additional information such as origin, date and depository, and is intended to be used conjointly with the catalogue.



I SEDES SAPIENTIAE

Affligem, Church of St John the Evangelist

Statue, polychromed oak
 Leuven, Master of the Piètrebais Madonna
 c.1500
 86 × 42 × 30 cm

1986-1988: study and conservation-restoration at the KIK-IRPA

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/47-1986/03478

The Virgin sits enthroned with the Child on her knee. In her free hand she holds the remains of what was probably a sceptre. Notches in the heads of the two figures show that both were once crowned. This *Sedes Sapientiae* joins the group of statues attributed to the workshop of the Master of the Piètrebais Madonna, a sculptor active in Leuven around 1500. The *Virgin and Child* now in M – Museum Leuven (cat. 48) also belongs to this group.¹ The figures of the Virgin have characteristic features in common, such as the high broad forehead, the indentations at the corners of the mouth, the firm and dimpled chin, and the cascade of hair, and they are typically clad in a loosely-worn V-necked gown.

The distinctive double enthronement of the *Sedes Sapientiae* is rooted in the Romanesque interpretation of the Virgin as the Throne of Wisdom, with the revealed Logos seated on her knee. It represents the Virgin in one of the most hieratic modes, as the Theotokos, or ‘God-bearer’, the bearer of Divine Wisdom manifested in mortal flesh. From early Christian times Mary was likened to a ‘living throne’ or was alluded to as the Throne of Solomon, seat of eternal wisdom, described in 1 Kings 10, or as the Church itself. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries Divine Wisdom was often portrayed as Ecclesia, a crowned and sceptred woman. Ecclesia was associated with the Virgin as the bearer and seat of that wisdom, literally the *Sedes Sapientiae*.²

The present statue was previously in the Chapel of Our Lady of Perpetual Succour at Affligem. When the chapel was demolished in the 1970s the *Sedes Sapientiae* was installed outdoors in a glass case on the wall of the Potaarde Chapel, where it was exposed to extreme changes of temperature and relative humidity, which caused serious damage.³

The statue has undergone drastic but undocumented modification, probably in the nineteenth century. The throne has been almost entirely reconstructed and few original elements remain. It was probably at this time that the statue was hollowed out from the back, partially stripped and completely repainted. In the 1980s, study under the binocular microscope at the KIK-IRPA revealed traces of original painting in the skin areas and hair.⁴ The polychromy of the Virgin’s overgown was found to be well preserved beneath the overpaint. The surface is decorated with continuous rectangular applied brocades whose design differs from those decorating the cloak of the Leuven Virgin (cat. 48.1), carved by the same master. The neckline is decorated with semi-precious stones rendered in relief in the ground and matt gilding enlivened with blue and green glaze.

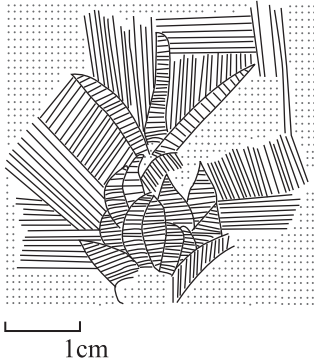
¹ This group has already been well defined by Jan Crab in various publications. See, among others, the articles in LEUVEN 1971: 377-393, esp. 379, 400-404; LEUVEN 1979: 85-106.

² FORSYTH 1972: 22-30.

³ VERFAILLE 1988-1989.

⁴ Idem.

Model 1.1



1.1a
Archaeological drawing



1.1b
Examination window showing the applied brocade on the Virgin's overgown

Location:	the Virgin's overgown
Type:	continuous
Design:	floral and foliate: pomegranate
Measurements:	small: c.4 x 4 cm
Relief:	fully striated (relief pattern)
Striations:	16 per cm (according to the rubbing made during the 1986-1988 restoration); variously aligned
Condition:	locally worn
Overpaint:	at least two
Highlighting:	none
Gilding:	gold leaf adhesive
Tin foil:	present according to KIK-IRPA file: 2L/47-1986/03478
Filler:	beige
Adhesive:	orange layer (red lead?)
Support layer:	white chalk and size ground
Ref:	cross section: none

The decoration beneath the overpaints, exposed by means of a small inspection 'window' by restorer Simone Verfaillie, has a particularly fine relief, being quite densely striated and apparently executed with care. Unfortunately, the statue's high position makes it difficult to access. It has been photographed, however, and a rubbing of the applied brocade has been made, which shows a pomegranate motif.



1b
Sedes Sapientiae



2 THREE SAINTS

Anderlecht, Church of St Peter and St Guy, north aisle

Wall painting, tempera(?) on lime mortar

1450-1460

St Wilgefortis: 183 × 113 cm

Male saint (Bruno?): 189 × 108 cm

St Guy: 175 × 108 cm

1840: the paintings are first discovered

1894-1895: removal of plaster from the walls, directed by Jules Van Ysendyck

1916: restoration by Joris de Geetere

1936-1937: restoration by Arthur van Gramberen

Mid-1960s: consolidation and cleaning by the KIK-IRPA

2003-2007: conservation treatment by the KIK-IRPA

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/44-62/263

In the second half of the fourteenth century work began on the rebuilding of Anderlecht's Church of St Peter and St Guy. In 1482 the church was consecrated, although the work still went on into the first half of the sixteenth century. The wall paintings that were executed in the course of this lengthy building process are among the most important in the Brussels Capital Region.¹ The images of the saints on the wall of the north aisle are of particular interest in the present context. Each saint is shown before a cloth of honour in a small tile-floored chamber with a wooden vault above and a semicircular-headed window on either side.

The crowned St Wilgefortis (or Uncumber), shown here without her characteristic moustache or beard, is bound to her cross with her ample gown and cloak tied tightly to its shaft just beneath her feet. Moving westwards down the nave, the second painting depicts a tonsured man in a monk's habit, his crozier tucked in the crook of his arm, intent on the open book in his hands. A mitre lies at his feet, alluding to his refusal of episcopal office. A diminutive donor with a banderole kneels before him. The monk is generally identified as St Bruno, although the founder of the Carthusian Order is usually clad in a white habit rather than a black one. Moreover, his cult was made universal only in the seventeenth century. In the third wall painting is St Guy, portrayed in pilgrim's garb with a scrip, staff and book, and a collar of scallop shells.

The style of the paintings in the Church of St Peter and St Guy suggests that they were executed in the mid-fifteenth century.² Closely related to them both stylistically and technically is the composition on the north wall of St Elizabeth's Church in Haren (near Brussels), in which St Gerard of Hungary is depicted. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century Camille Tulpinck produced watercolour copies of the Anderlecht wall paintings.³



2a
St Wilgefortis,
1450-1460;
Anderlecht,
Church of St Peter
and St Guy

2b
St Wilgefortis,
Camille Tulpinck,
c.1900; Brussels,
KMKG-MRAH
© KMKG-MRAH
Brussels,
Tulpinck archive

¹ BUYLE, BERGMANS 1994: 104-105; BERGMANS 1998: 302-303.

² BUYLE, BERGMANS 1994: 105.

³ Now in the KMKG-MRAH Brussels; inventoried by ROUSSEAU 1926: 2.



2c
St Guy



2d
St Guy, Camille Tulpinck
© KMKG-MRAH Brussels, Tulpinck archive



2e
Male saint (St Bruno?)

Successive restorations in the twentieth century make any understanding of the paintings' technical construction extremely problematic. Presumably all three images were created in the same way. The lime-mortared wall was given an ochre-orange coating. A limited palette was employed, with vermillion, green and white predominating. Some publications refer to the use of tempera,⁴ a conclusion that is probably based solely on visual examination, since physico-chemical tests of the binding medium have not yet been carried out. There is no gilding. Applied brocades are used chiefly on the cloths of honour in the background.⁵

The paint in all three murals is badly tented and flaked. In the last hundred years the losses have been filled and retouched several times. The wall paintings have darkened considerably due to the use of polyvinyl alcohol (Mowiol), which has concealed their original appearance behind a thin synthetic film. The recent treatment of the images of St Wilgefortis and the so-called St Bruno has significantly improved their legibility and condition.

The three cloths of honour behind the saints are the earliest examples of the use of applied brocade in a historic interior in the Low Countries known to date.⁶ Applied brocades also embellish the long sleeves of St Wilgefortis's gown. Our examination concentrated primarily on the images of St Wilgefortis and 'St Bruno', the cloth of honour behind St Guy being only partially accessible and thus allowing no more than a superficial observation.

In none of the three cloths of honour could a motif be identified. Flat zones are barely distinguishable; no raised contour line could be discerned around the striated areas.

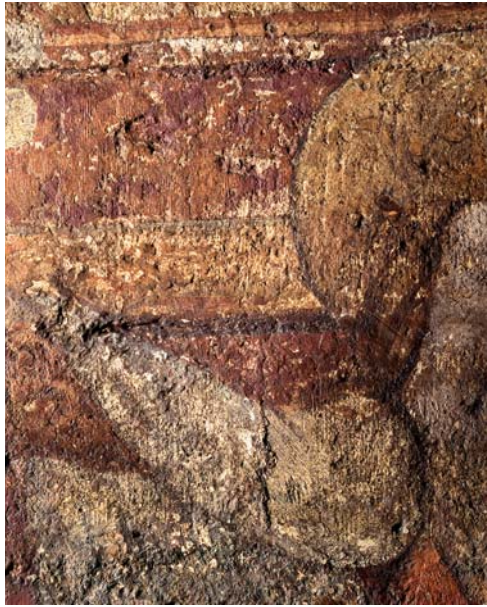
The paintings' badly damaged state makes it difficult to determine whether the same pattern was used on all three cloths of honour. Only in a very few places do the applied brocades retain their complete stratigraphic structure. Most of the tin has been lost and the orange-brown filler is now visible over the greater part of their surface. In general the relief is not very pronounced. Camille Tulpinck's watercolours provide little additional information. His cloths of honour are simply coloured a reddish grey and he gives no hint of traces of gold leaf. In some places he has indicated small floral motifs in a darker tone and he also represents the vertical striations. The sleeves of Wilgefortis's gown, on the other hand, he depicts with a red design on a yellow background.

⁴ BUYLE, BERGMANS 1994: 104-105.

⁵ GEELLEN, STEYAERT 2005: 2-3.

⁶ The cloth of honour behind St Gerard in St Elizabeth's Church in Haren is not decorated with applied brocades but painted.

Model 2.1



2.1a
Remains of applied brocade behind St Wilgefortis



2.1b
Detail of applied brocade behind St Wilgefortis

Location:	cloth of honour behind St Wilgefortis, the sleeves of St Wilgefortis's gown, cloth of honour behind 'St Bruno'	
Type:	continuous: straight rows	
Design:	unidentifiable, too incomplete for reconstruction	
Measurements:	large: 20 x min. 20 cm; sheet incomplete	
Relief:	striations, flat zones (Tegernsee type)	
Striations:	5-6 per cm; vertical, not all equally straight or equally spaced, some wider than others	
Condition:	badly damaged	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	too indistinct for identification in St Wilgefortis	red on flat zones in 'St Bruno'
Gilding:	no gold leaf; on the tinfoil there is a translucent, gold-imitating glaze that fluoresces orange in UV light	
Tin foil:	heavily degraded, grey to black, only traces remain	
Filler:	orange-brown, semi-transparent, waxy appearance, a few white and red particles (as thickening)	
Adhesive:	ochre in colour	
Intermediate layer:	thin ochre red layer	
Intermediate layer:	thin whitish layer	
Support layer:	ochre-orange coating several layers of lime mortar	
Ref:	KIK-IRPA laboratory file (3 cross sections). See also Chapter Ten, Table B	

The applied brocade behind 'St Bruno' was highlighted in red and the number of striations per centimetre tallies with that of the Wilgefortis (5 to 6 per cm) brocades. In none of the paintings could the size of the individual tin foil sheets be determined. A cross section shows the same stratigraphic structure as that of the Wilgefortis brocades, except for the highlighting. It is worth noting that the tin foil was covered not with gold leaf but with a gold-imitating glaze. This thin translucent layer, originally yellow, fluoresces orange under UV light, indicating that it probably contains a resin.



3 THE MARRIAGE OF THE VIRGIN THE CIRCUMCISION OF CHRIST

Antwerp, Mayer van den Bergh Museum, inv. 265 (cat. 2166) & inv. 264 (cat. 2167)

Figurative groups from an altarpiece, carved and polychromed walnut
Brabant, Brussels(?)
No marks
1460-1480
Marriage of the Virgin: 45.5 × 28.5 × 13.7 cm
Circumcision: 46.5 × 29.5 × 11.8 cm

1896: purchased by Fritz Mayer van den Bergh, provenance unknown¹
1964-1965: examination and treatment at the KIK-IRPA

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/47-2004/08267

These two figurative groups come from a lost altarpiece which probably depicted the Life of the Virgin and the Infancy of Christ. In the Marriage group, Joseph – portrayed here as a bearded elder with bent head – and the crowned Mary join hands beneath the priest's stole. Four characters peer over the celebrant's shoulders to witness the nuptial blessing.² In the second group five figures clad in heavy robes cluster round the protagonists at the altar where the infant Christ is to be circumcised. They have broad faces with slightly pursed mouths. The half-closed eyes are achieved more by means of the polychromy than the carving. In both works the grouping of the figures is very compact. There are no marks on either group but stylistic comparison suggests a Brussels master.

Apart from some small details such as the hands, each group has been carved from a single block of walnut. The backs are hollowed out. The polychromy is dominated by extensive areas of burnished gilding on orange bole, varied here and there by a colourful touch in glaze or matt azurite.³ Apart from the applied brocades there is little decoration, just the occasional painted motif on a coloured paint layer.

The two sculptural groups have met with a fair amount of damage. Practically the entire surface of the wood has been assailed by woodworm. Wood rot has led to the breaking off or loss of certain elements. The decoration is in a similarly parlous state. The present visible polychromy is original but only fragments survive and they are obscured by a layer of paraffin. There are vestiges of applied brocades adorning the garments in the Circumcision group but they have vanished almost entirely from the Marriage.



3a
*The Circumcision
of Christ*, Brabant,
Brussels(?),
1460-1480; Antwerp,
Mayer van den Bergh
Museum

3b
*The Marriage
of the Virgin*

¹ DE COO 1969: 171-172.

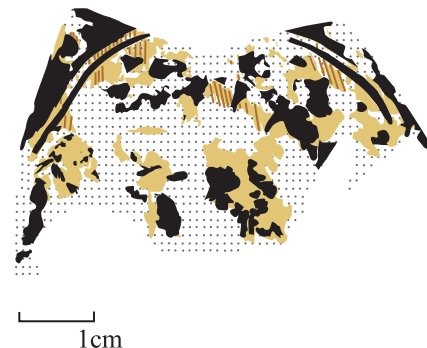
² On related 'Marriage' groups, see NIEUWDORP 1971: 7-24 and WILLIAMSON 2002: 66-68.

³ *Chronique* 1966: 219-220, 240.

Model 3.1



3.1a
Circumcision, applied brocade on the Virgin's gown



3.1b
Archaeological drawing

Location:	the Virgin's gown (Circumcision)
Type:	continuous
Design:	unidentifiable, too incomplete for reconstruction
Measurements:	medium, too incomplete for precise measurement
Relief:	striations, flat zones (Tegernsee type)
Striations:	6-7 per 0.5 cm; vertical
Condition:	badly damaged
Overpaint:	none
Highlighting:	black on flat zones
Gilding:	gold leaf no adhesive observed
Tin foil:	degraded, black
Filler:	thin, brown red, translucent, organic layer, wax-resin appearance, in two layers
Adhesive:	brown-red
Support layer:	white chalk and size ground
Ref:	cross section: none

Only continuous applied brocades were used on this sculptural group. The surviving remains are too scant to identify the motifs. The brocade on the Virgin's gown could have been made to measure: the motif has been placed at the very centre of the bodice so the oblique lines curve symmetrically downwards from the neckline. The striations are in extremely fine and shallow relief.

Model 3.2



3.2a
Circumcision, applied brocade on the gown of
the woman in the foreground



3.2b
Detail of the applied brocade

Location:	gown of the woman in the foreground (<i>Circumcision</i>)
Type:	continuous
Design:	unidentifiable, too incomplete for reconstruction
Measurements:	unidentifiable; too incomplete for precise measurement
Relief:	striations, flat zones (Tegernsee type)
Striations:	number unidentifiable, insufficient for measurement; vertical
Condition:	badly damaged
Overpaint:	none
Highlighting:	green glaze on flat zones
Gilding:	gold leaf yellow mordant
Tin foil:	dark grey
Intermediate layer / filler 1(?):	thin brown transparent organic layer, strong fluorescence in UV light
Filler 2(?):	ochre-like brown, translucent, waxy appearance, fluorescent in UV light
Adhesive:	brown-red
Support layer:	white chalk and size ground
Ref:	KIK-IRPA laboratory file (1 cross section). See also Chapter Ten, Table B

This is a design with very narrow flat zones that form a lozenge. Whether or not there is a contour in relief is uncertain. Highlighting is in green glaze.

There are traces of applied brocade on the priest's stole in the *Marriage* too, there with red highlighting, but it is too badly damaged to yield any data. The cross section reveals the presence of gold leaf beneath the relief decoration. This probably comes from an overlapping of the adjacent gilding. Below the tin foil is an organic layer whose function is unclear.



4 ANNUNCIATION ALTARPIECE

Antwerp, Mayer van den Bergh Museum, inv. 405 (cat. 2227)

Altarpiece, carved, polychromed and painted wood, painted wings

Southern Netherlands

No marks

1480-1490

Open: 41.5 × 45.7 × 9.2 cm

Closed: 41.5 × 23.4 × 9.2 cm

Before 1902: acquired by Fritz Mayer van den Bergh, provenance unknown¹

1965: examination and extensive treatment by the KIK-IRPA, followed by regular inspection in situ

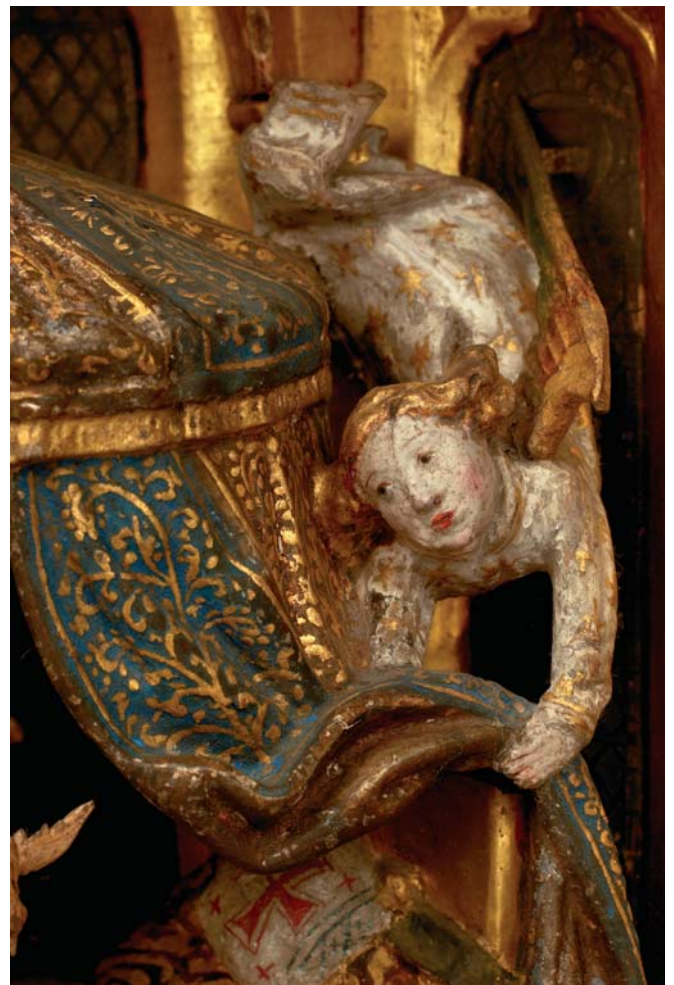
KIK-IRPA file: 2L/47-1964/00378

In a chapel-like interior with tall Gothic windows two hovering angels draw back the curtains of a canopy to reveal the Virgin surprised at her devotions by the Archangel Gabriel, who prefaces his tidings with *Ave Maria*, inscribed on the banderole twined around his sceptre. Above their heads the dove, symbol of the Holy Spirit, alludes to Christ's miraculous conception. Painted in the 'stained glass' are coats of arms, probably those of the little altarpiece's patron.

The altarpiece case and the wing panels are in oak. Except for the separately made dove the figurative group was carved from a single block of walnut. It still retains its fifteenth-century polychromy and is unsullied by overpaints. This incorporates a good deal of gold leaf (on orange bole) and a sober palette of coloured layers – principally pale pink (flesh tones), matt blue and white. Some glaze has been used, chiefly green and red for details and highlighting. On the panels of the canopy and hangings matt blue (on a black under-layer) alternates with a red glaze on silver leaf. The red has faded to brown in areas exposed to light.²

Despite the figures' small size much care has been devoted to the rendering of the fabrics of furnishings and garments. The burnished gilding of the bed coverlet is enlivened by a painted red pomegranate pattern. The edges of the Virgin's gilded mantle and Gabriel's gold cope are ornamented with tooled cusping and sinuous leafy stemwork. The angels' white tunics are patterned with stars and a stylized beaming sun painted in shell gold. On the canopy, stemwork was added to both the azurite blue and the red-glazed panels. The entwined stems and stylized flowers are virtually identical on each panel of the canopy and must have been produced with a stencil or carefully copied from a model.

Apart from some small instances of local damage the little altarpiece is in excellent condition. A few local eruptions and areas of flaking paint have been treated at various times.



4a
Annunciation
Altarpiece, 1480-1490,
Southern Netherlands; Antwerp,
Mayer van den Bergh
Museum

4b
Angel holding back
the canopy curtain

¹ DE COO 1969: 184-185.

² *Chronique* 1966: 219. The composition of the red glaze has not been analysed.

Model 4.1

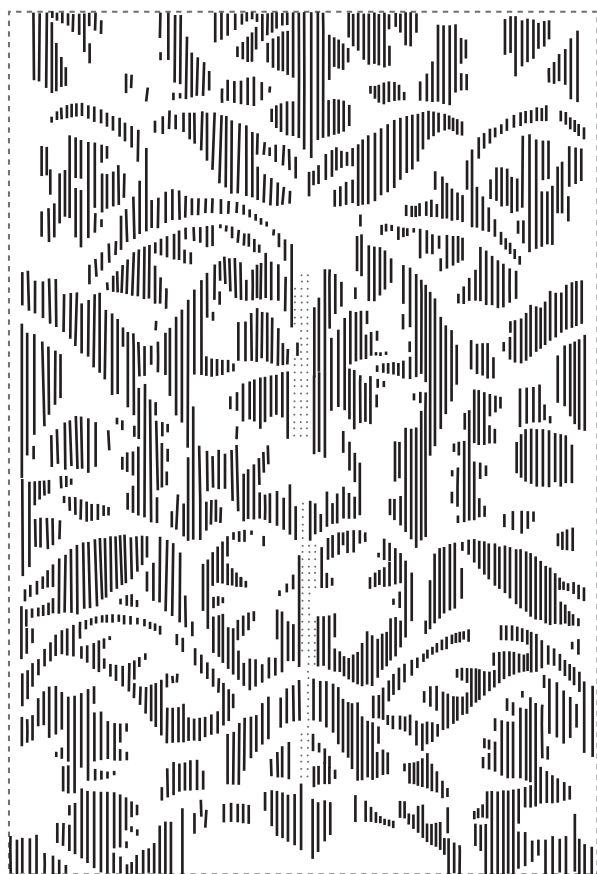


4.1a
Applied brocade on the left wing



4.1b
Applied brocade on the right wing

Location:	interior side of the wings	
Type:	continuous: straight rows	
Design:	floral and foliate: pomegranate with vine leaves (or dianthus?) among stems and foliage	
Measurements:	medium: 9.9-11.7 x c.3.7-3.9 (= 7.7) cm	
Relief:	striations, flat zones (Tegernsee type)	
Striations:	11-12 per cm; vertical, variable in width, not always equally straight and regular, convex in section	
Condition:	well preserved	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	matt blue (azurite) and matt red on flat zones	
Gilding:	gold leaf mordant(?) (according to cross section 1)	gold leaf thin, translucent brown layer (according to cross section 2)
Tin foil:	local black degradation	
Filler:	yellow ochre in colour, semi-transparent, wax-resin	
Adhesive:	yellow ochre in colour	
Support layer:	white chalk and size ground	
Ref:	KIK-IRPA laboratory file (3 cross sections); MASSCHELEIN-KLEINER, HEYLEN, TRICOT-MARCKX 1968: 113 (analysis of filler). See also Chapter Ten, Table B	



4.1c
Reconstruction of the relief



4.1d
Detail of the applied brocade on the left wing

The pattern would look even richer than it does here were it to be repeated over a larger surface, clearly revealing the design of quincuncially arranged vine leaves (or dianthus?) alternating with stylized pomegranates crowned by lobed leaves, the space between filled with curving stems and foliage. The size of the motif neatly matches the width of the wings and the pattern runs uninterrupted from the top to the bottom panel, creating the illusion of a single piece of fabric. To complete the textile impression a painted fringe has been added at the bottom.

The pattern is divided in two down the centre by a painted line which disguises the join between the two separate sheets of tin. Both halves of the design have the same relief pattern, the flat zones are the same on both left and right, though small differences indicate that the left half is not the mirror image of the right. It would seem that the tin foil was cut in two after it was taken from the mould. The painter used alternately blue and red highlighting, reprising the bicolour stripes of the canopy in the Annunciation. A two-colour infilling of applied brocades also occurs on the cloth of honour behind the Virgin in the Skepptuna *Altarpiece of the Virgin* (cat. S2.1).

An analysis of a sample carried out in 1964 showed that the filler was mostly wax. Cross sections show that this wax contains a few particles of black pigment.



2247245 Retabel met de Passie • ZUIDNEDERLANDS Antwerpen of Brussel ca.1430/65

5 PASSION ALTARPIECE

Antwerp, Mayer van den Bergh Museum, inv. 403 (cat. 2244-2246)

Altarpiece, carved and polychromed oak, wings lost

Brussels

Marks: compasses and plane

c.1500

88.5 × 86.7 × 16.7 cm

1898: purchased by Fritz Mayer van den Bergh from the Paris collection of Carlo Micheli¹

1967: examination and treatment in the KIK-IRPA, followed by regular maintenance in situ

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/47-1965/00456

This altarpiece, whose three compartments echo the aisled choir of a church, depicts the Carrying of the Cross, the Crucifixion, and the Descent from the Cross in carved and polychromed oak. In place of a predella is a narrow tracery frieze. The wings have been lost. Within its small compass the sculptor has suggested substantial depth by the adroit layering of the scenes. The characters' restrained and controlled expressions and their remarkably elegant and refined appearance are in keeping with Brussels production. However, it is difficult to associate this altarpiece with other sculpture on stylistic grounds.

The altarpiece case and figurative groups are in quarter-cut oak.² Tiny details such as the rings of the soldiers' hauberks, several sartorial accessories and accoutrements and the decoration of a hem are carved directly into the wood. The paint layers and metal foil are applied onto a thin chalk and size ground. Instead of the more customary burnished leaf the polychromer has used matt gilding laid on an oily yellow-ochre adhesive and coated with a yellow glaze. The gilding on the *St Adrian Altarpiece* in Boendael, three altarpiece fragments in the Museum Catharijneconvent in Utrecht and a Virgin in the Musée départemental des Antiquités in Rouen is also unburnished, although the structure of that presumably Brussels polychromy also differs in several respects.³ On the present *Passion Altarpiece* the greater part of the silver leaf is painted with a red madder-based glaze, green glaze occurring only in a few places. A broad palette counterbalances these gleaming surfaces. Punchwork is not a great feature of the ornamentation. Most of the decoration consists of painted geometric patterns alternating with applied brocades.

Along with the wings, many components of the carved scenes have also been lost, particularly from the Crucifixion, which is now lacking the crucified Christ and the two thieves. There are still sporadic traces of overpainting, for instance on the blue areas and on some of the characters' headgear. These were not removed during the restoration carried out in the 1960s as the underlying polychromy was in a poor state and the overpaint was difficult to remove, and was in any case sufficiently in keeping visually with the original polychromy.⁴



5a
Passion Altarpiece,
c.1500, Brussels;
Antwerp, Mayer van
den Bergh Museum

5b
Location of the
applied brocades

- Model 5.1
- Model 5.2
- Model 5.3

¹ DE COO 1969: 194-196; DE BOODT 2005: 159-160.

² BALLESTREM 1967-1968: 36-45.

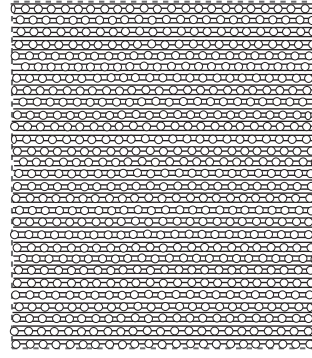
³ MERCIER 2002: 169-170. None of these examples is decorated with applied brocades.

⁴ BALLESTREM 1967-1968: 36-37.

Model 5.1



5.1a
Carrying of the Cross, applied brocade on
Christ's robe



5.1b
Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	Christ's robe and the tunic of the bearded male figure next to John (Carrying of the Cross), bridle (Crucifixion) (see ill. 5b)	Comparable applied brocades cat. 19.2
Type:	continuous: irregular arrangement	
Design:	geometric	
Measurements:	small: min. 6.7 x 4 cm; incomplete sheet	
Relief:	fully striated with stipples (relief pattern)	
Striations:	16 per cm; horizontal	
Condition:	well preserved	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	matt purple (blue and red particles) in the stipples white underlayer	
Gilding:	gold leaf very thin adhesive layer	
Tin foil:	grey	
Filler:	yellow ochre to brown in colour, semi-transparent, waxy appearance, no pigments	
Adhesive:	orange ochre, oily appearance	
Support layer:	white chalk and size ground	
Ref:	KIK-IRPA laboratory file (1 cross section). See also Chapter Ten, Table B	

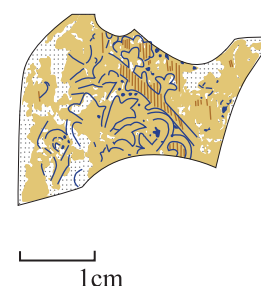
In this model the applied brocade sheets come in a variety of sizes. Nine differently-sized brocades were applied to Christ's robe alone, all their edges cunningly concealed from view. The entire surface of the brocade was striated then, after demoulding, tooled with a dot punch to create a regular pattern of concave dots or stipples. The almost infinitesimal highlighting of these stipples, which are barely 0.1 centimetre in diameter, consists of two layers – a white, which has not been analysed, beneath a matt purple. The same method is also encountered in the applied brocades on the tunic of Nicodemus (model 5.2). On the *Saluzzo Altarpiece* (cat. 19.2) there is a similar motif on the hangings in the Presentation in the Temple, but in this case the stipples are somewhat squarer.

In the KMKG-MRAH in Brussels⁵ and the Musée National du Moyen-Âge in Paris⁶ are silk velvets patterned with roundels sewn in gold thread. The textiles are Iranian in origin and date from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Such fabrics may have inspired the polychromer, even though he has produced the opposite effect.

Model 5.2



5.2a
Descent from the Cross, applied brocade on the tunic of Nicodemus



5.2b
Archaeological drawing

Location:	garments of the soldier and the two mockers of Christ (Carrying of the Cross), garments of Longinus, the foremost horseman, the standing male figure with a shield, and a holy woman (Crucifixion), robe of Joseph of Arimathea and tunic of Nicodemus (Descent from the Cross) (see ill. 5b)		Comparable applied brocades cat. S2.1 Arras, Musée des Beaux-Arts, <i>Altarpiece with the Nativity and the Adoration of the Shepherds</i> London, V&A, <i>Adoration of the Magi Altarpiece</i>
Type:	continuous		
Design:	floral and foliate: twig with foliage and flowers		
Measurements:	medium: min. 11 x 6.2 cm; incomplete sheet		
Relief:	striations, contour and raised dots, small flat zones (relief or mixed pattern)		
Striations:	c.10 per cm; variously aligned		
Condition:	badly damaged		
Overpaint:	none		
Highlighting:	red glaze on contour and raised dots white or pink underlayer (garments of the soldier and the two mockers of Christ (Carrying of the Cross), garments of Longinus, a holy woman (Crucifixion), robe of Joseph of Arimathea (Descent from the Cross)	blue on contour and raised dots underlayer(?) (foremost horseman, standing male figure with a shield (Crucifixion), tunic of Nicodemus (Descent from the Cross)	
Gilding:	gold leaf adhesive(?)		
Tin foil:	degraded, black		
Filler:	ochre in colour, semi-transparent, waxy appearance		
Adhesive:	orange ochre, oily appearance		
Support layer:	white chalk and size ground		
Ref:	KIK-IRPA laboratory file (3 cross sections). See also Chapter Ten, Table B		

⁵ ERRERA 1907: 89-90.

⁶ DESROSIERS 2004: 318-320.

The highly detailed motif consists of a curved twig or stem from which sprout leaves and daisy-like flowers. The lines in the design are in slight relief and there are occasional raised dots. Striated zones alternate with flat areas. The degradation of the tin foil and the extensive damage make the pattern rather difficult to decipher.

What appears to be a related design occurs in the magnificent applied brocade cloths of honour of a Nativity altarpiece in the Museum of Arras (Brussels, c.1500) and the *Adoration of the Magi Altarpiece* in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London (Brussels, Mechelen(?), c.1500), but a more thorough study is needed to determine their precise connection.

The finely executed red and blue highlighting is made up of two layers, a white or pale underlayer and a finishing layer of red glaze and azurite blue respectively. This method can also be observed on the *Saluzzo Altarpiece* (cat. 19.1) and the Brussels *Holy Kinship Altarpiece* (cat. 24.1).

Model 5.3



5.3a
Lamentation, applied brocade on John's garment



5.3b
Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	garment of St John (Carrying of the Cross); garments of John and the holy woman beside him (Crucifixion); traces beneath the overpainting of the Virgin's gown (Carrying of the Cross, Crucifixion, Descent from the Cross) (see ill. 5b)	Comparable applied brocades cat. 22.2 cat. S10.3								
Type:	local									
Design:	floral and foliate									
Measurements:	small: 3.2 x 2.2 cm									
Relief:	fully striated (relief pattern)									
Striations:	16 per cm; vertical									
Condition:	well preserved									
Overpaint:	none									
Highlighting:	none									
Gilding:	gold leaf no adhesive observed									
Tin foil:	degraded, black									
Filler:	extremely thin, ochre in colour, waxy appearance									
Adhesive:	none									
Support layer:	<table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 33%;">green glaze (holy woman)</td> <td style="width: 33%;">red glaze (John)</td> <td style="width: 33%;">azurite</td> </tr> <tr> <td>silver leaf</td> <td>gold leaf</td> <td>(the Virgin)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>mordant</td> <td>mordant</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	green glaze (holy woman)	red glaze (John)	azurite	silver leaf	gold leaf	(the Virgin)	mordant	mordant	
green glaze (holy woman)	red glaze (John)	azurite								
silver leaf	gold leaf	(the Virgin)								
mordant	mordant									
Ref:	white chalk and size ground cross section: none. See Chapter Ten, Table B									

The applied brocades are evenly distributed on either a red or green glaze or, in the case of the Virgin's gown, on a layer of azurite blue. The red glaze has been applied to the silver leaf; the green glaze covers the gold. The motif is symmetrically constructed with three dentate leaves on either side of a vertical axis.

A similar though slightly larger leaf motif occurs on several of the figures of the Villberga *Passion Altarpiece* (cat. S10.3), which was probably made some ten or twenty years after the present work. Unlike the present example, however, where the sheet is fully striated, on the Villberga retable a semicircle has been cut out of the centre of the motif. Although differences can be discerned in the other polychromy techniques as well, the similarities between the two applied brocades point to a connection between the respective polychromers or to a common source of inspiration. There is a similar leaf motif, albeit also different in size, on the *Passion Altarpiece* (Vermeersch bequest) in the KMKG-MRAH in Brussels (cat. 22.2).



5.3c
Applied brocade on
the holy woman's
bodice



6 ALTARPIECE OF THE VIRGIN WITH SS BARBARA AND CATHERINE

Antwerp, Mayer van den Bergh Museum, inv. 404 (cat. 2256-2258)

Altarpiece, carved, polychromed and painted wood, painted wings

Case and carving: Mechelen

Polychromy: Brussels, attributed to Master I*T

Marks: Mechelen arms (three pales)

1500-1510

Open: 97.5 × 112.5 × 16.5 cm

Closed: 97.5 × 56.5 × 16.5 cm

1898: purchased by Fritz Mayer van den Bergh from the Paris collection of Carlo Micheli¹

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/47-1970/00050

The case of this domestic altarpiece is divided into three niches resembling the aisles and nave of a church, each containing a statue. The Virgin and Child in the centre are flanked by St Barbara and St Catherine of Alexandria. Each of the charming figures stands on a pedestal beneath a vault. Painted on the insides of the wings are St Agnes and Mary Magdalene, on the outsides two armorial-bearing angels. There is a very similar altarpiece in the parish church of Saint-Galmier on the Loire.² It has the same kind of measurements and architecture and is dedicated to the same saints, but there are several points of difference in the style of the sculptures and the painted wings.

The refined statues are typical of early Mechelen production, which is still related stylistically to Brussels sculpture. In the present instance, however, stereotypical models have acquired a greater individuality through voluminous and clearly defined shapes, and a subtle and grave detachment that gives the saints great appeal.

The altarpiece case and wings are in oak, the statuettes in walnut. The three pales mark of the Mechelen guild is on the underside of each pedestal and on the outside of the case. The polychromy survives in an excellent state; only the applied brocades have suffered the odd loss. The flesh tones work harmoniously with the gilding (on ochre mordant or orange bole) and azurite blue (on a black underlayer). The red glaze of the flanking saints' kirtles has been painted onto burnished gold leaf. All three types of applied brocade have been used, continuous, local and braid (see Chapter Four). The altarpiece does not bear the polychromer's mark, but the brocades suggest that the polychromy was executed in the workshop of Master I*T.

The case and statues were made in Mechelen, and stylistic analysis by Cathéline Périer-D'Ieteren indicates that the wings were probably painted in a Mechelen atelier.³ The polychroming of the statues was undertaken by a Brussels workshop. More than forty surviving sculptures of this type testify to regular Mechelen-Brussels collaboration. There are many pointers to Master I*T as the initiator of this arrangement, although firm proof is lacking.



6a

Altarpiece of the Virgin with SS Barbara and Catherine, 1500-1510, Mechelen-Brussels; Antwerp, Mayer van den Bergh Museum

6b

St Catherine

¹ DE COO 1969: 202-204.

² NIEUWDORP 1969: 7-15; GUILLOT DE SUDIRAUT 2001a: 42.

³ PÉRIER-D'ETEREN 2000: 48-50.

Model 6.1



6.1a
Applied brocade on the Virgin's gown



6.1b
Reconstruction of the applied brocade

1cm

Location:	the Virgin's undergown	Identical applied brocades cat. 7.1 cat. 19.1 cat. 24.1 cat. 66.1 cat. G4.1 cat. S1.1 cat. S7.1 cat. S9.1 cat. S10.1 Comparable applied brocades cat. 47.1
Type:	continuous: straight rows	
Design:	floral and foliate: posy of flowers and lanceolate leaves in a basket inside an ogival framework of flowering stems, on a latticed background	
Measurements:	medium: 11-11.3 x 6.5 cm	
Relief:	striations, contour and latticing in slightly higher relief (relief pattern)	
Striations:	12-20 per cm; vertical, diagonal	
Condition:	locally worn	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	red glaze on contour and latticing	
Gilding:	gold leaf no adhesive observed	
Tin foil:	degraded, white-grey to grey	
Filler:	partly translucent and partly opaque white, partly translucent ochre, waxy appearance(?)	
Adhesive:	orange-ochre, oily appearance (mordant?)	
Support layer:	white chalk and size ground	
Ref:	cross section: none	

The applied brocade is badly damaged but enough remains to identify it with the famous motif from the repertoire of Master I*T, which was employed on many of the sculptures polychromed in his workshop over a period of two decades (see cat. 19 and Chapter Six). As regards model and measurements the relief decorations display identical characteristics. Here, however, red rather than the more usual blue was used to highlight the applied brocades on the Virgin's gown. It has not been analysed, so whether it was applied in one layer or two, as on the *Saluzzo Altarpiece* (cat. 19.1), is uncertain. The motif seems to have been very popular and also occurs in tapestries and on painted panels, especially altarpiece wings produced by the workshop of Colijn de Coter.

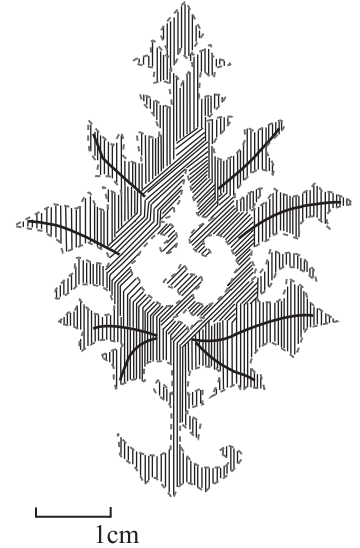
Model 6.2



6.2a
Reconstruction of the applied brocade



6.2b
Archaeological drawing



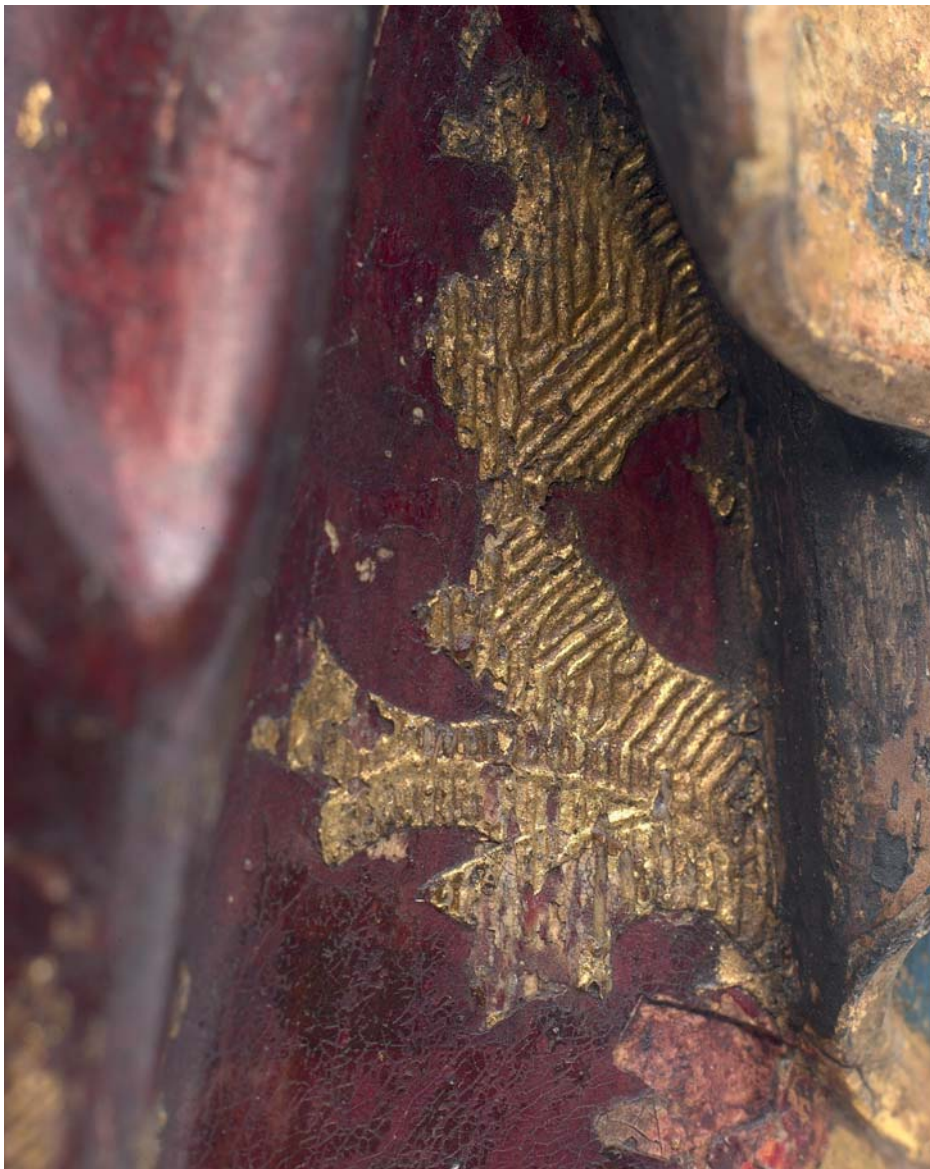
6.2c
Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	kirtles of SS Barbara and Catherine	Identical applied brocades cat. 19.7 cat. 28.1 cat. 29.1 cat. 66.2 cat. G4.2 cat. S1.2 cat. S6.2 cat. S7.3 cat. S9.2 cat. PC1.1 Possibly identical applied brocades Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, <i>Female Saint</i> (1965.2230) London, V&A, <i>St Barbara</i> (A.107-1937) Paris, Louvre, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (RF 1567) Paris, Louvre, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (RF 1788) Paris, Louvre, <i>St Margaret</i> (RF 2572) Paris, Musée Marmottan, <i>St Barbara</i> (622d) Private collection, <i>St Gudule</i> (formerly in the Kofler-Truniger collection) Private collection, <i>St Roch</i> (formerly in the Kofler-Truniger collection) Comparable applied brocades cat. 24.2
Type:	local	
Design:	floral and foliate: stylized thistle leaf or acanthus leaf	
Measurements:	small: min. 4.5 x min. 3.5 cm; sheet incomplete	
Relief:	fully striated, veins in relief, excisions (relief pattern)	
Striations:	15-17 per cm; vertical, diagonal	
Condition:	badly damaged	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	none	
Gilding:	gold leaf no adhesive observed	
Tin foil:	grey, relatively well preserved	
Filler:	partly translucent and partly opaque white, partly translucent ochre, waxy appearance(?)	
Adhesive:	none observed, apparently none	
Support layer:	red glaze gold leaf orange bole white chalk and size ground	
Ref:	cross section: none	

The central bud emerges from its calyx and is surrounded by dentate leaves. Like model 6.1 this fantastic motif belongs to the repertoire of Master I*T.

The applied brocade sheets seem to have been pressed into the tacky glaze without the use of any further adhesive. The filler is very thin and found only in the depth of the relief. Its colour may suggest a chalk and size composition. As with the *Virgin and Child* (cat. 26) and the *St Barbara* (cat. 29) now in Brussels and the *Altarpiece with Three Saints* (cat. 66) in a private collection no samples were available to confirm this observation. In the case of the *Saluzzo Altarpiece* (cat. 19) physico-chemical analysis revealed a waxy filler in this local brocade.

The same stylized thistle leaf or acanthus leaf is encountered on a figure of *St Margaret* (Musée du Louvre)⁴ and likely also on a *St Gudule* and a *St Roch* (private collection).⁵ Whether the same mould as the present was used can only be conjectured, as no precise measurements of the applied brocades on these sculptures are available. A number of other Mechelen sculptures can be added to this list, such as a *St Barbara* also from the private collection just mentioned. Other works – in French collections – are referred to by Sophie Guillot de Suduiraut in the catalogue of Brabant sculpture in the Louvre.⁶ A *St Barbara* in London (Victoria and Albert Museum)⁷ and a *Female Saint* in Boston (Museum of Fine Arts)⁸ are likewise embellished with what is very probably this same design. In all these cases the palette and colour distribution follow the same formula. The cloak is always embellished with a brocade braid. On the gown, local brocades adhere to a red glaze that has usually been painted over silver leaf, although in one case it covers gilding. On none of these statues are the brocades well preserved.



6.2d
Applied brocade on St Barbara's kirtle

⁴ GUILLOT DE SUDUIRAUT 2001a: 106-108 and fig. 15.

⁵ SCHNITZLER, VOLBACH, BLOCH 1964: 39-40, figs. 161-163.

⁶ GUILLOT DE SUDUIRAUT 2001a: 98-99 (fig. 10), 101-102, 107 (fig. 15b), 99 (10b); see also GODENNE 1957: 81-83, fig. XIV.

⁷ GUILLOT DE SUDUIRAUT 2001a: 106 (fig. 15a); WILLIAMSON 2002: 126-127.

⁸ *Gothic Sculpture in America* 1989: 65.

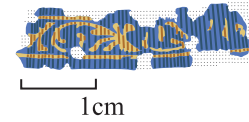
Model 6.3



6.3a
Applied brocade on St Catherine's cloak



6.3b
Applied brocade on St Barbara's cloak



6.3c
Archaeological drawing



6.3d
Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	hem of the cloaks of the Virgin, St Barbara and St Catherine	Identical applied brocades cat. 19.9 (arabesque 1) cat. 51.3 (arabesque 1) cat. 57.5 (arabesque 1) cat. 59.4 (arabesque 1) cat. S10.4 (arabesque 1) Private collection, <i>St Catherine</i> (former Becker collection, Brussels) (arabesque 1) Private collection, <i>St Roch</i> (former Kofler-Truniger collection) (arabesque 1)
Type:	braid	
Design:	floral and foliate: arabesques between two parallel lines	Comparable applied brocades cat. 7.2 (arabesque 3) cat. 24.6 (arabesque 3) cat. 49.1 cat. 66.3 cat. G4.4 cat. S6.4 Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, <i>Female Saint</i> (1965.2230) Cologne, Schnütgen Museum, <i>St Christopher</i> (A 227) London, V&A, <i>St Barbara</i> (A.107-1937) Paris, Louvre, <i>St Margaret</i> (RF 2572) Paris, Louvre, <i>St Michael</i> (OA 310) Paris, Louvre, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (RF 1567) Paris, Musée Marmottan, <i>St Barbara</i> (622d) Private collection, <i>St Barbara</i> (former Kofler-Truniger collection) Private collection, <i>St Gudule</i> (former Kofler-Truniger collection) Private collection, <i>St Margaret</i> (Christie's sale, New York 1994) Private collection, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (antiquary Bruno Speybrouck sale, Kortrijk 2007) Private collection, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (Brussels, KIK-IRPA photograph N4563)
Measurements:	small: 0.8 x min. 3 cm; incomplete sheet	
Relief:	fully striated strip (relief pattern)	
Striations:	15 per cm; vertical	
Condition:	badly damaged	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	matt blue (azurite) on striations	
Gilding:	gold leaf no adhesive observed	
Tin foil:	dark grey	
Filler:	partly translucent and partly opaque white, partly translucent ochre, waxy appearance(?)	
Adhesive:	light ochre in colour, transparent	
Support layer:	burnished gold leaf orange bole white chalk and size ground	
Ref:	cross section: none	

Along the length of both braids gilded arabesques twine between parallel lines against a blue background. The stem divides into finer offshoots and narrow leaves. St Catherine's braid also occurs on the *Saluzzo Altarpiece* and a number of Brussels altarpieces in Sweden polychromed by the workshop of Master I*T (see cat. 19.9, arabesque 1). The technique is the same: the tin foil was first gilded then painted with azurite, though sparing the motif, thus giving the appearance of gold embroidery on a blue band. St Barbara's braid bears a stylistic resemblance to the I*T-braid with the cloverleaves, as well as to the braid on the Brussels *Holy Kinship Altarpiece* (cat. 24.6, arabesque 3), but it varies technically, the composition of the filler apparently being different.



7 BURIAL OF ST ANDREW

Antwerp, Mayer van den Bergh Museum, inv. 239 (cat. 2277)

Figurative group from an altarpiece, carved and polychromed oak

Brussels, polychromy attributed to Master I*T

No marks

c.1510-1515

43.2 × 29.3 × 8.5 cm

1898: purchased by Fritz Mayer van den Bergh from the Paris collection of Carlo Micheli¹

1965: conservation in situ by the KIK-IRPA

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/47-2004/08265

According to his apocryphal Acts, St Andrew's ministry took him to Patras in the province of Achaia (Greece). There he converted a great number of people and healed and baptized Maximilla, wife of the proconsul Egeas. Consumed with rage, the proconsul charged Andrew with inciting disobedience to the emperor, and had him scourged and bound to a cross, from which the apostle preached to the people for three days before he died. Aided by one of her servants Maximilla took down Andrew's body and buried him. This figurative group represents the noble lady and her manservant bearing away the limp and lifeless saint. It was probably part of an altarpiece dedicated to St Andrew and illustrated with apocryphal episodes from his life.

The remarkable quality of the design, subtly and aptly expressed, can be compared with that of the *Saluzzo Altarpiece* (cat. 19) and the *Holy Kinship Altarpiece* (cat. 24), both in Brussels. The faces and hairstyles recur in several Brussels altarpieces produced in the Borman circle. The *Burial of St Andrew* can be dated to around 1510-1515. There is no record of this figurative group before its inclusion in the late-nineteenth-century inventory of the Carlo Micheli collection.²

Apart from a crack or two in Maximilla's gown the wood is in good condition.³ The group has been skilfully carved from a thin block of quarter-cut oak. Only the front has been polychromed – with burnished gilding on orange bole, matt gilding on ochre mordant, and azurite blue on a black underlayer. Glaze was used on the tiled floor, and on the lining of the manservant's overgarment and his hat and boots, on a matt underlayer as well as on gilding. Precise painted details such as errant strands of hair on forehead and temple add character to the figures. Neither tooling nor sgraffito have been used: decoration is limited to applied brocade and small dots in shell gold on a matt blue background (on Maximilla's sleeve).

The condition of the sculpture is excellent but the polychromy has suffered considerably. Several zones are very badly worn. The applied brocades are much disfigured; the azurite areas and also the layer of white on the shroud are badly damaged – conceivably due to the past use of faulty restoration techniques.



7a
Burial of St Andrew,
c.1510-1515, Brussels;
Antwerp, Mayer van
den Bergh Museum

7b
The manservant
carrying St Andrew's
corpse

¹ DE COO 1969: 216-217.

² DE COO 1965: 349.

³ See also laboratory report 1965: 259.

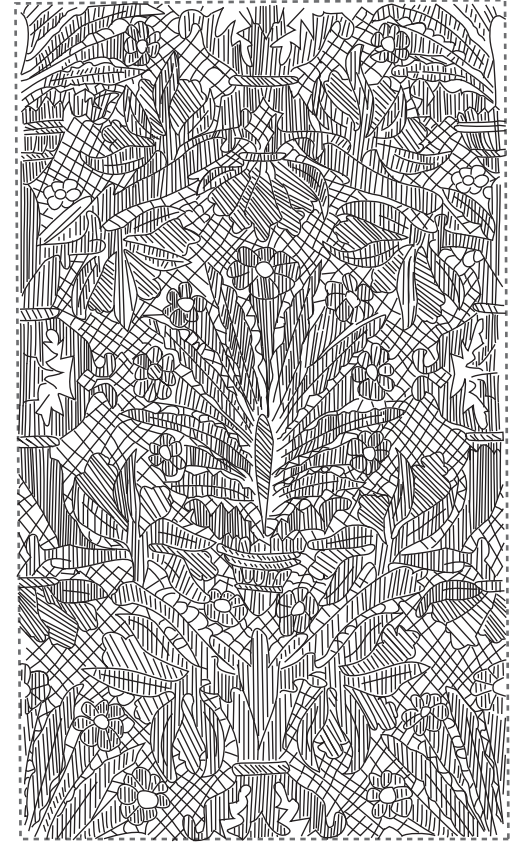
Model 7.1



7.1a
Applied brocade on Maximilla's undergown



7.1b
Archaeological drawing



7.1c
Reconstruction of the relief

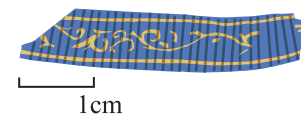
Location:	manservant's overgarment, Maximilla's undergown	Identical applied brocades cat. 6.1 cat. 19.1 cat. 24.1 cat. 66.1 cat. G4.1 cat. S1.1 cat. S7.1 cat. S9.1 cat. S10.1 Comparable applied brocades cat. 47.1
Type:	continuous: straight rows	
Design:	floral and foliate: posy of flowers and lanceolate leaves in a basket inside an ogival framework of flowering stems, on a latticed background	
Measurements:	medium: 11-11.3 x 6.5 cm	
Relief:	striations, contour and latticing in slightly higher relief (relief pattern)	
Striations:	12-20 per cm; vertical, diagonal	
Condition:	badly damaged	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	red glaze on contour and latticing	
Gilding:	gold leaf no adhesive observed	
Tin foil:	degraded, grey to white	
Filler:	extremely thin, ochre in colour, semi-transparent, waxy appearance	
Adhesive:	orange-ochre in colour, oily appearance	
Support layer:	white chalk and size ground	
Ref:	KIK-IRPA laboratory file (1 cross section). See also Chapter Ten, Table B	

There is practically nothing left of this applied brocade. Maximilla's undergown is the only place where enough remains to give an idea of the complex pattern. Lanceolate leaves sprouting from a central stem form a posy against a latticed background. The posy is arranged in a basket surrounded by intertwined flowering stems. This is one of the I*T Master's most characteristic motifs (see cat. 19.1 and Chapter Six).

Model 7.2



7.2a
Applied brocade braid on the hem of Maximilla's overgown



7.2b
Archaeological drawing



7.2c
Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	hem of Maximilla's overgown	Possibly identical applied brocades cat. 6.3 (arabesque 3) cat. 24.6 (arabesque 3)
Type:	braid	
Design:	floral and foliate: arabesque between parallel lines	
Measurements:	small: 0.8 cm	Comparable applied brocades
Relief:	fully striated strip (relief pattern)	cat. 19.9
Striations:	7-8 per cm; vertical	cat. 49.1
Condition:	badly damaged	cat. 66.3
Overpaint:	none	cat. G4.4
Highlighting:	matt blue (azurite) on striations	cat. S1.3
Gilding:	gold leaf very thin adhesive layer	cat. S6.4
Tin foil:	white-grey appearance	cat. S7.5
Filler:	brownish ochre in colour, semi-transparent, waxy appearance	cat. S9.4
Adhesive:	none	cat. S10.4
Support layer:	burnished gold leaf orange bole white chalk and size ground	Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, <i>Female Saint</i> (1965.2230)
Ref:	KIK-IRPA laboratory file (2 cross sections)	Cologne, Schnütgen Museum, <i>St Christopher</i> (A 227)
		London, V&A, <i>St Barbara</i> (A.107-1937)
		Paris, Louvre, <i>St Margaret</i> (RF 2572)
		Paris, Louvre, <i>St Michael</i> (OA 310)
		Paris, Louvre, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (RF 1567)
		Paris, Musée Marmottan, <i>St Barbara</i> (622d)
		Private collection, <i>St Barbara</i> (former Kofler-Truniger collection)
		Private collection, <i>St Gudule</i> (former Kofler-Truniger collection)
		Private collection, <i>St Roch</i> (former Kofler-Truniger collection)
		Private collection, <i>St Catherine</i> (former Becker collection, Brussels)
		Private collection, <i>St Margaret</i> (Christie's sale, New York 1994)
		Private collection, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (antiquary Bruno Speybrouck sale, Kortrijk 2007)
		Private collection, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (Brussels, KIK-IRPA photograph: N4563)

Arabesques curvet between a pair of parallel lines. The tin foil strip was fully striated, then gilded and the background painted with a layer of azurite. Braids decorated with arabesques and flowering stems are a recurring feature of the sculpture polychromed by Master I*T. Whether the motif is the same in every case is hard to determine, given their damaged state. None of the arabesque-decorated braids on the *Saluzzo Altarpiece* (cat. 19.9) is a perfect match for this one. The motif is most closely related to the damaged braid on the *Holy Kinship Altarpiece* (cat. 24.6, arabesque 3). There is no adhesive layer between the braid and the burnished gilding to be detected with the naked eye, nor does it appear in the samples.



8 MARY MAGDALENE

Antwerp, Mayer van den Bergh Museum, inv. 234 (cat. 2272)

Figure from an altarpiece, carved and polychromed oak

Brabant, Brussels(?)

No marks

c.1510-1515

23 × 14.1 × 5.9 cm

1902: purchased by the Mayer van den Bergh Museum, possibly from the Paris collection of Carlo Micheli¹

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/47-2004/08266

This *Mary Magdalene* undoubtedly comes from the Crucifixion scene of a Passion altarpiece. The elegant kneeling woman raises her arms despairingly to the heavens. Her capacious cloak cascades over her right shoulder and tumbles over her left knee, while the long trailing end of her veil falls over her left arm. The cloak's rhythmic play of line reprises the veil's graceful sway.

Except for the hands, now lost, the figure is carved from a single block of oak and bears no marks. On the bottom of the base traces of the vice are still visible. On the 'back' of the figure only the face is finished; the torso and gown are no more than sketchily indicated.

The remains of the original polychromy suggest a traditional layer structure: a chalk and size ground, burnished gilding on light orange bole, azurite blue on a black underlayer. The flesh tones are pale pink, with a darker pink on the lips and cheeks; the veil is white, painted with decorative green stripes. A single line of green glaze was used for the hem of the cloak. The visible parts of the gown are covered with applied brocade.

Apart from the missing hands the wooden support is undamaged, but the polychromy is worn and has many losses. The sculpture has several times undergone minor conservation treatment by the KIK-IRPA.²

Model 8.1

Location:	Mary Magdalene's gown
Type:	continuous
Design:	unidentifiable, too incomplete for reconstruction
Measurements:	unidentifiable, too incomplete for precise measurement
Relief:	striations, contour (relief pattern)
Striations:	5-6 per 0.5 cm; variously aligned
Condition:	badly damaged
Overpaint:	none
Highlighting:	red glaze on contour
Gilding:	gold leaf no adhesive observed
Tin foil:	degraded, black
Filler:	yellow ochre in colour, waxy appearance
Adhesive:	dark ochre-brown, oily appearance
Support layer:	white chalk and size ground
Ref:	cross section: none



8a

Mary Magdalene,
c.1510-1515, Brabant,
Brussels(?); Antwerp,
Mayer van den Bergh
Museum

8b

Location of the
applied brocades

The brocade is too damaged for any conclusions to be drawn about measurements or motif. From the few surviving traces it would appear that the tin foil was fully gilded and embellished with a linear design in red glaze.

¹ DE COO 1969: 212-213.

² *Chronique* 1965: 240.



9 BESLOTEN HOFJE WITH THE VIRGIN AND CHILD IN A MANDORLA

Antwerp, KMSKA, inv. 5094

Besloten hofje, carved and polychromed wood, elements in mixed media (metal, paper, silk thread),
painted shutters
Southern Netherlands
Early 16th century
Open: 90.8 × 106 × 16 cm
Closed: 90.8 × 53.6 × 16 cm

Until 1929: owned by a Kortrijk beguine
1929: owned by the Van Herck family
1971: purchased by the KMSKA

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/47-2006/09160

The 'besloten hofje' or 'enclosed garden' is a devotional object rendered in mixed media such as metal, paper and silk thread and embellished with medallions and relics, presented in a cabinet that can usually be closed with shutters. The iconography, often derived from the Song of Songs, is generally complex, the subject invariably a religious scene set in a *hortus conclusus*, usually the Garden of Paradise. Mechelen was one of the main centres for the making of these works.

The centre of this besloten hofje is occupied by the Virgin and Child standing on a crescent moon and surrounded by a golden-rayed mandorla.¹ The background is filled with an abundance of apples, pears and flowers made from fabric and braid of various sorts and is further embellished with small metal tags, letters and leaves. In the lower part of the hofje, behind a rustic gated fence, the Fall of Man is enacted between two portals. The sword-brandishing angel is poised to drive Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden while the serpent clings to a tree. Introduced into this dramatic scene are the small figures of St Agnes and John the Evangelist. The somewhat surprising combination of the Expulsion in the cabinet and the Ascension, Descent into Limbo, Pentecost and Noli me tangere painted on the shutters can perhaps be understood in antithetical terms of Fall and Redemption.²

No identifying marks have as yet been found on this hofje. The sculptures integrated in the few hofjes that survive from this period are almost invariably Mechelen-made, according to their marks. Their stereotypical characteristics are not immediately to be discerned in the little figures of the present example, however. Documents attest to the production of hofjes in other towns besides Mechelen: Margaret of Austria had one made by the nuns of the Galilee convent in Ghent, for example.³ The location of the workshop that created the present hofje is therefore uncertain as yet.

Erik Vandamme recently suggested that the shutters were produced in Germany some decades before the sculpture.⁴ According to this hypothesis the main compartment of the little altarpiece could have been remodelled to turn it into a besloten hofje.

The cabinet and shutters are oak. In the polychromy burnished and matt gilding alternate with areas painted in blue (azurite) and pink. Parallel lines have been scored into the ground of the Virgin's veil. Numerous stars cut from paper or metal stud the blue background of the main compartment. The use of coloured glaze is limited to the occasional highlight. The Virgin's tightly-cinched belt is also noteworthy, most likely being made entirely of green-tinted wax.⁵

9a
*Besloten Hofje with
the Virgin and Child
in a Mandorla,*
early 16th century,
Southern
Netherlands;
Antwerp, KMSKA
© KMSKA-Lukas
Art in Flanders

¹ This motif is reminiscent of the Marianum: two adorsed figures of the crowned Virgin and Child, often enclosed in a mandorla, suspended from the ceiling of a church nave. See SMEYERS 1994: 270-291.

² VANDAMME 1981: 146.

³ Ibid. 148; EICHBERGER 2002: 398.

⁴ Museumboek KMSKA 2003: 58.

⁵ VANDAMME 1982: 137-138.

Model 9.1



9.1a
The Virgin



9.1b
Applied brocade on the Virgin's undergown

Location:	the Virgin's undergown
Type:	continuous
Design:	unidentifiable, too incomplete for reconstruction
Measurements:	small: min. 2 cm high
Relief:	striations, otherwise unidentifiable
Striations:	number unidentified, glass impeded close observation; vertical
Condition:	badly damaged
Overpaint:	none
Highlighting:	red glaze
Gilding:	gold leaf no adhesive observed
Tin foil:	degraded, dark grey to black
Filler:	none observed, too indistinct for identification
Adhesive:	brown, oily layer
Support layer:	white chalk and size ground
Ref:	cross section: none

The applied brocade, which is no more than 2 centimetres in height, ornaments the Virgin's undergown above a gilded hem finished with a painted double red line. There is only a small section of imitated silk textile to be seen and even that does not survive intact. It is not possible to make out a motif, which precludes comparison with other applied brocades.



9b
The expulsion of Adam and Eve



9c
SS Agnes and John



10 THREE BLIND ARCADES WITH PAINTED FIGURES

Antwerp, Cathedral of Our Lady, St Luke Chapel (K8), north wall

Wall painting, tempera

Choir built between 1352 and the end of the 15th century;¹ the painted decoration discussed here dates from 1500-1533

Blind arcades: c.295 × 46-48 cm

1989-1990: examination of the painted decoration by Lode De Clercq and Walter Schudel

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/44-1973/00464

These three blind arcades are nowadays concealed by a stone altar and the neo-Gothic altarpiece it supports. For the purpose of this study the altarpiece was moved, allowing the upper part of the arcading to be examined; the lower section, behind by the massive altar itself, was inaccessible.² The painting and polychromy of the blind arcades are in a poor state of preservation.

In 1493 Colijn de Coter was commissioned to paint angels on the chapel ceiling. At around the same time the walls were painted red.³ The surfaces were first prepared with a fine sealing layer followed by a thin light orangey ground, then painted in broad vertical bands of bright red and orange red separated by black stripes (1.4 cm wide). This was followed by the addition of brown and beige painted motifs (resembling barrels on legs): they have been found on the lower parts of the chapel walls as well as in and around the blind arcades, whose mouldings are highlighted with yellow and black lines. Sadly, nothing remains of Colijn de Coter's angels.

The succeeding layer of polychromy is referred to as the 'first green phase'. It also extends to the top of the chapel.⁴ The dark green background around the blind arcades is strewn with stylized flowers, their gilding hatched with black lines. The moulding of the blind arcades is outlined in light green and red-brown.

In each arcade a large figure, most likely a saint or apostle, is painted against a background of continuous gilded applied brocade – possibly the same brocade in all three arcades. The paint seems to have been applied without any priming. There is, however, a black underlayer beneath the blue headdress of the figure in the right arcade. This is the best preserved figure of the three: a finger is still visible and part of the face, modelled in a pinkish brown and framed by a veil edged with blue lines. Also discernable are the finials of a crown painted on a deep blue headdress reserved in the applied brocade of the background. An escutcheon appears lower down, modelled, like the finials, in black, brown and beige. The figure in the left arcade wears a blue cloak and carries a black staff; the face has disappeared. Very little remains of the figure in the badly damaged central arcade.

The arcades were painted and polychromed in the following sequence: first the underlayer(s) were applied; then the brocade, which appears to have been gilded after being glued to the wall; and finally the figure was painted in.

There are numerous overpaints. Over the first green phase the green was reprised, layers of plaster were added, followed by yellowish painted ornaments and one or two neo-Gothic decorations.⁵ These were partially removed during the De Clercq and Schudel study.

¹ VAN LANGENDONCK 1990: 17; DE CLERCQ 1990: 24.

² We thank Bernard Delmotte, contractor, Rutger Steenmeijer, architect, and Jan Verbeke, mural restorer, for moving the altarpiece.

³ DE CLERCQ 1990: 26.

⁴ DE CLERCQ, SCHUDEL 1989-1990, vol. 0 (*Repertorium*, K8), vol. 5 (photographs 360-376); DE CLERCQ 1990: 28.

⁵ DE CLERCQ, SCHUDEL 1989-1990, vol. 0 (*Repertorium*, K8).

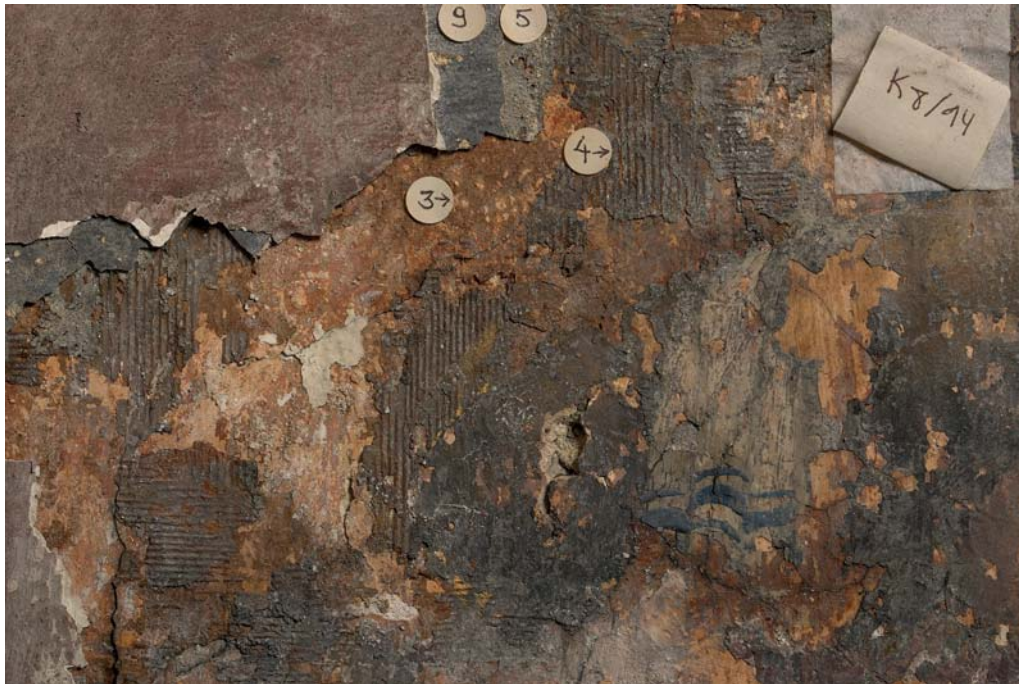
Model 10.1



10.1a
Right-hand blind arcade with painted figure and applied brocade

Location:	blind arcades
Type:	continuous
Design:	unidentifiable, too incomplete for reconstruction
Measurements:	unidentifiable, too incomplete for precise measurement
Relief:	striations, occasional contour, narrow flat zones (mixed or relief pattern)
Striations:	8-9 per cm; horizontal, vertical, convex in section
Condition:	badly damaged
Overpaint:	one or two neo-Gothic decorations (partially removed) yellowish painted decorations plaster layers repetition of green decoration
Highlighting:	matt black on narrow flat zones (central arcade)
Gilding:	gold leaf very thin, transparent organic layer thick ochre-coloured mordant (the pigments are more finely ground than those in the adhesive)
Tin foil:	degraded, grey-white
Filler:	translucent brown, wax-resin appearance
Adhesive:	brown ochre in colour, matt appearance, thick, granular layer (mixture of coarsely ground black, orange and yellow pigments)
Support layer:	'first green phase' paintings by Colijn de Coter
Ref:	KIK-IRPA laboratory file (1 cross section); DE CLERCO, SCHUDEL 1989-1990, vol. 0 (<i>Repertorium</i> , K8). See also Chapter Ten, Table B

The area covered with applied brocade seems to represent not a cloth of honour but an abstract gilded background. The badly damaged brocade survives only in patches and no more than traces remain, except in the central arcade where a few square centimetres of black-highlighted gilding are still visible.



10.1b
 Right-hand blind arcade. Detail of the painted figure (face and crown with finials) and of the applied brocade (background) (detail of 10.1)



10.1c
 Detail of the applied brocade (detail of 10.1)



II ARCHITECTURAL POLYCHROMY

Antwerp, Cathedral of Our Lady, choir and transept

Architectural polychromy and wall painting

Choir and transepts built between 1352 and 1519;¹ the painted decoration discussed here dates from 1500-1533

1989 and 1990: general examination of the painted decoration by Lode De Clercq, Walter Schudel and collaborators²

2001-2002: detailed examination of chapel K₃ and bays O₁, O₂ and O₃ (see plan), by Marie-Hélène Ghisdal and Linda Van Dijck³

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/44-1973/00464 & 2L/44-2006/09019

Antwerp's Cathedral of Our Lady offers one of the rare examples of the large-scale use of applied brocade in architectural polychromy. It edged an immense imitation tapestry and enlivened its surface with local motifs (models II.1, II.2, II.3, II.5). At the entrance to the choir a cloth of honour was made up of continuous applied brocade (model II.4).⁴ Applied brocade also covered the backs of three blind arcades in the Chapel of St Luke (see cat. 10).⁵

The chapels on the south side of the choir (K₂, K₃, K₄) and their corresponding ambulatory bays were probably vaulted around 1387. Construction then continued in the main part of the choir, working from east to west. The choir and transepts were completed at the end of the fifteenth century. The applied brocades – which were discovered by scraping 'windows' in the paint layer to reveal the stratigraphy of the multiple overpaints – are not part of the original decoration but belong to the 'first red phase', dating from around 1500-1533. Several factors support this dating. Firstly, the transept paintings were damaged by the 1533 fire. Secondly, the heyday of applied brocade production was over by the end of the first third of the sixteenth century. And thirdly, the walls of chapel K₃ are decorated with kettle motifs (model II.5), the emblem of the soap-makers guild, which occupied the chapel from 1497 onwards.

The artists responsible for the first red phase used various techniques to create the illusion of an immense tapestry that undulated across the walls of the chapels, ambulatory and transepts in striking horizontal counterpoint to the architecture's vertical thrust. The walls are covered in bright red, and in places with a darker red, to a height that varies from 3.60 metres to around 6.70 metres (and up to 10 metres in the transept), this apparently being determined by both the architecture and the furniture. Dispersed across these large red surfaces are motifs, sometimes in tin foil (model II.3), sometimes simply painted, with the iconography in the chapels differing according to dedication or use. Many parts of this painted tapestry have a wide applied brocade border at the top (models II.1, II.2) and a painted fringe consisting of blocks of colour enlivened with black 'threads' at the bottom. The painted tapestry ends above a bordeaux-red plinth about 1 metre high. The limewashed wall above the top border is decorated along almost the entire length of the tapestry with a row of elegant black finials, painted freehand or with stencils.

Where the walls were already decorated, the paint of this first red phase was applied without a new ground, as occurred in chapel K₃. Where the red was the first coloured layer, as on the pillars of the ambulatory, an orangey ground was applied on top of a thin coat of limewash.

IIa
Bundle pier with an applied brocade border at the top, between 1500 and 1533; Antwerp, Cathedral of Our Lady
© Lode De Clercq

¹ VAN LANGENDONCK 1990: 17; DE CLERCQ 1990: 24.

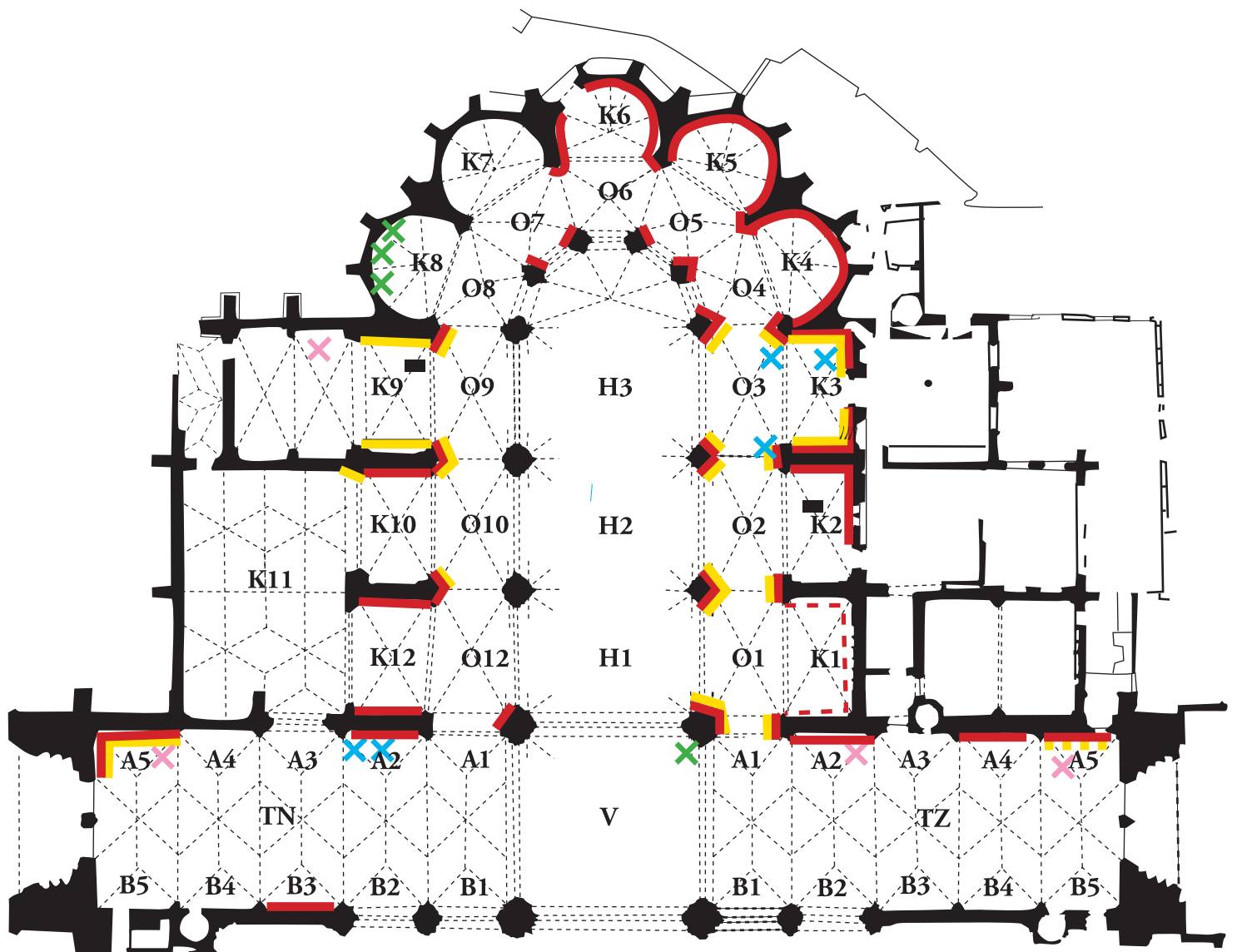
² DE CLERCQ, SCHUDEL 1989-1990; DE CLERCQ 1990.

³ GHISDAL, VAN DYCK 2002; VAN DYCK, GHISDAL 2002.

⁴ DE CLERCQ 1990: 27-28.

⁵ Walter Schudel, former head of the KIK-IRPA Wall Painting Restoration Unit, has said that applied brocades have recently been discovered in the second vault of the Venerable Chapel in the south nave aisle. The decoration is in Renaissance style. There are small local brocades in the frieze along the vault ribs (personal communication). Very recently Begga Vermaelen of the Wall Painting Restoration Unit discovered that relief decorations using tin foil were also integrated into the wall paintings of the Virtues.

In the sacristy chapel (K₃), which has been studied in greater detail, nine decorative phases succeed each other, though they are not all necessarily represented everywhere. Here the red decoration constitutes the fifth painting phase, although in the adjacent ambulatory it is the first painted decoration. This red decoration was renewed throughout the choir and transept between 1533 and 1566. The repainting respected the layout of the underlying decoration but was generally simpler, with engravings on paper and simple sheets of flat painted tin in place of the tin foil relief. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries these coloured decorative phases were covered over with several layers of limewash.



11c

Groundplan showing the location of the relief decorations
(after De Clercq-Schudel 1989-1990)

- Red decoration
- Applied brocade braid
- ✕ Applied tin relief
- ✕ Continuous applied brocade
- ✕ Local applied brocade

Model 11.1



11.1a
Examination window showing applied brocade

11.1b
Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	upper edge of the red surfaces (chapel K3, pillars of bay O3 and the north pillars of bay O10), ⁶ according to the examination windows	Comparable applied brocades Leiden, St Peter's Church, 'cloths of honour' on choir piers
Type:	braid	
Design:	floral and foliate: leaf scrolled around a central horizontal stem, small roses, lozenge-patterned frame	
Measurements:	large: c.8.5 x c.15-15.5 cm	
Relief:	flat background, motif in slight relief, veins and contour in more pronounced relief, horizontal central stem in still higher relief (atypical mixed pattern)	
Striations:	none	
Condition:	badly damaged	
Overpaint:	overpaints, several layers of limewash and other painting	
Highlighting:	too indistinct for certainty about either colour or location (minute traces of bright blue observed by Ghisdal and Van Dijck)	
Gilding:	gold leaf (minute traces, as observed by Ghisdal and Van Dijck, not visible on the cross section) no data on adhesive	
Tin foil:	degraded, grey	
Filler:	brown, translucent, wax-resin appearance, no additional thickening	
Adhesive:	none	
Support layer:	bright red (red lead and vermilion) or dark red, oily layer orange-red underlayer (red earth, baryte or ochre, chalk), tempera pale orange (pillars of bays O3 and O10) painted surface of the previous decoration chalk and size ground	
Ref:	KIK-IRPA laboratory file (2 cross sections). See also Chapter Ten, Table B	

The relief is finely rendered but lacks the usual gold thread-simulating striations. The brocade mimics a richly embroidered trimming – a valance in the Musée des Arts décoratifs de Paris gives a good idea of what the imitation embroideries would have looked like.⁷ It shares the same motif: acanthus-like foliage scrolling around a central horizontal stem. Applied brocades similar to the present model and remarkably well executed occur in the choir of St Peter's Church in Leiden,⁸ where they edge the applied brocade 'cloths of honour' that adorn the pillars.

The cross section is taken from an applied brocade on the wall of chapel K3. The samples taken from one of the north pillars of bay O10 contain additional layers whose function remains unclear.

On the pillars of the first bay of the south ambulatory (O1) are signs of an attempt to produce applied brocades without tin foil.⁹ This motif, which measures around 15 centimetres across, is illegible, although its width suggests that the mould of model 11.1 may have been used. The brocade is made of a waxy-looking brown substance, with a yellow layer and black highlighting on top. These brocades have survived less well than those produced in the traditional way; perhaps they evidence an unsuccessful technical innovation.

⁶ DE CLERCQ, SCHUDEL 1989-1990, vol. 0 (*Repertorium van de voornaamste afwerkingslagen = Repertorium*: K3, O3, O10) vol. 2 (nos. 181, 182, 190, 191, 193-197), vol. 3 (nos. 211-215), vol. 10 (nos. 490-493); GHISDAL, VAN DIJCK 2002a: 61-62. KIK-IRPA photographs: LX000645-LX000651, LX000654-LX000656.

⁷ DE FARCY 1890: 132, pl. 83.

⁸ FRIEDRICH 2003: 84-85 and fig. 55.

⁹ DE CLERCQ, SCHUDEL 1989-1990, vol. 0 (*Repertorium*: O1), vol.1 (nos. 82, 84); GHISDAL, VAN DIJCK 2002: 63.

Model II.2



II.2a
Examination window showing applied brocade



II.2b
Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	top border of the red painted hangings (pillars of bay O2) ¹⁰	Comparable applied brocades Leiden, St Peter's Church, 'cloths of honour' on choir piers
Type:	braid	
Design:	floral and foliate: fine leaves scrolled around a central horizontal stem, small flower, diamond-patterned border	
Measurements:	large: c.15 x 20 cm	
Relief:	flat background, contour and veins in relief (the lines are a little more coarse than those of model 11.1), details in more pronounced relief (atypical mixed pattern)	
Striations:	none	
Condition:	badly damaged	
Overpaint:	overpaints, several layers of limewash and other painting	
Highlighting:	too indistinct for certainty about either colour or location (minute traces of bright blue observed by Ghisdal and Van Dijck)	
Gilding:	gold leaf (traces, as observed by Ghisdal and Van Dijck) no data on adhesive	
Tin foil:	degraded, grey	
Filler:	brown, wax-resin appearance	
Adhesive:	none	
Support layer:	bright red orange-red underlayer pale orange layer (pillars of bays 03 and 010) chalk and size ground	dark red orange-red underlayer painted surface of the previous decoration
Ref:	KIK-IRPA laboratory file (2 cross sections). See also Chapter Ten, Table B	

The lines in relief are rather coarser than those of model II.1. There is no specific adhesive layer, adhesion being provided by the red support layer. This is oily (or with a mixed binder) beneath the applied brocades, whereas the rest of the red surface has a tempera binder.

¹⁰ DE CLERCQ, SCHUDEL 1989-1990, vol. 0 (*Repertorium*: O2), vol. 2 (nos. 130-140); GHISDAL, VAN DIJCK 2002: 61-62. KIK-IRPA photographs: LX000658-LX000664.



II.2c
Applied brocade braid with a row of finials above

Model II.3

Location:	on an area of blue (possibly a coat of arms) patterning the red painted hanging on the east wall of chapel K9 (St Joseph Chapel) ¹¹
Type:	local
Design:	no data; brocade no longer traceable
Measurements:	no data
Relief:	no data
Striations:	no data
Condition:	badly damaged
Overpaint:	overpaints, several layers of limewash and other painting
Highlighting:	no data
Gilding:	no data
Tin foil:	no data
Filler:	waxy appearance
Adhesive:	no data
Support layer:	blue red painted surface of the previous decorations
Ref:	cross section: none

This kind of decoration is also visible on the east walls of the transepts (north transept, bay 5; south transept, bay 5).¹²

Model II.4

Location:	cloth of honour, north-west face of the south-east crossing pier ¹³
Type:	continuous
Design:	unidentifiable; brocade no longer locatable
Measurements:	no data
Relief:	striations, fine contour in relief, flat zones (mixed pattern)
Striations:	unidentifiable number, no longer accessible; wide, vertical, rectangular in section (interpretation based on photographs)
Condition:	badly damaged
Overpaint:	overpaints, several layers of limewash and other painting
Highlighting:	black on flat zones
Gilding:	none observed on the photographs
Tin foil:	degraded, grey
Filler:	brown, wax-resin appearance
Adhesive:	red-brown
Support layer:	orange white ground painted surface of the previous decoration (first phase)
Ref:	cross section: none



II.4
Examination window showing applied brocade
© Lode De Clercq

The applied brocades revealed via the examination window are very fragmentary. It has been suggested that the striations were produced with a comb of some sort, but this is unlikely given the presence of tin foil, which indicates the use of a mould. No trace of gold is visible on the photographs or mentioned in the restorer's report. Either the gold leaf has been entirely lost, or a coloured glaze was used to give the appearance of gilding.

¹¹ DE CLERCQ, SCHUDEL 1989-1990, vol. 0 (*Repertorium*: K9), vol. 5 (nos. 433, 434); GHISDAL, VAN DIJCK 2002: 62-64.

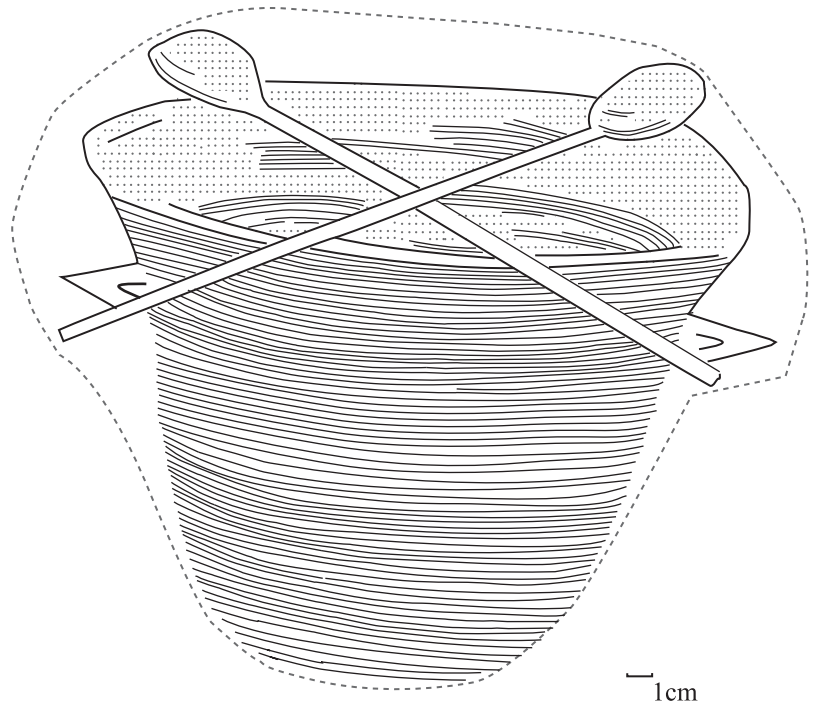
¹² DE CLERCQ, SCHUDEL 1989-1990, vol. 0, vol. 8 (nos. 655, 702, 707), vol. 9 (nos. 778, 779).

¹³ DE CLERCQ, SCHUDEL 1989-1990, vol. 0 (*Repertorium*: III-Viering), vol. 7 (nos. 597-606); DE CLERCQ 1996: 3.39.

Model II.5



II.5a
Examination window showing applied brocade



II.5b
Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	scattered across the red painted hangings on the walls of chapel K3 and the pillars of bay O3
Type:	local
Design:	miscellaneous: two-handled kettle with a pair of crossed spoons on top
Measurements:	extra large: c.27 x 27.1 cm
Relief:	curved parallel striations, contour, flat zones (mixed pattern)
Striations:	5-6 per cm
Condition:	locally worn
Overpaint:	overpaints, several layers of limewash and other painting
Highlighting:	black
Gilding:	brown transparent organic layer; fluoresces orange in UV light: resin(?); gold-imitating glaze(?)
Tin foil:	degraded, dark grey or grey-white
Filler:	none observed
Adhesive:	orange ochre with yellow and red particles, oily binder
Support layer:	bright red orange-red painted surface of the previous decoration
Ref:	KIK-IRPA laboratory file (2 cross sections)

The brocades on the pillars of the ambulatory are less damaged than those on the chapel walls, where the adhesion of the underlying layers is very poor, leaving the decorations fragile and crumbly. No filler has been used in these decorations, so whether they should be regarded as applied brocades or consigned to another category is debatable. The tin foil has been tamped into a mould to replicate the relief of a woven or embroidered textile, as occurs in the production of applied brocades, yet the absence of a fill material rather recalls flat tin foil applications like the chalices around the St John altar in the north transept.

The kettle motif reappears in the 'second red phase', which succeeds the one described here. The motif measures 22 x 19 centimetres. The kettle again has crossed spoons but also three little legs. At first sight it looks like painted paper, but analysis by the KIK-IRPA has revealed the presence of tin. The tin is flat and painted black.



12 TWO ANGELS SUPPORTING A CLOTH OF HONOUR

Bruges, St Saviour's Cathedral, St James Chapel

Wall painting, oil and tempera on lime mortar

Late 15th century

c.200 × 68 cm

1576: the wall painting is covered by a new decoration; the wall is subsequently limewashed at several different times

1935: rediscovery of the late-medieval wall painting

1993-1994: study, uncovering and restoration directed by Lode De Clercq¹

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/44-2004/08268

On the left side of the window in the west wall of the St James Chapel (the chapel of the dry-nappers) in Bruges Cathedral is a late-fifteenth-century wall painting depicting two angels unfolding a cloth of honour embellished with applied brocade decoration.² The unpainted area evidences the now lost sculpture that once stood on a console in front of it. There was a similar composition on the other side of the window. Wall painting, sculpture and an imitation of a textile wall hanging were synthesized in an original composition. This setting emphasizes the importance of the represented saint by creating for him or her a sacred space. The painting was carried out on a brown imprimatura. According to Lode De Clercq's observations it was executed in a technique resembling oil tempera,³ but this has not yet been confirmed by physico-chemical analysis.

The composition seems to reprise a theme that had already been used elsewhere in the church, particularly in the monumental wall painting on the west wall at the end of the north aisle. Here two angels spread out a red painted cloth of honour over a surface of at least 3 × 1.5 metres.⁴

¹ DE CLERCQ 1994: 17-20.

² BUYLE, BERGMANS 1994: 96-98; BERGMANS 1998: 301; GEELLEN, STEYAERT 2003: 65, 67; GEELLEN, STEYAERT 2005: 7.

³ DE CLERCQ 1994: 18.

⁴ DEVLIEGHER 1979: 145-148; DEVLIEGHER 1994: 198; BUYLE, BERGMANS 1994: 100-101. At the time of writing this mural was completely hidden behind a seventeenth-century painting on canvas, *The Descent of the Holy Spirit* by Jacob van Oost.

Model 12.1



12.1
Remains of applied brocade

Location:	cloth of honour
Type:	continuous
Design:	unidentifiable, too incomplete for reconstruction
Measurements:	unidentifiable, too incomplete for precise measurement
Relief:	striations, flat zones (Tegernsee type?)
Striations:	10-12 per cm; diagonal in the preserved areas
Condition:	badly damaged
Overpaint:	none
Highlighting:	unidentifiable, too damaged for certainty about either colour or location
Gilding:	no gold leaf; on the tin foil there is a translucent layer that fluoresces orange in UV light
Tin foil:	white-grey, very damaged
Filler:	brown, semi-transparent, waxy appearance, no additional thickening
Adhesive:	yellow ochre in colour
Support layer:	probably light brown imprimatura white ground
Ref:	KIK-IRPA laboratory file (2 cross sections). See also Chapter Ten, Table B

The cloth of honour is approximately 170 × 68 centimetres and is a good four metres above the present floor level. The area embellished with applied brocade has painted lateral borders (in green and black) and a painted fringe at the bottom. The imitation textile is badly damaged and it is no longer possible to tell what the motif or the dimensions of the tin foil sheets may have been. Practically all the layers on top of the tin foil have disappeared, as has the tin foil itself in many places. However, on some of the remaining traces a black layer which may correspond to the highlighting was revealed in a cross section. According to Lode De Clercq, on the other hand, it could be a red paint layer. Notably, there is a very thin brown organic layer on the tin foil, which fluoresces orange under UV light. As in other historical interiors this could be a yellow glaze or varnish that was applied to the tin foil as a less expensive alternative to gold leaf (see Chapter Three). Beneath the two-layered waxy brown filler is a granular ochre-coloured adhesive layer. The smooth white ground seems to have been coated with a light brown imprimatura before the relief decoration was glued on.⁵

⁵ This could not be confirmed, as the sample was not sufficiently complete. We thank Lode De Clercq, who made the sample available.



13 HOLY KINSHIP ALTARPIECE

Bruges, St Saviour's Cathedral, Our Lady of Loreto Chapel

Altarpiece, carved, polychromed and painted oak, painted wings

Bruges

No marks

Carving: early 16th century, painting of wings 1533

Open: 162 × c.390 × 19 cm

Closed: 162 × 193.5 × 19 cm (excluding cornice)

1891: unspecified restoration treatment, probably by Pieter De Wispelaere (altarpiece case and figures) and Robert De Pauw (wings)

1893: the frames of the wings are repainted; the new cornice may also have been applied at this time¹

1908: unspecified treatment by Reynaert-Heynkens

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/47-1998/6321

In the rectangular single-compartment altarpiece case the holy family of Christ is gathered around St Anne. Two registers of figures are linked by a 'family tree' rooted in the throne of the *mater familias*. In iconographic terms the literal stemming of the lineage from Anne is the female counterpart to the Tree of Jesse.² Horizontally-spreading branches interrupt the window tracery in the background and the vertical organization of the figures. The sculptor has displayed considerable creativity in portraying their garments and their various hats, headdresses and hairstyles.

Painted on the inside of the wings are four scenes from the lives of SS Hubert and Lucy. In the top right panel a group of pilgrims is welcomed by their patron saint, Judoc of Ponthieu and his brother, the monk. The royal crown encircling Judoc's arm alludes to his renunciation of the throne before going on pilgrimage to Rome and his withdrawal into the eremitic life on his return.³ On the outside of the wings are SS Norbert and Eleutherius on the left, and SS Giles and possibly Lambert on the right.⁴

The painting of the panels is attributed to the Bruges artist Jan Puseel. Painted on the frame of the right-hand wing is the year 1533. The carving must have been executed some time before this, in the early sixteenth century.⁵ Moreover, the altarpiece's measurements correspond more or less to the Bruges 'voet' or 'foot' (approximately 27.4 cm), being 6 × 7 feet. This, together with the style, suggests that the carving was the work of an atelier in or near Bruges. Little is known about sculpture from the Bruges production centres, either from archival sources or the few surviving examples. From the same region and period comes a sculptural group representing the consecration of a bishop – possibly the consecration of Augustine as bishop of Hippo⁶ – that was probably once part of a carved altarpiece.⁷ On the altar cloth in the background of that group the two tiny spots visible to the beholder are decorated with pieces of applied brocade, but they are too small to yield any useful information.

Each of the large figurative groups is carved from a single block of slab cut heartwood (oak), likewise the central tree trunk, including the Virgin and Child. The figures have been overpainted, but originally gold and blue predominated. The burnished gilding lay on orange bole, the matt gilding on a yellow mordant. Hems of garments were decorated with painted, punched or sgraffitoed motifs. Local applied brocades were economically but very evenly used throughout the composition, though they are now completely hidden by the overpainting.

Some elements, such as the banderoles and the gilded areas, had already been overpainted once before the complete repainting and gilding of the altarpiece in 1891. The palette employed in that repainting is closely in keeping with the original polychromy, albeit much less intense. The original painted decorations were closely adhered to, but relief decorations were omitted.

13a
Holy Kinship
Altarpiece,
early 16th century,
Bruges; Bruges,
St Saviour's
Cathedral

¹ DEVLIEGHER 1979: 90-91.

² DERVEAUX-VAN USSEL 1975: 86.

³ RÉAU 1958, III, 2: 763-764, LCI, 7, cols. 70-71. See also HAVERKAMP-BEGEMANN 1955: 185-198.

⁴ AUGUSTYNIAK, GEELEN, SERCK 1999: 46-47.

⁵ *Ibid.* 47.

⁶ NAMUR-GHENT 1995: 84-85; BRUGES 1998: 218.

⁷ DEVLIEGHER 1979: 91-92; KIK-IRPA file 2L/47-1994/5320.

Model 13.1



13b
Location of the applied brocades

Location:	garments of SS Anne, Hismeria, Emerencia, Elizabeth and Servatus, and Stolanus's purse (see ill.13b)
Type:	local
Design:	unidentifiable, too incomplete for reconstruction and no longer visible beneath overpaint
Measurements:	unidentifiable, too incomplete for precise measurement, inaccessible
Relief:	unidentifiable
Striations:	number unidentifiable, insufficient for identification
Condition:	badly damaged
Overpaint:	several overpaints
Highlighting:	red glaze(?)
Gilding:	gold leaf mordant
Intermediate layer:	thin, transparent organic layer; strong pale blue fluorescence in UV light
Tin foil:	grey
Filler:	brownish ochre in colour, semi-transparent, waxy appearance
Adhesive:	none observed
Support layer:	red glaze gold leaf orange bole(?) white chalk and size ground
Ref:	KIK-IRPA laboratory file (1 cross section)

The applied brocades, together with the rest of the original polychromy, were completely covered when the altarpiece was repainted in 1891. The original polychromy has been documented solely on the basis of small examination windows. The brocades appear to have been fixed on a layer of red-glazed burnished gilding, which suggests that they were local motifs. Both the filler and the tin foil can be clearly distinguished in the cross section. Unfortunately, the available samples are incomplete. As there is no gilding on the tin foil in this cross section it cannot be certain that the red glaze was the original highlighting. It might have been added later or as part of a subsequent undocumented overpainting.



13c
St Anne, Stolanus and Emerencia



14 ST CORNELIUS

Bruges, Memling in Sint-Jan – Hospitaalmuseum, inv. O.SJ157.V

Statue, carved and polychromed oak

Bruges

1390-1400

The applied brocades are found on the first overpainting dating from the late 15th century (probably the 1470s)

166 × 67 × 45.5 cm

1394: agreement between St John's Hospital and the Confraternity of St Cornelius giving the confraternity the use of a chapel, subject to undertaking conversion work¹

1472-1480: the archives mention major renovations to the hospital's church, which was adjacent to the Saint Cornelius Chapel²

1975: conservation-restoration at the KIK-IRPA

1981-1984: further study and conservation-restoration at the KIK-IRPA

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/47-1975/00910

This life-sized statue of St Cornelius was probably intended to stand on the altar of the hospital's St Cornelius Chapel, where the saint's relics were venerated, or in a niche above the chapel entrance.³ Cornelius was invoked against all kinds of sickness, including epilepsy, whooping cough and rickets.⁴ He was also the patron saint of domestic animals.

St Cornelius is majestically enthroned. He wears the papal tiara. In his right hand is a hunting horn, his very literal attribute; in his left is the *sudarium*, fixed to a pontifical cross whose upper part is now lost. The statue is frontally conceived, and its simple geometric structure gives it an authoritative solidity, although the resulting massive and hieratic effect is countered by the fluidity of the drapery and the richness of the polychromy.⁵ The statue comes from a Bruges workshop active in the late fourteenth century. Robert Didier attributes it to the Master of the Varlar/Coesfeld Altarpiece or his workshop. The polychromy of both the statue and the altarpiece (Münster, Westfälisches Landesmuseum für Kunst und Kulturgeschichte) from which this master takes his name appear to have been executed by the same atelier.⁶

During treatment in 1984 the many successive overpaints were removed with a scalpel to reveal the presently visible polychromy, which dates partly from the fourteenth and partly from the fifteenth century.⁷ The flesh tones, hair and throne retain their original fourteenth-century appearance. The polychromy of the attributes, vestments (cope, alb, stole) and throne, on the other hand, is from the fifteenth century. The major fifteenth-century modifications to the statue, which were probably carried out between 1472 and 1480, respected the distribution of the original colours, with gold, blue and red predominating. The refined applied brocade decoration of the stole dates from this time.

¹ DIDIER et al. 1984-1985: 100, 105; LOBELLE-CALUWE 1984: 12; DIDIER 1984: 21.

² DIDIER et al. 1984-1985: 100, 102.

³ Ibid. 102, 105.

⁴ Ibid. 99-100.

⁵ Ibid. 106-107.

⁶ Ibid. 116-117.

⁷ For the study and treatment in 1984 see *ibid.* 117-134.

Model 14.1



14.1a
St Cornelius's stole



14.1b
Applied brocade on St Cornelius's stole



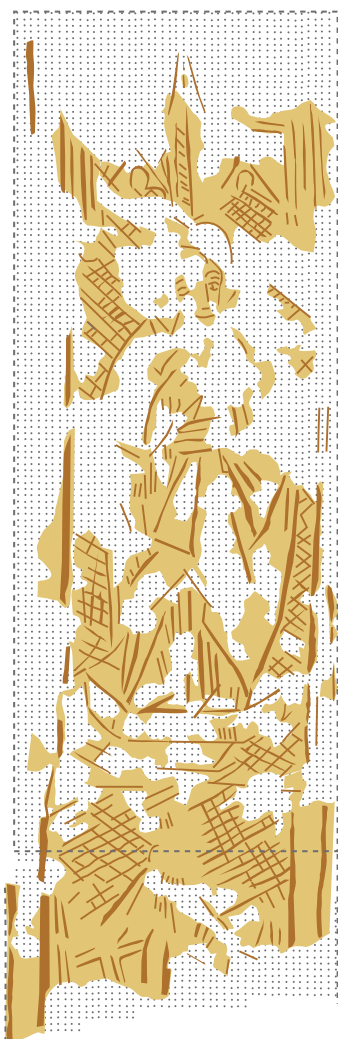
14.1c
Detail of the applied brocade

Location:	stole	Comparable applied brocades cat. 19.10 cat. 318.4 cat. 51.4 cat. 57.6
Type:	braid (orphrey)	
Design:	miscellaneous: nimbused standing saint beneath a stylized canopy against a hatched background	
Measurements:	medium: c.11.1 x 4.5 cm	
Relief:	hatched background, contour, flat zones (mixed pattern)	
Striations:	none	
Condition:	badly damaged	
Overpaint:	removed	
Highlighting:	none	
Gilding:	gold leaf beige mordant	
Intermediate layer:	brown, transparent, organic layer: fluoresces orange in UV light: resin(?); gold-imitating glaze(?)	
Tin foil:	degraded, grey	
Filler 1:	thin, brown-ochre in colour, translucent, waxy resin appearance	
Filler 2(?)/adhesive(?):	thick, ochre in colour, opaque, greasy appearance, thickened with pigments (lead white, orange and red particles)	
Adhesive(?):	thin, pale, slightly pink ochre, thickened with pigments	
Support layer:	- orange-red bole (along the edges) white chalk and size ground	
Ref:	KIK-IRPA laboratory file (2 cross sections). See also Chapter Ten, Table B	

The stole is covered with four whole applied brocades and four fragments to fill in the edges. Only two of the brocades are sufficiently well preserved to give an idea of the motif.

Myriam Serck-Dewaide, who examined the decoration, suggests the opaque beige layer is an adhesive,⁸ which may be the case, although it is so thick that it could also be considered as a second filler. The layer contains mostly linseed oil (see Chapter Ten) and was probably laid onto the reverse of the brocade before it was glued onto the statue. Another layer, slightly pink, which differs from the previous one, was applied on the white ground of the sculpture. This is possibly the adhesive (or a second adhesive?).

⁸ DIDIER et al. 1984-1985: 124.



14.1d
Archaeological drawing

Visible in the cross section, between the tin foil and the mordant used to fix the gold leaf, is a thin transparent brown layer with a bright orange UV fluorescence. This is probably a gold-imitating glaze, yet here it has been concealed beneath mordant gilding. This is not an isolated case: the polychromed stone *St Sylvester* in Brussels (cat. 31A.1), the *Life of the Virgin Altarpiece* in Ham-sur-Heure (cat. 44.1) and the immense applied brocade ‘hangings’ on the piers of the Church of Our Lady at Breda, for example, are similarly treated (see also Chapter Ten).⁹

Archival references indicate that the tin foil could be bought in its natural state or already coated with a gold-imitating glaze.¹⁰ In the case of the present sculpture of *St Cornelius* the artist probably used such ‘ready-gilded’ sheets, which would have been available in the workshop, subsequently covering them with real gold leaf.

Cornelius’s applied brocade-embellished stole mimics a liturgical orphrey.¹¹ The saint portrayed in the brocade is perhaps John the Evangelist, the hospital’s patron. The architectural setting is highly stylized, rendering any dating of the brocade by it highly insecure. The saint’s static position and the drapery of his cloak recall the figurative orphrey bordering *St Donatian’s cope* in Jan van Eyck’s *Virgin and Child with Canon Joris van der Paele*,¹² which could place the overpaint in the mid-fifteenth century. But this comparison does not exclude the possibility – indeed, the likelihood – that the applied brocade dates from the 1470s, when renovations were carried out in the hospital’s church (1472–1480).

Fifteenth- and sixteenth-century vestments and other church textiles are often decorated with standing saints beneath arcaded canopies. The embroidered bands on an antependium now in the KMKG-MRAH in Brussels provide a good example.¹³ Here the figures were embroidered separately then attached to the embroidered background.

Comparable applied brocades are present on the *Saluzzo Altarpiece* (cat. 19.10) and the *Pope* (cat. 31B.4), though in these two examples the figurative motif is not part of the relief pattern but simply painted onto the striated background.

⁹ FRIEDRICH 1999–2000: 167.

¹⁰ VANDAMME 1982.

¹¹ An earlier reconstruction was proposed in DIDIER et al. 1984–1985: 127 (fig. 13.a)

¹² Ibid. 124.

¹³ ERRERA 1905: 25–26 (cat. 34). See also KIK-IRPA photograph: B124676.



15 ST MARGARET OF ANTIOCH

Bruges, Gruuthusemuseum, inv. o.113.V

Statue, polychromed oak
Bruges or Brabant
c.1480
85.8 × 25.5 × 16 cm

1866: the statue is given on permanent loan to the Société des Antiquités de Bruges (now the Gruuthusemuseum) by Dr de Meester Deswaef¹
2008-2009: study of the polychromy at the KIK-IRPA

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/47-2001/07481

St Margaret stands with the dragon, her traditional animal attribute, beneath her feet. This apochryphal virgin martyr was extremely popular in the later Middle Ages. Purportedly the daughter of a pagan patriarch of Antioch, she was repudiated by her father for espousing Christianity and became a shepherdess, in which role she caught the eye of the prefect Olybrius who, finding both his amorous advances and his demands that she abandon her faith resolutely rejected, cast her into gaol. There, Jacobus de Voragine tells us in the *Golden Legend*, she overcame a variety of temptations, torments and encounters with the devil – most notably in the form of a dragon who swallowed her up, only to burst asunder when the virgin inside him shielded herself with the sign of the Cross (though De Voragine doubts this particular is to be taken seriously).²

With her slender, elongated silhouette, Margaret is a model of elegance. Her cloak hangs from her shoulders in graceful folds, its high, turned up collar increasing the figure's vertical emphasis. She lifts the hem of her dress, revealing the undergown beneath. The graphic aspect of her facial features, her finely-carved ringlets and the supple, linear drapery further enhance her distinction. The pearls on her crown and the brooches of her cloak evoke her name, Margaret, which in Latin means 'pearl'. Stéphane Vandenberghe, deputy conservator at the Stedelijke Musea Brugge, has identified several statues in private collections copied from this one.³

The statue is carved fully in the round. It has been severely attacked by woodworm where unprotected by the polychromy (the base is completely worm-eaten). The large and very visible split in the back that runs from the neck downwards appears to be original. The original polychromy is covered with two overpaints which partly repeat the original colours. The first overpainting used techniques very similar to those employed in the original polychromy and is therefore probably medieval. The second overpainting is coarser and was probably carried out in the nineteenth century.

The carved figure was first covered with a white ground then coated with a layer of orange everywhere except the face and hands, and the red and blue surfaces. There is no burnished gilding. The gown and hair are mordant gilded, as are the accessories (crown, necklace, and brooches) and some details of the dragon, these elements being further enlivened in places with red or green glaze. The undergown is covered with red-glazed silver leaf; the lining of the overgown is green (green glaze on silver), the lining of the cloak is blue (azurite on a black underlayer). The red cloak is painted with a red glaze over a bright matt red underlayer and ornamented with a line of gilding along the hem and lozenge-shaped local applied brocades with a fine foliate motif.



15a
St Margaret of Antioch, c.1480, Bruges or Brabant; Bruges, Gruuthusemuseum

15b
Reconstruction of the polychromy

¹ See the note and bibliography in BRUGES 1992: 26 (cat. 28); DETROIT 1960: 236-237.

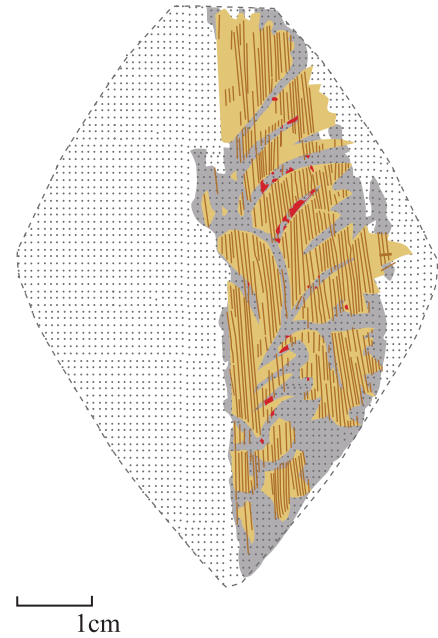
² LCI, 7, col. 494; DE VORAGINE 1993, I: 368.

³ BRUGES 1992: 26 (cat. 28).

Model 15.1



15.1a
Applied brocade on St Margaret's cloak



15.1b
Archaeological drawing

Location:	cloak
Type:	local
Design:	floral and foliate: dentate leaves untrimmed lozenge-shaped tinfoil sheet
Measurements:	medium: max. 7.6 x c.4.7 cm
Relief:	striations, very narrow flat zones (Tegernsee type)
Striations:	17-19 per cm; vertical
Condition:	badly damaged
Overpaint:	areas of encroaching red glaze matt red local patches of regilding
Highlighting:	red glaze on flat zones, occasionally overlapping onto the striations
Gilding:	gold leaf beige mordant
Tin foil:	degraded, black and white
Filler:	brown, translucent, wax-resin appearance, slightly thickened (a few black particles observed under the microscope)
Adhesive:	none observed
Support layer:	vivid matt red underlayer white chalk and size ground
Ref:	cross section: none

Some twenty local applied brocades ornament the surface of the cloak, both the sides and back. They were glued onto the matt red underlayer before it received its final red glaze, which was painted around the brocades. The filler, apparently wax resin, is whitish in places, probably from the degradation of the tin foil.

The applied brocades have been locally regilded using a fairly dark beige mordant (small patches are visible under the microscope). These are probably original 'repairs' or else a later addition prior to the repainting of the cloak in red. Applied fairly crudely, the red repainting generally skirts round the applied brocades.



15c
Back of the figure



16 ST URSULA

Bruges, Convent of the Sisters of St John

Statue, carved and polychromed oak

Bruges

No marks

1510-1520

65 × 25 × 17 cm

1992 and 2000: conservation by the Stedelijke Musea Brugge

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/47-2007/09673

Ever since it was carved this statue of St Ursula has belonged to the Bruges hospital sisters of St John. In the late 1970s it was displayed in the modern St John's Hospital; at present it is in the convent of the hospital sisters.¹

This St Ursula has not been portrayed with the customary arrow and palm branch. She appears as a tutelary saint, safeguarding beneath her sheltering cloak some of the companion-virgins who shared her martyrdom at Cologne, like her counterpart on the *St Ursula Shrine* of around 1400 (Bruges, Memling in Sint-Jan – Hospitaalmuseum). As befits a king's daughter she is crowned and richly attired in an ermine surcote whose deep armholes reveal her slender waist, and which inevitably evokes comparison with the painted Ursula on Hans Memling's later *St Ursula Shrine* (before 1489).

Hilde Lobelle-Caluwé suggests that the figure's somewhat outmoded dress perhaps represents an allusion to a Mater Misericordia.² She also notes its similarity to an image on an altarpiece wing by the Master of the St Ursula Legend that is some decades earlier (probably painted before 1482). The painting, now in the Groeningemuseum, shows a similar statue of St Ursula, worshipped on an altar.³ The combination of old and new elements incorporated in the present figure suggests that the sculptor drew his inspiration directly from an earlier model. The plump face with its high curving forehead, dainty rounded chin, well-marked eyebrows, and thick abundant tresses, link this St Ursula with other Bruges sculptures.⁴ Similar traits also hallmark certain sculptures from Limburg.⁵ This complex mix of stylistic elements makes the present St Ursula an interesting object of study, on which the last word has not yet been said. An enthroned *Virgin and Child* is so close in physiognomy, and in the execution of the hair and the crown, that an origin in the same milieu seems very strongly indicated. The walnut statue was shown in 1998 in an exhibition of Gothic wood sculpture from private collections in the Suermondt-Ludwig Museum in Aachen.⁶

The sculpture is virtually intact, having lost only some of the fingers. Except for the hands it was cut from a single block. No identifying marks were observed during the brief in situ examination. It has not yet been possible to make a detailed study of the polychromy, but the overpainting is largely faithful to the late-medieval canon, with a burnished gilt gown, ermine surcote, and azurite blue lining to the cloak. The front of the statue gives no hint of the excellently preserved applied brocade on the back of the cloak: the figure must certainly have been intended to be viewed in the round. The area between the applied brocade motifs is strewn with numerous little inverted cup-shaped decorations or cupules, and this is repeated on the lining of the saint's cloak and the garments of some of the holy virgins. The same ornamentation also occurs on the garments of the four carved patron saints on the corners of Memling's *St Ursula Shrine*.⁷

¹ We thank Robert Van Nevel, Stedelijke Musea Brugge, for bringing the sculpture to our attention.

² BRUGES 1998: 219.

³ Idem.

⁴ BRUGES 1976, II: 480; GHENT 1994: 210-211.

⁵ Noted by Christina Ceulemans, KIK-IRPA; see SINT-TRUIDEN 1990, II.

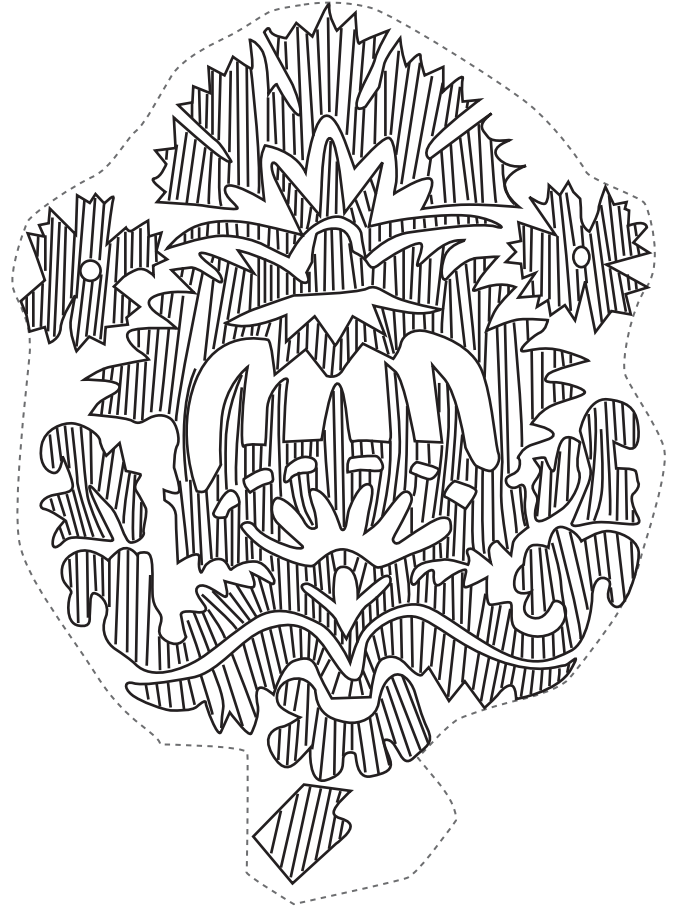
⁶ AACHEN 1998: 101-104.

⁷ BRUGES 1994, I: 144.

Model 16.1



16.1a
Applied brocade on St Ursula's cloak



16.1b
Reconstruction of the relief

1cm

Location:	back of St Ursula's cloak
Type:	local
Design:	floral and foliate: stylized pomegranate or artichoke with two dianthus-like flowers
Measurements:	medium: 9 x 11.2 cm
Relief:	striations, contour, flat zones in centre (bracts) and the hearts of the dianthus-like flowers (mixed pattern)
Striations:	10 per cm; vertical, convex in section
Condition:	well preserved
Overpaint:	matt black
Highlighting:	green glaze on flat zones in centre (bracts), red glaze on remaining flat zones
Gilding:	gold leaf no adhesive observed
Tin foil:	grey appearance
Filler:	orange-yellow, waxy appearance
Adhesive:	none observed
Support layer:	red glaze underlayer(?) (not observed) white chalk and size ground
Ref:	cross section: none

The elegant leaves curl around an artichoke-like centre with bracts, enclosed by dentate leaves and a double corolla. On either side of the artichoke are two dianthus-like flowers. In proportion to the covered surface the motif looks exaggeratedly large. The striations produce a pronounced relief.

Around the motif small inverted metal cupules (0.2 cm in diameter) have been applied, and these are also present on the garments of some of the holy virgins.

The sculpture has been largely overpainted and its examination was unfortunately too brief to allow any analysis of the complex layer structure. The black highlighting is presumably a later addition, as vestiges of green glaze were noted underneath. A detailed examination of the polychromy would undoubtedly bring new data to light.



16b
Back of the figure



17 CEILING DECORATION

Bruges, Oosterlingenhuis or Hanse House, council chamber

Architectural polychromy, tempera(?) on panel

Late 15th century

Joists: 220 × 12 cm

1988: conservation by the KIK-IRPA and the conservation team of the Flemish Heritage Institute (the Vlaams Instituut voor het Onroerend Erfgoed or VIOE)¹

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/44-88/4137

In 1478 work began on a new building for the German Hanse in Bruges.² By this time the city's economic and mercantile importance was already on the wane and Antwerp's was on the rise. The Oosterlingenhuis, as the new building was called, was designed by Jan vanden Poele,³ who was also concerned with the new ambulatory in the St Saviour's Church (later to become St Saviour's Cathedral) and the construction of the offices of the Brugse Vrije. The Hanse's new premises included a council chamber, offices and sleeping accommodation, as well as archive rooms and storage cellars. But the Oosterlingenhuis was vacated even before the Hanse moved its offices to Antwerp in 1553. In 1582 the tower went up in flames and in the following centuries the building underwent some drastic alterations. In 1866 it was remodelled in neo-Gothic style. Despite the many changes to the property, the restoration carried out in the nineteen-eighties uncovered a late-Gothic ceiling in the council chamber on the first floor (c.10 × 7 metres). The ceiling has three main beams and seventy-three secondary joists. No decoration survives on the main beams, but the mouldings and undersides of the secondary joists are painted in brown-red and blue (without a ground) with a strip of applied brocade running along the centre.⁴

¹ BUYLE 1993: 54-57.

² DEVLIEGHER 1986: 180-187; DEVLIEGHER 2000: 13-32.

³ FIRMIN 1948: 9.

⁴ GEELLEN, STEYAERT 2003: 69-70; GEELLEN, STEYAERT 2005: 14-15.

Model 17.1



17.1a
Applied brocade on the joists of the council chamber ceiling

Location:	on the undersides of the secondary joists
Type:	strip
Design:	floral and foliate pattern: stem with curling foliage
Measurements:	extra large: 5 x 30 cm
Relief:	striated foliage and stem, contour and veins in higher relief, flat background (mixed pattern)
Striations:	11-12 per cm; variously aligned
Condition:	well preserved
Overpaint:	none
Highlighting:	matt blue, granular (azurite) on flat background
Gilding:	gold leaf on foliage and stem ochre-coloured mordant
Tin foil:	grey
Filler:	white, opaque: gypsum and chalk
Adhesive:	ochre in colour, organic composition with a large proportion of calcium and sulphur
Support layer:	dark-grey layer with calcium, sulphur, a small amount of silicon, aluminium, potassium and traces of iron, according to KIK-IRPA file: 2L/44-88/4137
Ref:	KIK-IRPA laboratory file (1 cross section (lost))



17.1b
Archaeological drawing



17.1c
Reconstruction of the relief

Deeply striated acanthus leaves curl around a central stem. The principal veins and the outlines are in greater relief than the leaves themselves. The striations run in several directions, creating a great sense of plasticity and light and shade by suggesting alternately the front and back of the curling leaves.

The dimensions of the decoration are perfectly tailored to the width of the joists. In some places the relief is now flattened and erased. Only the acanthus leaves were gilded, the background around them was painted with a blue azurite-based paint. The motif occurs more often in late-fifteenth and early-sixteenth-century general ornamentation than as patterning on textiles. The different degrees of relief and the shadow areas evoke parallels with contemporary prints⁵ as well as recalling some border decorations of illuminated manuscripts made in the second half of the fifteenth century. The decoration can also be compared with the applied relief edgings of the imitated textile on the walls the choir of the Cathedral of Our Lady in Antwerp and on the piers in the choir of St Peter's Church in Leiden.⁶

These applied brocades are among the few examples in the catalogue that were produced using a dry fill material. The same basic elements – gypsum and chalk – recur in the filler, the adhesive layer and the ground.⁷ This method differs from that used to create the applied brocades in Antwerp Cathedral, where the pronounced relief was achieved with a wax mixture (cat. 11).

⁵ BERLINER, EGGER 1981, I: 27, 29-30, II, figs. 23, 36-38, 41.

⁶ FOCK 2003: 90-91.

⁷ A cross section was examined by the laboratory and described in the KIK-IRPA report (1988), but the sample itself has been lost.



18 ALTARPIECE OF THE VIRGIN

Brussels, Broodhuis-Maison du Roi, inv. 1.5.3

Altarpiece, carved and polychromed oak, painted wings

Carving: Brussels

Painted wings: Brussels, circle of the Master of the View of St Gudule or the Master of Affligem

Marks: compasses and plane, mallet and flower-shaped mark (sides of case), BRVESEL (lower edge of case)

1490-1500

105.7 × 97.3 × 16.5 cm

The provenance of the altarpiece is unknown. It was given to the Broodhuis-Maison du Roi by the Van der Straeten family¹

1958: conservation and restoration at the KIK-IRPA

1978-1980: conservation and restoration at the KIK-IRPA

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/47-1957/01504

This altarpiece's small size suggests it was probably meant for private devotion. The inverted T-shaped case, divided into three compartments, has two large and two small wings. The work's Brussels origin is attested by the official Brussels marks for the joinery, carving and polychroming. The flower stamped on the case is probably a workshop mark.

When open, the altarpiece presents various scenes from the Life of the Virgin and the Infancy of Christ: the Marriage of the Virgin is painted on the left wing; the Annunciation, Nativity, Journey of the Magi and the Circumcision fill the compartments; and the Adoration of the Magi is painted on the right wing. The six female saints on the exterior sides of the wings are in grisaille, standing on plinths so as to suggest unpainted stone statues, against the red background of the niches. Each carved scene is topped by an elegant trilobed and traceried arch supported by ornamented colonettes. The slender figures with their graceful, delicate gestures are enveloped in long draperies that conceal most of their bodies.

18a

Altarpiece of the Virgin, 1490-1500, carving: Brussels; painted wings: Brussels, circle of the Master of the View of St Gudule or the Master of Affligem; Brussels, Broodhuis-Maison du Roi

18b

Annunciation, the Virgin

18c

Location of the applied brocades

- Model 18.1
- Model 18.2
- Unidentified local applied brocades



18b



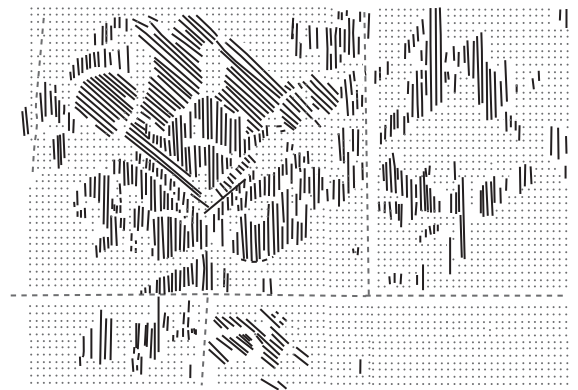
18c

¹ On this altarpiece see: DEVIGNE 1940; PÉRIER-D'ETEREN 1985: 156-157; DE BOODT 2005: 164-165; BRUSSELS 2000a: 20-25.

The carving was partially repolychromed and, in particular, regilded in the nineteenth century. The gilding was retouched with bronze paint before 1941. The most recent restoration, in 1978-1980, concentrated mainly on the carving, with the partial removal of the nineteenth-century overpaints and later retouches.

The polychromy that is visible today is partly original and partly overpainted. The regilded punchwork is mostly original, but some of the finer details have been lost with the regilding. The applied brocades of the bed curtain have also been regilded, while the local brocades on the robes of Joseph and God the Father have been recovered with red glaze and gilded locally. The local applied brocades ornamenting the blue surfaces of the garments are still covered with their overpainting.

Model 18.1



18.1a
Applied brocade on the bed hangings

18.1b
Archaeological drawing

Location:	bed curtain (Annunciation) (see ill. 18c)
Type:	continuous: staggered rows
Design:	floral and foliate, too incomplete for reconstruction
Measurements:	medium: too incomplete for precise measurement
Relief:	striations, flat zones (Tegernsee type)
Striations:	14 per cm; vertical, diagonal
Condition:	badly damaged
Overpaint:	gold leaf fairly thick mordant
Highlighting:	unidentifiable due to regilding
Gilding:	gold leaf very thin adhesive layer
Tin foil:	greyish appearance
Filler:	brown, translucent, no additional thickening
Adhesive:	no data due to regilding and incomplete cross section
Support layer:	white ground
Ref:	KIK-IRPA laboratory file (1 cross section)

The regilding, on a thick mordant, hides any original colour highlighting. It also blunts the details of the fine relief.

Model 18.2



18.2a
Applied brocade on Joseph's robe



1cm

18.2b
Archaeological drawing



1cm

18.2c
Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	Joseph's robe (Nativity); robe of God the Father (top of the central compartment) (see ill. 18c)	Identical applied brocades cat. 19.5 cat. 24.4 cat. G4.3 cat. S7.3 Possibly identical applied brocades cat. 22.1 Comparable applied brocades cat. 19.4 cat. 24.3 cat. 35.2 cat. 35.3 cat. F3.3 cat. S3.2 cat. S4.2
Type:	local	
Design:	floral and foliate: stylized thistle or pomegranate, lozenge-patterned centre surrounded by dentate leaves and double corolla, lily-like stem (pomegranate 2)	
Measurements:	small: c.4.5 x 3.5 cm	
Relief:	fully striated, leaf veins, contour(?) and centre latticing (relief pattern)	
Striations:	16 per cm; vertical, horizontal	
Condition:	badly damaged	
Overpaint:	gold leaf fairly thick mordant	
Highlighting:	no data	
Gilding:	no data	
Tin foil:	no data	
Filler:	no data	
Adhesive:	no data	
Support layer:	no data	
Ref:	cross section: none	

In the nineteenth century some elements of the altarpiece were completely repolychromed. In the process these applied brocades were regilded, reglazed, and where necessary reconstructed (simply in gold leaf), based on the traces of the original brocades whose badly damaged relief can still be made out. This motif – a lozenge-patterned centre with lateral dentate leaves and double corolla – occurs frequently in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries.

On the red bed coverlet in the Annunciation there is also an underlying relief with a lozenge motif. It is very badly damaged, however, and whether the motif corresponds to that of the robes of Joseph and God the Father is impossible to tell. The filler is translucent ochre with a waxy appearance, with black and white pigments.



19 SALUZZO ALTARPIECE

Brussels, Broodhuis-Maison du Roi, inv. 1.5.1 & 1.5.2

Double-winged altarpiece, in carved and polychromed oak, with painted wings
 Carving: Brussels, attributed to the Borman workshop or circle
 Polychromy: Master I*T
 Painted wings: signed ORLEI (probably Valentijn van Orley) on the edge of a garment
 Marks: compasses and plane (eight, case), BRVESEL (five, gilding on case)
 1500-1510
 Closed: 212 × 213 cm

18th century: altarpiece transferred from Mondovi to Saluzzo
 1891: purchased by the Duke of Dino
 1894: acquired by the City of Brussels
 Late 19th century: first(?) restoration work (local retouching)
 1953: in situ conservation treatment by the KIK-IRPA
 1965: treatment of the wings at the KIK-IRPA
 1973: in situ conservation treatment by the KIK-IRPA
 1988: in situ conservation treatment by the KIK-IRPA
 2008: in situ conservation treatment by the KIK-IRPA

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/47-1959/00054

This sumptuous double winged inverted-T-shaped altarpiece was commissioned by the Pensa di Mondovi di Marsaglia family to adorn the altar of the family chapel in the cathedral of Mondovi in Italy.¹ Their coats of arms are incorporated into the carving of the pierced frieze below the left and right-hand compartments of the central section, and also appear on the exterior sides of the painted outer wings, visible when the altarpiece was completely closed.

Open, the altarpiece reveals a traditional cycle of carved scenes depicting the Life of the Virgin and the Infancy of Christ. It begins with the Presentation of Mary in the Temple and the Marriage of the Virgin on the left wing. The Annunciation, Nativity and Circumcision take up the main compartment, and on the right wing are the Adoration of the Magi and the Presentation in the Temple. St John and St James the Great are enthroned in the narrow upper wing compartments that close over the projecting top of the centre section. The prophet Isaiah and the Cumaean Sibyl occupy the two little niches below the Nativity. The Life of St Joseph, which is painted on the reverse of the inner wings, would be seen when the retable was half-opened. It is based on the *Historie vanden heiligen patriarch Joseph: brudegom der maget maria ende opvoeder ons heren ihesu cristi*, printed by the Brethren of the Common Life in Gouda in the last decade of the fifteenth century, and illustrates various episodes in Joseph's life from birth to death, including some that are rarely portrayed. The Tree of Jesse with SS Luke and Matthew depicted on the exterior of the outer wings would be visible when the altarpiece was fully closed. The opening and closing of the wings depended on the liturgical calendar: the spectacular carving of the interior was revealed only on special feast days when the altarpiece was completely open.²

The clearly articulated and spaciouly conceived scenes are set beneath elaborate canopies of crocketed and pinnacled tracery complete with tiny statues, which occupy the full depth of the case. The conception of the scenes, the positioning of the figures and furniture and the distortions in the architectural canopy show that the carved part of the altarpiece was designed to be viewed from a specific point, in front of the centre compartment. The same kind of deliberate distortion can also be seen in other Brussels retables, such as the *Life of the Virgin Altarpiece* in the Church of Our Lady in Lombeek or the *Altarpiece of the Passion and the Life of St Denis* in the Church of St Denis in Liège.³ This question of the optical processes used to enhance the illusion of figures and objects fully in the round merits further study. Compared to the work of Jan II Borman, author

19a
Saluzzo Altarpiece,
 1500-1510, carving:
 Brussels, attributed
 to the Borman work-
 shop or circle; poly-
 chromy: Master I*T;
 painted wings: signed
 ORLEI (probably
 Valentijn van Orley)
 on the edge of a
 garment; Brussels,
 Broodhuis-Maison
 du Roi
 Inner wings closed
 © Broodhuis-Maison
 du Roi, Brussels

19b
Saluzzo Altarpiece
 Wings open
 © Broodhuis-Maison
 du Roi, Brussels

¹ PERGAMENI 1933; FICHEFET 1965; BRUSSELS 2000a: 12-19; DE BOODT 2005: 165-166.

² D'HAINAUT-ZVENY 2008: 233-235.

³ BRUSSELS 2000a: 138.

of the *St George Altarpiece* in the KMKG-MRAH in Brussels, the *Saluzzo Altarpiece* displays rounder volumes and softer shapes. The carving, which is generally attributed to a member of the Borman family or his workshop, is similar to that of the *Altarpiece of the Virgin* called Strängnäs III (cat. S5), the Skepptuna *Altarpiece of the Virgin* (cat. S2), the Vadstena *Altarpiece of the Glorification of the Virgin* (cat. S7), the *Holy Kinship Altarpiece* from Oudergem (cat. 24), and the Jäder *Altarpiece of the Life of the Virgin and the Passion*, though we cannot be sure that all these retables came from the same workshop, given the differences in treatment that close examination reveals.⁴

The altarpiece is remarkably well preserved. Very few elements have been reworked and the polychromy is original. The polychromy technique is traditional but executed with considerable panache. Burnished gold predominates. Often lavishly decorated with punchwork it alternates with matt gold, bright red (red glaze on silver) and matt blue (several layers of azurite? on a black underlayer); the colour range is further enhanced with green (glaze on silver and matt green), white, pale blue, pink and pale mauve. Applied brocades are everywhere. They embellish the hangings and other furnishing textiles, and apart from a few background figures every character wears at least one garment decorated with brocade.

No fewer than ten different models of applied brocade have been used on the altarpiece: two continuous, six local, one braid (albeit with five variant designs painted onto the fully striated and gilded strips of brocade) and one orphrey. These brocades occur on a whole range of altarpieces and carved groups, these being the *Holy Kinship Altarpiece* now in the KMKG-MRAH (cat. 24) and the retables in Sala (cat. S1), Uppsala (cat. S6), Vadstena (cat. S7), Västerås (cat. S9), Villberga (cat. S10) and Güstrow (cat. G4), all of which were made in Brussels, as well as the carved *Burial of St Andrew* group in Antwerp (cat. 7) and the *Three Angels* sold at Maastricht in 2007 (cat. PC1).⁵ In almost every case we find the continuous applied brocade (model 19.1), one of the local brocades (model 19.7) and the braid (model 19.9). These last two applied brocades also appear on a number of statuettes that were carved in Mechelen but polychromed in Brussels,⁶ among them the figures of the *Altarpiece of the Virgin with SS Barbara and Catherine* in Antwerp (cat. 6) and those of the *Altarpiece with Three Saints* now in a private collection (cat. 66).

The name of the polychromer responsible for this prodigious output is not known, but he can be identified by the monogram I*T that appears on the original bases of four statuettes carved in Mechelen and polychromed in Brussels.⁷ Comparison of the applied brocades has made it possible to form a corpus attributed to Master I*T. Given the number of altarpieces and statues identified in this way, Master I*T must have led a vast workshop.

⁴ GUILLOT DE SUDUIRAUT 2002a: 280-288; PÉRIER-D'ETEREN 2002: 318, 321, 326, 328-329.

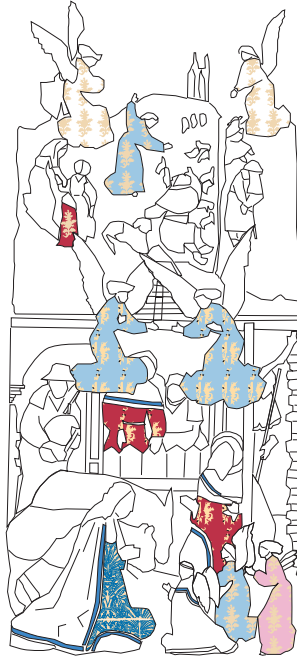
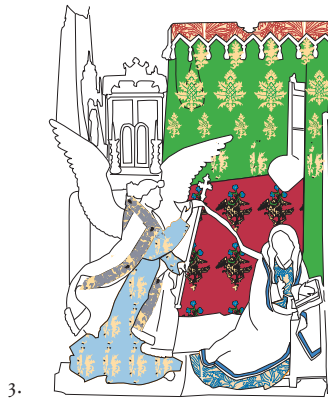
⁵ The similarities in the polychromy of these works have already been noted by CASCIO, LÉVY 2002: 136, 147, 155-159; GUILLOT DE SUDUIRAUT 2002a: 280-281; PÉRIER-D'ETEREN 2002: 322, 327.

⁶ GUILLOT DE SUDUIRAUT 2001a: 100.

⁷ The I*T mark is stamped into the ground on the bases of several statues, including a *St Elizabeth* belonging to an altarpiece in a private collection (cat. 66), a *St Roch*, also privately owned, and a *St Michael* now in the Louvre. The BRVESEL mark on the base of the *St Barbara* in the KMKG-MRAH in Brussels (cat. 29) is accompanied by traces of letters that could well be those of the I*T monogram. GUILLOT DE SUDUIRAUT 2001a: 23, 108-110 (cat. 16); GODENNE 1960: 121-122; *La sculpture des Pays-Bas méridionaux | Beeldhouwwerken van de Zuidelijke Nederlanden 2000*: 152-153 (cat. 71); GEELLEN, STEYAERT 2009b: 23-26.



19c
The Annunciation



4.

5.

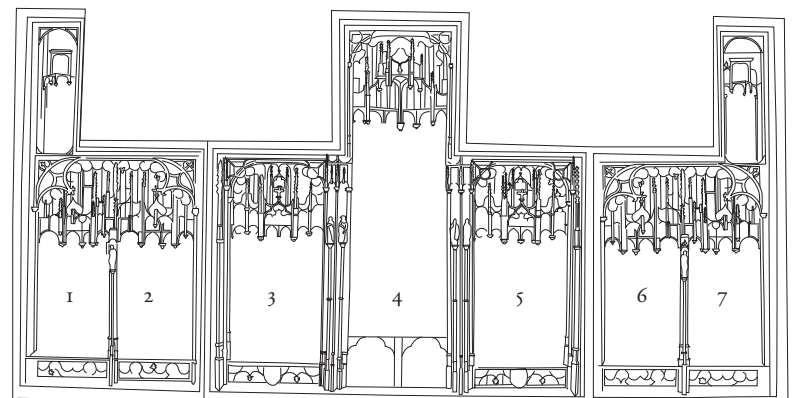


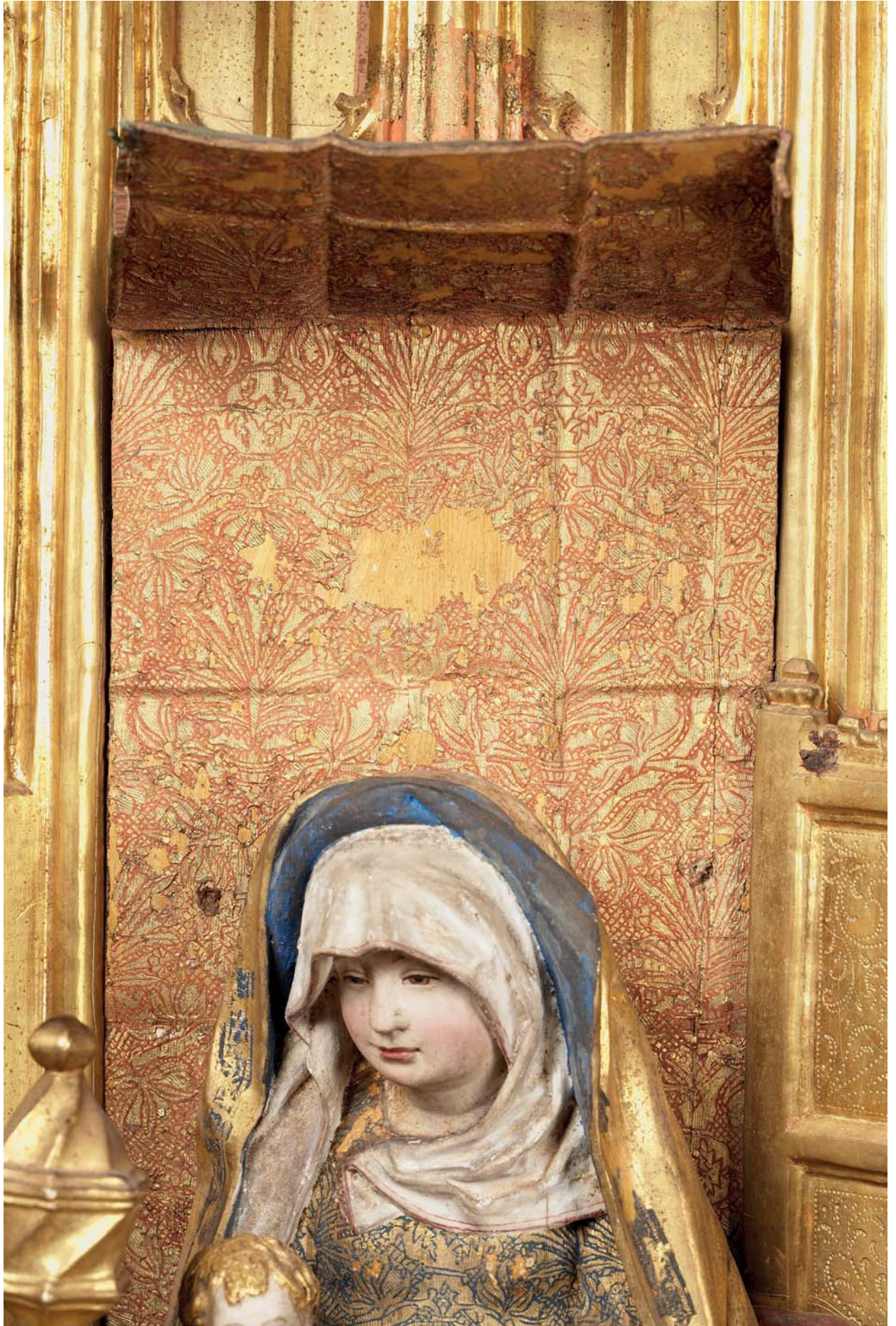
6.

7.

- 19d**
 Location of the applied brocades
- 1 Presentation of Mary in the Temple
 - 2 Marriage of the Virgin
 - 3 Annunciation
 - 4 Nativity
 - 5 Circumcision
 - 6 Adoration of the Magi
 - 7 Presentation in the Temple

		Model 19.1					Model 19.6
		Model 19.2					Model 19.7
		Model 19.3					Model 19.8
		Model 19.4					Model 19.9
		Model 19.5					Model 19.10





19.1a
Adoration,
the Virgin's cloth
of honour

Model 19.1



19.1b
Marriage of the Virgin, applied brocade on
the Virgin's gown



19.1c
Detail of the applied brocade



19.1d
Reconstruction of the applied brocade

1cm

Location:	see text (below) and ill. 19d	Identical applied brocades cat. 6.1 cat. 7.1 cat. 24.1 cat. 66.1 cat. G4.1 cat. S1.1 cat. S7.1 cat. S9.1 cat. S10.1	
Type:	continuous: straight rows		
Design:	floral and foliate: posy of flowers and lanceolate leaves in a basket inside an ogival framework of flowering stems, on a latted background		
Measurements:	medium: 11-11.3 x 6.5 cm		
Relief:	striations, contour and laticing in slightly higher relief (relief pattern)		
Striations:	16-20 per cm (vertical), 12-18 per cm (diagonal), convex in section		
Condition:	well preserved		
Overpaint:	none	Comparable applied brocades cat. 47.1	
Highlighting:	red glaze (lake) on contour and laticing vivid matt red underlayer		matt azurite blue on contour and laticing bright blue underlayer
Gilding:	gold leaf very thin transparent adhesive layer (egg white?, animal glue?, garlic juice?, beer?)		
Tin foil:	degraded, grey		
Filler:	very thin, beige ochre in colour, translucent, wax-resin appearance		
Adhesive:	orange-ochre (lead white, ochre, quartz)		
Support layer:	white chalk and size ground, slightly pigmented		
Ref:	KIK-IRPA laboratory file (3 cross sections). See also Chapter Ten, Table B		

The design of this applied brocade consists of a posy of flowers and lanceolate leaves in a basket inside an ogival framework of flowering stems on a latticed background.⁸ It occurs in every scene of the altarpiece.⁹ Highlighted in blue, it appears consistently on the Virgin's robe, and also on the cushion on which the Christ Child is laid in the Circumcision, and the doublet of a witness in the Marriage and the Presentation in the Temple. The same brocade, highlighted in red, conspicuously covers the robes of Joachim and the high priest in the Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple, two of the three magi in the Adoration, the high priest in the Marriage of the Virgin, the Circumcision, and the Presentation, and, more discreetly, the garments of a witness in each of the two last-mentioned scenes. It also embellishes the edge of the canopy in the Annunciation and the Virgin's cloth of honour in the Adoration.

These applied brocades are extremely thin; some even have no fill material. Where a filler is used, cross sections show a thin translucent beige ochre layer with a waxy appearance. In order not to reduce the relief, the gold leaf has been applied to the tin with a thin transparent film hardly thicker than the leaf (either egg white? animal glue? garlic juice? or beer?) instead of mordant.

The coloured highlights, which are either blue or red and were painted freehand, closely follow the contour lines that emphasize the design of the brocade. Remarkably, given the small size of the tin foil sheets, the highlights consist of two layers: first an underlayer (vivid matt red or pale blue) then the final line (red glaze or azurite blue). This was probably intended to produce a stronger line that would stand out more forcefully against the gilded background, thus enhancing the illusion of the decoration and its tactile effect. The same refined and painstaking process was also employed

for the applied brocades on the *Holy Kinship Altarpiece* (cat. 24.1), the Antwerp *Passion Altarpiece* (cat. 5.1 and 5.2) and the *Virgin and Child* by the Master of the Piétrebais Madonna (cat. 48.1).

The brocades must have been fully gilded and painted before application. The precision required would have made the painting of the highlights difficult if not impossible once the brocades were on the sculptures, especially in areas such as the depth of a fold.

When the sheets of relief are placed side by side the pattern created produces a most convincing imitation of sumptuous cloth of gold. We have not as yet identified the textile which presumably served as a model, but it was probably a lampas, brocatelle or velvet. There is, in fact, a very similar pattern on a late-fifteenth-century Florentine lampas weave chasuble now in London (Victoria and Albert Museum, inv. 8345-1863).¹⁰ The Museu Tèxtil i d'Indumentària in Barcelona displays a piece of brocatelle from the first half of the sixteenth century whose pattern is also similar to that of the present applied brocade.¹¹

This applied brocade seems to be almost ubiquitous on the works attributed to the I*T Master. Probably produced with the same or very similar moulds, it can be identified on a whole range of altarpieces dated between 1500 and 1522.



19.1e
Chasuble in woven silk, late 15th century, Florence; London,
V&A
© V&A, London

⁸ We thank biologist Ruth Walther for pointing out the inclusion of a flower (five petaloid sepals, one spurred), possibly larkspur (*Delphinium consolida*).

⁹ We also thank Christine Cession and Erika Rabelo of the KIK-IRPA Polychromed Wood Sculpture Workshop and interns Sophie Barton, Vincent Cattersel and Erika Santos for the valuable insights they shared with us at the time of the conservation treatment in May 2008.

¹⁰ MONNAS 2008: 64-65. Lisa Monnas describes the technique as 'lampas weave, continuous silver-gilt *filé* and yellow silk pattern wefts tied by a separate binding warp, on a red satin ground (the red ground weave forms the outline of the pattern)'.

¹¹ Silk, linen, gold and silver brocatelle, inv. MTIB 23.734. See also the copes, chasubles and dalmatics in BERNE-STRASBOURG 2001: 150-155 (cats. 11-14), and Chapter Nine in this publication.

Similar design but different technique: panel painting

Colijn de Coter and his workshop used the same textile pattern in a whole series of paintings. The design seems to have made its first appearance around 1480-1490 on the painted wings of the *Passion Altarpiece* called Strängnäs I, before it was adapted for use as applied brocade by Master I*T.



19.1f
Passion Altarpiece
called Strängnäs I
(detail), 1480-1490,
Brussels; Strängnäs,
Cathedral (cat. S3)
Annunciation
(exterior side of
wing), Gabriel's
dalmatic

- Bocholt, St Lawrence's Church, *Life of the Virgin Altarpiece*, painted wing panels attributed to the workshop of Colijn de Coter, 1500-1510. Interior and exterior sides: St Lawrence's dalmatic in the various scenes.¹²
- Mechelen, St Rombaut's Cathedral, two panels in the *Legend of St Rombaut* series, 1500-1510, Master of the Guild of St George (who collaborated with Colijn de Coter in the production of this series): the antependium in *St Rombaut heals Helinart* (panel 19), and tunic of the praying knight in the *Healing of the Antwerp Knight* (panel 20).¹³
- Orsoy, St Nicholas Church, *Altarpiece I*, c.1500, painted wing panels attributed to Colijn de Coter. Exterior side: St Ambrose's cope.¹⁴
- Orsoy, St Nicholas Church, *Altarpiece II*, c.1500, painted wing panels attributed to the workshop of Colijn de Coter. Interior side: Pontius Pilate's robe and the garment of a figure in the *Ecce Homo* / exterior side: dalmatics of two deacons in the *Death of St Nicholas*.¹⁵
- Schleiden, Schloßkirche, *Last Supper* and *Ecce Homo*, c.1515-1520, painted wing panels attributed to the workshop of Colijn de Coter. Interior side: Pontius Pilate's tunic in the *Ecce Homo*.¹⁶
- Strängnäs, Cathedral, *Passion Altarpiece* called Strängnäs I, 1480-1490, Brussels (cat. S1), painted wings attributed to Colijn de Coter and workshop. Exterior of the outer painted wings: Gabriel's dalmatic in the *Annunciation* / interior of the outer painted wings: vestment of the priest in the *Circumcision* / exterior of the inner painted wings: tunic of the elder kneeling magus.¹⁷
- Veckholm, Parish Church, *Passion Altarpiece*, c.1512-1514, Brussels. Exterior of the upper wings: St Augustine's cope / interior of main wings: Pilate's tunic in *Christ before Pilate*.¹⁸

With the exception of the panels from the *Legend of St Rombaut* series, the above are all painted wings of altarpieces: in none of these altarpieces, however, does the pattern appear in the polychromy of the carved figures. Conversely, some of the altarpieces whose polychromy is attributed to Master I*T and includes this applied brocade have wings that were painted by Colijn de Coter or his workshop (cat. S7, cat. S10), but the pattern appears in none of them.

¹² ANTWERP 1993: 86-90. The carved parts of the altarpiece are dated 1525-1530.

¹³ PÉRIER-D'ETEREN 1975: 113-132, esp. 129. KIK-IRPA photographs: KN7304, KN7305, B216458, B231917.

¹⁴ PÉRIER-D'ETEREN 1985: 108, figs. 236, 240.

¹⁵ Ibid. 109, figs 243b, 280; PÉRIER-D'ETEREN 1984: 168 (fig. D35b).

¹⁶ PÉRIER-D'ETEREN 1985: figs. 28, 281.

¹⁷ Ibid. 76, figs. 92, 130, 155a, 159, 161c. KIK-IRPA photographs: M64517, M64520, M64521, M64529.

¹⁸ PÉRIER-D'ETEREN 1984: 162 (fig. E30), 169 (fig. D35a), 170 (figs. D36, E38). KIK-IRPA photographs: M64148, M64153. On this altarpiece see: GUILLOT DE SUDUIRAUT 2002a: 297, who dates it c.1512-1514, and DE BOODT 2005: 221, who dates it 1500-1510.

Similar design but different technique: tapestry

The pattern is also found in a series of tapestries dated around 1500 and 1510 that were designed by Colijn de Coter, or which have Coteresque features. It also appears in slightly later Brussels tapestries designed by other artists, including Bernard van Orley. It would be interesting to understand how the patterns were passed from one workshop to another – by the creator, the cartoon maker, the weaver? – but this is beyond the scope of the present study.



19.1g
Lamentation over the Dead Christ (detail), 1510, Brussels; Brussels, KMKG-MRAH
Figure in the left foreground

- Brussels, KMKG-MRAH, *Lamentation over the Dead Christ*, 1510, Brussels: robe of the standing male figure in the left foreground. The composition is influenced by a Pietà by Perugino but the style is similar to that of Colijn de Coter or Quentin Metsys.¹⁹
- Brussels, KMKG-MRAH, *Legend of Our Lady of the Zavel*, 1518, Brussels: robe of Margaret of Austria. Designed by Bernard van Orley while still influenced by Jan van Roome.²⁰
- Brussels, KMKG-MRAH, *Christ before Pilate*, first quarter of the sixteenth century, Brussels: garment of the figure in the foreground, slightly to the right of Pilate.²¹
- La Granja de San Ildefonso, *Romulus Gives the Laws to the Roman People*, c.1525-1530, Brussels, cartoons in the style of Bernard van Orley: Romulus's mantle.²²
- Madrid, Palacio Real, *Devotion to Our Lady* series, before 1502, Brussels, probably woven in the workshop of Pieter van Edingen (also known as Pieter van Aelst and as Pierre d'Enghien). Compositions attributed to the Master of the Gold Fabrics. The faces of the figures and many decorative details also occur in the work of Colijn de Coter.²³ Tapestry 1: overgown of the woman at the top right; tapestry 4: robe of the male figure showing the portrait at bottom left.
- Madrid, Palacio Real, *Life of the Virgin* series, 1509, Brussels, compositions attributed to Colijn de Coter and workshop. Tapestry 1: Christ's robe and the gown of the woman kneeling in the foreground of the central scene; tapestry 2: gown of the woman standing just behind Jesus.²⁴
- Madrid, Palacio Real, *Life of St John the Baptist* series, 1515-1520, Brussels. Pieter van Edingen (also known as Pieter van Aelst and as Pierre d'Enghien) was very likely involved in the production of two of the tapestries.²⁵ Tapestry 1 and 2: Zacharias's vestment; tapestry 4: garment of the standing male figure in the right foreground.
- Madrid, Palacio Real, *Story of David and Bathsheba*, c.1515, Brussels, Pieter de Pannemaker(?), cartoons attributed, perhaps erroneously, to Jan van Roome: garment of the king's emissary.²⁶
- Madrid, Palacio Real, *Moralities* series c.1520, Brussels, attributed to the workshop of Pieter van Edingen (also known as Pieter van Aelst and Pierre d'Enghien). Tapestry 3: *Grace proclaims the Honours*: cloak of the enthroned figure personifying Grace.
- Naples, Palazzo e Galleria nazionale di Capodimonte, *Battle of Pavia* series, *Francis I is Taken Prisoner*, c.1525-1531, Brussels, after Bernard van Orley: armour of Francis I.²⁷
- Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, *Life of St Paul Tapestries*, *St Paul Preaching at Philippi*, c.1535, Brussels, based on the cartoons by Pieter Coecke van Aelst: surcote of the woman at the centre of the composition.²⁸

¹⁹ BRUSSELS 1976: 73-75.

²⁰ Ibid. 94-99.

²¹ Ibid. 67-73.

²² MECHELEN-MUNICH-AMSTERDAM 1993: 88-89.

²³ BRUSSELS 2000b: 20-23 (cats. 3, 4).

²⁴ Ibid. 24-29 (cat. 5, cat. 6).

²⁵ Ibid. 42-61 (cats. 10, 11, 13).

²⁶ Ibid. 32-37 (cats. 7, 8).

²⁷ JOUBERT, LEFÉBURE 1995: 120-121.

²⁸ SCHNEEBALG-PERELMAN 1982: 204 (fig. 129).

Model 19.2



19.2a
Presentation in the Temple, altarpiece with curtains



19.2b
Annunciation, applied brocade on the altarpiece curtains

Location:	altarpiece curtains (Presentation in the Temple) (see ill. 19d)	Comparable applied brocades cat. 5.1
Type:	continuous	
Design:	geometric	
Measurements:	medium: 8.5 cm high	
Relief:	fully striated with punched lozenges (relief pattern)	
Striations:	16 per cm; horizontal	
Condition:	badly damaged	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	azurite blue in the punched lozenges pale blue underlayer (with lead white)	
Gilding:	gold leaf fairly thick transparent layer (egg white?, garlic-juice?, beer?)	
Tin foil:	partially degraded, grey, brown or silver aspect	
Filler:	beige ochre, translucent, wax-resin appearance	
Adhesive:	apparently none	
Support layer:	pinkish white chalk and size ground	
Ref:	KIK-IRPA laboratory file (1 cross section)	

An applied brocade similar to this one enriches Christ's robe in the *Passion Altarpiece* in Antwerp. Here too the highlighting is applied in two layers, though in the Antwerp work the surface layer is matt purple (cat. 5.1).

There are fabrics of this kind – cut velvet with a pattern weft in gold thread – in the KMKG-MRAH in Brussels²⁹ and the Musée National du Moyen Age in Paris.³⁰ Here, however, the design is reversed, with gilded roundels on a coloured ground rather than coloured roundels on a gilded ground.

²⁹ ERRERA 1907: 89, 90.

³⁰ DESROSIERS 2004: 318-320 (cats. 170, 171).

Model 19.3



19.3a
Annunciation, applied brocade on the bed cover



19.3b
Archaeological drawing

Location:	red bed cover (Annunciation), cushion of the Virgin's throne (Adoration of the Magi) (see ill. 19d)
Type:	local
Design:	animal: spread-winged eagle gripping a branch with a flowering twig in its beak
Measurements:	medium: 8.7 x 6.5 cm
Relief:	striations, on branch only; eagle and twig modelled in relief (relief pattern)
Striations:	15 per cm; vertical
Condition:	well preserved
Overpaint:	none
Highlighting:	green on twig, blue with lighter accents on petals
Gilding:	gold leaf adhesive
Tin foil:	degraded, grey
Filler:	very thin, beige ochre in colour, translucent, wax-resin appearance
Adhesive:	apparently none
Support layer:	red glaze (in two layers) silver leaf translucent white (ground impregnated by adhesive?) white chalk and size ground
Ref:	KIK-IRPA laboratory file (1 cross section)

This applied brocade is particularly refined. The eagle with a twig in its beak recurs often in fourteenth- and fifteenth-century textiles. There is a velvet with a motif very similar to this one in the KMKG-MRAH in Brussels: an eagle with wings spread perches on the head of what appears to be a horse. The eagle has one end of a twig in its beak; the horse has the other end in its mouth. The motif is picked out red and white against the green background.³¹ The Musée historique des tissus de Lyon³² has a textile fragment with a virtually identical design. Isabelle Errera dates the Brussels cloth to the fifteenth century; the Lyon fragment is apparently late-fourteenth-century Italian.

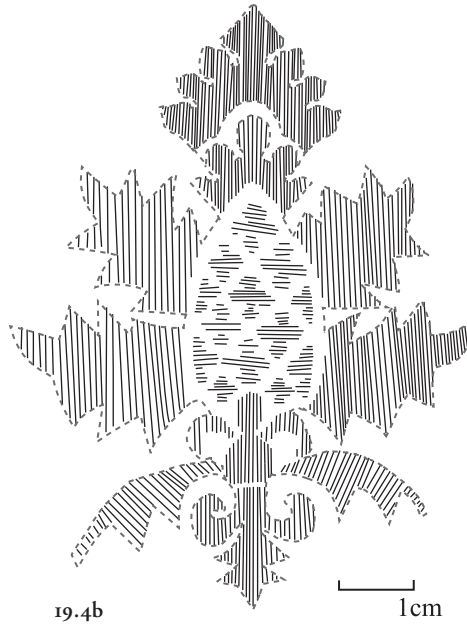
³¹ ERRERA 1907: 98 (cat. 110).

³² ORSI LANDINI 1993: 24.

Model 19.4



19.4a
Annunciation, applied brocade
on the bed hanging



19.4b



19.4c

Location:	bed hanging, third row up from the bed (Annunciation) (see ill. 19d)	Comparable applied brocades cat. 18.2 cat. 19.5 cat. 22.1 cat. 24.3 cat. 24.4 cat. 35.2 cat. 35.3 cat. F3.3 cat. G4.3 cat. S3.2 cat. S4.2 cat. S7.3
Type:	local	
Design:	floral and foliate: double corolla above a quatrefoil-filled centre rising from a stem resembling an inverted fleuron; two pairs of dentate leaves flank the centre, one pair of leaves sprouts from the stem (pomegranate 1)	
Measurements:	medium: 8.2 x 6.5 cm	
Relief:	striations, flat zones, excision (between the corollas) (Tegernsee type)	
Striations:	15-18 per cm; vertical, horizontal	
Condition:	well preserved	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	green glaze on flat zones and veins	
Gilding:	gold leaf very thin translucent layer of organic material	
Tin foil:	degraded, grey	
Filler:	beige ochre in colour, translucent, wax-resin appearance, thickened with pigments	
Adhesive:	none	
Support layer:	green glaze (verdigris) silver leaf translucent white (ground impregnated by adhesive?) white chalk and size ground	
Ref:	KIK-IRPA laboratory file (1 cross section). See also Chapter Ten, Table B	

The bed hanging is ornamented with four rows of local applied brocades. In addition to the large pomegranates (model 19.4) on the third row up from the bed there is a row of similar but smaller pomegranates (model 19.5) on the hanging plus two rows of thistle-like applied brocades (models 19.6, 19.7).

Although at first sight model 19.4 seems to be made up of several separate elements it is in fact a single sheet, trimmed around the outside edge. There are quite a few comparable applied brocades in the catalogue as the motif is fairly common, though usually on a rather smaller scale, with a more schematically rendered stem. It forms the centre of a larger motif, a multifoil rosette in contrasting greens that is part of the overall patterning of the bed hanging. The two tones of green were most likely achieved by the use of a thicker binding medium to produce the darker colour on the burnished silver leaf.

The textile imitated here is probably a green damask or velvet with a pile of two different heights, brocaded with gold.³³ There is a similar hanging on the reverse of one of the panels of the *Trinity Altar* by Hugo van der Goes (Holyrood Palace, Royal Collections, on loan to the National Gallery of Scotland, Edinburgh). Margaret of Denmark, Queen of Scotland, commended by St George, kneels before a curtain patterned with at least three different types of pomegranate (or stylized thistle?).

19.4b
Reconstruction
of the relief

19.4c
Reconstruction of
the polychromy
of the bed hanging

³³ WAILLIEZ 2002: 126-127.

Model 19.5



19.5a
Annunciation, applied brocade
on the bed hanging



19.5b
Archaeological drawing



19.5c
Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	bed hanging, second row up from the bed (Annunciation) (see ill. 19d)	Identical applied brocades cat. 18.2 cat. 24.4 cat. G4.3 cat. S7.3 Possibly identical applied brocades cat. 22.1 Comparable applied brocades cat. 19.4 cat. 24.3 cat. 35.2 cat. 35.3 cat. F3.3 cat. S3.2 cat. S4.2
Type:	local	
Design:	floral and foliate: double corolla above a lozenge-patterned centre rising from a stem formed of small lily-like elements; two pairs of dentate leaves flank the centre, one pair of leaves sprouts from the stem (pomegranate 2)	
Measurements:	small: c.4.5 x 3.5 cm	
Relief:	fully striated, leaf veins, contour and centre latticing (relief pattern)	
Striations:	16 per cm; vertical, horizontal	
Condition:	well preserved	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	green glaze on flat zones and veins	
Gilding:	gold leaf adhesive not observed	
Tin foil:	degraded, grey	
Filler:	very thin, beige ochre, translucent, wax-resin appearance	
Adhesive:	none	
Support layer:	green glaze (verdigris) silver leaf translucent white (ground impregnated by adhesive?) white chalk and size ground	
Ref:	KIK-IRPA laboratory file (1 cross section) (see model 19.4)	

These little pomegranates form a row below a row of similar but larger pomegranates with a different stem (model 19.4). In fact this motif could equally well be a stylized thistle, the lozenge-patterned centre corresponding to the bracts and the double corolla to the flower head. As mentioned above (model 19.4), the richly decorated imitation textile is probably meant as a green damask or a velvet with a pile of two different heights, brocaded with gold. This motif with its double corolla, lozenge-patterned centre and dentate leaves is fairly common, albeit with variant stems.

Model 19.6



19.6a
Nativity, applied brocade on the shepherdess's dress



19.6b
Annunciation, applied brocade on the bed hanging



19.6c
Reconstruction of the relief

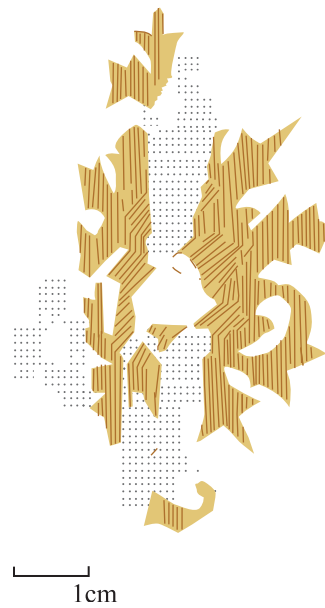
Location:	bed hanging, top row (Annunciation); angels' albs and shepherdess's dress (Nativity) (see ill. 19d)					Identical applied brocades cat. S6.3 cat. S7.4 Possibly identical applied brocades cat. 24.5 Comparable applied brocades cat. 21.2
Type:	local					
Design:	floral and foliate: stylized thistle leaf or acanthus leaf					
Measurements:	small: c.4.7 x 2.8 cm					
Relief:	striations (relief pattern)					
Striations:	16 per cm; variously aligned					
Condition:	well preserved					
Overpaint:	none					
Highlighting:	none, occasional transparent orange traces (original varnish?)					
Gilding:	gold leaf adhesive not observed					
Tin foil:	degraded, grey					
Filler:	beige ochre, translucent, wax-resin appearance					
Adhesive:	none(?) (there are a few traces of a transparent yellow substance)					
Support layer:	green glaze silver leaf translucent white (ground impregnated by adhesive?)	red glaze silver leaf translucent white (ground impregnated by adhesive?)	white	light blue	pink	
Ref:	white chalk and size ground KIK-IRPA laboratory file (2 cross sections of the support layers)					

As mentioned above (model 19.4), the bed hanging is probably intended as a green damask or a velvet with a pile of two different heights, brocaded with gold. The fabric that inspired the angels' albs and shepherdess's dress is probably a silk brocaded with gold thread.

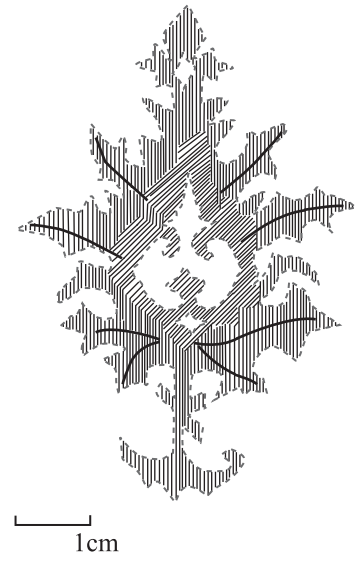
Model 19.7



19.7a
Annunciation, applied brocade on the bed hanging



19.7b
Archaeological drawing



19.7c
Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	bed hanging, bottom row (Annunciation); garments in the various scenes (see ill. 19d)					Identical applied brocades cat. 6.2 cat. 28.1 cat. 29.1 cat. 66.2 cat. G4.2 cat. S1.2 cat. S6.2 cat. S7.2 cat. S9.2 cat. S10.2 cat. PC1.1
Type:	local					
Design:	floral and foliate: stylized thistle leaf or acanthus leaf					
Measurements:	small: c.6.5 x 4.5 cm					
Relief:	striations, excision (relief pattern)					
Striations:	14-18 per cm; variously aligned					
Condition:	well preserved					
Overpaint:	none					Possibly identical applied brocades Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, <i>Female Saint</i> (1965.2230) London, V&A, <i>St Barbara</i> (A.107-1937) Paris, Louvre, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (RF 1567) Paris, Louvre, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (RF 1788) Paris, Louvre, <i>St Margaret</i> (RF 2572) Paris, Musée Marmottan, <i>St Barbara</i> (622d) Private collection, <i>St Gudule</i> (formerly in the Kofler-Truniger collection) Private collection, <i>St Roch</i> (formerly in the Kofler-Truniger collection)
Highlighting:	none, occasional transparent orange traces (original varnish?)					
Gilding:	gold leaf very thin adhesive layer					
Tin foil:	degraded, grey					
Filler:	ochre in colour, translucent, wax-resin appearance, sometimes none					
Adhesive:	absent					
Support layer:	green glaze silver leaf translucent white (ground impregnated by adhesive?)	red glaze silver leaf translucent white (ground impregnated by adhesive?)	bright blue (azurite) lighter bright blue (azurite) black underlayer	light blue	pink	
	white chalk and size ground					
Ref:	KIK-IRPA laboratory file (3 cross sections)					
	Comparable applied brocades cat. 24.2					

This applied brocade, which occurs in many places on the altarpiece, is only partially identifiable owing to its very poor state of preservation. The motif is complex and initially we thought that there were two distinct models of similar size. But after reviewing all the applied brocades of this type on the altarpiece it appears that there is just the one model. It is formed of vertical striations with diagonal striations in the centre. Zones have been excised inside the motifs, so that the background colour, which differs according to location, is visible.

Model 19.8



19.8a
Presentation of Mary in the
Temple, the Virgin Mary and angel



19.8b
Applied brocade on the angel's alb



19.8c
Archaeological drawing

Location:	angels' albs (Presentation of Mary in the Temple and Marriage of the Virgin); under-robe of the kneeling magus (Adoration of the Magi) (see ill. 19d)	Identical applied brocades cat. 59.3
Type:	local	
Design:	miscellaneous: star and rays (two separate elements)	
Measurements:	small: star, c.0.8 cm in diameter; rays c.1.8 x 1.8 cm	
Relief:	dots on rays (relief pattern)	
Striations:	none	
Condition:	well preserved	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	none	
Gilding:	gold leaf adhesive	
Tin foil:	degraded, grey	
Filler:	beige ochre in colour, translucent, wax-resin	
Adhesive:	none	
Support layer:	white light blue wine lee colour bright blue (azurite) pink lighter bright blue (azurite) black underlayer	
Ref:	white chalk and size ground KIK-IRPA laboratory file (1 cross section). See also Chapter Ten, Table B	

The albs ornamented with this applied brocade are completed at the collar, cuffs and hem with tiny pieces of the continuous applied brocade, highlighted in either red or blue, described as model 19.1, above. This star and rays motif also appears painted in shell gold in a number of altarpieces.

Same motif but different technique: shell gold painted on polychromed statue

- cat. 4: Archangel Gabriel's alb
- cat. S3: Footwear of a soldier (Ecce Homo)
- cat. S6: Sleeve of the servant behind the bed (Birth of the Virgin)
- Arras, Musée des Beaux-Arts, *Altarpiece with the Nativity and the Adoration of the Shepherds*, c.1500, Brussels: Joseph's red robe
- London, V&A, *Adoration of the Magi*, c.1500, Brussels: the Virgin's blue robe³⁴
- Veckholm, Parish Church, *Passion Altarpiece*, c.1512-1514, Brussels: a holy woman's blue sleeve

³⁴ WILLIAMSON 2002: 108-109 (cat. 29).

Model 19.9



19.9a
Adoration of the Magi, applied brocade braid on the Virgin's overgown



19.9b Reconstruction of the applied brocade braid with arabesque 1



19.9c Reconstruction of the applied brocade braid with arabesque 2



19.9d Reconstruction of the applied brocade braid with foliage



19.9e Reconstruction of the applied brocade braid with flowers



19.9f Reconstruction of the applied brocade braid with cloverleaves



19.9g Reconstruction of the relief

Grouped together here are all the narrow applied brocade braids that decorate the edges of gilded cloaks and other garments. There are five different designs but they are all produced in paint on the same basic fully striated braid, the pattern itself being left in reserve and thus appearing to be woven in gold. Arabesque 1 and arabesque 2 are the most frequently used; the flowers and cloverleaves are less common; and the foliage has apparently been used only to trim the black magus's cloak in the Adoration of the Magi. In several cases the same cloak is trimmed with two different braids – one on either side, for instance.

The regularity, delicacy and small size of the pattern indicate the use of a tiny stencil, an idea supported by the large number of works with the same decoration. Such a stencil could comprise several repeats of the design. We do not know what material may have been used to make the stencils, but metal or even thick (varnished or waxed?) paper are possibilities.

Blue is not used in every one of the identical and comparable cases. Some braids are created with red, like those on the *Altarpiece of the Glorification of the Virgin* in Vadstena (cat. S7) and the *Passion Altarpiece* in Villberga (cat. S10). The *Altarpiece of the Virgin* in Skepptuna (cat. S2) also features a number of different applied brocade braids with an individual repertoire of motifs and in one case a more complex rendering than the simple striated strip, the design also being in relief rather than painted.



19.9h
Nativity, applied brocade braid on
Joseph's cloak



19.9i
Presentation of Mary in the Temple,
applied brocade braid on St Anne's cloak

Location:	edges of many gilded cloaks and surcotes (see ill. 19d)	<p>Identical applied brocades cat. 6.3 (arabesque 1) cat. 66.3 (cloverleaves) cat. 51.3 (arabesque 1, arabesque 2, foliage, flowers, cloverleaves) cat. 57.5 (arabesque 1, arabesque 2, foliage, flowers, cloverleaves) cat. 59.4 (arabesque 1, arabesque 2, flowers, cloverleaves) cat. 510.4 (arabesque 1, flowers, cloverleaves) Paris, Louvre, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (RF 1788)³⁵ (arabesque 2, flowers) Private collection, <i>St Catherine</i> (former Becker collection, Brussels)³⁶ (arabesque 1 and another unidentified arabesque) Private collection, <i>St Roch</i> (former Kofler-Truniger collection)³⁷ (arabesque 1 and another unidentified arabesque)</p> <p>Comparable applied brocades cat. 6.3 (arabesque 3) cat. 7.2 (arabesque 3) cat. 24.6 (arabesque 3) cat. 49.1 cat. G4.4 cat. 56.4 Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, <i>Female Saint</i> (1965.2230)³⁸ Cologne, Schnütgen Museum, <i>St Christopher</i> (A 227)³⁹ London, V&A, <i>St Barbara</i> (A.107-1937)⁴⁰ Paris, Louvre, <i>St Margaret</i> (RF 2572)⁴¹ Paris, Louvre, <i>St Michael</i> (OA 310)⁴² Paris, Louvre, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (RF 1567)⁴³ Paris, Musée Marmottan, <i>St Barbara</i> (622d)⁴⁴ Private collection, <i>St Barbara</i> (former Kofler-Truniger collection)⁴⁵ Private collection, <i>St Gudule</i> (former Kofler-Truniger collection)⁴⁶ Private collection, <i>St Margaret</i> (Christie's sale, New York 1994)⁴⁷ Private collection, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (antiquary Bruno Speybrouck sale, Kortrijk 2007) Private collection, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (Brussels, KIK-IRPA photograph N4563)</p>
Type:	braid	
Design:	floral and foliate: arabesque 1; arabesque 2; foliage; flowers; cloverleaves, between two parallel lines	
Measurements:	small: 0.75-0.8 cm	
Relief:	fully striated strip (relief pattern)	
Striations:	15-16 per cm; vertical	
Condition:	badly damaged	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	azurite blue on striations white underlayer	
Gilding:	gold leaf thin adhesive layer	
Tin foil:	degraded, grey	
Filler:	very thin, beige ochre in colour, transparent, wax-resin appearance	
Adhesive:	apparently none	
Support layer:	burnished gold leaf orange bole white chalk and size ground	
Ref:	cross section: none	

³⁵ GUILLOT DE SUDUIRAUT 2001a: 98-100 (cat. 10)

³⁶ KIK-IRPA photograph: B105309. The BRVESEL mark on the base is clearly visible in the photograph.

³⁷ GODENNE 1960: 121-122, XCIV; SCHNITZLER, VOLBACH, BLOCH 1964: 39-40, fig. 161-163. The statuette was shown at TEFAF 2000 in Maastricht by Galleria Kurt Spirig, Lugano.

³⁸ *Gothic Sculpture in America* 1989: 65 (cat. 41).

³⁹ GODENNE 1973: 138-139, II/246.

⁴⁰ GUILLOT DE SUDUIRAUT 2001a: 106 (fig. 15a); WILLIAMSON 2002: 126-127.

⁴¹ GUILLOT DE SUDUIRAUT 2001a: 106-108 (cat. 15).

⁴² *Ibid.* 108-110 (cat. 16).

⁴³ *Ibid.* 101-102 (cat. 11)

⁴⁴ GODENNE 1957: 81-83, XIV.

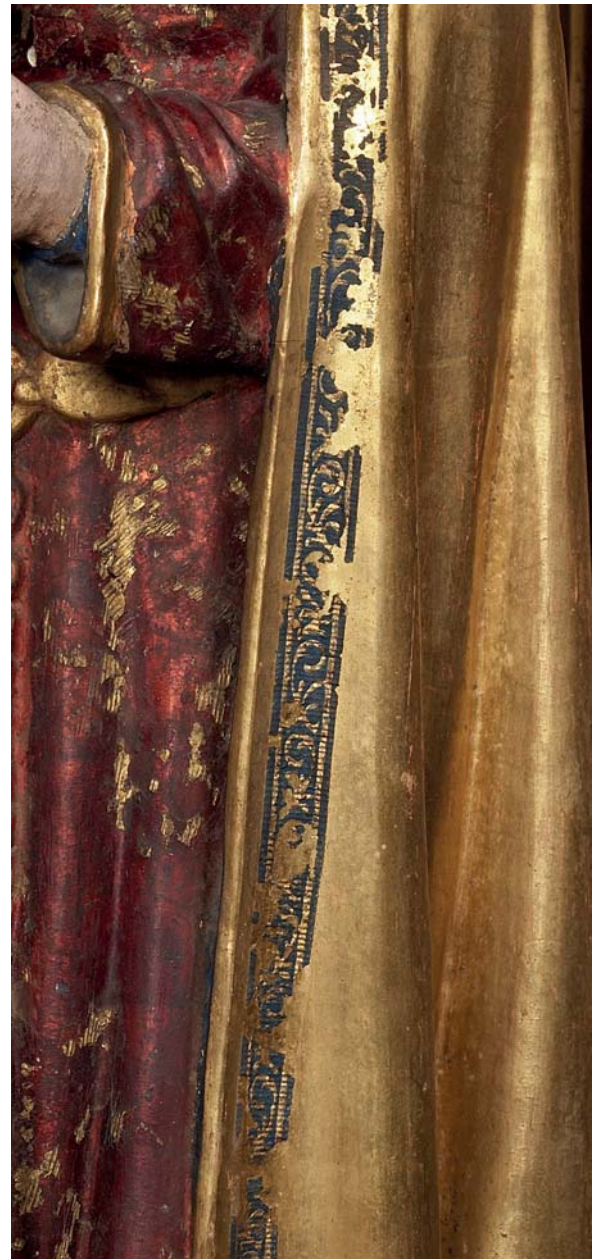
⁴⁵ GODENNE 1960: 118-20, XCII. The statuette was shown at TEFAF 2000 in Maastricht by Galleria Kurt Spirig, Lugano.

⁴⁶ GUILLOT DE SUDUIRAUT 2001a: 120-121, XCIII; SCHNITZLER, VOLBACH, BLOCH 1964: 39-40, figs. 161-163. The statuette was shown at TEFAF 2000 in Maastricht by Galleria Kurt Spirig, Lugano.

⁴⁷ GUILLOT DE SUDUIRAUT 2001a: 107 (fig. 15b).



19.9j
Adoration of the Magi, applied brocade braid on the black magus's cloak



19.9k
Presentation in the Temple, applied brocade braid on the prophetess Anna's cloak

Model 19.10



19.10a-b
Annunciation, applied brocade on Gabriel's cope



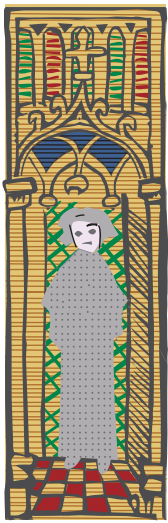
19.10c
Archaeological
drawing

1cm

Location:	edge of the Archangel Gabriel's cope (Annunciation) (see ill. 19d)	Identical applied brocades cat. 51.4 cat. 57.6 Comparable applied brocades cat. 14.1 cat. 31b.4
Type:	braid (orphrey)	
Design:	miscellaneous: standing saint in a traceried niche	
Measurements:	small: 6.8 x 2.3 cm	
Relief:	fully striated (relief pattern)	
Striations:	16 per cm; horizontal	
Condition:	badly damaged	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	black, blue, red glaze, green glaze, pink	
Gilding:	gold leaf no adhesive observed	
Tin foil:	greyish	
Filler(?) / adhesive(?):	occasional transparent yellow layer	
Support layer:	burnished gold leaf orange bole white chalk and size ground	
Ref:	cross section: none	

Like the braids just mentioned, the orphrey's relief consists of uniformly parallel striations.⁴⁸ The outline of a vaulted niche in Brabantine Gothic style is painted in black on the gilding, perhaps by using a stencil. The extrados of the ogival arch is decorated with crockets and a finial. Inside, the vault is painted blue. Above the niche is a row of lancet windows alternately filled with red and green stripes that suggest glowing stained glass. Green and red are also used in the tiled floor and latticed rear wall.

⁴⁸ SERCK-DEWAIDE 1990: 36-40.



1cm

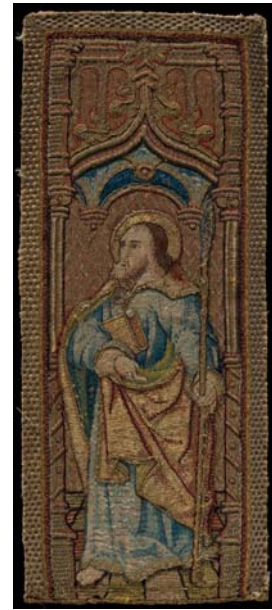
19.10d
Reconstruction of
the applied brocade



19.10e
Reconstruction
of the relief



19.10f
Annunciation, detail of the applied brocade
on Gabriel's cope



19.10g
Antependium (detail),
15th-16th century, Flanders(?);
Brussels, KMKG-MRAH
© KMKG-MRAH, Brussels

In each niche is a standing figure. It has been painted onto the striated surface of the applied brocade. Each brocade has a different saintly character: a turbaned woman, a bearded man, and a saint holding a staff (a crozier?) can be identified.

The brocade braids making up the orphrey are arranged end-to-end along the edge of Gabriel's gilded cope (five on either side); others decorate the hood. Losses in the brocade reveal a pale orange strip that runs the full length of the edge of the cope. This is the bole used for the gilding of the cope, which for economy's sake was left ungilded where it was to be covered with applied brocade.

A saint in a niche is not an uncommon motif to find embroidered on an orphrey and many examples survive. There is a fifteenth-century antependium made in the Low Countries with embroidered bands similar to the present model in the KMKG-MRAH in Brussels, for instance. Interestingly, in that case the saint was made separately and then applied.⁴⁹ And very similar orphreys also occur in a number of paintings by Colijn de Coter.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ Isabelle Errera describes the orphreys as: '... broderie d'or nué, mi-nué, naté en couchure, couché et gaufré, et de soie polychrome au passé; liseré de cordonnet d'or. Les personnages sont appliqués.' ERRERA 1905: 25-26 (cat. 34). See also KIK-IRPA photograph: B12.4676.

⁵⁰ *St Alban Altarpiece*, orphreys on the Archangel Michael's cope (shortly before 1510; KMSKB-MRBAB, Brussels); *Legend of St Rombaut*, orphreys on the copes in *St Rombaut baptizes Libert* and *St Rombaut takes Leave of Pope Stephen II* (1500-1510; St Rombaut's Cathedral, Mechelen). See PÉRIER-D'ETEREN 1985: figs. 105b, 113, 175a, 175b, 166, 187a, 187b.



20 PASSION ALTARPIECE (former Brimo de Laroussilhe collection)

Brussels, KMKG-MRAH, inv. Sc. 130

Altarpiece, carved and polychromed oak and walnut, wings lost

Brabant, Antwerp(?), Brussels(?)

No marks

1470-1490

232 × 265 × 22 cm

The original destination of this altarpiece is unknown. It changed hands several times before its acquisition by the KMKG-MRAH in 1994.

1992-1993: conservation treatment by private restorers

1994: acquired on the art market by Galerie Brimo de Laroussilhe

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/47-2002/07611

Several episodes from Christ's Passion are depicted in the five compartments of this inverted T-shaped altarpiece. From left to right are the Crowning with Thorns, the Carrying of the Cross, the Crucifixion, the Entombment and the Resurrection.¹ Finely wrought tracery forms an elegant canopy above well-balanced and uncluttered compositions. The figures, sensitively rendered yet with a distinct corporeal presence, are comparable with those of two carved groups now in the Louvre and two holy women in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, attributed by Sophie Guillot de Suduiraut and Juliette Lévy to the same sculptor and probably originally belonging to the same altarpiece.² The present altarpiece also seems to be by this sculptor.

Until now this *Passion Altarpiece* was thought to have been made in Brussels, despite the absence of marks; however, recent studies suggest it was produced in Antwerp.³ It shares similarities with a group of retables which Mathias Weniger has related to the *Klausen Altarpiece* in the conception of space, the refined and monumental treatment of the figures and also in the handling of the polychromy,⁴ though it was carved by another artist. As works from the Master of Klausen's atelier carry Antwerp marks it can be assumed that the present altarpiece was also produced there, although a Brussels provenance should not be entirely excluded (nor for the Paris and New York works).

The altarpiece underwent a number of undocumented interventions, probably in the nineteenth century.⁵ Existing marks may have disappeared with the renewal of some parts of the case (the rear walls, for instance). The new background was gilded and decorated with brocade-like motifs tooled in the ground. Certain figures and architectural elements were replaced. Most of the burnished gilding was renewed (though not on the canopies). The flesh tones and some brocade decorations on the garments were possibly repainted. There are also more recent retouches.

The original elements of the case and tracery are in oak, while the carved groups and vault blocks are in walnut. Each of the figurative groups in the side compartments is carved from a single block.⁶ The central scene consists of two larger groups and the three crucified figures. The polychromy is varied and refined: shell gilding on the Virgin's robe, six different applied brocades, and a series of small applied decorative elements – stars, cupules, fleurs de lis, rays and cloverleaves – in copper gilt or an alloy. These little decorative items, between 1 and 4 millimetres in width, form motifs, edging patterns, or letters. The surfaces decorated with irregularly distributed cupules are intended to represent *alluciolato* or looped velvet, while the fleurs de lis, stars, rays and cloverleaves rather

20a

Passion Altarpiece
(former Brimo de Laroussilhe collection),
1470-1490, Brabant,
Antwerp(?), Brussels,
Brussels(?); Brussels,
KMKG-MRAH

¹ BRUSSELS 2000a: 38-47.

² GUILLOT DE SUDUIRAUT, LÉVY 2007.

³ WENIGER 2002: 506.

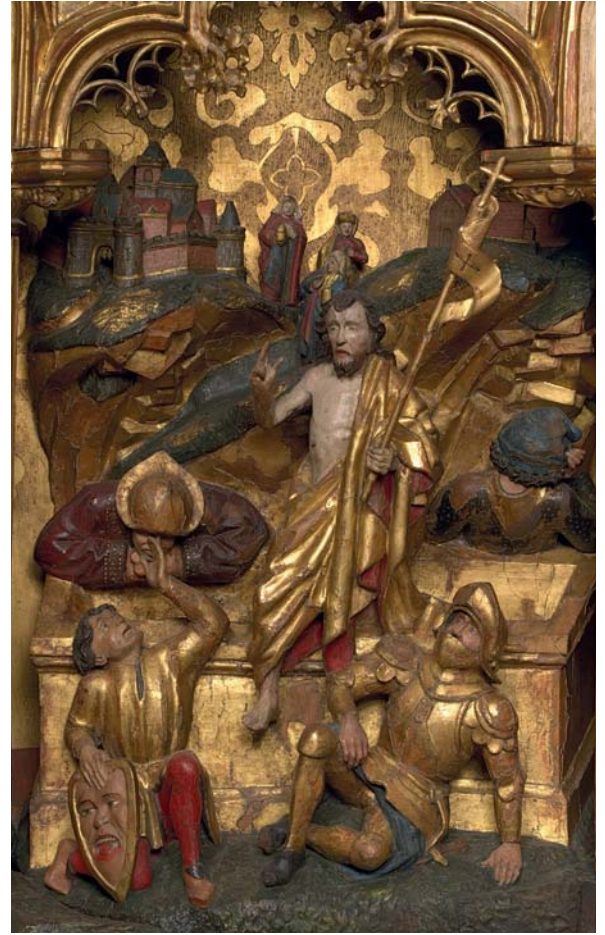
⁴ In particular the *Passion* altarpieces from Pfalzel, now in the Votive Church in Vienna and the Church of the Visitation in Klausen, Germany. See WENIGER 2002; KOLLER 2002; GUILLOT DE SUDUIRAUT, LÉVY 2007.

⁵ BRUSSELS 2000a: 42-44.

⁶ With the exception of the two pinewood figures in the Carrying of the Cross, probably added in the nineteenth century. The two thieves of the Crucifixion are also not original.



20b
Crucifixion, soldiers beneath the Cross



20c
Resurrection

imitate the sort of minuscule metal elements that were sewn onto real fabrics.⁷ The combination of applied brocade and cupules is also encountered on other altarpieces and sculptures from Antwerp (such as those mentioned above), Brussels (cat. S3.2, cat. S4.2), Leuven (cat. 63) and Bruges (cat. 16).

The same combination of small metallic elements and applied brocades occur in the polychromy of the groups in Paris and New York and the altarpieces by the Master of Klausen.⁸ A statue of John the Evangelist in a St John polyptych now in Barcelona⁹ also features similar applied brocades combined with cupules.

⁷ The altar frontal in the textile treasury of Uppsala Cathedral (red velvet with silver gilt cupules) or the mantle of a Christ Child in St Andrew's Abbey at Sarnen in Switzerland (second half of the fourteenth century) are examples of fabrics with metal decorations sewn onto them. GEIJER 1964: cat. 37 and pl. 50; CASCIO, LÉVY 2002: 152 (fig. 8). On the use of small metal decorations in Brabantine altarpieces, see also GUILLOT DE SUDUIRAUT 2002b: 193-194, 199, 203.

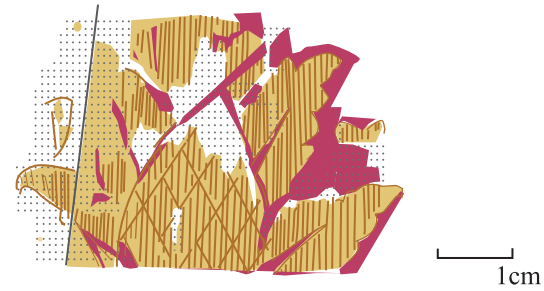
⁸ ZYKAN, ZEHETMAIER 1966; KOLLER 2002; WENIGER 2002; CASCIO, LÉVY 2002: 131-133, 159; GUILLOT DE SUDUIRAUT, LÉVY 2007.

⁹ MANOTE I CLIVILLES, RUIZ I QUESADA, QUÍLEZ I CORELLA 1999: 208-209, room XVII, cat. 5. We thank José Moya for his help in acquiring information about this polyptych.

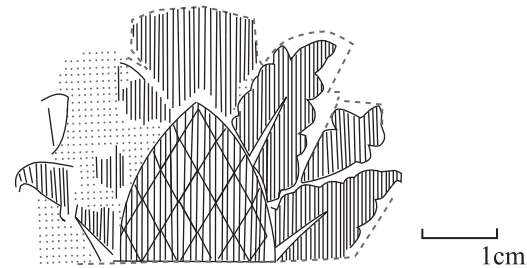
Model 20.1



20.1a
Crowning with Thorns, applied brocade on the robe of the grey-bearded figure



20.1b
Archaeological drawing



20.1c
Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	robe of the grey-bearded figure (Crowning with Thorns) (see fig. 110)
Type:	local
Design:	floral and foliate: lozenge-shaped centre surrounded by five lobate leaves
Measurements:	small: 3.3 x c.5.3 cm
Relief:	striations, contour, diagonal lines, flat zones (veins) (mixed pattern)
Striations:	12-13 per cm; vertical, convex in section
Condition:	badly damaged
Overpaint:	red retouches
Highlighting:	red glaze on veins, lines of the lozenges and trimmed edges
Gilding:	gold leaf mordant
Tin foil:	grey
Filler:	brown ochre in colour, translucent, wax-resin appearance
Adhesive:	beige brown
Support layer:	white chalk and size ground
Ref:	cross section: none

The robe of the elegant bearded figure on the right in the background of the Crowning with Thorns is decorated with a single local applied brocade at the hem and another, much more damaged, on the breast. The applied brocades were glued directly onto the ground; the surrounding area was then painted with red glaze on a matt orange-red underlayer.

The applied brocades have not been trimmed exactly to the outline of the motif and flanges of excess tin have been left around the lateral leaves. These flat edges are camouflaged by the subsequently applied red glaze.

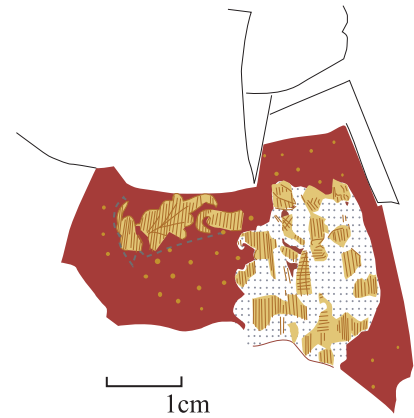
As everywhere else on the altarpiece, the applied brocades are combined with minute metal cupules about 1 millimetre in diameter, seemingly added at random on the red surface. On the edges of the robe they are joined by tiny fleurs de lis, about 3 millimetres in length, to form patterned borders.

The type of textile imitated here is a silk fabric enriched with gold thread, probably a looped velvet brocaded with gold, with a border strewn with little metal decorations.

Model 20.2



20.2a
Carrying of the Cross, applied brocade on the robe of the bearded figure



20.2b
Archaeological drawing

Location:	robe of the bearded figure depicted in profile behind Christ (Carrying of the Cross) (see fig. 110)
Type:	local
Design:	floral and foliate: lobed leaf; incomplete sheet untrimmed tinfoil sheet
Measurements:	unidentifiable, too incomplete for precise measurement
Relief:	striations, veins and contour, cross-hatched zones (relief pattern)
Striations:	12-14 per cm; vertical, horizontal
Condition:	locally worn
Overpaint:	none
Highlighting:	red glaze on untrimmed edges, veins(?)
Gilding:	gold leaf mordant
Tin foil:	degraded, grey-black
Filler:	orange-brown, translucent, wax-resin appearance
Adhesive:	beige-brown, oily appearance
Support layer:	white chalk and size ground(?)
Ref:	cross section: none

As with model 20.1, the brocade was glued to the white ground before the surrounding red was painted. The veins of the leaf are rendered by fine lines in relief. The pattern includes an area of cross-hatching. Here again the applied brocades are combined with little gilded metal elements, with an assortment of cupules, fleurs de lis and cloverleaves forming a very attractive border along the hem of the robe.

Model 20.3



20.3a
Crucifixion, applied brocade on the soldier's tunic



20.3b
Archaeological drawing

Location:	red tunic of the soldier helping Longinus to hold the lance (Crucifixion) (see fig. 110)		
Type:	local		
Design:	floral and foliate: fleurs de lis inside rosette untrimmed tinfoil sheet		
Measurements:	medium: 10 x 9.5 cm		
Relief:	striations, two lines in relief enclosing raised dots, flat zones (mixed pattern)		
Striations:	9 per cm; vertical		
Condition:	badly damaged		
Overpaint:	transparent yellow layer (varnish?)	red retouches	local regilding bright orange mordant
Highlighting:	red glaze on flat zones between the fleurs de lis and on untrimmed edges		
Gilding:	gold leaf mordant, thickened with ochre and calcium carbonate; fluoresces in UV light		
Tin foil:	degraded, grey-black		
Filler:	orange-brown, translucent, beeswax and another unidentified wax		
Adhesive:	ochre in colour, containing ochre, lead-white, calcium carbonate; fluoresces in UV light		
Support layer:	translucent white, fluoresces in UV light (sealing layer?) three layers of white chalk and size ground		
Ref:	KIK-IRPA laboratory file (1 cross section). See also Chapter Ten, Table B		

Three local applied brocades embellish the bottom of the soldier's tunic. There is a fourth on his chest and a fifth on his back. Fragments also decorate each sleeve. The applied brocades were glued with ochre adhesive before the red was painted around them (red glaze on a matt orange-red underlayer). This adhesive is on a support layer, possibly a sealant, covering the white ground. Certain elements of the brocades appear to have been locally regilded (on a bright orange mordant). Areas retouched in red are visible here and there. The cross section shows a transparent yellow varnish – probably a restoration – on top of the original gilding.

This applied brocade is spectacular in both shape and size but is very badly damaged. The 0.4-centimetre-wide border of ogees punctuated by tiny raised dots is still clearly legible. Inside the rosette, vertical striations form what are probably fleur de lis motifs alternating with flat zones. The many losses make it impossible to reconstruct the motif.

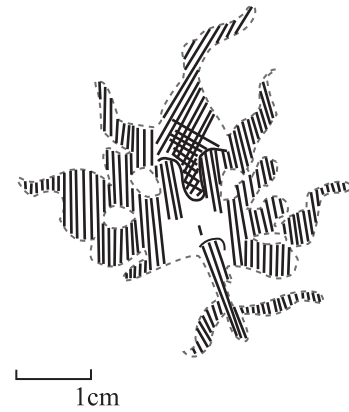
Model 20.4



20.4a
Crucifixion, applied brocade on the horse-
man's tunic



20.4b
Archaeological drawing



20.4c
Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	bordeaux-red tunic of the horseman on the right (Crucifixion) (see fig. 110)
Type:	local
Design:	floral and foliate: large flower with pointed petals blooming from a short curved stem
Measurements:	small: c.4 x c.4 cm
Relief:	almost fully striated, contour of centre in fairly thick relief; very small flat or excised zone (centre) (mixed or relief pattern)
Striations:	12 per cm; vertical, diagonal or latticed in the upper part
Condition:	well preserved
Overpaint:	none
Highlighting:	red glaze on flat or excised zone
Gilding:	gold leaf no adhesive observed
Tin foil:	grey
Filler:	ochre, translucent, wax-resin appearance
Adhesive:	no adhesive observed, probably none
Support layer:	orangey underlayer white chalk and size ground
Ref:	cross section: none

Beneath his gilded cloak the horseman wears a long belted robe. It is painted with a red glaze on an orange underlayer and decorated with two complete and two incomplete local applied brocades. The edge of the robe is decorated with little metal cupules, stars and fleurs de lis.

The red glaze was applied around the motifs after they were glued in place. The small ovals are not in relief; it may be that they are excised from the tin foil. The motif can be reconstructed by combining the various surviving elements. It is similar to the one on the jerkin of the soldier at the bottom right of the same compartment (model 20.5). This too is a curved stem with a large flower blooming from it.

Model 20.5



20.5a
Crucifixion, applied brocade on the soldier's jerkin



20.5b
Archaeological
drawing



20.5c
Reconstruction
of the relief

Location:	jerkin of one of the soldiers fighting over Christ's garment (Crucifixion) (see fig. 110)
Type:	local
Design:	floral and foliate: an open flower (iris? lily?) with four stamens in the centre, blooming from a short stem
Measurements:	small: 2.7 x 2.5 cm
Relief:	striations, contour and stamens, flat zone (centre) (mixed or relief pattern)
Striations:	10 per cm; vertical
Condition:	well preserved
Overpaint:	none
Highlighting:	green glaze on stamens
Gilding:	gold leaf adhesive
Tin foil:	grey
Filler:	brown ochre in colour, translucent, wax-resin appearance
Adhesive:	none observed
Support layer:	black-looking layer (originally green?) white chalk and size ground
Ref:	cross section: none

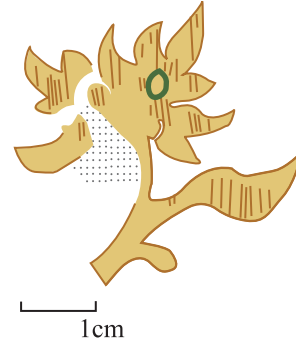
In the foreground of the centre compartment three soldiers quarrel over Christ's garment. Two fight while the third pulls it towards him. The local brocades are surrounded with tiny gilded metal cupules, which also decorate the armholes and front fastening of the jerkin. One of the applied brocades is almost entirely lost, with only minor fragments left; the other is almost complete. This brocade does not appear on any other figure on the altarpiece.

The colour of the support layer to which the motifs have been glued is difficult to describe. It is either a single layer of black paint applied directly onto the ground or a green glaze that has darkened with time. The stamens have been rendered in relief and highlighted with a green glaze, whose colour is clearly recognizable.

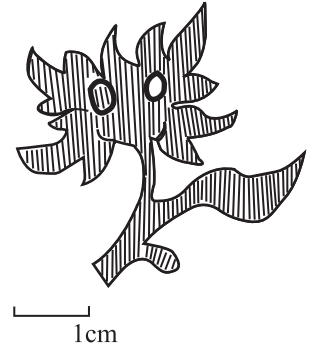
Model 20.6



20.6a
Resurrection, applied brocade on the garment of the sleeping soldier



20.6b
Archaeological drawing

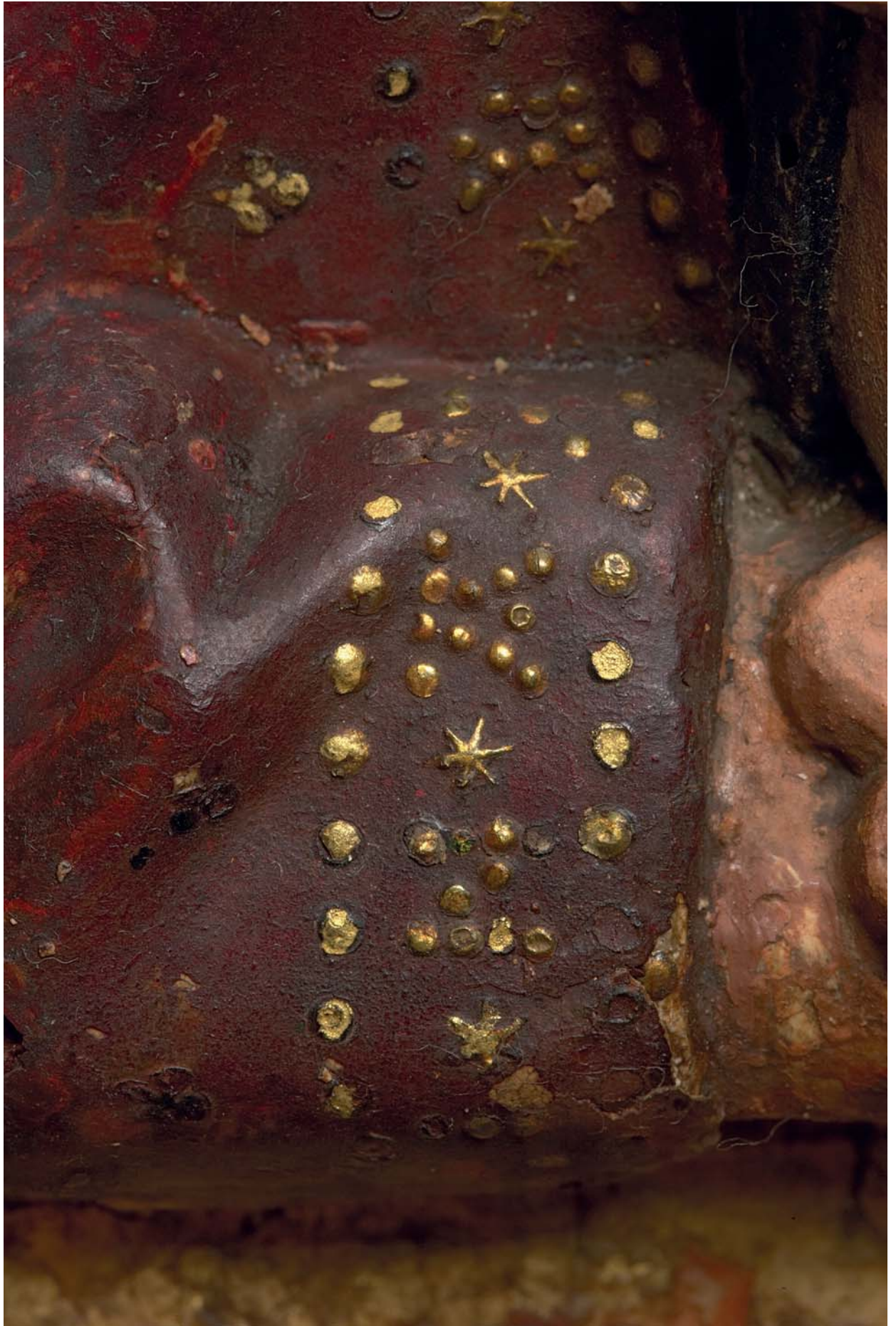


20.6c
Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	gown of a holy woman (Entombment), back of the garment of the sleeping soldier behind the tomb (Resurrection) (see fig. 110)
Type:	local
Design:	floral and foliate: double flower sprouts from a stem that terminates in a leaf
Measurements:	small: 3.7 x c.4.7 cm
Relief:	almost fully striated, contour (relief pattern)
Striations:	9 per cm; vertical
Condition:	well preserved
Overpaint:	none
Highlighting:	green glaze
Gilding:	gold leaf no adhesive observed
Tin foil:	grey
Filler:	brown ochre in colour, translucent, wax-resin appearance
Adhesive:	none observed
Support layer:	blackish layer (originally green?) white chalk and size ground
Ref:	cross section: none

The excess tin has been trimmed away along the outside of the raised contour line. The two small circles, whose surface looks lower, may have been excised. In both the Entombment and the Resurrection the background colour is hard to identify. It would appear to be a layer of dark green paint applied directly onto the white ground. The applied brocades are highlighted with green glaze and combined with tiny cupules.

The motif occurs in both the Entombment and the Resurrection. There are five brocades in all; four of them are only fragmentary. In the Resurrection, one very well preserved brocade is on the garment of the sleeping soldier, seen from behind, on Christ's left. He forms a pendant to his fellow on Christ's right, whose tunic is glazed with red and decorated on the collar and cuffs with tiny gilded metal fleurs de lis, stars and cupules arranged to form letters (NA...U on his right cuff and AI on the left). The same applied brocade can also be found in the Entombment on the robe of the standing holy woman with the pot of ointment, though only tiny vestiges of it remain.



20d
Resurrection, metal
ornaments on the
sleeve of the sleeping
soldier



21 ALTARPIECE OF CLAUDIO DE VILLA AND GENTINA SOLARO

Brussels, KMKG-MRAH, inv. 3006

Altarpiece, carved and polychromed oak, wings lost

Brussels

Marks: compasses and plane (two, case), rosette (back of the left Crucifixion group)

1470-1480

253 × 265 × 26.5 cm

1878: altarpiece loaned to the Museo Civico in Turin

1891: altarpiece acquired by the KMKG-MRAH

1969-1970: treatment and conservation-restoration at the KIK-IRPA

1996: maintenance in situ by the KIK-IRPA

2001: maintenance in situ by the KIK-IRPA

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/47-1968/827

Illustrated in this altarpiece made up of three ogee-headed compartments are scenes from the Life and Passion of Christ.¹ The Feast in the House of Simon and the Raising of Lazarus occupy the left compartment, the Crucifixion is depicted in the centre, and the Lamentation and the Three Maries at the Sepulchre are on the right. It is noteworthy that Mary Magdalene appears in every scene.

Low in the foreground of the Crucifixion, kneeling at prie-dieux, are the donors, probably Claudio Villa and Gentina Solaro, with their carved coats of arms. They are accompanied by their patron saints, Peter and Mary Magdalene respectively. Their armorials and motto – DROIT ET AVANT – appear in the pierced frieze at the bottom of the case. The altarpiece was probably intended for the family chapel dedicated to Mary Magdalene in the Dominican church at Chieri in Piedmont. The compactness of the compositions with their rising tiers of figures and the clear stylistic influence from the oeuvre of Rogier van der Weyden allow this highly accomplished work to be dated to the third quarter of the fifteenth century. The elaborate pinnacled and turreted tracery displays an exceptional finesse typical of Brussels altarpieces of the time.

The case divides into three parts for easier transportation. The four scenes in the left and right compartments were carved from single blocks of oak; the central Crucifixion required two blocks, with the crucified Christ and thieves made separately. Apart from regilding and some repainting the polychromy of the altarpiece still looks much as originally conceived. Burnished and matt gold alternate on the gilded hair and the architectural detailing. The windows are covered in matt silver, now corroded. Azurite blue is painted over a black or pink underlayer. The vaults have been overpainted with lapis lazuli and subsequently with Prussian blue. Red glaze (kermes lake and madder) covers a matt red underlayer (vermillion and red lead). Pale mauve and green occur on the floors.² The case, the rear walls of the compartments and the architectural details have been regilded, probably in the nineteenth century when the altarpiece was still in Italy.

¹ DERVEAUX-VAN USSEL 1977: 9-10; JACOBS 1998: 188-190; DE BOODT 2005: 164-165; BRUSSELS 2000a: 48-53.

² SANYOVA 2002: 88-94.

Model 21.1



21.1
Feast in the House of Simon, remains of applied
brocade on Christ's robe

Location:	Christ's robe (Feast in the House of Simon and Raising of Lazarus) (see fig. 109)
Type:	local
Design:	floral and foliate, too incomplete for reconstruction
Measurements:	unidentifiable, too incomplete for precise measurement
Relief:	fully striated (relief pattern)
Striations:	15-17 per cm; vertical, horizontal, convex in section
Condition:	badly damaged
Overpaint:	none
Highlighting:	none
Gilding:	gold leaf no adhesive observed
Tin foil:	degraded, grey
Filler:	translucent brown, wax-resin appearance, no additional thickening
Adhesive:	none
Support layer:	violet blue: azurite pink underlayer (lead white, red lake) white chalk and size ground
Ref:	KIK-IRPA laboratory file (2 cross sections); SANYOVA 2002: 91.

This applied brocade is difficult to read owing to its very poor state of preservation. A mass of foliage can be made out but little else. The striations, convex in section, are vertical except in the centre of the motif, where they are horizontal and appear to form a lozenge motif. The relief is coarser than that of Gentina's applied brocade (cat. 21.2).

Model 21.2



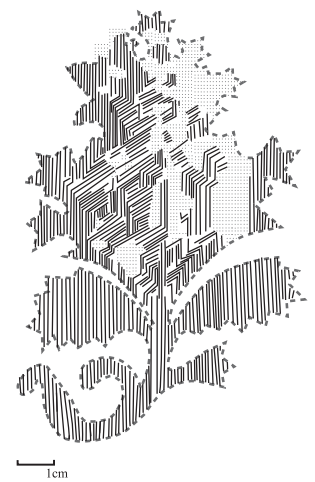
21.2a
Crucifixion, Gentina



21.2b
Crucifixion, applied brocade
on Gentina's gown



21.2c
Archaeological drawing



21.2d
Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	Gentina's gown (Crucifixion) (see fig. 109)	Comparable applied brocades cat. 19.6 cat. 24.5 cat. 56.3 cat. 57.4
Type:	local	
Design:	floral and foliate: stylized thistle-like leaf, too incomplete for further reconstruction	
Measurements:	small: 6.5 x 3.8 cm	
Relief:	fully striated (relief pattern)	
Striations:	16-22 per cm; vertical, diagonal	
Condition:	badly damaged	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	none	
Gilding:	gold leaf ochre in colour	
Tin foil:	degraded, grey	
Filler:	brown, translucent, wax-resin appearance, no additional thickening	
Adhesive:	none	
Support layer:	red glaze (madder lake and kermes lake) matt red underlayer (vermillion and red lead) white chalk and size ground	
Ref:	KIK-IRPA laboratory file (1 cross section); SANYOVA 2002: 89-91.	

Gentina's gown supports approximately fifteen whole or partial local applied brocades. They are extremely refined. A sinuous S-shaped stem produces two little offshoots (a bud and a three-pointed leaf) and two large and almost symmetrical leaves, before expanding into a large thistle-like leaf.

Model 21.3



21.3a
Crucifixion, Claudio



21.3b
Crucifixion, applied brocade on the textile
covering Claudio's prie-dieu

Location:	textile covering the donors' prie-dieux (Crucifixion) (see fig. 109)
Type:	local
Design:	unidentifiable, too incomplete for reconstruction; lozenge-shaped tinfoil sheet
Measurements:	medium; 4 x 3.8 cm; each side is 2.7 cm
Relief:	fully striated (relief pattern)
Striations:	10 per cm; vertical
Condition:	badly damaged
Overpaint:	none
Highlighting:	none
Gilding:	gold leaf very thin adhesive
Tin foil:	degraded, grey
Filler:	brown, translucent
Adhesive:	none
Support layer:	azurite black underlayer white chalk and size ground
Ref:	cross section: none

On Claudio's prie-dieu there seem to be four complete applied brocades and nine fragments. The general outline of the sheet is perceptible but losses and the flattening of the relief have left the motif illegible. None the less, the relief is more pronounced than that of Gentina's brocade (cat. 21.2).

Model 21.4



21.4a
The Maries at the Sepulchre, angel



21.4b
Remains of applied brocade on the angel's alb

Location:	angel's alb (the Maries at the Sepulchre) (see fig. 109)
Type:	local
Design:	unidentifiable, too incomplete for reconstruction
Measurements:	unidentifiable, too incomplete for precise measurement
Relief:	fully striated (relief pattern)
Striations:	number unidentifiable; variously aligned
Condition:	badly damaged
Overpaint:	none
Highlighting:	none
Gilding:	gold leaf no adhesive observed
Tin foil:	grey(?)
Filler:	brown, translucent
Adhesive:	none
Support layer:	lilac layer: azurite and red lake suspended in lead white white chalk and size ground
Ref:	KIK-IRPA laboratory file (1 cross section); SANYOVA 2002: 91-92.

There are at least four applied brocades on the alb of the angel at the Sepulchre. They are very badly damaged, however, and the motif could not be reconstructed. There are also several simply gilded motifs, though these do not appear to be original. They show no relief: perhaps they were intended to replace lost or damaged applied brocades. The stratigraphy of the applied brocades is traditional but that of the simply gilded motifs is curious, comprising first a layer of mordant gilding, then a layer of violet paint, then a second layer of gilding and finally a second layer of violet paint.³ The presence of lapis lazuli in the violet layers suggests they are not original, as the fifteenth-century blue paint in this altarpiece has an azurite base.⁴ The composition of the two violets is the same (lapis lazuli and red lake in lead white), which suggests that they were painted at the same time.

There is also an overpaint containing lapis lazuli on Christ's robe in both the Feast in the House of Simon and the Raising of Lazarus.

³ SANYOVA 2002: 91-92.

⁴ Ibid. 90.



22 PASSION ALTARPIECE (VERMEERSCH BEQUEST)

Brussels, KMKG-MRAH, inv. V 198

Altarpiece, carved and polychromed oak, wings lost

Brussels

Marks: compasses and plane (top of case)

1490-1500

108 × 265 × 94 cm

1911: bequest of Gustave Vermeersch

1968-1971: restoration at the KIK-IRPA prior to the *Aspecten van de Laatgotiek in Brabant* exhibition in Leuven

1996: maintenance in situ

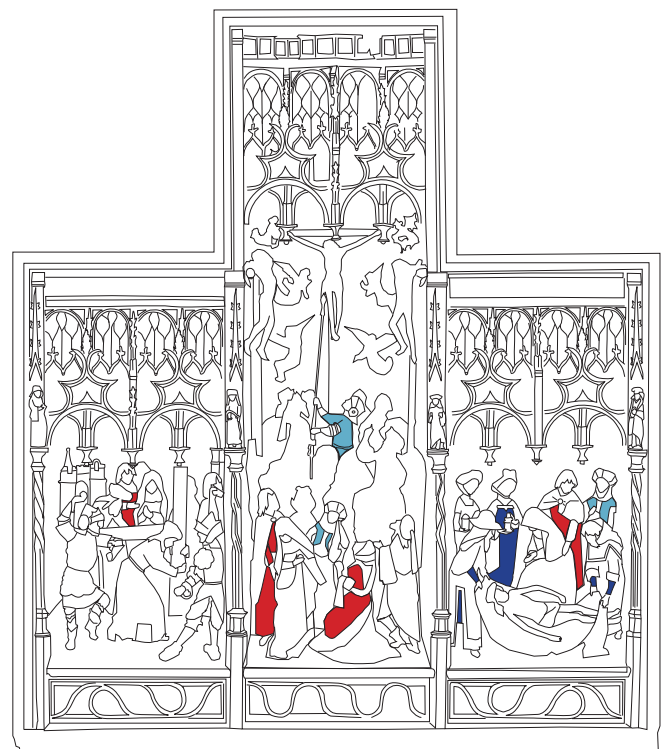
2001: maintenance in situ

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/47-1971/135

This inverted T-shaped domestic altarpiece illustrates three episodes from the Passion: the Carrying of the Cross, the Crucifixion and the Lamentation.¹ Further Passion scenes would have been painted on the wings, of which there were four, two large and two small ones, according to traces of hinges. Various spiral colonettes supporting tiny prophets separate the three compartments, whose top sections are filled with fine tracery. The elongated figures below are very delicately carved, their gestures graceful and well-articulated, their facial features at once firm and sensitive, and their fluidly draped garments settling in deep angular folds. The work's Brussels provenance is attested by the joiners' mark on one of the dovetails of the case.

The carvings were disfigured by overpaints, most of which were removed during the 1968-1971 restoration.² However, except for the blue robe of the holy woman to the left of the Cross in the Lamentation the surfaces decorated with applied brocade were never overpainted.

The figures have been carved separately and assembled with precision, the joins filled with a fibrous material that also covers the floors. The highly refined polychromy is traditional: burnished gold, frequently tooled, alternating with matt gold on mordant, with red glazes (discoloured) over silver leaf. It also includes little metallic cupules on a soldier's armour, as well as matt blue punctuated in places by gilded dots. Two different local applied brocades decorate the garments of the holy figures.



22a
Passion Altarpiece
(Vermeersch
bequest), 1490-1500,
Brussels; Brussels,
KMKG-MRAH

22b
Location of the
applied brocades

- Model 22.1
- Model 22.2
- Unidentified local
applied brocades

¹ BRUSSELS 2000a: 68-71; *Sculpture des Pays-Bas méridionaux | Beeldhouwwerken van de Zuidelijke Nederlanden 2000*: 93-95; DE BOODT 2005: 169-170.

² *Chronique 1970-1971*: 236; LEUVEN 1971: 330-335 (cat. BB/13).

Model 22.1



22.1a
Crucifixion, Mary Magdalene



22.1b
Applied brocade on Mary Magdalene's gown



22.1c
Archaeological drawing

Location:	Mary Magdalene's gown (Crucifixion); St John's robe (all three scenes) (see ill. 22b)	Possibly identical applied brocades cat. 18.2 cat. 19.5 cat. 24.4 cat. G4.3
Type:	local	
Design:	floral and foliate: inverted heart-shaped centre, a double five-lobed corolla, four dentate leaves and a stem with lily-like offshoots	Comparable applied brocades cat. 24.3 cat. 35.2 cat. 35.3 cat. F3.3 cat. S3.2 cat. S4.2 cat. S7.5
Measurements:	small: 4.5 x 3.2 cm (upper section: 2.7 x 3.2 cm; lower section (stem): 1.8 x 2.2 cm)	
Relief:	striations (leaves, corolla, centre), fine lines (veins, centre lozenges), flat zones (around the centre, veins), excisions (between the two parts of the corolla and in the stem) (mixed pattern)	
Striations:	15-18 per cm; vertical, horizontal	
Condition:	badly damaged	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	red glaze on the flat contour around the centre, the lines defining the lozenges in the centre, the veins of the dentate leaves and the lines that separate the two parts of the corolla	
Gilding:	gold leaf no adhesive observed	
Tin foil:	degraded, grey-black	
Filler:	brown ochre in colour, matt, waxy appearance	
Adhesive:	none	
Support layer:	discoloured red glaze burnished silver leaf pale orange bole white chalk and size ground	
Ref:	cross section: none	

The motif represents a pomegranate or perhaps a stylized thistle, the lozenge-filled centre corresponding to the bracts and the double corolla to the flower head. The lily-like shape of the stems is specific to this model.

A crescent-shaped zone has been excised from the corolla, allowing the red glaze of the support layer to show through. Excisions have also been made in the stem, to produce the lily shapes.

Where the red glaze has been applied onto silver leaf it has taken on a brownish tinge. However, it has retained its full density on the gilding of the applied brocades.

There are very comparable applied brocades on the *Altarpiece of the Virgin* (cat. 18.2), the *Saluzzo Altarpiece* (cat. 19.5), and the *Güstrow Passion Altarpiece* (cat. G4.3) (see Chapter Six). The applied brocades on the Brussels, *Holy Kinship Altarpiece* (cat. 24.4) and the Geel, *Passion Altarpiece* (cat. 35.2) are similar in the upper part (centre, leaves and corolla), but differ in the design of the stem.

Model 22.2



22.2a-b
Crucifixion, applied brocade on the gambeson of the mounted soldier raising the lance

22.2c
Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	gambeson of the mounted soldier raising the lance (Crucifixion); surcote of one of the holy women (Crucifixion, Lamentation) (see ill. 22b)		Comparable applied brocades cat. 5.3 cat. S10.3
Type:	local		
Design:	floral and foliate: dentate leaves on a cruciform stem with sagittate leaves		
Measurements:	small: 3 x 2 cm		
Relief:	fully striated, contour(?) and veins (relief pattern)		
Striations:	17-18 per cm; vertical		
Condition:	well preserved		
Overpaint:	none		
Highlighting:	none	red glaze on centre and veins; applied brocade of the holy woman in the Lamentation only	
Gilding:	gold leaf no adhesive observed		
Tin foil:	degraded, grey-black		
Filler:	brown ochre in colour, waxy appearance		
Adhesive:	none observed		
Support layer:	red glaze burnished silver leaf pale orange bole white chalk and size ground		
Ref:	cross section: none		

This applied brocade is well preserved on the gambeson of the mounted soldier who helps to raise the lance. Small pieces of the same brocade also appear to have been used on Nicodemus's and Simeon's sleeves in the Lamentation.



23 FOUR FIGURATIVE GROUPS FROM A PASSION ALTARPIECE

Brussels, KMKG-MRAH, inv. 866, 867, 868, 869

Figurative groups from a Passion altarpiece, carved and polychromed oak

Brussels

Marks: Brussels mallet (on each group), grid (on each group)

1460-1470

Flagellation: 47 × 35 × 15.5 cm

Carrying of the Cross: 49.5 × 37 × 15.6 cm

Descent from the Cross: 46.8 × 33.4 × 15.6 cm

Entombment: 48 × 35 × 17 cm

1861: bought by the KMKG-MRAH from St Peter's Church in Leuven

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/47-2004/08255

These four groups come from a Passion altarpiece whose case has been lost. It was long thought that the retable in question stood on the high altar of St Peter's in Leuven,¹ a hypothesis based on a description by Eduard Van Even in 1895.² The altar had apparently already disappeared by the beginning of the nineteenth century. Van Even writes that the altarpiece consisted of eight groups of figures arranged in two rows. But the four scenes from Brussels are most unlikely to have been part of an altarpiece of this kind: their format rather suggests a single horizontal register of five compartments with the Crucifixion occupying a higher centre section, like the Passion altarpieces in Geel (cat. 35), the KMKG-MRAH in Brussels (cat. 20),³ and Stassfurt (cat. G5).⁴ Moreover, the St Peter's altarpiece dated from 1441, according to Van Even. The style of the present four groups and the Brussels marks are entirely inconsistent with this date.

The carved groups are one of the many interpretations of canonic themes in which specific compositions were reprised – with slight variations – for several decades and in diverse disciplines. The Flagellation is represented in exactly the same way – with Christ embracing the column, his wrists lashed in front of it and a tormentor hauling tight the bonds around his ankles while Pilate stands off to the rear left – in a stained glass medallion now in The Cloisters in New York, to mention but one of several examples.⁵

The present sculptures can be dated to the third quarter of the fifteenth century. Each group, carved from a single block of oak, is marked with the Brussels mallet as well as the workshop's grid. The physiognomy, headdresses and drapery have caused them to be associated with the Master of the Rouen Retable. In his *Altarpiece of the Life of the Virgin and the Infancy of Christ* (cat. F3) in Rouen no grid mark has been documented, however.⁶ Several other groups attributed to this master are in private ownership. They have not yet been closely examined for the presence of marks and little has been published about them.⁷ On the other hand, a stylistically similar Resurrection formerly in the Schoufour-Martin collection is marked with a grid. The carving generally corresponds to that of the four Brussels groups, but all the polychromy is lost.⁸

The surviving original polychromy on the present groups is badly damaged in places. Colour is used sparingly, allowing the burnished gilding to predominate. There is very little decoration: besides the applied brocade it consists of a simple border painted on the gold leaf.

¹ DETROIT 1960: 252-253; LEUVEN 1971: 322-323; AACHEN 1999: 150-152.

² VAN EVEN 1895: 351-352.

³ DE BOODT 2005: 166-167.

⁴ Ibid. 195-196.

⁵ LEUVEN 1998: 351; CARTER 1975: 63.

⁶ LEUVEN 1998: 350-352; *Sculpture des Pays-Bas méridionaux | Beeldhouwwerken van de Zuidelijke Nederlanden 2000: 104-107.*

⁷ GHENT 1994: 156-157.

⁸ ROTTERDAM 2008. The owner recently donated his collection to the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen in Rotterdam, on which occasion the Resurrection group was exhibited. It was not included in the catalogue, however.

Model 23.1



23.1a
Entombment, applied brocade on Mary Magdalene's gown
© KMKG-MRAH, Brussels



23.1b
Carrying of the Cross, remains of applied
brocade on the gown of the holy woman
© KMKG-MRAH, Brussels

Location:	gown of the holy woman behind John (Carrying of the Cross); gown of the swooning Virgin (Descent from the Cross); gown of Mary Magdalene (Entombment)	
Type:	continuous	
Design:	unidentifiable, too incomplete for reconstruction	
Measurements:	unidentifiable, too incomplete for precise measurement	
Relief:	unidentifiable	
Striations:	12 per cm; vertical	
Condition:	badly damaged	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	red glaze (Mary Magdalene)	blue (the Virgin, holy woman)
Gilding:	gold leaf no adhesive observed	
Tin foil:	grey to black appearance	
Filler:	ochre in colour, waxy appearance	
Adhesive:	brown; too indistinct to be clearly identified	
Support layer:	white chalk and size ground	
Ref:	cross section: none	

Too little brocade survives to allow a pattern to be identified. It is equally unclear whether the same model was used on all three figures.



23b
Descent from
the Cross
© KMKG-MRAH,
Brussels



24 HOLY KINSHIP ALTARPIECE

KMKG-MRAH, Brussels, inv. 327

Altarpiece, carved, polychromed and gilded oak, wings lost

Carving: Brussels, Borman circle

Polychromy: Brussels, Master I*T

No marks

c.1500

117.6 × 93.5 × 22.8 cm

1844: the Ministry of Justice gives the altarpiece to the Musée royal d'armure, d'antiquités et d'ethnologie, forerunner of the KMKG-MRAH, Brussels; how it came into the Ministry's possession is unknown

1968: extensive treatment at the KIK-IRPA, followed by regular inspection

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/47-1968/710

In the splendidly worked, single-compartment altarpiece case the enthroned St Anne and the Virgin and Child are surrounded by kith and kin. The accomplished composition is built up in several zones of different depths, with the characters harmoniously arranged according to their branch of the family tree. Above, God the Father blesses the gathering and two angels provide music on the lute and viol.¹

The style, characterized by great creativity and naturalism, is clearly that of the hand that produced the figures for the Vadstena *Altarpiece of the Glorification of the Virgin* (cat. S7). The *Saluzzo Altarpiece* (cat. 19) and the Marian altarpieces in Skepptuna and Strängnäs (cat. S2, cat. S5) are also very closely related stylistically to the present work, and may well have been carved in the same workshop. There are also parallels in the polychromy. With the exception of the Skepptuna altarpiece the I*T workshop was responsible for the polychroming of all these works (see Chapter Six).

It is assumed that the altarpiece comes from the St Anne Chapel in Oudergem,² one of the oldest Romanesque chapels in the Low Countries, where it may have adorned an altar in one of the aisles.

Both the altarpiece case and the figures are in oak. There are seven carved groups and a number of separately-made characters. The original polychromy is well preserved and has never been over-painted. The thin ground is largely covered with burnished gold leaf. Silver leaf has also been used here and there, and both metals are extensively highlighted with red and green glaze. The gleaming surfaces are tempered by matt blue areas and pale pink flesh tones. The diversity of decoration employed on this work is impressive – virtuoso punchwork, painted patterns on metal leaf and shell gold motifs on azurite blue, in addition to the various types of applied brocade.

24a
Holy Kinship Altarpiece, c.1500, Brussels; Brussels, KMKG-MRAH

24b
Elizabeth, Cleophas, Hysmeria, Joseph, Joachim and Alpheus

24c
Location of the applied brocades

- Model 24.1
- Model 24.2
- Model 24.3
- Model 24.4
- Model 24.5
- Model 24.6



¹ BALLESTREM 1970: 226-234; DERVEAUX-VAN USSEL 1975: 9-128; *Sculpture des Pays-Bas méridionaux | Beeldhouwwerken van de Zuidelijke Nederlanden* 2000: 96-99; DE BOODT 2005: 172-173.

² EVERAERT 1998.

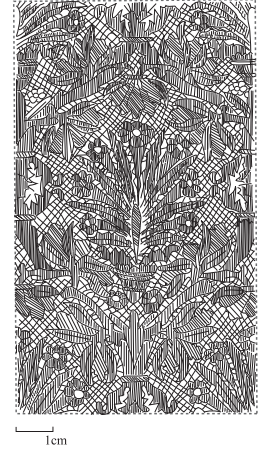
Model 24.1



24.1a
Applied brocade on Joachim's shoulder cape



24.1b
Applied brocade on Cleophas's cloak



24.1c
Reconstruction of the relief

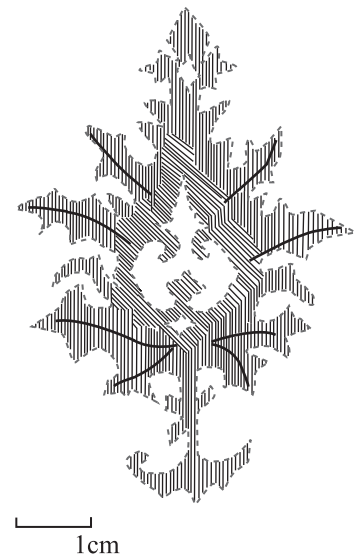
Location:	garments of Stolanus, Zacharias, Zebedee and Cleophas, Joachim's shoulder cape, gowns of the Virgin and Menelia (see ill. 24c)		Identical applied brocades cat. 7.1 cat. 6.1 cat. 19.1 cat. 66.1 cat. G4.1 cat. S1.1 cat. S7.1 cat. S9.1 cat. S10.1
Type:	continuous: straight rows		
Design:	floral and foliate: posy of flowers and lanceolate leaves in a basket inside an ogival framework of flowering stems, on a latted background		Comparable applied brocades cat. 47.1
Measurements:	medium: 11.5 x 6.5 cm		
Relief:	striations, contour and laticing in slightly higher relief (relief pattern)		
Striations:	12-20 per cm; vertical, diagonal		
Condition:	badly damaged		
Overpaint:	none		
Highlighting:	red lake on contour and laticing (Stolanus, Zacharias, Zebedee, Joachim, Menelia) purplish pink, opaque (lake and lead white)	matt blue on contour and laticing (Cleophas, the Virgin)	
Gilding:	gold leaf thin organic adhesive layer; fluoresces blue in UV light		
Tin foil:	degraded, white or dark grey		
Filler:	yellow ochre in colour, semi-transparent appearance, waxy		
Adhesive:	thick ochre-coloured adhesive layer thin ochre-coloured layer		
Support layer:	white chalk and size ground		
Ref:	KIK-IRPA laboratory file (1 cross section)		

Although nowhere completely intact, the surviving elements show that this is the familiar posy of flowers and lanceolate leaves that was also used on the *Saluzzo Altarpiece* (cat. 19.1). The measurements of the design are the same in both retables. In the present work it occurs on the garments of six characters. In most cases the pattern has been highlighted with red glaze; the Virgin's gown and Cleophas's cloak were highlighted with blue.

Several samples have already been extensively analysed as part of a case study.³ The brocades on Cleophas's cloak were apparently glued with both a thin and thick adhesive layer.

³ SANYOVA 2002: 81-101, esp. 85-87. See also KIK-IRPA laboratory file: 2L/47-1968/710, supervised by Jana Sanyova.

Model 24.2



24.2a-b
Applied brocade on St Anne's gown

24.2c
Archaeological drawing

24.2d
Possible reconstruction of the relief

Location:	garments of St Anne and Eliude (see ill. 24c)		Comparable applied brocades cat. 6.2 cat. 19.7 cat. 28.1 cat. 29.1 cat. 66.2 cat. 51.2 cat. 56.2 cat. 57.2 cat. 59.2 cat. PC1.1 Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, <i>Female Saint</i> (1965.2230) London, V&A, <i>St Barbara</i> (A.107-1937) Paris, Louvre, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (RF 1567) Paris, Louvre, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (RF 1788) Paris, Louvre, <i>St Margaret</i> (RF 2572) Paris, Musée Marmottan, <i>St Barbara</i> (622d) Private collection, <i>St Gudule</i> (formerly in the Kofler-Truniger collection) Private collection, <i>St Roch</i> (formerly in the Kofler-Truniger collection)
Type:	local		
Design:	floral and foliate: thistle leaf or acanthus leaf		
Measurements:	small: c.4.5 x 4 cm		
Relief:	fully striated, veins and contour of centre in relief, centre excised from the tin foil (relief pattern)		
Striations:	15-17 per cm; vertical, diagonal		
Condition:	well preserved		
Overpaint:	none		
Highlighting:	red glaze on contour and possibly on veins		
Gilding:	gold leaf thin transparent layer (adhesive?)		
Tin foil:	locally degraded, black		
Filler:	brown, translucent, waxy appearance, thickened with red lead		
Adhesive:	none		
Support layer:	red madder-based lake (St Anne) silver leaf red bole (?) white chalk and size ground	green glaze (Eliude) burnished gold leaf red bole	
Ref:	KIK-IRPA laboratory file (1 cross section); SANYOVA 2002: 86.		

The thistle leaf or acanthus leaf with dentate leaves strongly resembles the motif from the I*T Master's repertoire that was used with such regularity on the small statues made in Mechelen (see cat. 6 and cat. 29, for example). However, it differs from the norm in that the diagonal striations around the excised centre are aligned in the opposite direction. Perhaps it was – inadvertently? – applied back-to-front. The brocades were fixed in place by being pressed into the still tacky red or green glaze. The red glaze is madder-based (*Rubia tinctorum*).⁴

Of all the samples taken from the altarpiece this is the only one in which the filler contains large particles of red lead. Red lead was also encountered in a cross section of the brocades on the viol-playing angel, but in that case in a separate layer beneath the filler, not mixed with it.

⁴ Physico-chemical analysis carried out under the supervision of Dr Jan Wouters (KIK-IRPA).

Model 24.3

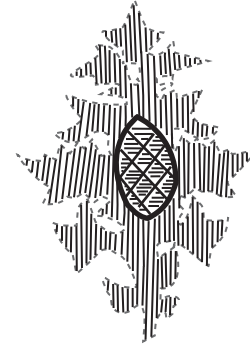


24.3a
Applied brocade on the Christ Child's tunic



1 cm

24.3b
Archaeological drawing



1 cm

24.3c
Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	Christ Child's robe, garments of James the Great (see ill. 24c)		Comparable applied brocades cat. 18.2 cat. 19.4 cat. 19.5 cat. 22.1 cat. 24.4 cat. 35.2 cat. 35.3 cat. F3.3 cat. G4.3 cat. S3.2 cat. S4.2 cat. S7.3
Type:	local		
Design:	floral and foliate: stylized thistle or pomegranate, lozenge-patterned centre surrounded by dentate leaves (pomegranate 3)		
Measurements:	small: c.4.5 x 3.5 cm		
Relief:	fully striated, contour and centre latticing (relief pattern)		
Striations:	12-14 per cm; vertical, horizontal		
Condition:	locally worn		
Overpaint:	none		
Highlighting:	matt blue on contour and centre latticing (Christ Child)	green glaze on contour and centre latticing (James the Great)	
Gilding:	gold leaf mordant		
Tin foil:	locally degraded, white		
Filler:	brown, translucent, waxy appearance, no additional thickening		
Adhesive:	none		
Support layer:	azurite blue (Christ Child)	green glaze (James the Great) gold leaf	
	white chalk and size ground		
Ref:	KIK-IRPA laboratory file (1 cross section)		

This motif – a thistle-like plant with elongated dentate leaves and dentate crown – occurs on the garments of the Christ Child and James the Great. On the infant Christ's robe nine local applied brocades are still fairly well preserved, in this case on a matt blue paint layer. The brocades on James's garment were applied onto gleaming green-glazed gold leaf. The contour and lattice of the central oval are in relief and in each case highlighted with the background colour. There is no suggestion of veins in the leaves. No identical applied brocades have been found on other sculptures, but motifs that are stylistically very close are encountered, such as model 24.4, below, and certain motifs on the *Saluzzo Altarpiece* (cat. 19.4, cat. 19.5), the Vermeersch bequest *Passion Altarpiece* (cat. 22.1) and the Geel *Passion Altarpiece* (cat. 35.2). These are the same size but differ in the treatment of the top of the thistle and the leaf veins (see Chapter Six).

Model 24.4

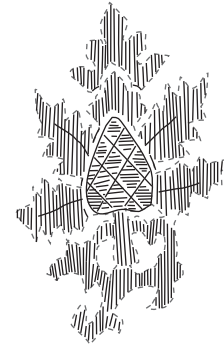


24.4a
Applied brocade on the tunic of James the Less



1cm

24.4b
Archaeological drawing



1cm

24.4c
Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	robe of James the Less (see ill. 24c)	Identical applied brocades cat. 18.2 cat. 19.5 cat. G4.3 cat. S7.3
Type:	local	
Design:	floral and foliate: stylized thistle or pomegranate, lozenge-patterned centre surrounded by dentate leaves and double corolla, lily-like stem (pomegranate 2)	Possibly identical applied brocades cat. 22.1
Measurements:	small: min. 4.5 x 2.5 cm; incomplete sheet	
Relief:	fully striated, leaf veins, contour and centre latticing (relief pattern)	Comparable applied brocades cat. 19.4 cat. 24.3 cat. 35.2 cat. 35.3 cat. F3.3 cat. S3.2 cat. S4.2
Striations:	11-12 per cm; vertical, horizontal	
Condition:	locally worn	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	red glaze on contour, centre latticing and leaf veins	
Gilding:	gold leaf very thin layer (adhesive?)	
Tin foil:	dark grey	
Filler:	brown, translucent, waxy appearance	
Adhesive:	none	
Support layer:	red glaze burnished gilding white chalk and size ground	
Ref:	KIK-IRPA laboratory file (1 cross section)	

This motif differs from model 24.3 in a few details only. Here the thistle-like plant is finished with a crown of lobed rather than dentate foliage, and the leaves are veined in relief. The brocade has been pressed into the tacky glaze without any additional adhesive. There are identical applied brocades on the *Saluzzo Altarpiece* (cat. 19.5) and the *Güstrow Passion Altarpiece* (cat. G4.3), for example.

Model 24.5



24.5a
Applied brocade on the alb of the lutenist angel



24.5b
Archaeological drawing

Location:	albs of the two musician angels (see ill. 24c)	Possibly identical applied brocades cat. 19.6 cat. S6.3 cat. S7.4
Type:	local	
Design:	floral and foliate	Comparable applied brocades cat. 21.2
Measurements:	small: c.4.5 x min. 2.5 cm; incomplete sheet	
Relief:	fully striated, veins (relief pattern)	
Striations:	12 per cm; vertical, diagonal	
Condition:	badly damaged	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	red glaze on the veins	
Gilding:	gold leaf very thin layer (adhesive?)	
Tin foil:	grey	
Filler 1:	very thin red layer brown, translucent, waxy appearance, no additional thickening	
Filler 2:	red lead	
Adhesive:	orange-brown, semi-translucent	
Support layer:	lead white white chalk and size ground	
Ref:	KIK-IRPA laboratory file (1 cross section); SANYOVA 2002: 87.	

This local brocade can be compared with one of the thistle motifs on the *Saluzzo Altarpiece* (cat. 19.6) and is perhaps identical to it. In the case of the viol-playing angel red lead was added to the filler, a component that also occurs in model 24.4, albeit there less opaque. What initially seemed to be a partial repair is probably a second, orange filler, added when the brocade was made, to reinforce the tin foil.

Pieces of local applied brocade were also found on the garments of Elizabeth and Alpheus, but the lack of a complete motif impedes identification.

Model 24.6



24.6a
Applied brocade braid on St Anne's cloak



24.6b
Archaeological drawing



24.6c
Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	edges of the gilded cloaks and surcotes of the Virgin, St Anne, Mary Cleophas, Mary Salome, St Elizabeth, Joachim, Zachariah (see ill. 24c)	Possibly identical applied brocades cat. 6.3 (arabesque3) cat. 7.2 (arabesque3)
Type:	braid	
Design:	floral and foliate: arabesque between parallel lines (arabesque 3)	Comparable applied brocades
Measurements:	small: 0.9 x min. 7.1 cm; incomplete sheet	cat. 19.9 cat. 49.1 cat. 66.3 cat. G4.5 cat. S1.3 cat. S6.4 cat. S7.5 cat. S9.4 cat. S10.4
Relief:	fully striated strip (relief pattern)	Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, <i>Female Saint</i> (1965.2230) Cologne, Schnütgen Museum, <i>St Christopher</i> (A 227) London, V&A, <i>St Barbara</i> (A.107-1937) Paris, Louvre, <i>St Margaret</i> (RF 2572) Paris, Louvre, <i>St Michael</i> (OA 310) Paris, Louvre, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (RF 1567) Paris, Musée Marmottan, <i>St Barbara</i> (622d)
Striations:	12 per cm; vertical	Private collection, <i>St Barbara</i> (former Kofler-Truniger collection) Private collection, <i>St Gudule</i> (former Kofler-Truniger collection) Private collection, <i>St Roch</i> (former Kofler-Truniger collection) Private collection, <i>St Catherine</i> (former Becker collection, Brussels) Private collection, <i>St Margaret</i> (Christie's sale, New York 1994) Private collection, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (antiquary Bruno Speybrouck sale, Kortrijk 2007) Private collection, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (Brussels, KIK-IRPA photograph N4563)
Condition:	badly damaged	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	azurite blue on striations grey underlayer	red glaze on striations
Gilding:	gold leaf adhesive layer	
Tin foil:	white-grey, opaque	
Filler:	ochre in colour, semi-transparent appearance, beeswax, no additional thickening	
Adhesive:	pale yellow ochre in colour, semi-transparent	
Support layer:	gold leaf orange bole white chalk and size ground	
Ref:	KIK-IRPA laboratory file (1 cross section); SANYOVA 2002: 86. See also Chapter Ten, Table B	

The approximately 0.9-centimetre-wide braid is patterned with arabesques between two parallel lines. The surviving fragments reveal a curving stem with finer tendrils. The I*T workshop used diverse braids, some ornamented with arabesques, some with tiny flowers, some with cloverleaves (see cat. 19.9), but none matches the braid used here.⁵ There is a slight similarity to the braid on the hem of Maximilla's gown in the *Burial of St Andrew* (cat. 7.2), but that too is badly damaged. The tin foil was gilded then painted with azurite on a grey underlayer, the arabesques and parallel lines being left unpainted to give the idea of gold thread on a blue band. At the corners of the garment the strips are cut on the diagonal to make a mitred join.

The hem of the Virgin's cloak and the cuffs of her gown, Joachim's cuffs, and the edges of the cloaks worn by Zacharias and Elizabeth are also embellished with applied brocade braids. They are made in the same way but highlighted with red glaze rather than azurite blue. There is nothing left of the pattern here, so whether it was the same design or not is uncertain.

⁵ Arabesque 3 is yet another variant of the arabesque-decorated braids used by the I*T workshop (for arabesques 1 and 2 see cat. 19.9).



25 MASS OF ST GREGORY

Brussels, KMKG-MRAH, inv. V. 261

Figurative group from an altarpiece, carved and polychromed oak

Antwerp

No marks

1530-1540

61 × 35,5 × 10,5 cm

1911: acquired from the estate of Gustave Vermeersch

1978: original polychromy exposed by Anne Van Grevenstein-Kruse

2001: minor conservation by the KIK-IRPA

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/47-2004/08241

In the fifteenth and early sixteenth century the Mass of St Gregory was a popular subject in the visual arts of the Low Countries. It emerged from a number of complex images in the late fourteenth century. The story appears neither in Gregory's *vitae* nor in the *Golden Legend*. This figurative group¹ represents the Eucharist, when the bread and wine are miraculously transubstantiated into Christ's body and blood. According to legend a cleric doubted Christ's actual presence during Mass. In response, Gregory prayed for a sign from heaven and was answered by a vision of the suffering Christ surrounded by the instruments of his Passion. The present composition is evenly structured, leading the eye via the kneeling deacon and the pope with his upraised hands holding the host to the figure of Christ on the altar. Stylistically, the group is a typical example of early-sixteenth-century Antwerp altarpiece production – witness the large hands and the expressive sharply carved features that lend the faces a slightly caricatural appearance. The flat and rather schematic modelling suggests a somewhat hasty execution.

The transubstantiation was a regular theme in painting and sculpture in the fifteenth century, although the didactic, theologically orientated content meant the subject was more often to be encountered in a monastic context than a parish church. Jan de Molder produced an altarpiece (now in the Musée Cluny in Paris) for Averbode Abbey with the Mass of St Gregory as its central focus.² However, the scene was usually used to supplement the Passion, sometimes as a carved group but far more often painted on the exterior of an altarpiece's wings.³

The group is cut from two blocks of oak. In the original polychromy a judicious palette was used, combining gold leaf and glaze with matt colours (green, white and blue). Red glaze (on an orange underlayer) on the cardinals' cassocks brackets the composition. The white albs are decorated with geometric motifs in sgraffito (azurite and white on burnished gold leaf); Gregory's is embellished with applied brocade.

The sculpture is in good condition but the polychromy is lacunate and obscured by grime and varnish.

¹ *Sculpture des Pays-Bas méridionaux | Beeldhouwwerken van de Zuidelijke Nederlanden* 2000: 186-187.

² JACOBS 1998: 65-66.

³ D'HAINAUT-ZVENY 1997: 55-56. On the Mass of St Gregory, see also COLOGNE 1982.

Model 25.1



25.1a
Archaeological drawing



25.1b
Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	Pope Gregory's alb, cardinals' cassocks	
Type:	local	
Design:	floral and foliate: dentate foliage	
Measurements:	small: 3.3 x 2.2 cm	
Relief:	striations, veins, small flat zone in the centre (possibly with contour) (mixed or relief pattern)	
Striations:	11 per cm; variously aligned	
Condition:	well preserved	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	none	
Gilding:	gold leaf no adhesive observed	
Tin foil:	slightly degraded, grey	
Filler:	orange-yellow, waxy appearance	
Adhesive:	none observed	
Support layer:	white (Pope Gregory's alb)	red glaze (cardinals' cassocks) orange underlayer
Ref:	white chalk and size ground cross section: none	

There are local brocades on the garments of three figures: on the dark red vestments of the two cardinals and on Pope Gregory's alb. Only a couple are still complete. The stylized motif is symmetrically constructed with two dentate leaves at the bottom, one at the top, and three on either side. The side leaves have veins in relief. The centre of the motif has been left flat and is possibly marked out with a contour line, although damage makes this difficult to determine with certainty. There was no adhesive layer to be discerned with the naked eye between the applied brocades and the glaze beneath them.



25.1c
Applied brocade
on the cardinal's
cassocks



26 VIRGIN AND CHILD ON THE CRESCENT MOON

Brussels, KMKG-MRAH, inv. V2626

Statue, carved and polychromed Avesnes stone
Brabant, Brussels(?)
1435-1440
82 × 31.9 × 24 cm

1911: acquired by the KMKG-MRAH from the estate of Gustave Vermeersch¹
1970: desalination treatment at the KIK-IRPA

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/47-1970/987

The monumental character of this statue is produced particularly by the virtuoso modelling of the voluminous mantle, by which the crowned Virgin seems almost weighed down. Her serene countenance contrasts with the Child's mischievous face. The shared gesture in which Mary's slender fingers and the chubby infant hands fold up the pages is achieved with great sensitivity and subtlety. The masterly execution of the Child's robe renders the fabric almost tangible, refuting the unyielding nature of the material. The combination of realism and amplitude gives this Virgin and Child a certain affinity with the oeuvre of Rogier Van der Weyden.²

The statue in Avesnes stone is covered with a red-lead-based ground.³ In the less visible places such as the depths of the folds, and the figure's back and sides, the surface has not been evenly finished and traces of a claw chisel or rasp are clearly visible. The gold leaf on the hair has been laid over bole; a mordant was used for the gilding on the cloak. The polychromy is very lacunate and worn: on the faces of both Mother and Child, for instance, virtually nothing remains of the paint layer. Applied brocade covered both the Virgin's gown and the Child's robe. This is the earliest extant example of the technique preserved in Belgium. The entire surface of the Virgin's blue-lined matt-gilded mantle was enriched with red-glazed painted brocade: the pattern of tetra-rosettes in ogival fields was produced with a stencil. On the back of the sculpture the gilding was thriftily replaced by yellow ochre paint, over which the pattern was continued in the red glaze. On the Virgin's crown, between the large gems carved in relief, additional precious stones were painted.



26a
*Virgin and Child on
the Crescent Moon,*
1435-1440, Brabant,
Brussels(?); Brussels,
KMKG-MRAH

26b
Painted brocade on
the back of the figure

¹ *Sculpture des Pays-Bas méridionaux | Beeldhouwwerken van de Zuidelijke Nederlanden* 2000: 108-109.

² GHENT 1994: 82.

³ ANNAERT, DE HENAU 1971: 139-144.

Model 26.1



26.1
Applied brocade on the Virgin's gown

Location:	the Virgin's gown
Type:	continuous
Design:	unidentifiable, too incomplete for reconstruction
Measurements:	unidentifiable, too incomplete for precise measurement
Relief:	striations, contour, flat zones (mixed pattern)
Striations:	10-12 per cm; vertical, very straight, evenly spaced
Condition:	badly damaged
Overpaint:	none
Highlighting:	red glaze(?); minute traces, too indistinct for identification
Gilding:	gold leaf mordant
Tin foil:	degraded, black
Filler:	brown, translucent, waxy appearance
Adhesive:	orange-brown
Support layer:	orange white chalk and size ground
Ref:	cross section: none

Only scant vestiges of the decoration survive, and few data can be derived from them. It can be seen, however, that the relief is extremely fine and carefully executed. The motif consists of flat areas defined by a contour line in relief against a striated background but the minute surviving traces no longer allow reconstruction or measurement. The red glaze highlighting may be a later overpaint.

Model 26.2



26.2
Applied brocade on the Child's gown

Location:	Child's gown
Type:	continuous
Design:	unidentifiable, too incomplete for reconstruction
Measurements:	unidentifiable, too incomplete for precise measurement
Relief:	unidentifiable
Striations:	unidentifiable
Condition:	badly damaged
Overpaint:	none
Highlighting:	none observed, no remaining traces
Gilding:	none observed, no remaining traces
Tin foil:	degraded, black
Filler:	brown, translucent, waxy appearance
Adhesive:	orange-brown
Support layer:	orange white chalk and size ground
Ref:	cross section: none

Only small patches of the brown transparent filler remain, together with a few fragments of tin foil. The pattern is completely lost.



27 VIRGIN AND CHILD

Brussels, MRAH-KMKG, inv. 2542

Statue, polychromed limestone

Brabant, Brussels(?)

Mark: compasses (carved into the crown of the head; not the Brussels mark; possibly the craftsman's mark)

Mid-15th century(?)

120 × 42 × 30 cm

1966: conservation-restoration at the KIK-IRPA

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/47-1966/486a

The Virgin stands in a slightly contrapposto position, the Child supported by her right arm¹ and a book in her left hand (now lost). Her cloak, bunched up by the Child's foot, falls across her belly in a generous swathe. The Child plays with the pages of the book, following a formula most likely invented by Rogier van der Weyden.²

The voluminous draperies, the fine, broad face with its rounded forehead, the elongated corners of the eyes and the thick waving hair, place the statue in the wake of Robert Campin. The work recalls another *Virgin and Child* (cat. 26) in the same museum, especially in the treatment of the hands and drapery. The tilt of the hip and the elliptical sweep of the cloak give great elegance and dynamism to this Madonna.

In 1966 the original polychromy, which had been obscured by several overpaints, was uncovered and documented.³ It was shown that the orange sealing layer applied to the stone also serves as a ground.⁴ The Virgin's cloak and hair are gilded, with the gold leaf laid on a beige mordant. The cloak also has a wide blue border inscribed with gilded letters that correspond to three verses from the Paschal antiphons to the Virgin.⁵ Both Mary's gown and the Child's robe are decorated with applied brocade.

27a
Virgin and Child,
mid-15th century(?),
Brussels(?); Brussels,
MRAH-KMKG

¹ DE BORCHGRAVE d'ALTENA 1934: 206 (fig. 39); JANSEN 1964: 59 (246), pl. CXV.

² RADEMACHER-CHORUS 1972: 376-377, 381.

³ ANNAERT 1967-1968: 168-173.

⁴ Ibid. 170.

⁵ Ibid. 169.

Model 27.1



27.1
Applied brocade on the Virgin's gown

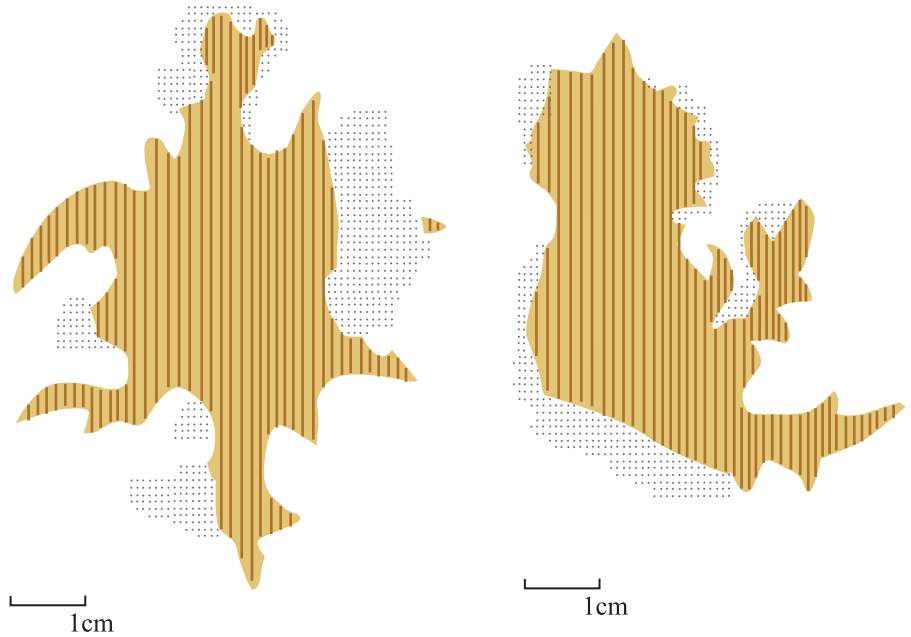
Location:	the Virgin's gown
Type:	local
Design:	floral and foliate: dentate foliage, too indistinct for reconstruction
Measurements:	medium: min. 9.5 cm wide; sheet incomplete
Relief:	fully striated, vein (relief pattern)
Striations:	8 per cm; vertical
Condition:	badly damaged
Overpaint:	red traces
Highlighting:	none observed, no remaining traces
Gilding:	gold leaf (minute traces) beige mordant
Tin foil:	degraded, grey
Filler:	fairly thick, beige, opaque, waxy appearance, thickened with pigments
Adhesive:	none observed, apparently none
Support layer:	red glaze matt red underlayer orange sealing layer white chalk and size ground
Ref:	cross section: none

The gilding of the applied brocade is almost completely lost and much of the tin also, leaving the opaque beige filler visible. Traces of old red overpaint can still be seen in places.

Model 27.2



27.2a
Applied brocade on the Child's robe



27.2b-c
Archaeological drawings

Location:	Child's robe
Type:	local
Design:	floral and foliate: dentate foliage, too incomplete for reconstruction
Measurements:	medium: min. 7 x min. 5.5 cm; incomplete sheet
Relief:	fully striated (relief pattern)
Striations:	10 per cm; vertical
Condition:	badly damaged
Overpaint:	none
Highlighting:	none observed, no remaining traces
Gilding:	gold leaf (minute traces) beige mordant
Tin foil:	degraded, grey
Filler:	light brown, translucent, wax-resin appearance
Adhesive:	none observed, apparently none
Support layer:	blue orange sealing layer white chalk and size ground
Ref:	cross section: none

A dozen complete or fragmentary brocades embellish the Child's robe. They seem finer than those on the Virgin's gown, due to the greater number of striations per centimetre. The filler is translucent brown and apparently not the same as the opaque beige filler of the applied brocade on the Virgin's gown (model 27.1).



28 VIRGIN AND CHILD

Brussels, KMKG-MRAH, inv. 8655

Statue, carved and polychromed walnut
 Carving: Mechelen; polychromy
 Brussels, attributed to the workshop of Master I*T
 No marks
 1500-1510
 36 × 11 × 8 cm

1945-1950: acquired by the KMKG-MRAH
 1984: restoration by Catherine Van Herck, exposure of the original polychromy¹

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/47-2005/08737

Her frontal pose and insouciant expression give this Virgin a distinctly forceful character. Her gown's comparatively high neckline with rounded corners is also a feature of that worn by the Leuven Virgin (cat. 49). The cloak is caught up in the left hand to create a flowing and voluminous mass of drapery that moderates the figure's verticality. The position of the Child closely resembles that of a *Virgin and Child* now in the Museum Catharijneconvent in Utrecht.² In general the stylistic elements conform to the Mechelen canon. Mechelen produced an enormous number of sculptures that were very homogeneous in size and iconography and which varied only slightly on a standard formula.³ The sculptor of the present work has endowed his figures with rather more individuality, however, giving his Virgin a less doll-like and juvenile appearance than the canonic *St Barbara* in Brussels (cat. 29), for instance.

Carved almost completely from a single block, the sculpture was originally fixed to a pedestal by means of two pegs. It has suffered some damage: the Child's head, right arm, and feet have been lost, likewise the Virgin's crown. A red glaze covers the silver leaf on the gown. The gilded cloak was lined with a layer of azurite blue (on a black underlayer). The face has a porcelain-like appearance, pale pink in colour with a blush suffusing the cheeks. Other than the brocades, of which no more than a few traces remain, no decoration was applied.

Of the many sculptures that survive from the original vast early-sixteenth-century Mechelen corpus a good thirty were certainly polychromed in a single Brussels workshop.⁴ This collaboration is evidenced by the marks of both cities or, as in the case of this *Virgin and Child*, by the applied brocades, although just how that creative interaction worked is not yet entirely clear (see Chapter Six).

¹ *Sculpture des Pays-Bas méridionaux | Beeldhouwwerken van de Zuidelijke Nederlanden* 2000: 144-145.

² VAN VLIERDEN 2004: 287, fig. p. 45 (ABM BH 346).

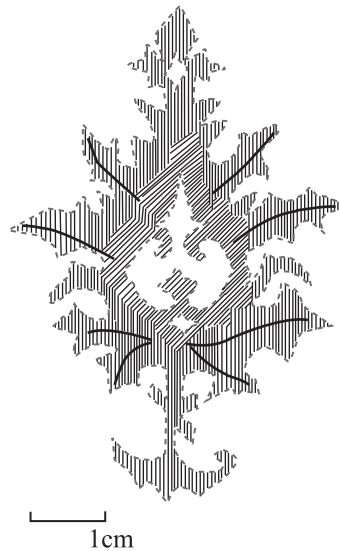
³ GUILLOT DE SUDIRAUT 2001a: 98-100 (RF 1788).

⁴ GEELLEN, STEYAERT 2009b: 23-26.

Model 28.1



28.1a
Remains of applied brocade on the Virgin's gown



28.1b
Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	the Virgin's gown; bodice, sleeve and skirt	Identical applied brocades cat. 6.2 cat. 19.7 cat. 29.1 cat. 66.2 cat. G4.2 cat. S1.2 cat. S6.2 cat. S7.2 cat. S9.2 cat. PC1.1
Type:	local	
Design:	floral and foliate: stylized thistle leaf or acanthus leaf	Possibly identical applied brocades Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, <i>Female Saint</i> (1965.2230) London, V&A, <i>St Barbara</i> (A.107-1937) Paris, Louvre, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (RF 1567) Paris, Louvre, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (RF 1788) Paris, Louvre, <i>St Margaret</i> (RF 2572) Paris, Musée Marmottan, <i>St Barbara</i> (622d) Private collection, <i>St Gudule</i> (formerly in the Kofler-Truniger collection) Private collection, <i>St Roch</i> (formerly in the Kofler-Truniger collection)
Measurements:	small: c.6.5 x 4.5 cm	
Relief:	fully striated, veins, excisions (relief pattern)	
Striations:	15-17 per cm; vertical, diagonal	
Condition:	badly damaged	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	none	
Gilding:	gold leaf (minute traces) no adhesive layer observed	
Tin foil:	degraded, black	
Filler:	extremely thin, white-grey, chalky appearance (?)	
Adhesive:	none observed, apparently none	
Support layer:	red glaze silver leaf orange bole white chalk and size ground	
Ref:	cross section: none	Comparable applied brocades cat. 24.2

The surface's damaged state allows only a few conclusions to be drawn. None of the applied brocades is completely intact, but it is clear from what remains that this is the stylized thistle-like motif of the I*T workshop. As far as could be seen with the unaided eye no adhesive layer was used: the applied brocades may simply have been pressed into the wet glaze – most local motifs were attached in this way. An extremely thin white-grey layer was observed under the tin foil, as was also the case with the *St Barbara* in the same museum (cat. 29). Without a sample, however, it is not entirely certain whether this is a chalky filler or local white degradation of the tin foil.

Model 28.2

On the cloak there was originally also an applied brocade braid, highlighted with azurite blue. Only in a fold of the cloak does a ghost of a trace still remain. No data can be derived from this, but like model 28.1 such braids were certainly part of the I*T workshop's repertoire (see also cat. 19.9).



29 ST BARBARA

Brussels, KMKG-MRAH, inv. 6570

Statue, carved and polychromed walnut

Carving: Mechelen

Polychromy: Brussels, Master I*T

Marks: Mechelen arms (three pales), BRVESEL, I*T monogram (incomplete)

1500-1510

41.5 (including 5.5 cm pedestal) × 13 × 7.5 cm

1939: purchased by the KMKG-MRAH from a private collection

1984: restoration by Catherine Van Herck, exposure of the original polychromy

1996 and 2001: minimal conservation by the KIK-IRPA

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/47-2004/08240

This dainty *St Barbara*, in graceful contrapposto with her head slightly inclined, is a typical example of Mechelen devotional sculpture of around 1500.¹ Over her square-necked gown, her décolletage decorously covered, she wears a voluminous cloak, caught up and held fast between her arms and body.

In design and polychromy the sculpture has much in common with a *Virgin and Child* and a *St Margaret* in Paris² and a *Female Saint* in Boston.³ They all share Barbara's rather round face and flat profile with unemphatic chin, lips and eyelids. Many of these now isolated figures must have belonged to altarpieces made for private devotion, only a few of which survive, such as the *Altarpiece of the Virgin with SS Barbara and Catherine* now in the Mayer van den Bergh Museum in Antwerp (cat. 6) and the *Altarpiece with Three Saints* in a private collection (cat. 66).

This *St Barbara* has been carved from a single block of walnut. The polychromy conforms to the traditional palette: a burnished gilt cloak lined in azurite blue (on a black underlayer) and a gown with red glaze over silver leaf.⁴

On the back of the figure is the Mechelen mark with its three pales. The pedestal bears the 'BRVESEL' mark, however, along with traces of a monogram. Within a stamped frame the first initial may perhaps be an 'I'. Although it is not entirely certain that the pedestal originally belonged to the statue, there are suggestions enough to ascribe the polychromy to Brussels. The applied brocades not only indicate that this is Brussels work, but also that the I*T Master was responsible for its execution.

29a

St Barbara, 1500-1510,
Mechelen-Brussels;
Brussels, KMKG-
MRAH

¹ *Sculpture des Pays-Bas méridionaux | Beeldhouwwerken van de Zuidelijke Nederlanden* 2000: 152.

² GUILLOT DE SUDUIRAUT 2001a: 101-102 (RF 1567), 106-108 (RF 2572).

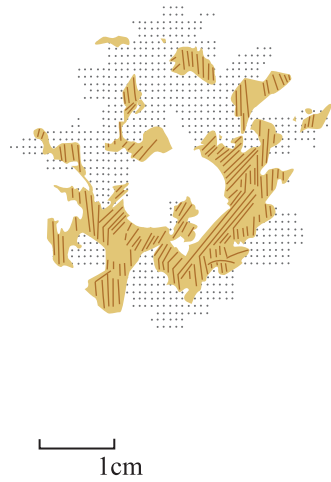
³ *Gothic Sculpture in America* 1989: 65.

⁴ GUILLOT DE SUDUIRAUT 2001a: 100.

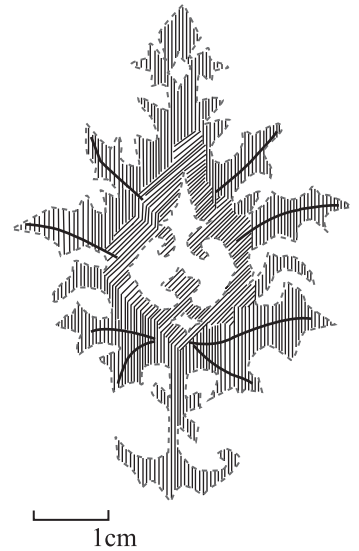
Model 29.1



29.1a
Applied brocade on St Barbara's gown



29.1b
Archaeological drawing



29.1c
Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	St Barbara's gown	Identical applied brocades cat. 6.2 cat. 19.7 cat. 28.1 cat. 66.2 cat. G4.2 cat. S1.2 cat. S6.2 cat. S7.2 cat. S9.2 cat. PC1.1
Type:	local	
Design:	floral and foliate: stylized thistle leaf or acanthus leaf	Possibly identical applied brocades Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, <i>Female Saint</i> (1965.2230) London, V&A, <i>St Barbara</i> (A.107-1937) Paris, Louvre, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (RF 1567) Paris, Louvre, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (RF 1788) Paris, Louvre, <i>St Margaret</i> (RF 2572) Paris, Musée Marmottan, <i>St Barbara</i> (622d) Private collection, <i>St Gudule</i> (formerly in the Kofler-Truniger collection) Private collection, <i>St Roch</i> (formerly in the Kofler-Truniger collection)
Measurements:	small: c.6.5 x 4.5 cm	
Relief:	fully striated, veins in relief, excisions (relief pattern)	
Striations:	15-17 per cm; vertical, diagonal	
Condition:	badly damaged	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	none	
Gilding:	gold leaf no adhesive layer observed	
Tin foil:	degraded, white-grey to black	
Filler:	white-grey, opaque, chalky appearance (?)	
Adhesive:	none observed, apparently none	
Support layer:	red glaze silver leaf orange bole white chalk and size ground	
Ref:	cross section: none	Comparable applied brocades cat. 24.2

The stylized thistle leaf or acanthus leaf brocades are distributed over the whole surface of St Barbara's gown but only on the bodice is a motif sufficiently well preserved for documentation. The same fictive flower motif occurs in a series of altarpieces and freestanding sculptures whose polychromy is attributed to Master I*T.

The filler looks extremely thin and is probably present only in the depth of the relief. It is impossible to determine its composition with any certainty by the naked eye alone, as in several places the filler and the white-degraded tin foil are barely distinguishable. No samples were taken. Nor can an adhesive layer be clearly identified. It is very likely that the motifs were pressed into the tacky glaze, a fixing method that was almost invariably used for local brocades.



29b
The Mechelen mark on the back of the figure



29c
Remains of the monogram on the pedestal



30 VIRGIN AND CHILD ON THE CRESCENT MOON

Brussels, KMKG-MRAH, inv. 920 A

Sculpture from a besloten hofje or private altarpiece, carved and polychromed oak

Mechelen

No marks

c.1520

43 × 13.7 × 7.5 cm

1860-1865: purchased by the KMKG-MRAH

1996: conservation treatment by the KIK-IRPA; regular maintenance thereafter

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/47-2004/08243

This carved Virgin and Child probably comes from a besloten hofje or private altarpiece.¹ Mary's petite round face with its smooth high brow is decidedly unemphatic in profile. Her hair is worn loose, flowing from a beaded diadem to be trapped under her cloak. This she has caught up at both edges to form an ample apron, as it were, draped in V-shaped folds, a simplified version of a type prevalent in Mechelen sculptures of around 1500. Beneath her square-necked overgown she wears a chemise with a decorative round collar. Her metal crown is probably a later addition. The semi-recumbent Child turns in three-quarter profile, to the beholder as he plays with a rosary.

Although there is no warrant mark on the figure, its style, typical of Mechelen production, leaves little doubt as to its origin. The treatment of the drapery and facial features is similar to that of the figures of St Elizabeth and St Augustine from the besloten hofje now in the Schepenhuis Museum in Mechelen (cat. 54).

The present Virgin's attire is decorated chiefly with sgraffito arabesques, volutes and letter-borders on various underlayers (red glaze on silver leaf, white on silver leaf, azurite on gold leaf). The visible parts of her gown are entirely covered with applied brocade. The polychromy indicates that the same master was responsible both for this figure and for the St Elizabeth from the Schepenhuis besloten hofje. Not only are the colouration and applied brocades very similar – the angular 'O', the extended leg of the 'R' and the other letters scratched in the cloak's border are identical in both works and they also occur on the figure of St Augustine, disclosing the hand of the same polychromer.

30a

*Virgin and Child on
the Crescent Moon,*
c.1520, Mechelen;
Brussels, KMKG-
MRAH

¹ *Sculpture des Pays-Bas méridionaux | Beeldhouwwerken van de Zuidelijke Nederlanden 2000: 146-147.*

Model 30.1



30.1
Applied brocade on the Virgin's gown

Location:	the Virgin's gown; bodice, sleeves and skirt	Comparable applied brocades cat. 53.1 cat. 54.1
Type:	continuous	
Design:	floral and foliate(?), too indistinct for reconstruction	
Measurements:	small: 2.5-2.9 x 3.0-3.4 cm	
Relief:	striations, contour (relief pattern)	
Striations:	18-19 per cm; vertical, extremely fine	
Condition:	locally worn	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	red glaze on contour	
Gilding:	gold leaf no adhesive layer observed	
Tin foil:	grey	
Filler:	none observed	
Adhesive:	orange, oily appearance	
Support layer:	white chalk and size ground	
Ref:	cross section: none	

To cover the small visible area of the skirt of the gown no fewer than seven sheets of tin foil were glued side by side. Sadly it is no longer possible to distinguish a specific motif in the raised linear design. The lacunate state of the applied brocade evidences once again the fragility of this type of decoration, which frequently sustains more damage and wear than other forms of ornamentation. In many respects the applied brocades on this sculpture are reminiscent of those on the *Besloten Hofje with SS Anne, Augustine and Elizabeth* (cat. 54), on which the same polychromer worked. In both cases an orange, oily adhesive layer was used.



30b
*Besloten Hofje with SS Anne, Augustine and Elizabeth (detail), c.1530, Mechelen; Mechelen, collection of the Augustinian hospital sisters St Elizabeth, polychromed by the same artist as the *Virgin and Child on the Crescent Moon**



30c
*Besloten Hofje with SS Anne, Augustine and Elizabeth (detail), c.1530, Mechelen; Mechelen, collection of the Augustinian hospital sisters St Augustine, polychromed by the same artist as the *Virgin and Child on the Crescent Moon**



31A ST SYLVESTER

Brussels, KMKG-MRAH, inv. 2288

31B POPE

Brussels, KMKG-MRAH, inv. 2287

Statues, polychromed limestone (Avesnes limestone?)
 Mechelen(?); attributed (with reservations) to Andries I Keldermans (1400-1481) and workshop
 c.1480
 St Sylvester: 118 × 42 × 31 cm
 Pope: 116 × 37 × 32 cm

Before 1879: in Bouchout Castle¹
 1879: given by Count Léopold de Beaufort to the KMKG-MRAH
 1968: St Sylvester, conservation-restoration treatment at the KIK-IRPA, removal of reddish overpaint²
 1972: Pope, conservation-restoration treatment at the KIK-IRPA
 1997-1998: Pope, overpaints removed to expose the original polychromy

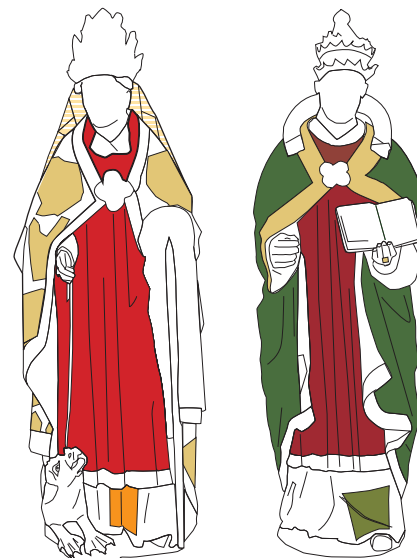
KIK-IRPA file: 2L/47-1968/00711 & 2L/47-1972/00218

The two statues, St Sylvester and an unidentified pope, reputedly come from the rood screen – probably produced by Andries I Kelderman around 1480 and dismantled in 1664 – of St Rombaut's Cathedral in Mechelen.³

Sylvester became bishop of Rome in 314, shortly after Christianity was recognized by the Edict of Milan, and is credited with baptizing Constantine and curing him of leprosy. The dragon at his side alludes to one of the feats by which he converted the people of Rome, who were dying in droves from the creature's venomous breath until Sylvester muzzled him with a cord. The second pope's attribute, an open book, is too generic to establish his identity.

Each pope stands on a patch of green grass, with his left foot slightly advanced. Both bear the attributes of papal dignity, the lappeted triple tiara and crozier (that of the unidentified pope is lost); both wear an amice and alb, a fringed chasuble, and a cope fastened with a quatrefoil morse. The chasubles fall in vertical tubular folds; the folds of the alb follow the movement of the outthrust foot. St Sylvester's realistically modelled face, marked by the years, has a distinctly portrait-like quality. This is true of the unidentified pope as well, but Sylvester has a greater air of finesse and authority than his more heavily featured fellow pontiff.

The original polychromy was carried out as follows: the limestone figure received an orange-red sealing layer. Gilding and silver leaf were then applied on a beige mordant. Then the coloured areas were covered with two layers of paint. The blue linings are azurite on a black underlayer. The white surfaces (alb, amice, gloves and book) were also achieved in two layers, the first most likely chalk-based, the second a smooth finishing layer that probably has a lead-white base. The green of the unidentified pope's cope appears to be matt green under a green glaze. The fringes of the chasubles are enlivened with green glaze on gilding or silver leaf. All three types of applied brocade have been used to embellish the popes' albs (in the form of apparels), chasubles and copes, and the lappets of St Sylvester's tiara.



31A.a-31B.a

St Sylvester and Pope,
 c.1480, Mechelen(?),
 attributed
 (with reservations) to
 Andries I Keldermans
 (1400-1481) and
 workshop; Brussels,
 KMKG-MRAH

31A.b
St Sylvester, location
 of the applied
 brocades

- Model 31A.1
- Model 31A.2
- Model 31A.3
- Model 31A.4

31B.b
Pope, location of the
 applied brocades

- Model 31B.1
- Model 31B.2
- Model 31B.3
- Model 31B.4

¹ DE BORCHGRAVE D'ALTENA 1934: 213.

² *Chronique* 1968: 198, 221.

³ DE BORCHGRAVE D'ALTENA 1938: 12-13; STEPPE 1952: 93; JANSSEN 1964: 59 (cat. 243, cat. 244). DE ROO 1971: 421; *Sculpture des Pays-Bas méridionaux* | *Beeldhouwwerken van de Zuidelijke Nederlanden* 2000: 116-117.

3IA SYLVESTER

Model 3IA.1



3IA.1a
Applied brocade on the chasuble

Location:	chasuble
Type:	continuous
Design:	unidentifiable, too incomplete for reconstruction
Measurements:	large: 15.3 cm; too incomplete for precise measurement
Relief:	striations, contour, flat zones (mixed pattern)
Striations:	5-7 per cm; vertical
Condition:	badly damaged
Overpaint:	none
Highlighting:	red glaze
Gilding:	gold leaf mordant, ochre in colour
Intermediate layer:	thin transparent brown organic matter, fluoresces orange in UV light: resin(?); gold-imitating glaze(?)
Tin foil:	degraded, grey
Filler:	transparent brown, wax-resin appearance
Adhesive:	traces of an ochre-yellow layer
Support layer:	orange sealing layer
Ref:	KIK-IRPA laboratory file (1 cross section). See also Chapter Ten, Table B

The applied brocades are very badly damaged. The design's legibility is significantly hampered by the very many retouches applied during the conservation-restoration of the statue in 1968, and by the remains of orange-brown overpaint. The applied brocades were glued onto the chasuble after the lining of the cope had received its layer of azurite blue, as can be seen from the encroachments of the brocade where the two surfaces meet.

Model 31A.2



31A.2a
Applied brocade on the cope



31A.2b
Detail of the applied brocade on St Sylvester's cope

Location:	cope	Comparable applied brocades cat. F1.1
Type:	local	
Design:	floral and foliate: traces of a rosette, too incomplete for reconstruction	
Measurements:	medium: min. 8 cm; each polygonal brocade is made up of several pieces (measurements of one polygonal brocade: c. 14.5 x 14 cm)	
Relief:	striations, narrow flat zones (Tegernsee type)	
Striations:	6-8 per cm, vertical	
Condition:	damaged	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	red glaze(?)	
Gilding:	gold leaf	
Tin foil:	degraded, grey	
Filler:	brown to ochre, transparent, wax-resin appearance	
Adhesive:	apparently none; a very thin beige layer in places	
Support layer:	black orange red sealing layer	
Ref:	cross section: none	

Each of the polygonal local brocades is apparently made up of several pieces; as a result, each polygon is different in size and shape. The cope's border was gilded (gold leaf on beige mordant) before the cope received its black background. The brocades – probably already gilded – were glued onto this black background. Here and there enough of the relief remains to suggest a rosette (bottom of the cope, proper right). The design can be compared to one on the wing of an altarpiece (dismembered) that was probably made in Brussels and is now in the Musée Boucher de Perthes in Abbeville (cat. F1). It has the same number of striations per centimetre and the same type of arrangement between striated and flat zones (wide striated areas separated by narrow flat zones), but it is too badly damaged to tell how far the similarity stretches or whether the two brocades were cast in the same mould.

Model 3IA.3



3IA.3
Applied brocade on the lappets of the tiara

Location:	lappets of the tiara
Type:	continuous
Design:	unidentifiable, too incomplete for reconstruction: no discernable motif (outer surfaces), stylized motif (inner surfaces)
Measurements:	too incomplete for precise measurement
Relief:	fully striated (outer surfaces); striations, flat zones (inner surfaces)
Striations:	number unidentifiable; vertical
Condition:	badly damaged
Overpaint:	none
Highlighting:	red glaze on flat zones (inner surfaces)
Gilding:	gold leaf beige-ochre mordant
Tin foil:	degraded, grey
Filler:	brown to ochre transparent, wax-resin appearance
Adhesive:	no data
Support layer:	orange sealing layer
Ref:	cross section: none

The outer surface of the lappet is covered with overlapping strips of applied brocade. A different brocade was used for the inner surface. The motif is stylized and very badly damaged, but is still visible next to Sylvester's right ear.

Model 31A.4



31A.4a
Applied brocade on the apparel



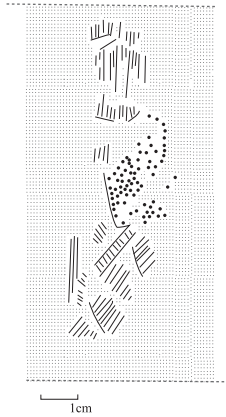
31A.4b
Detail of the applied brocade on the apparel

Location:	alb, apparel
Type:	continuous
Design:	unidentifiable, too incomplete for reconstruction
Measurements:	too incomplete for precise measurement (the complete orphrey measures 9.5 x c.14.5 cm)
Relief:	striations, flat zones (Tegernsee type)
Striations:	7 per cm, vertical
Condition:	badly damaged
Overpaint:	none
Highlighting:	red glaze on flat zones
Gilding:	gold leaf beige-ochre mordant
Tin foil:	degraded, grey
Filler:	brown to ochre transparent, wax-resin appearance
Adhesive:	no data
Support layer:	white chalk and size ground(?) orange red sealing layer
Ref:	cross section: none

The continuous applied brocade that forms the apparel of the alb was glued onto a white layer that is probably chalk-based. The finishing layer, which is smooth and enamelled, and probably has a lead-white base, was worked around the brocade. The apparel was then outlined with thin lines of green glaze and bordeaux red.

3IB. POPE

Model 3IB.1



3IB.1b

Archaeological drawing

Location:	chasuble
Type:	continuous
Design:	floral and foliate: rosette-like motif with scattered dots
Measurements:	large: 10 cm; too incomplete for precise measurement
Relief:	striations, raised dots and lines, narrow flat zones (mixed pattern)
Striations:	10-11 per cm; vertical, diagonal
Condition:	badly damaged
Overpaint:	none
Highlighting:	red glaze
Gilding:	gold leaf very thin adhesive
Tin foil:	degraded, grey-black
Filler:	transparent brown, organic matter, wax-resin appearance
Adhesive:	brown
Support layer:	orange red sealing layer
Ref:	cross section: none

This applied brocade decorates the lower part of the chasuble, beneath the quatrefoil morse, where it is arranged in five horizontal rows of varying length. The poor state of conservation makes it impossible to reconstruct the pattern. Even so, a sort of rosette with scattered dots and striated zones surrounded by a thin raised line can be discerned. Above the morse the chasuble is decorated with a different continuous brocade (see model 3IB.2).

Model 31B.2



31B.2a
Applied brocade on the chasuble
© E. Mercier

Location:	chasuble
Type:	continuous
Design:	floral and foliate: dentate leaf, too incomplete for reconstruction
Measurements:	too incomplete for precise measurement
Relief:	fully striated(?)
Striations:	number unidentifiable; vertical, diagonal
Condition:	badly damaged
Overpaint:	none
Highlighting:	red glaze
Gilding:	gold leaf very thin adhesive
Tin foil:	degraded, grey-black
Filler 1:	transparent brown, organic matter, wax-resin appearance
Filler 2:	opaque orange, waxy appearance
Adhesive:	brown
Support layer:	orange red sealing layer
Ref:	cross section: none

Above the morse the chasuble is decorated with a continuous applied brocade that differs from the previous model. It too is badly damaged. Its stratigraphy also varies, as it includes a filler made up of two layers: an orange opaque layer with a waxy appearance and, just below the tin foil, a very thin brown layer which also looks waxy. Otherwise the layer structure corresponds to the previous model (31B.1).

Model 31B.3



31B.3a
Applied brocade on the cope



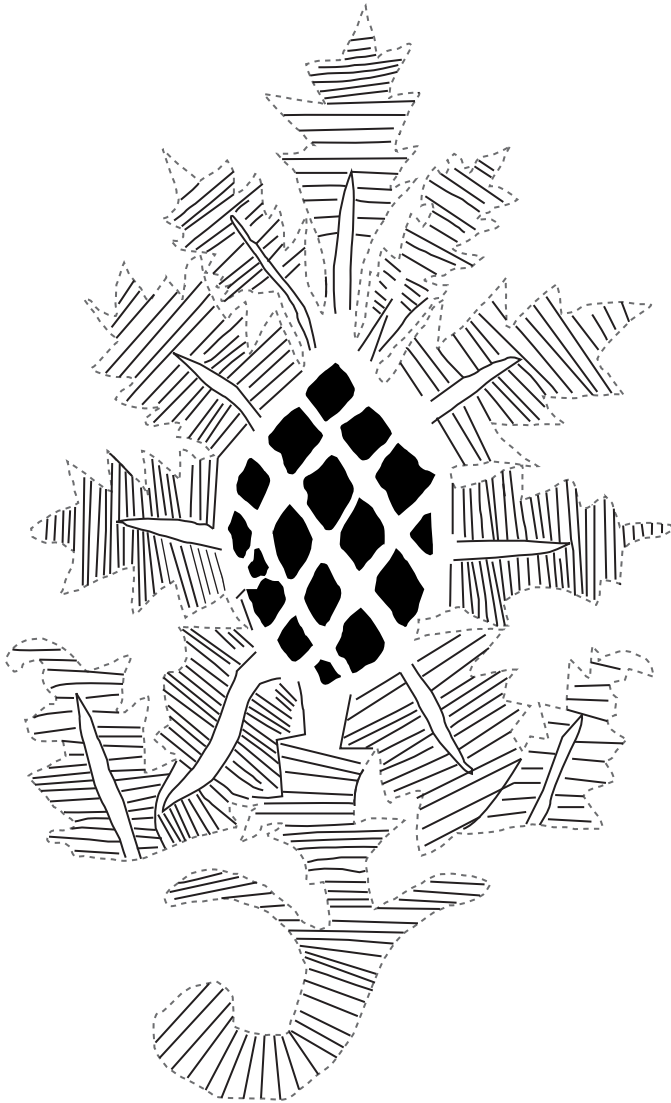
31B.3b
Archaeological drawing

Location:	cope
Type:	local
Design:	floral and foliate: pomegranate
Measurements:	large: 15 x 8.2 cm
Relief:	striations (lateral leaves and stem), lozenges (centre), contours, flat zones (mixed pattern)
Striations:	8-9 or 11 per cm; vertical, horizontal, oblique, radiating
Condition:	generally well preserved
Overpaint:	traces of light green
Highlighting:	green glaze on veins and lozenges
Gilding:	gold leaf beige-ochre mordant
Tin foil:	degraded, dark grey
Filler:	transparent brown, organic matter, wax-resin appearance
Adhesive:	none
Support layer:	green glaze matt green underlayer orange sealing layer
Ref:	cross section: none

On the proper left side of the cope are six complete brocades and five or six fragments. The applied brocades on the right are less well preserved. The curving stem produces little shoots before expanding into a bouquet of dentate leaves around a lozenge-filled centre. The brocades have retained their shape quite well, with the contours and relief still being clearly legible. The striations of the lateral leaves are fairly widely spaced and, unusually, are aligned to remain perpendicular to the centre vein of the leaves or to follow the curve of the stem. The lozenges in the centre are in particularly high relief. The gilding and green highlighting are almost entirely lost, with only minimal traces remaining.

This applied brocade can be compared with painted brocades on the wings of the Geel *Passion Altarpiece*: the pomegranate motif on the garments of St George and St Nicholas of Myra has similar shoots emerging from the stem (see ill. 35a).

On the back of the cope, in the less visible areas, are small pieces of applied brocade with a different pattern. It seems that leaves have been cut out from a uniformly striated sheet. Somehow, the zones representing the veins were flatted – possibly after demoulding.



┌───┐
1cm

31B.3c
Reconstruction of the relief



31B.3d
Detail of the applied brocade

Model 3IB.4



3IB.4
Applied brocade on the edge of the cope

Location:	edge of cope	Comparable applied brocades cat. 14.1 cat. 19.10 cat. S1.4 cat. S7.7
Type:	braid (orphrey)	
Design:	too indistinct for identification	
Measurements:	small: c.5.5 x c.4.7 cm	
Relief:	fully striated (relief pattern)	
Striations:	8-9 per cm; horizontal	
Condition:	badly damaged	
Overpaint:	traces of orange and green (remaining from overpaint removed in 1997-1998)	
Highlighting:	apparently none	
Gilding:	gold leaf (minute traces) mordant(?)	
Tin foil:	degraded, grey-black	
Filler:	transparent light brown, waxy appearance	
Adhesive:	no data, apparently none	
Support layer:	light matt green orange sealing layer	
Ref:	cross section: none	

The applied brocade that decorates the edge of the cope is very damaged. Strips of brocade survive in only a few places, and there are numerous losses down to the stone. The gilding is barely discernable. The relief of the striations is still visible, however. There seems to be no architectural design painted on the surface of the gilding, unlike the brocade orphrey on the *Saluzzo Altarpiece* (cat. 19.10).

Model 31B.5



31B.5a-b
The applied brocade apparel

Location:	alb, apparel
Type	continuous
Design	unidentifiable, too incomplete for reconstruction
Measurements:	too incomplete for precise measurement
Relief:	striations, flat zones (Tegernsee type)
Striations:	15 per cm; diagonal
Condition:	badly damaged
Overpaint:	none
Highlighting:	green glaze
Gilding:	gold leaf (minute traces) mordant(?)
Tin foil:	degraded, grey-black
Filler:	thin transparent brown layer, wax-resin appearance
Adhesive:	thick layer, brown, thickened with pigments
Support layer:	white (probably lead white) orange sealing layer
Ref:	KIK-IRPA laboratory file (1 cross section)

The rectangular apparel is made up of several pieces of applied brocade glued edge to edge. The contour was reinforced with a line of glaze. The alb's smooth white finishing layer was worked around the apparel.

Model 31B.6

On the unidentified pope's glove is an additional refinement – a small square of applied brocade in a painted beaded and ornamented frame. This is probably a piece of one of the above models, but we have been unable to determine which one.



31B.6
Applied brocade on the glove



32 ST LAMBERT

Brussels, KMKG-MRAH, inv. 6644

Statue, carved and polychromed walnut

Meuse region, Liège(?)

No marks

c.1500

183 × 56 × 44 cm

1929: purchased by the KMKG-MRAH from a private collection¹

1967: study and treatment by the KIK-IRPA

2001: minor conservation by the KIK-IRPA

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/47-1967/599

The tall slender bishop clad in dalmatic and chasuble gazes benignly over his book. The splendid rationale he wears over his chasuble suggests his identification as Lambert, bishop and patron saint of Liège.² His cult was considerably enhanced by the translation of his relics from Maastricht to Liège and the moving of the headquarters of the see to Liège. In the KMKG-MRAH in Brussels is a stylistically related wooden sculpture of St Stephen as a young deacon (inv. 9023). Though smaller than this figure of St Lambert it is equally impressive in its narrow elongated shape. There are also similarities in the posture, drapery and idealized features of the two sculptures, and much attention has been bestowed on their respective decorative details.

Except for the hands, the figure of St Lambert has been cut from a single massive block of walnut. The numerous beads, the flowing fringes, the book fittings, the ornamentation on the gloves and the chasuble, are all carved with deft precision.³ Sometime before 1929 the sculpture was treated with lye, which removed not only at least three overpaints but also most of the original polychromy. None the less, sufficient traces remain to show the considered and varied use of decorative techniques. Matt zones, burnished and unburnished metal leaf, and glaze on a variety of grounds would have provided a subtle range of reflections. The alb, amice and bookbinding were covered with silver leaf. On the alb and amice this received a layer of white paint into which vertical lines were scratched, while the silver leaf on the bookbinding was painted with a yellow glaze. According to the desired effect a red glaze was used on various underlayers – matt red in some places (e.g. mitre, stole, dalmatic and mouth), silver leaf in others (gloves). The matt areas consisted chiefly of the blue lining and fringes (azurite on a black underlayer), the pale pink skin, and the hair.

Various decorative techniques were used in finishing the sculpture: sgraffito, tooling and applied brocades. These last are all local and embellish the dalmatic and the lining of the chasuble.

32

St Lambert, c.1500,
Meuse region,
Liège(?); Brussels,
KMKG-MRAH

¹ *Les enrichissements de nos collections 1929-1930*: 14.

² LCI, 7, col. 363-370; DE BOODT 2000: 114-115.

³ Walnut was used for Stephen too, and the surface is embellished with many details. The red paint on his dalmatic is very similar to that on the figure of St Lambert, but whether it has the same composition is uncertain. No applied brocades were observed, but the red dalmatic is blocked with gilt lozenges.

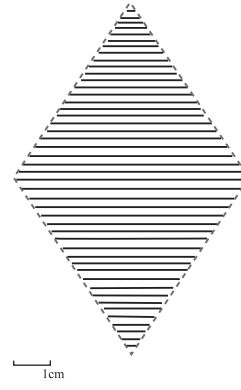
Model 32.1



32.1a
Applied brocade on the lining of the dalmatic



32.1b
Archaeological drawing



32.1c
Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	St Lambert's dalmatic, front and lining	
Type:	local	
Design:	geometric: lozenge	
Measurements:	medium: 9.5 x 6.5 cm	
Relief:	fully striated (relief pattern)	
Striations:	10 per cm; horizontal	
Condition:	locally worn	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	none	
Gilding:	gold leaf (minute traces) no adhesive layer observed	
Tin foil:	almost entirely lost	
Filler:	light brown, waxy appearance	
Adhesive:	yellow ochre in colour, oily appearance comparable to mordant	
Support layer:	red glaze (front)	azurite (?) blue (lining)
	matt red underlayer	
	white chalk and size ground	
Ref:	cross section: none	

The applied brocades consist of simple tin foil lozenges completely filled with horizontal striations. The lozenges are all the same size and are arranged 2.5 centimetres apart in diagonal rows. Together with the gold leaf, most of the tin foil has been lost. On the lining not a single motif survives intact. Wear has left one of them looking like a quatrefoil or stylized cloverleaf, but in fact this is the same lozenge as those on the front of the dalmatic. Here the applied brocades were first glued on the vermillion underlayer, then the madder glaze was applied around and between the motifs.



32.1d
Applied brocade
on the dalmatic



33 NICHE

Brussels, Church of Our Lady of the Chapel, south transept, Godfrey Chapel

Niche, polychromed stone

Second half of the 15th century, probably before 1483

98 × 78 × 30 cm

1990: restoration by architects Marcel and Paul Mignot, including removal of the wall blocking the chapel;¹ partial removal of the limewash covering the polychromy of the niche

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/15-2004/08298

The Godfrey Chapel is set into the east wall of the south transept (1215-1223), between the choir and the Trinity Chapel. Its foundations appear to predate the fifteenth century, but the chapel probably acquired its present shape during the rebuilding that followed a fire in 1405.² The work began in the nave (1431-1434), continued in the aisles (from 1436 onwards), and was completed by 1483, when the bishop of Cambrai consecrated the reconstructed parts of the church. The oak leaf decoration on the capitals suggests that the new arrangement dates from the rebuilding of the south aisle, where the capitals are similarly decorated.

This Brabantine Gothic chapel, which is relatively small, being only 2 metres deep and 2.3 metres wide, is polygonal in plan. The bays are articulated by colonettes which continue as vaulting shafts supporting the vault ribs. In the central bay are two niches, one above the other: the lower one is ornamented with applied brocade. The niche, whose sill is 1.25 metres above floor level, repeats the general structure of the chapel, with five bays and vaulting. Both the bays and vaulting of the chapel were completely polychromed, predominantly in green and red, against which the colours of the niches stood out.

The applied brocade is in the form of a cloth of honour that may have served as the backdrop to a devotional reliquary cross presented to the church by Henry III of Brabant in 1250.³ This is possibly the 'Cross of Miracles', which is still preserved in the Church and whose measurements correspond to those of the niche. This relic was worshiped on Trinity Day for the healing of the eye disease known as 'bloem op de oog' (literally 'flour on the eyes'). The pilgrims who sought the reliquary's aid brought offerings of small packets of flour.⁴ The water with which, morning and evening, the sick moistened their eyes as they said the Gloria Patri or crossed themselves, was blessed with a prayer: 'O God, who has given a special virtue to the simple contact with your garments, grant, we beseech you, that the curative virtue of the salutary wood of the Cross is given to this water, so that those who use it obtain health of the soul as well as of the body.'⁵

¹ The chapel was walled up, probably around 1850, during Van Eycken's restoration and repainting of the adjacent chapel, or, less likely, around two centuries earlier, when the new tabernacle for the 'Cross of Miracles' was donated by Charles D'Hovynne in 1647. Until the removal of the wall, the chapel could be accessed only via the sacristy. DE BOECK 1928: 171-172, 254; MORFOISSE-GUENAUULT 2005: 4-5.

² PATRIMOINE MONUMENTAL 1989: 243-251, esp. 243.

³ DE BOECK 1928: 169-170, 172-175, 254; BRUSSELS 1984: 108; MORFOISSE-GUENAUULT 2005: 4-5.

⁴ DE BOECK 1928: 169.

⁵ 'O Dieu, qui avez donné une vertu spéciale au simple contact de vos vêtements, accordez, nous vous en prions, que la vertu curative du bois salutaire de la Croix se communique à cette eau, afin que ceux qui en feront usage obtiennent avec la santé du corps celle de l'âme.' DE BOECK 1928: 170.

Model 33.1



33.1a
Applied brocade in the niche



33.1b
Detail of the applied brocade

Location:	Godfrey Chapel, lower niche
Type:	continuous: straight rows
Design:	unidentifiable, too incomplete for reconstruction
Measurements:	medium: 12 x 12 cm
Relief:	striations, flat zones (Tegernsee type)
Striations:	9 per cm; diagonal, convex in section
Condition:	badly damaged
Overpaint:	limewash
Highlighting:	matt black on flat zones
Gilding:	gold leaf mordant, thickened with ochre, lead white, calcium carbonate
Tin foil:	degraded, grey, 20-30µ
Filler:	translucent brown, wax
Adhesive:	brick red in colour, containing red earth, red lead, calcium carbonate, lead white
Support layer:	sealing layer, pale yellow ochre in colour brick-red layer containing red earth, red lead, calcium carbonate, lead white white chalk and size ground
Ref:	KIK-IRPA laboratory file (1 cross section). See also Chapter Ten, Table B

Starting above a painted red plinth the applied brocade cloth of honour virtually fills the niche's three central bays. It is made up of five rows of applied brocade which produce a total height of 60.2 centimetres. The bottom row is edged with a band of alternating red, yellow ochre, off-white and green blocks on which a lively black fringe is painted. The top of the cloth of honour is simply bordered with a white line. The niche's two remaining bays are painted black, while the moulding around the outside of the niche is gilded and painted in red and black. The gilded ribs stand out against the blue vaulting.⁶

The applied brocades are very badly damaged, making any reconstruction impossible. Perhaps additional information would be revealed if the remaining limewash was removed.

⁶ Unfortunately, these details were necessarily observed in haste. Closer study is called for.



33-1C
Reconstruction of
the polychromy
of the chapel



34 GAASBEEK ALTARPIECE

Gaasbeek, Castle, inv. 915-916

Altarpiece, carved and polychromed oak, painted wings

Antwerp

No marks

c.1520-1525 and 19th century

115 × 85 × 27.5 cm

1893: acquired from the sale of the Frédéric Spitzer estate by Marchioness Arconati Visconti¹

1999-2002: technical study by Ria de Boodt, Kristof Haneca and Hilde Cuvelier of the Vrije Universiteit Brussel

2002: conservation treatment by restorer Sandy Van Wissen

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/31-2008/09901

Filling the centre of this altarpiece is a carved Lamentation. Painted on the inside of the wings are the Descent from the Cross and the Entombment,² and on the outside is the Annunciation. The style of both the painting and the carving is typical of the Antwerp Mannerism of the 1520s. A relationship has been established between the carving of this Lamentation and the Passion altarpieces of St Nicholas's Church in Bielefeld (Germany) and the parish church of Fromentières (Marne, France).³ The paintings are strongly reminiscent of the work of the Master of the Groote Adoration.⁴

This single-compartment altarpiece is an assemblage, probably put together in the nineteenth century at the request of Austrian collector Frédéric Spitzer (1915-1890). The seven figures, which are carved in six individual blocks, form an unusual composition and appear to have been adapted to a new configuration at some point.⁵ Dendrochronological analysis and technical study of the blocks show that they come from the same early-sixteenth-century ensemble.⁶ The soldier, whose presence is unusual in a Lamentation, probably comes from another compartment of the altarpiece to which all the figures once belonged. The case, the architectural and scenic elements, and the vaults and pilasters, are modern, likewise the frame around the painted wings. The carvings actually project beyond the case, preventing the wings from closing completely: this has caused some damage to the inside of the wings

The medieval carved figures still retain their original polychromy, although its effect is sadly spoiled by a thick varnish. The extensive gilding is enlivened with painted or tooled decoration and blue sgraffito motifs. The Virgin is the only figure whose garments are embellished with applied brocade.

Despite attempts to match the medieval polychromy, the gilding and painting of the nineteenth-century elements betray their recent manufacture.

¹ GOOSENS 2003: 31-34.

² ANTWERP 1993, II: 191; BUYLE, VANTHILLO 2000: 190-191; BRUSSELS 2000a: 120-123; GOOSENS 2003: 31-34; DE BOODT, HANECA, CUVELIER 2005: 165-169; HANECA et al. 2005.

³ DE BOODT, HANECA, CUVELIER 2005: 169.

⁴ BRUSSELS 2000a: 120-123; GOOSENS 2003: 31-34.

⁵ The wood used for the figures came from northern Poland, most likely from a forest in the vicinity of Gdansk. HANECA et al. 2005: 286.

⁶ DE BOODT, HANECA, CUVELIER 2005: 165-169.

Model 34.1



34.1a
The Virgin and St John

Location:	the Virgin's gown
Type:	continuous
Design:	floral and foliate, too incomplete for reconstruction
Measurements:	medium: 9 x 8 cm; 7 x 3.3 cm
Relief:	fully striated (relief pattern)
Striations:	11-12 per cm; vertical, horizontal
Condition:	locally worn
Overpaint:	varnish
Highlighting:	red glaze on striations
Gilding:	gold leaf brownish-orange mordant
Tin foil:	grey
Filler:	reddish
Adhesive:	no data
Support layer:	no data
Ref:	cross section: none

The Virgin's gown is covered with a patchwork of applied brocades with parallel striations that are vertical on the skirt and horizontal on the bodice. The motif is simply painted onto the striated, gilded surface.



34.1b
Applied brocade on
the Virgin's gown



35 PASSION ALTARPIECE

Geel, Church of St Dymphna

Altarpiece, carved and polychromed oak, painted wings

Brussels

Carving: attributed to the carver of the Bowes altarpiece

Polychromy: attributed to the Geel Master of the Dianthus

Painted wings: attributed to the workshop of the Master of the View of St Gudule

Marks: mallet (two, Flagellation and Deposition), cross-shaped workshop mark (Flagellation)

c.1490

Closed: 254 × 297.5 × 34 cm

1850-1853: replacement of some figures, carved elements and tracery by sculptor-restorer François Sohest; cleaning and restoration of the carvings by painter-restorer Etienne Le Roy; repainting of certain polychromy elements by gilder Dulac, who also gilds and paints black the frames of the wings¹

1855: treatment of the wings by Le Roy

1957-1959: examination and treatment at the KIK-IRPA²

1967: maintenance in situ by the KIK-IRPA in 1967

1993: conservation by the KIK-IRPA and the conservation team of the Flemish Heritage Institute (the Vlaams Instituut voor het Onroerend Erfgoed or VIOE)

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/47-1957/2095

The carved inverted T-shaped case is divided into three compartments. The painted wings – two large double wings and two small upper wings – allowed the altarpiece to be opened and closed as required by the type of Mass and the liturgical calendar. Today the altarpiece is on the altar in the south transept of St Dymphna's Church in Geel.³

Open, the ensemble depicts the Passion of Christ. The cycle begins on the left wings, with paintings of the Agony in the Garden and the Arrest. It continues in the case with the carved Flagellation, Crucifixion and Deposition and a series of miniature scenes incorporated into the architectural decoration. On the right wings are painted the Appearance of Christ to the Apostles and Pentecost. On the exterior sides of the wings saints stand before cloths of honour that hang on a stone wall. On the large wings are SS George, Catherine of Alexandria, Barbara and Adrian; on the smaller upper wings are SS Anthony Abbot, and Nicholas of Myra.

The painted wings are attributed to the workshop of the Master of the View of St Gudule, being simpler in composition and more schematic than the work of the master himself.⁴ The faces are less strongly expressive, and lack something of the inner nervousness typical of the Master of the View of St Gudule.

The mallet marks attest to the Brussels origin of the sculpture; the cross-shaped mark (on the back of the Flagellation) probably identifies the carving workshop. The carved scenes are canopied by fine tracery and framed by small lateral episodes set into the architecture. The principal figures' grave expression of barely containable grief contrasts with the executioners' hard and caricatural physiognomy. The oval female faces and downturned mouths are typical of the sculptor to whom the Passion altarpiece at Bowes in England (c.1485) is attributed.⁵ The figures of the *Passion Altarpiece* called Strängnäs II (c.1500; cat. S4) are also often compared with those of the present retable, but the Strängnäs compositions are more dynamic and the poses and draperies more fluid.⁶

Incised Roman numerals on the backs of the carved figures were probably aids to the altarpiece's assembly; the painted Arabic numerals, on the other hand, are most likely connected with the nineteenth-century restoration. Closer study of the polychromy is needed in order to distinguish more precisely the original zones from those which have been redone or locally repainted. Two

35a

Passion Altarpiece, c.1490, carving: attributed to the carver of the Bowes altarpiece; polychromy: attributed to the Geel Master of the Dianthus; painted wings: attributed to the workshop of the Master of the View of St Gudule; Geel, Church of St Dymphna
Wings closed

35b

Passion Altarpiece
Wings open

¹ MARIJNISSEN, SAWKO-MICHALSKI 1960: 144-146.

² Ibid. 147-153.

³ For a concise note and recent bibliography on this altarpiece, see: DE BOODT 2005: 174-176.

⁴ See in particular D'HULST 1953: 135-146; PÉRIER-D'ETEREN 1984: 39, 47, 95-96; DUBOIS 1989: 39-52.

⁵ WOODS 1996: 793; PÉRIER-D'ETEREN 2002: 324; WOODS 2007: 291-297, esp. 296.

⁶ WOODS 2007: 296.

types of burnished gilding are visible, one on an original orange bole (present in certain places) and the other on a white ground (regilding at an unknown later date, possibly in the nineteenth century). The original burnished gilding alternated with matt oil gilding. There is also an orange underlayer (red lead?) which appears to be present under the dark colours.⁷ A number of figures wear garments embellished with local applied brocades. Tiny gilded dots decorate several of the blue-painted linings. The polychromy is particularly noteworthy for the rich repertoire of delicate mordant line gilding that has been worked over surfaces covered in brown-glazed silver leaf.⁸ This type of line gilding on glazed silver leaf can be identified on a whole series of Brussels retables:⁹ the *Passion Altarpiece* called Strängnäs II, the *Passion Altarpiece* in the Musée des Arts décoratifs in Paris, the *Altarpiece of the Life of the Virgin and the Infancy of Christ* in the Musée départemental des Antiquités in Rouen (cat. F3), and the *Altarpiece of the Virgin* in Ytterselö (cat. S11). In the present altarpiece the line-gilded motif on St John's tunic picks up the pattern of the applied brocade cloths of honour on the wings (model 35.1). This same pattern is also rendered in line gilding on the Strängnäs II, Paris and Rouen altarpieces, suggesting that the same workshop was responsible for the polychromy of the four retables (see Chapter Five).

The inscription 'JOSEPH VAN AZOMA' painted on the boot of one of the soldiers in the Deposition was apparently done in the nineteenth century, based on a lost original. The reference is very likely to Joseph of Arimathea.



35c
Crucifixion, line gilding on St John's robe



35d
Lateral scene, line gilding on a soldier's garment

⁷ Noted by Emmanuelle Mercier in the KIK-IRPA file on the altarpiece. This layer appears to be original but this must still be confirmed.

⁸ A micro-sample taken in 1993 and examined in the laboratory shows this to be leaf gilding on a fairly thick mordant probably applied with a brush onto the brown glaze that covers silver leaf.

⁹ This has already been noted in the majority of the cited altarpieces. CASCIO, LÉVY 2002: 133-134, 153 (figs. 10-11); GUILLOT DE SUDUIRAUT 2001C: 14; PÉRIER-D'ETEREN 2002: 324.



35.1a
St Catherine, applied brocade on the cloth of honour



35.1b
St Adrian, applied brocade on the cloth of honour

Model 35.1



35.1c
St Adrian, detail of the applied brocade



35.1d
Archaeological drawing



35.1e
Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	exterior side of the painted wings, cloths of honour	Identical applied brocades cat. F3.1 cat. S4.1 Cambridge, Queens' College Chapel, <i>St Catherine, St Barbara and St George</i> ¹⁰ Private collection, <i>St Sebastian</i> ¹¹ Comparable applied brocades cat. S2.1 cat. G5.1 cat. S8.1 cat. S11.1
Type:	continuous: straight rows	
Design:	floral and foliate: flowers and foliage sprouting from undulating stems	
Measurements:	large: 17.1-17.5 x 9-9.5 cm	
Relief:	striations, contour, lines, raised dots, plateaus (mixed pattern)	
Striations:	6-8 per cm; vertical, fairly coarse and somewhat irregular	
Condition:	locally worn	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	none	
Gilding:	gold leaf beige mordant	
Tin foil:	degraded, grey	
Filler:	ochre in colour, translucent, waxy appearance	
Adhesive:	orange brown	
Support layer:	white chalk and size ground	
Ref:	cross section: none	

The applied brocade cloths of honour are framed with a painted imitation velvet border – black on the large wings, red on the small wings. The same mould has been used for all the hangings, and the complex and sometimes fairly coarse relief suggests that it was made of wood rather than metal, although a clay mould is also a possibility. This would be made by pressing a positive stamp into the clay to produce the mould from which further reliefs could be made.¹²

The applied brocades have been glued on and then gilded. This was certainly after the underdrawing but before the painting, as the gilding of the reliefs encroaches onto the ground but is overlapped by the paint.

¹⁰ MASSING 1991: 690-693.

¹¹ VERONEE-VERHAEGEN 1989-1991. See also the advertisement by Adam Williams Fine Art Ltd published in *The Burlington Magazine*, no. 1200, vol. CXLV, March 2003.

¹² This process has been described for the tin relief decorations of the *Thornham Parva Retable*. TAVARES DA SILVA 2003: 74-91.

The pattern consists of stylized flowers at different stages of growth, seen from different angles and integrated into a network of undulating stems. The motif appears to be a fictive plant, possibly based on a poppy or anemone, as often found in fifteenth-century painting.¹³ The heavy lobed roundel in the centre of the flower seems to correspond to the black markings at the base of the poppy's petals, and the smaller lobed roundel and dot inside it could represent the top of the seed pod, while the ogees around the scattering of dots could correspond to the petals. At the base of the flower are two sepals in profile. The cross-hatched bud would represent the flower still in bud. The five-petalled flower with a dot-filled centre is more reminiscent of an anemone, though it may also be intended as a leaf.

The brocade is fully gilded, suggesting that the fabric being evoked was woven entirely from gold thread. Yet the structure of the decoration, with a motif made up of large zones in relief, rather suggests velvet with a woven gold ground, with the raised zones representing the coloured velvet motif and the low zones the gold ground.¹⁴ On the *Passion Altarpiece* called Strängnäs II (cat. S4), which has exactly the same applied brocades as the present retable, the areas of relief are highlighted in red or green, obviously imitating a *ciselé* velvet with a gold ground. It is also possible that the decorations were based on a drawing or engraving rather than a real textile.

This textile design was also rendered in other techniques, such as line gilding on brown glaze or silver leaf on the polychromy of carved figures. It was also used in a painted version in panel painting.

Similar design but different technique: line gilding

- cat. 35: St John's robe (Lamentation)
- cat. F3: Balthazar's tunic (Adoration of the Magi)
- cat. S4: St John's robe (Crucifixion)
- Paris, Musée des Arts décoratifs, *Passion Altarpiece*, c.1490, Brussels: St John's robe in the three scenes, and garments of Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus (Deposition)

Similar design but different technique: panel painting

- Antwerp, KMSKA, *Last Supper with Christ washing St Peter's Feet*, wing of a dismembered altarpiece, Master of the Corkscrew Curl, c.1480: St Peter's robe¹⁵
- Florence, Museo Nazionale del Bargello, *Solomon and the Queen of Sheba*, c.1500, Brussels: the queen's gown
- Loppem, Castle, *Crucifixion*, last quarter of the 15th century, Bruges(?): tunic of the centurion(?) on the right¹⁶
- Melbourne, National Gallery of Victoria, *Triptych with the Miracles of Christ*, left wing depicting the Marriage at Cana, attributed to the Master of the Portraits of Princes, c.1490, Brussels: canopy hangings

¹³ Leo Vanhecke from the Belgium National Botanical Gardens confirms that this is indeed an imaginary plant but points out that certain details are reminiscent of certain members of the poppy or carnation (*Caryophyllaceae*) families. In the fifteenth century, many plants were not depicted realistically but rather according to the artists' idea of them. See VAN ASSCHE 1996 and VANWIJNSBERGHE 1998.

¹⁴ This contrast of velvet on a background woven with gold thread is reproduced in two panel paintings: Jan van Eyck's *Annunciation* in the National Gallery of Art in Washington (Archangel's cope) and the panel depicting the *Last Supper with Christ washing St Peter's Feet* attributed to the Master of the Corkscrew Curl in the KMSKA in Antwerp (St Peter's robe). See: MONNAS 2000: 151-152, pl. 38; VANDENBROECK 1985: 8-12 (fig. 3).

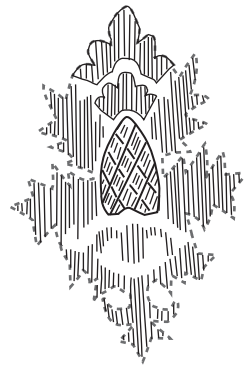
¹⁵ VANDENBROECK 1985.

¹⁶ VAN CALOEN 2001: 174, 176.

Model 35.2



35.2a
Flagellation, applied brocade on
the witness's tunic



1 cm

35.2b
Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	witness's tunic (Flagellation), undergown of a holy woman (Crucifixion), gown of a holy woman (Descent from the Cross)	Comparable applied brocades cat. 18.2 cat. 19.4 cat. 19.5 cat. 22.1 cat. 24.3 cat. 24.4 cat. 35.3 cat. F3.3 cat. G4.3 cat. S3.2 cat. S4.2 cat. S7.2 cat. S7.5
Type:	local	
Design:	floral and foliate: thistle or pomegranate motif, lozenge-patterned centre with double corolla and dentate leaves	
Measurements:	small: c.4.7 cm high, glass impeded precise measurement	
Relief:	striations, contour and diagonal lines in relief, flat zones (mixed pattern)	
Striations:	13 per cm, estimated from photograph, glass impeded precise measurement; vertical, diagonal, convex in section	
Condition:	locally worn	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	black on flat zones, contour and centre lozenges (witness's tunic)	
Gilding:	gold leaf fairly thick yellow ochre mordant	
Tin foil:	degraded	
Filler:	brown ochre in colour, translucent, with a few particles of pigment	
Adhesive:	none	
Support layer:	black blue black underlayer	
Ref:	white chalk and size ground KIK-IRPA laboratory file (3 cross sections)	

There are two types of pomegranate, one in which the diagonal striations in the centre are consistently aligned (model 35.2) and one in which the direction of the striations varies between lozenges (model 35.3). Therefore, at least two moulds were used.

In the 1950s paraffin was used to fix the paint layers on the carvings (a practice since discontinued). This makes it difficult to distinguish the original background colour. A sample taken from the figure at the foot of the cross clearly shows that the brocade there is glued onto azurite blue on a black underlayer (model 35.3). On another cross section, the brocade is simply glued onto a black layer (model 35.2). There is no coloured highlighting on the applied brocade of the turbaned horseman at the foot of the cross (model 35.3).

There are similar local applied brocades on both the Rouen *Altarpiece of the Life of the Virgin and the Infancy of Christ* and the Passion altarpieces called Strängnäs I and Strängnäs II (cat. F3.2, cat. S3.2, cat. S4.2). They do not exactly match models 35.2 and 35.3 of Geel, but the size and number of striations per centimetre are very comparable. The reliefs of Strängnäs II are particularly low, those of Rouen are higher. Furthermore, the Rouen and Strängnäs II brocades are cut out in a polygonal shape, rather than around the edges of the motif. The Strängnäs II reliefs are interspersed with tiny gilded metal cupules for which the paint itself acted as the adhesive.

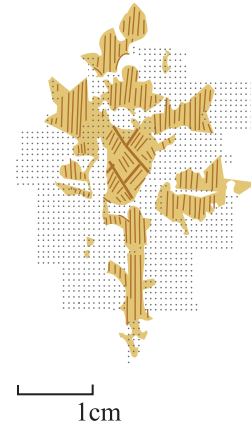
Model 35.3



35.3a
Crucifixion, applied brocade on the horseman's tunic



35.3b
Descent from the Cross, applied brocade on soldier's tunic



35.3c
Archaeological drawing

Location:	tunic of the turbaned horseman (Crucifixion), tunic of the soldier holding the ladder (Descent from the Cross)		Comparable applied brocades cat. 18.2 cat. 19.4 cat. 19.5 cat. 22.1 cat. 24.3 cat. 24.4 cat. 35.2 cat. F3.3 cat. G4.3 cat. S3.2 cat. S4.2 cat. S7.2 cat. S7.5
Type:	local		
Design:	floral and foliate: thistle or pomegranate motif, lozenge-patterned centre with double corolla and dentate leaves		
Measurements:	small: c.4.7 cm; glass impeded precise measurement		
Relief:	striations, contour and diagonal lines in relief, flat zones (mixed pattern)		
Striations:	13 per cm, estimated from photograph, glass impeded precise measurement; vertical, diagonal, convex in section		
Condition:	locally worn		
Overpaint:	none		
Highlighting:	black on flat zones, on contour and centre lozenges (tunic of the soldier holding the ladder)	none (turbaned horseman)	
Gilding:	gold leaf fairly thick yellow ochre mordant		
Tin foil:	degraded		
Filler:	brown ochre in colour, translucent, with a few particles of pigment		
Adhesive:	none		
Support layer:	black	blue black underlayer	
Ref:	white chalk and size ground cross section: see cat. 35.2		

What has been said about model 35.2 is also applicable to model 35.3 (see above).



36 ST DYMPHNA ALTARPIECE

Geel, Church of St Dymphna

Assemblage of two superposed altarpieces and a Calvary group, carved, polychromed and painted oak, carved, polychromed and painted wings

Brussels or Antwerp (lower altarpiece)

Mechelen(?) (upper altarpiece and Calvary)

Polychromy of upper altarpiece and Calvary: Jan van Wavere of Mechelen

1510-1515

136 × 320 × 29 cm (lower altarpiece)

No data for upper altarpiece

1631: exterior sides of wings repainted by Wouter Michiels of Zammel¹

According to oral tradition the altarpiece was damaged during the French Revolution

1845: estimate of sculptor-restorer François Sohest giving detailed information about the elements missing at that time

1853-1862: Sohest remakes 25 small figures, some elements of architectural decoration and certain details of the sculptures; most of the polychromy is renewed by Dulac; the 1631 paintings are restored by Etienne Le Roy

1957-1960: study and restoration at the KIK-IRPA²

1967: in situ conservation by the KIK-IRPA

1993: in situ conservation by the KIK-IRPA and the conservation team of the Flemish Heritage Institute (the Vlaams Instituut voor het Onroerend Erfgoed or VIOE)

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/47-1957/7182

The altarpieces relate the legend of St Dymphna, daughter of a seventh-century pagan Irish king and his most beautiful and beloved queen. Dymphna was as lovely as her mother but took no pleasure in courtly life and was secretly baptized. Shortly afterwards, the queen fell ill and died. At first the king was inconsolable, but then a shameful lust for his daughter arose in his breast and he determined to marry her. Dymphna fled his incestuous intentions with her aged confessor, Gerebernus, but the king tracked them down to their refuge in Geel, where they were slain – Dymphna by her father's own hand. St Dymphna has been greatly venerated in Geel since the discovery of her relics there in the thirteenth century. She is invoked as the patron saint of the insane. Her story inspired the *Vitae sanctae Dymphnae virginis et Gereberni sacerdotis* written in 1243 by Petrus Cameracensis, a canon of the abbey of St Aubert at Cambrai.³

The assemblage is made up of two superposed altarpieces – a large oblong retable with carved wings supporting a smaller retable, also with carved wings and incorporating St Dymphna's reliquary in the centre section – and a carved Calvary group.⁴ Both iconography and dimensions suggest that the altarpieces and the Calvary were made for the place they still occupy, on the high altar of the church. None the less, the two altarpieces are very different in style. The lower recalls the works of the Brussels Borman atelier but there is a certain stiffness in the carving and the postures that is not found in the Borman oeuvre. The carved groups of the upper retable and the Calvary, which have much harder, sharper features, have been attributed to a Mechelen workshop.⁵ Myriam Serck-Dewaide has identified the Antwerp mark (a hand) on the greensward of the central scene in the lower retable. Antwerp altarpieces of this period are generally covered with a multitude of marks, with a hand on practically each individual element, whereas this mark is the only one, so the Antwerp origin of the altarpiece is debatable.

36a

St Dymphna Altarpiece, 1510-1515, Brussels or Antwerp (lower altarpiece); Mechelen(?) (upper altarpiece and Calvary); polychromy of upper altarpiece and Calvary: Jan van Wavere of Mechelen; Geel, Church of St Dymphna

¹ See MARIJNISSEN, SAWKO-MICHALSKI 1960: 154.

² Ibid. 154-162.

³ DE BOODT 2005: 174.

⁴ On this altarpiece see: PIOT 1862: 408-417; VAN DOORSLAER 1933: 251-258; MARIJNISSEN, SAWKO-MICHALSKI 1960: 154-162; LEUVEN 1971: 353-355; BUYLE, VANTHILLO 2000: 174-185; DE BOODT 2005: 173-174. The present reliquary dates from the nineteenth century. The original is displayed in a showcase in the choir of the church.

⁵ DE BOODT 2005: 173.

According to an inscription renewed during the 1853-1862 restoration and which probably follows the original text, the polychromy of the upper retable was carried out by Jan van Wavere in 1515. This Mechelen polychromer is known: he also signed the polychromy of the *Altarpiece of the Life of the Virgin and the Passion* in Jäder (Sweden) and the *Passion Altarpiece* of the Church of the Teutonic Order in Vienna.⁶

The polychromy was almost entirely renewed by Dulac when the altarpiece was restored in 1853-1862. Certain areas, such as the tooled backgrounds, still seem to display their original polychromy, but a more thorough study is needed to distinguish original from overpaint. Dulac's neo-Gothic polychromy, with its predominant gilding and blue, green and red accents, conforms to the spirit of the medieval polychromy. On the lower altarpiece the relief of the applied brocade can still be discerned beneath the neo-Gothic overpaint. The brocades ornament the sleeves of St Dymphna's gown, her mother's pillow, the lining of the king's cloak, and the garments of two witnesses to the Baptism. A number of samples were taken during the in situ treatment in 1993.

What follows is based on the microscopic observation of the samples taken in 1993 by Jana Sanyova of the KIK-IRPA and personal observation of the altarpiece through its protective glass, which could not be removed for the purposes of this study.

⁶ VAN DOORSLAER 1930; VAN DOORSLAER 1933: 164-165; MARIJNISSEN, SAWKO-MICHALSKI 1960: 158; KOLLER 1995: 92.

Model 36.1



36.1a
Decollation of St Dymphna



36.1b
Applied brocade on the lining of the king's cloak

Location:	lining of the king's cloak in the decollation of St Dymphna
Type:	local
Design:	no data, partly obscured by overpaint, glass impeded close observation
Measurements:	small
Relief:	no data
Striations:	no data
Condition:	badly damaged
Overpaint:	no data
Highlighting:	blue
Gilding:	gold leaf mordant
Tin foil:	grey
Filler:	brown, translucent, fluoresces in UV light
Adhesive:	none
Support layer:	thick, blue black underlayer white chalk and size ground
Ref:	KIK-IRPA laboratory file (1 cross section)

Model 36.2



36.2a
Decollation of St Dymphna, applied brocade on St Dymphna's sleeve



36.2b
Archaeological drawing

Location:	sleeves of St Dymphna's gown in the various scenes of the lower altarpiece
Type:	local
Design:	floral and foliate: dentate leaves
Measurements:	small
Relief:	no data
Striations:	no data
Condition:	badly damaged
Overpaint:	completely covers the original polychromy
Highlighting:	red glaze
Gilding:	gold leaf mordant
Tin foil:	degraded, grey
Filler:	brown, translucent, fluoresces in UV light
Adhesive:	ochre-grey, thickened with pigments
Support layer:	red glaze gold leaf orange-red bole thick, white chalk and size ground
Ref:	KIK-IRPA laboratory file (1 cross section)

Model 36.3



36.3a
Deathbed of St Dymphna's mother



36.3b
Applied brocade on the pillow

Location:	pillow on the deathbed of St Dymphna's mother
Type:	local
Design:	no data
Measurements:	small
Relief:	no data
Striations:	no data
Condition:	badly damaged
Overpaint:	no data
Highlighting:	no data
Gilding:	no data
Tin foil:	no data
Filler:	no data
Adhesive:	no data
Support layer:	no data
Ref:	cross section: none



37 THE ADORATION OF THE LAMB ALTARPIECE

Ghent, St Bavo's Cathedral

Painted polyptych, mainly oil on oak panels

Ghent, Hubert and Jan van Eyck; according to the quatrain painted on the frame on the exterior side of the wings, which states that Hubert began the work and Jan completed it, at the request of Judocus Vijd, and in a chronogram gives the date (6 May 1432) on which the painting was unveiled

Pictor Hubertus e Eyck major quo nemo repertus
 incepit pondusque Johannes arte secundus
 [frater] perfecit Judoci Vyd prece fretus
 VersU seXtra MaI Vos CoLLoCat aCta tUerI

'The painter Hubert van Eyck, than whom none greater has been found, began this work, and Johannes, in art the second after him [his brother] completed it, at the request of Judocus Vijd. With this verse the sixth day of May 1432 enables you to view that which they have wrought'¹

Open: 375 × 520 × 4.4 cm

Closed: 375 × 260 × 9 cm

The Divine Lord: 212.2 × 83.1 × 2.2 cm

The Virgin: 168.7 × 74.9 × 2.2 cm

John the Baptist: 168.1 × 75.1 × 2.3 cm

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/43-1990/04394 & 2L/43-2008/09837

The *Adoration of the Lamb* altarpiece was commissioned by Jodocus Vijd and his wife Elisabeth Borluut for the altar of the chantry chapel they founded in the south choir aisle of the Church of St John the Baptist, now St Bavo's Cathedral, in Ghent.² The chapel served as the couple's private oratory and burial place. The theme of the altarpiece is drawn from the liturgy of the Feast of All Saints and illustrates Christ's redemptive sacrifice, renewed in the Eucharist at every celebration of the Mass.

The polyptych has a complex and peripatetic history. It has been displaced, dismembered, and moved on numerous occasions for reasons religious, revolutionary, incendiary and bellicose, and from at least the sixteenth century it has undergone successive restorations and cleanings.³ One incompetent cleaning had already been carried out (by 'calf-handed' individuals, according to Marcus van Vaernewijck) before the painters Lancelot Blondeel and Jan van Scorel worked on it in 1550.

Throughout its existence the *Adoration of the Lamb* has been an inspiration to other artists, imitated and extensively cited in countless paintings, drawings and miniatures.⁴ Of particular interest is the copy made by Michiel Coxcie for Philip II in 1566 (see below). Its panels, which are now divided between three museums in Brussels, Berlin and Munich, document the Van Eycks' altarpiece at that date.

¹ The quatrain's authenticity, which has been hotly debated since the removal of layers of paint in Berlin led to its discovery in 1823, has finally been generally accepted since the publications of Duverger and Dhanens in particular. DUVERGER 1945; DHANENS 1965: 10-17. Laboratory tests have failed to resolve the issue. DE SCHRIJVER, MARIJNISSEN 1953: 26, 46-47, no. 48; COREMANS, LOOSE, THISSEN 1953:120-122. Volker Herzner's study returned to the problem. He dates the quatrain to the second half of the sixteenth century. HERZNER 1995: 10-17. See also SCHMIDT 2005: 24.

² On the medium, see COREMANS, THISSEN 1953: 69-76; BRINKMAN et al. 1986: 137-166; BRINKMAN et al. 1988-1989: 26-49; ROY 2000: 97-100; WHITE 2000: 101-105. The frames of the centre panels are modern. In 1894, while they were in Berlin, six panels and their frames were split so that front and back could be hung separately. The Just Judges panel, stolen in 1934 and never recovered, has been replaced by a copy. See PHILIPPOT, SNEYERS 1953: 84-85; DE SCHRIJVER, MARIJNISSEN 1953: 28, 30, 32; VEROUGSTRAETE-MARCQ, VAN SCHOUTE 1987: 73-76; VEROUGSTRAETE-MARCQ, VAN SCHOUTE 1989: 127-128; VEROUGSTRAETE, VAN SCHOUTE 1996: 90-92. On the altarpiece's original place, see DHANENS 1965: 35-38; DHANENS 1976.

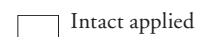
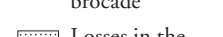

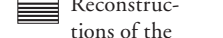
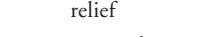
³ DE SCHRIJVER, MARIJNISSEN 1953: 21-68.

⁴ DUVERGER 1954: 52. The copy of the interior panels now in the KMSKA in Antwerp may have been produced in the early seventeenth century, although that polyptych is not of immediate interest in the present context as the dorsers are painted, not rendered in applied brocade. VANDENBROECK 1985: 181-184, fig. 87.



The three upper panels of the centre section of the opened altarpiece are especially interesting in the context of applied brocade. They represent the Divine Lord,⁵ the Virgin, and John the Baptist, enthroned in glory. The Divine Lord wears the triple tiara and raises his right hand in blessing. At his feet is the crown of temporality. On his right is the Virgin, absorbed in her reading; on his left is John the Baptist, pointing to the deity. Rising behind the three figures are concentric gilded and inscribed arches – perhaps the backs of their thrones.⁶ There are other inscriptions alluding to the king of kings and lord of lords on the richly jewelled hem of the deity's red garments and the riser of the step below his throne.⁷ Spanning the backs of the thrones are magnificent lampas dorsers serving as sumptuous cloths of honour. The lampas forms a flat and abstract background; there is no hint of how it is hung or where it ends. Equally little information is given about the seats of the thrones, which are presupposed by the figures' seated poses. The shadows cast on the dorsers by the figures of the Divine Lord and the Virgin provide one tangible fact to offset the background's ambiguity. The three figures are presented almost as icons, albeit with a background not clad in gold but covered with precious textile rendered by the illusionistic technique of applied brocade, whose gilded striations create a very literal evocation of the metal thread of real lampas. The motifs and inscriptions worked into the brocades are entirely consistent with the altarpiece's iconographic programme (see below). The background colours (white on the Virgin's cloth of honour, blue on the Divine Lord's, red ochre on John the Baptist's) are also purposefully chosen and integrated in a complex colour system that links the three panels through the subtle interplay of three principal

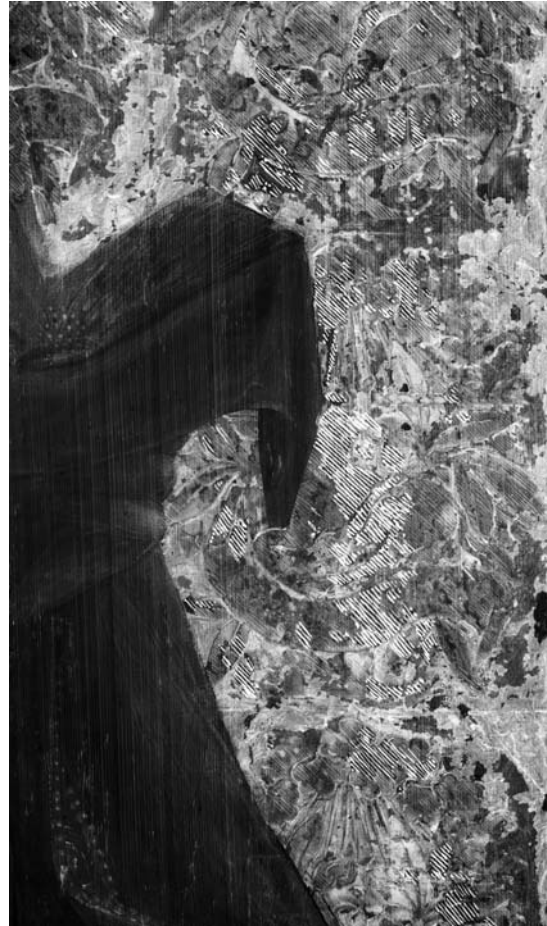
37b
The Divine Lord
Location of the
damage; remnants of
applied brocade
© M. Serck

-  Intact applied brocade
-  Losses in the filler
-  Reconstructions of the relief
-  Losses down to the wood
-  Repair using a lead white based material

⁵ The identity of the central figure can be interpreted in several ways, as God the Father, Christ, or the Trinity. See for example GOODGAL 1981: 278 ff.; SCHMIDT 2005: 88-94.

⁶ The inscriptions are transcribed in DHANENS 1965: 58-63; SCHMIDT 2005: 90-92.

⁷ On the authenticity of the text painted on the riser, see COREMANS, LOOSE, THISSEN 1953: 102-105; DHANENS 1965: 59.



37c
The Divine Lord, X-radiograph of applied brocade

37d
The Virgin, X-radiograph of applied brocade

colours – red, blue and green.⁸ In the rendering of sumptuous materials the imitated brocades on the three panels are accompanied by other illusionistic effects, such as the gleam of the concentric arches, and the glitter of the pearls and gems that enrich the crowns and the hems of the garments.⁹ Elsewhere in the polyptych textiles are portrayed by purely pictorial means, without the use of gold leaf, the volumes of the clothes being rendered with subtle modelling and patterning. The extraordinary proportions of the three principal figures and the large areas of solid colour used for their garments contribute to their commanding presence.¹⁰

While the fabrics of the garments depicted in the altarpiece (velvets, satins and damasks) reflect the Burgundian court's taste in fashion at that time, the lampas silks of the dorsers, with their animal motifs and banderoles, are from an earlier period. Philip the Good used such silks for interior embellishment and gave them as pious donations.¹¹

The Eyckian *Fountain of Life* or *Triumph of the Church over the Synagogue* now in Madrid (Museo del Prado) was probably produced by a close associate shortly after the Ghent polyptych was finished.¹² The enigmatic painting displays a clear relationship with the *Adoration of the Lamb*. God the Father(?), the Virgin and John the Evangelist are similarly enthroned before magnificent textile hangings. The type of fabric of which these are made varies from that in the Ghent altarpiece, being

⁸ FRODL-KRAFT 1977-1978: 89-178, esp. 139.

⁹ MARIEN-DUGARDIN 1947-1948: 20.

¹⁰ PANOFSKY 1953, I: 211-213. In the same vein, Jean Arrouye has shown how the celestial upper register of Enguerrand Quarton's *Coronation of the Virgin* is differentiated from the terrestrial lower register by colour, materials, and treatment of volumes. ARROUYE 1988: 7-14.

¹¹ MONNAS 2000: 152.

¹² See esp. PÄCHT 1999: 132; BERMEJO MARTINEZ 1980: 47-50; HERZNER 1995: 51-III; FRANSEN 2009: 105-125.

rich velvet – red behind Mary and John, blue behind the central figure – with a different pomegranate motif on each cloth rather than the animal-patterned lampas of the *Adoration of the Lamb*.¹³

Successive interventions and a host of calamities have had a considerable impact on the *Adoration of the Lamb*.¹⁴ Notwithstanding the comparatively good condition of the three panels considered here the applied brocades have sustained no little damage as a result of the many manipulations, cleanings and restorations.¹⁵ They have been repaired, retouched and varnished several times. According to the Coremans report (1953) the gilding ('fond doré') has been redone three times while the highlights (containing lead white, 'motifs à base de blanc de plomb') have been reprised on no fewer than five separate occasions,¹⁶ probably at the same time as certain of the interventions identified during the study of the altarpiece carried out at the KIK-IRPA in 1950-1951. Amongst these interventions are compositional changes which may or may not have been made by Van Eyck, older overpaints, and more recent, nineteenth-century overpaints. The precise connections between the repairing of the applied brocades and the restorations documented by technical (and archival) study cannot always be determined.

The comprehensive study and treatment of the *Adoration of the Lamb* in 1950-1951 included UV and IR photographs. These give a very good idea of the damage – the ultraviolet fluorescence indicates later retouches in several places, for example.¹⁷ The moving of the altarpiece from the Vijd Chapel to the baptistery in 1986 provided an opportunity to update the research. A series of X-radiographs was also made at this time. This was essential to the accurate analysis of the relief decoration as differences in X-ray absorbance show up retouches and repairs very clearly. Based on the X-radiographs and a new examination with the binocular microscope, Myriam Serck-Dewaide and Tiamat Molina mapped the pattern of damage sustained by the applied brocades.¹⁸

¹³ Susan Jones has shown that the pattern on John the Evangelist's cloth of honour is the same as the one on the Virgin's cloth of honour in Petrus Christus's *Virgin and Child with St Jerome and St Francis* (Städel Frankfurt). JONES 2000: 204; FRANSEN 2009: 45.

¹⁴ DE SCHRIJVER, MARIJNISSEN 1953; DHANENS 1975: 110-118; DHANENS 1976.

¹⁵ As this book was in its final stages the Ghent altarpiece's state of conservation was being mapped by various specialists, including members of the KIK-IRPA, during the international research and conservation campaign (April-October 2010): *Lasting Support: A proposal for an interdisciplinary research project to assess the structural condition of the Ghent Altarpiece*, directed by Dr Ron Spronk and Anna van Grevenstein-Kruse, supported by the Getty Panel Painting Initiative.

¹⁶ COREMANS, LOOSE, THISSEN 1953: 100-101.

¹⁷ Ibid. 102, pl. XIX (fig. 1).

¹⁸ We thank Myriam Serck-Dewaide and Tiamat Molina (unpublished research report KIK-IRPA 1988-1989).

Model 37.1



37.1a
The Divine Lord, applied brocade on the cloth of honour



37.1b
The Divine Lord, detail of the applied brocade in raking light



37.1c
Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	cloth of honour behind the Divine Lord
Type:	continuous: staggered rows
Design:	pelican in piety, encircled by vine leaves and grapes, banderole with inscription
Measurements:	large: 19 x 12 cm
Relief:	striations, flat zones (Tegernsee type)
Striations:	8-10 per cm; diagonal
Condition:	locally worn
Overpaint:	several retouches
Highlighting:	matt blue (background), red glaze (inscription)
Gilding:	gold leaf no data on adhesive
Tin foil:	visible on X-radiograph
Filler:	white (?)
Adhesive:	no data
Support layer:	chalk and size ground
Ref:	unpublished report

The motif represents the ‘pelican in piety’ – a pelican vulning, piercing her breast in order to feed her three chicks with her own blood. The birds occupy a boat-shaped nest of leaves and flowers; a banderole inscribed with *IHESVS XPS* arcs above them to create a medallion-like effect. Above the banderole, completing the motif, vine leaves and clusters of grapes spring from a central stem.¹⁹

The pelican’s polysymbolism derives from both the Bible and the *Physiologus*. The early Church Fathers and mystics stressed the pelican’s solitary nature, drawing on Psalm 102, 6 (‘*Similis factus sum pelicano qui habitat in solitudine*’ – ‘I am like a pelican of the wilderness’).²⁰ Many legends told of the pelican feeding her starving chicks with her own blood. The bird’s supposed self-sacrifice and

¹⁹ The motif has been described by WEALE 1908: 38; MARIEN-DUGARDIN 1947-1948: 18-21, also cites two Italian silk textiles with a motif of a pelican in a nest in the Kulturhistorisches Museum der Hansestadt Stralsund and the Abegg Collection in Riggisberg.

²⁰ PORTIER 1984: 37-38; GRAHAM 1962: 235-243, among others.

charity were seen as symbolizing Christ's death on the Cross and were thus associated with the Crucifixion and Resurrection. In medieval bestiaries the young pelicans are killed either by the excessive love of the mother bird or by the parent bird stirred to sudden and fatal anger as the growing chicks begin to strike it in the face. Three days later, overcome by remorse, the parent tears open its own breast and bathes the dead chicks in its blood, restoring them to life. This was interpreted as man's striking of his divine parent (God) with his sin, by which he is doomed, and his redemption through Christ's blood. The pelican on the cloth on honour in the Ghent altarpiece is generally read as a Christological symbol. The iconography alludes directly to that of the panel below, which depicts the adoration of the Eucharistic Lamb, the crucified Christ whose blood streams into the chalice.²¹ The grapes and vine leaves that surround the bird are an additional allusion to the Eucharist. Depictions of the Crucifixion with the pelican perched on top of Christ's Cross were fairly common.²² And in the *Narbonne Altarcloth* (c.1375), for instance, the nest is provided by the Crown of Thorns, surrounded by vine leaves. Van Eyck integrated the motif into other works as well: in the central panel of the small Dresden *Virgin and Child* triptych (1437; Dresden, Gemäldegalerie) the pelican ornaments the arms of the throne (the unicorn is also depicted in the hangings).²³

The brocades seem relatively intact, but dark patches on photographs taken under UV light indicate many losses and later retouches. X-radiographs give a better picture of the damage to the original decoration beneath the overpaints and the striking amount of tin foil that has been lost (see ill. 37b).

Losses occur over the whole surface of the applied brocade but are particularly prevalent in the flat zones and at the edges of the tin foil sheets, the central area containing the motif being rather better preserved. The X-radiographs show bright white parallel lines filling up the losses: these are retouches that were probably done with pigments containing heavy elements such as lead and mercury. Not only do the X-radiographs reveal the extent of the losses, they are also essential for documenting the original form of the relief decorations, since successive restorations have ensured that the appearance and pattern we see today differ slightly from the original.

A total of nineteen brocades cover the surface. The tin sheets were glued on in staggered vertical rows. The pattern seems to be somewhat distorted behind the deity's head as the brocades were applied starting from the outside and working inwards to the edge of the painted figure.²⁴ The X-radiographs show that the pattern was made up of regular diagonal striations, eight to ten per centimetre. The letters of the inscription in the banderole and certain other details such as the birds' eyes were left as flat zones. In the flat zone around the motif, foliage painted with light stripes and tiny dots can be seen with the naked eye and on the X-radiographs. This dates from a later restoration. As far as can be gathered from photographs this foliage does not appear in Coxcie's sixteenth-century copy.

Unsurprisingly, the pattern in relief was originally much finer. Comparison of the X-radiographs with the brocades' appearance now shows that the flowers have lost their crisp delineation and some of the leaves, particularly in the foliage above the banderole, have not retained their precise shape. The inscription in the banderole has also changed. At present it reads IHESUS XPS,²⁵ the Greek version of Jesus Christ.²⁶ But the X-radiographs show that the original inscription was IHC+XPS. This alteration must have been made at a fairly early date, around 1557-1559 at the latest, for IHESUS XPS already appears in the banderole in Coxcie's copy. It is, of course, possible that Van Eyck himself was responsible, in which case the coloured highlighting probably never followed the letters that were worked into the relief of the brocade. After all, it is unlikely that Van Eyck would have completely regilded the just-applied brocades, which, had the highlighting already been completed,

²¹ PANOFSKY 1953, I: 214; PURTLE 1982: 18; MONNAS 2000: 152.

²² LCI, 3, col. 391.

²³ PURTLE 1982: 136.

²⁴ COTTRELL 2002: 177.

²⁵ PANOFSKY 1953, I: 217. Apparently the extra 'E' was added because it had been forgotten that the Greek 'H' stands for a long 'E'.

²⁶ PAVIOT 2006: 62.

would have been necessary before the new inscription could be added. Besides, he also painted IHC in the floor tiles on which the singing and music-making angels stand.²⁷ Could the alterations be a consequence of wear or an inept attempt at cleaning, in which the damaged original was regilded and highlighted with the longer inscription?²⁸ The traces of the little ‘plus’ sign that separates the two contracted words could then have been mistakenly interpreted as an S. The intervention probably dates from the same period as the earliest overpaint whose presence was established in 1950-1951 by the KIK-IRPA research team.²⁹ They judged that this overpainting was done before the sixteenth century and that it may have been carried out, at least in part, by Van Scorel and Blondeel in 1550.³⁰ Elisabeth Dhanens, on the other hand, adheres to the evidence provided by Marcus van Vaernewijck, who ascribed only a cleaning operation to these two.³¹ She questions whether, in addition to copying the polyptych, Michiel Coxcie also made some modifications to it. According to the description by Antonio de Beatis – ‘et parvo che adesso escano di mano di maestro’ – the *Adoration of the Lamb* was still in good condition in 1517. In any case, the question of when the inscription was altered and by whom remains unanswered.

The literature on Van Eyck is extensive and the iconography of the cloths of honour has been discussed by several authors.³² As regards the technical execution of the panels, Paul Coremans’s analysis laid the foundations for subsequent study.³³ At that time (1950-1951), however, the complex structure of the applied brocades was not thoroughly examined. The brocades’ stratigraphy was described as ‘an alternation of a series of translucent layers and a series with a lead white base, with or without coloured pigments’. It was further noted that ‘in other samples we find, beneath the structure, on the ground layer, a whitish bole, then thin gold leaf, and finally a translucent layer’.³⁴ How should these data be interpreted? Subsequent publications make no reference to the composition of the applied brocades.³⁵ When the data were updated in the 1980s the old samples were also re-examined.³⁶ But again the brocades were virtually ignored. For purposes of the present publication the samples were taken out once more. Unfortunately, the old sample of the applied brocade on the cloth of honour proved to have gone astray. The Virgin’s blue gown consists of three successive layers of azurite (mixed with lead white) beneath a layer of natural ultramarine.³⁷ Whether this complex structure was also used for the blue highlighting of the applied brocade on the Divine Lord’s cloth of honour is not known. As to the inscription on his banderole, the letters were coloured in with a red glaze, but to what extent this glaze is original must still be established.

²⁷ PAVIOT 2006: 62.

²⁸ See DE SCHRIJVER, MARIJNISSEN 1953: 22, 35-36 for a résumé of the intervention and the related documents.

²⁹ COREMANS, LOOSE, THISSEN 1953: 98-122 (‘vêtements des anges, visage de la Vierge, dallages aux panneaux III, IV et V, contremarche au panneau V, manteau rouge de Dieu’).

³⁰ COREMANS, LOOSE, THISSEN 1953: 105.

³¹ DHANENS 1975: 115.

³² VAN DEN GHEYN 1921, MARIEN-DUGARDIN 1947-1948; COTTRELL 2002; TIETZEL 1994: 229; MONNAS 2000: 152.

³³ COREMANS 1953: 100-102.

³⁴ Ibid. 100. ‘...une alternance d’une série de couches à caractère translucide et d’une autre série, à base de blanc de plomb, avec ou sans pigments colorés’ and ‘dans d’autres échantillons, nous trouvons, sous cette structure, recouvrant la préparation, une assiette blanchâtre, puis une fine feuille d’or et enfin une couche translucide.’

³⁵ VAN ASPEREN DE BOER 1979: 145, n. 10. The author concentrates on compositional changes in the panels based on the underdrawing.

³⁶ BRINKMAN et al. 1984-1985: 137-166; BRINKMAN et al. 1988-1989: 26-49.

³⁷ VAN ASPEREN DE BOER 1973: 93.

Model 37.2



37.2a
John the Baptist, applied brocade on the cloth
of honour



37.2b
The Virgin, applied brocade on the cloth
of honour

Location:	cloths of honour behind the Virgin and John the Baptist	
Type:	continuous: straight rows	
Design:	couchant unicorn among foliage and flowers, clouds and solar rays, banderole with inscription	
Measurements:	large: 17 x 14 cm	
Relief:	striations, flat zones (Tegernsee type)	
Striations:	10-11 per cm; diagonal	
Condition:	locally worn	
Overpaint:	several retouches	
Highlighting:	Virgin: white to blue (background), red glaze (inscription), green, grey (flowers and foliage)	St John: red (background), darkened green (inscription), green, blue (flowers and foliage)
Gilding:	gold leaf no data on adhesive	
Tin foil:	visible on X-ray	
Filler:	white(?)	
Adhesive:	no data	
Support layer:	chalk and size ground	
Ref:	unpublished report	

Emblazoning the cloths of honour behind the Virgin and St John is an elegant couchant unicorn, its head and long spiral horn turned over its shoulder as it nestles among foliage and flowers beneath radiant beams emitting from clouds, and here too is a banderole.

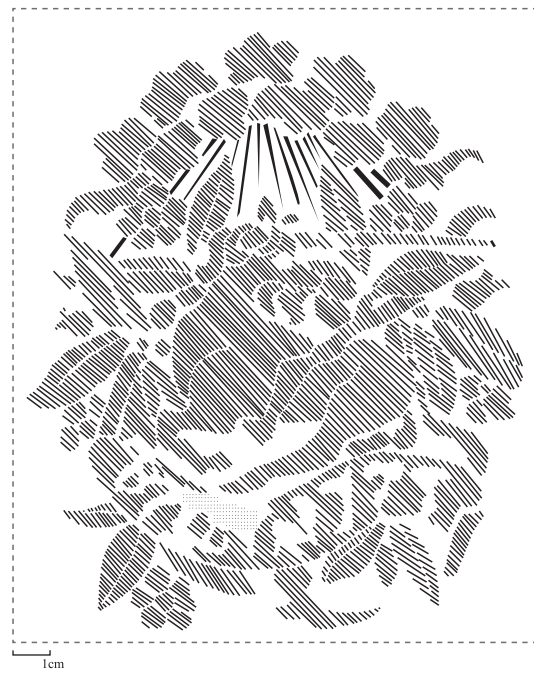
The unicorn first appears in the Septuagint, whence it made its way into theological treatises.³⁸ In the Old Testament the creature was admired especially for its strength and fierce wildness.³⁹ God's omnipotence and exaltation of Israel is compared to the strength of the unicorn (Numbers 23, 22 and 24, 8). The early Church Fathers identified the mythical beast with Christ. Tertullian (c.160-220), for instance, interpreted its horn as the Cross, while Basil of Caesarea (c.330-379) saw

³⁸ GOTFREDSEN 1999: 27.

³⁹ LCI, I, cols. 590-591.



37.2c
The Virgin, detail of the applied brocade in raking light



37.2d
Reconstruction of the relief

the horn as symbolizing the common power of Christ and God (see also Psalm 28).⁴⁰ The unicorn of the *Physiologus* is small but untameable, and can be captured only by a virgin: lured by the scent of purity it lays its head in her lap and falls asleep. The theme of the unicorn hunt was adopted as an allegory of Christ's incarnation in the Virgin's womb and his salvation of mankind, the unicorn exemplifying the humility of Christ, who became a man for man's sake.⁴¹ In the thirteenth century the allegory was further developed, now specifically denoting the Annunciation, with the hunter transformed into the Archangel Gabriel.⁴² In late-fifteenth-century miniatures, tapestries and paintings – and two of the *besloten hofjes* (cat. 53, cat. 54) in the present catalogue – the unicorn appears in the midst of Marian symbols in the paradisaical *hortus conclusus*.⁴³ Donna Cottrell has noted that in the Ghent altarpiece the motif includes two pomegranates, a fruit of paradise and also a Christological symbol.⁴⁴

The pattern of the cloth of honour behind St John is identical to the Virgin's in shape, size and striations. Only the colour of the highlighting differs. Here too, X-rays are essential in evaluating damage and acquiring data about the original execution. The pattern of damage mapped out on the basis of the X-radiographs by Myriam Serck-Dewaide and Tiamat Molina and UV photographs provide additional information. In many places the relief is eroded or completely lost. On John's cloth three of the tin foil sheets in the upper left quadrant are well delineated and very legible, in

⁴⁰ FREEMAN 1976: 17; CAVALLO 1998: 19-24; GOTFREDSEN 1999: 32-33.

⁴¹ FREEMAN 1976: 21.

⁴² *Ibid.* 23, 25.

⁴³ A Swiss altar frontal (1480, Zurich, Landesmuseum) expresses in allegory man's fall and his redemption through the suffering of Christ. The Virgin sits in an enclosed garden with the sealed fountain, a basket of manna and Gideon's fleece. Candles burn on the altar, over which hovers the dove of the Holy Spirit. Adam pierces the unicorn's breast and Eve catches the blood in a chalice, while Mary holds the unicorn's magical 'horn of salvation'. Outside the wall with its various gates is the horn-blowing hunter-Gabriel with the hounds of Truth, Justice, Peace and Mercy. To this already complex iconography are added symbols of the Resurrection: the pelican reviving her chicks with her blood and the lion roaring at his cubs to restore them to life. FREEMAN 1976: 51.

⁴⁴ COTTRELL 2002: 185; SEGAL 1984: 410, 419.

striking contrast to the eroded and damaged tin foil in the lower left corner and the brocades on the Virgin's cloth of honour. Comparison of the applied brocade sheets with the X-radiographs show that exactly the same model was used here as elsewhere, although a clear difference in X-ray absorbance is visible. Probably only the filler survives here and the tin foil itself is almost entirely lost. Therefore, these brocades are original rather than renewed, as has been suggested.⁴⁵

Ten separate sheets of tin foil were used to cover the surface of the Virgin's cloth of honour. Only two contain the complete pattern; another two are merely triangular snippets with virtually no pattern on them. John's cloth is made up of seven sheets, of which one is a small piece of just a few centimetres. In the placing of the tin foil sheets on the panel the logical continuation of the textile behind the figure was taken into account, especially on the Virgin's cloth – exactly two sheets would cover the area of the textile concealed by her figure. In John's case too we have the impression that the textile continues logically behind him, even though there is slightly more space than would be filled by two sheets of brocade. Unlike the pelican-patterned applied brocade on the Divine Lord's cloth of honour the rows of unicorn brocades are not staggered. The motif is striated with ten to eleven diagonal striations per centimetre. The unicorn's eye, the veins of the leaves and the inscription on the banderole are rendered by flat zones, and narrow flat zones also delineate the unicorn's limbs and mane.

The *Adoration of the Lamb* bears an ingenious and appropriate programme of inscriptions.⁴⁶ The texts were evidently intended to be read, but they are not all easy to identify. In addition to Latin and Greek, there are also Hebrew characters.⁴⁷ Some inscriptions still defy a definitive interpretation, including the one on the unicorn's banderole. Its fragmentary preservation has led to various readings – KREUZ XPS or IHESUS XPI,⁴⁸ ΚΡΕΥΖ ΧΡ,⁴⁹ although none is entirely convincing. James Weale described the lettering as 'saracenic';⁵⁰ Lisa Monnas points out that although Van Eyck was familiar with the Hebrew alphabet, here he used a stylization of it, a sort of pseudo-Hebrew.⁵¹ Jacques Paviot, who has made a study of the Greek and Hebrew inscriptions in Van Eyck's oeuvre, notes that the calligraphy of the Hebrew letters is generally excellent but their combination is often meaningless.⁵² Some of the characters in the applied brocade do indeed bear some affinity to Hebrew, but they do not form a word. The X-radiographs provide no solution to the enigma. The text appears just the same as in the last painted highlighting that we see now. Coxcie's copy does not make interpretation any simpler as he did not include the inscription in every banderole. In his cloth of honour behind the Virgin the first letters correspond; the last three were retouched later.⁵³ The inscription in the banderole on the Baptist's cloth of honour ends with UXL.⁵⁴

Van Eyck made various changes to the composition as he worked on it, including alterations to the Virgin's hair, which was initially intended to take up more width. These alterations show up quite clearly on the X-radiographs. To reduce the volume of Mary's hair the unicorn pattern was extended in a narrow painted strip at the level of her left shoulder. The infrared photograph shows a distinct difference in texture compared to the applied brocade. On the X-radiograph the zone looks remarkably well preserved, which also suggests that the decoration is painted rather than made with tin foil. A lock of hair was then painted over it. At the Virgin's right shoulder the unicorn pattern was extended in paint, reducing the width of the figure. A difference in appearance (somewhat coarser compared to both the applied brocade and the narrow painted strip at her left shoulder) creates doubt about the author of this modification. Further examination is called for.

⁴⁵ Unpublished research report by Myriam Serck-Dewaide and Tiamat Molina, KIK-IRPA 1988-1989.

⁴⁶ GOODGAL 1981: 169-199.

⁴⁷ GOODGAL 1981; PAVIOT 2006.

⁴⁸ COTTRELL 2002: 180-181 (fig. 10.2); MONNAS 2000: 153, both citing Friedrich Fischbach, *Geschichte der Textilkunst*, Frankfurt-am Main, 1883, pl. 75, a book we have unfortunately been unable to find.

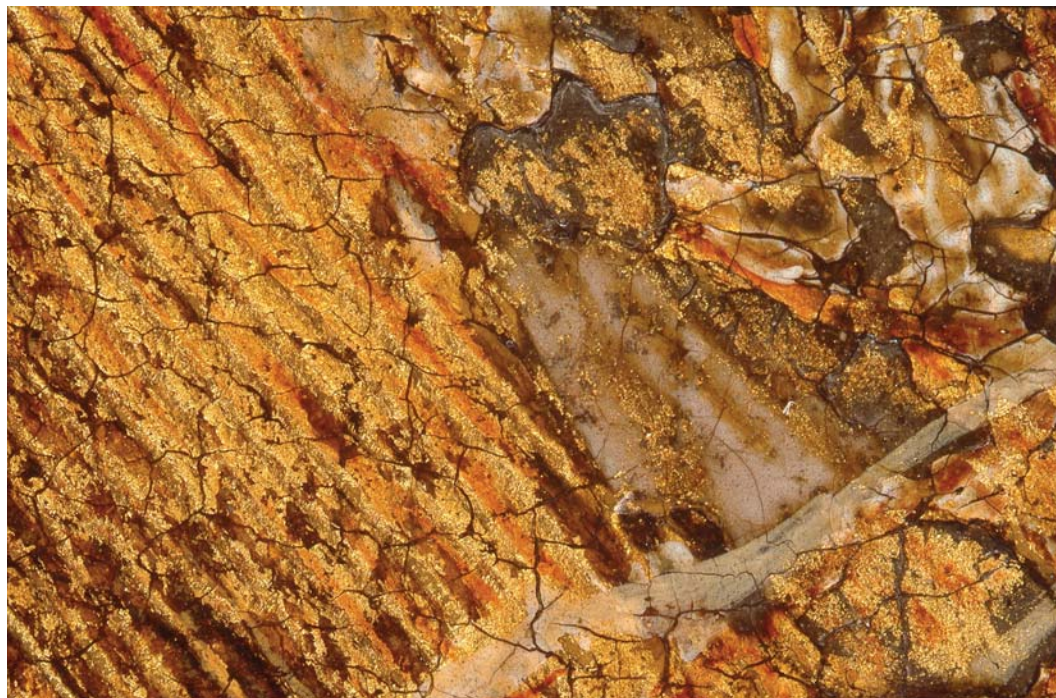
⁴⁹ COTTRELL 2002: 181.

⁵⁰ WEALE 1908: 39; MONNAS 2000: 153.

⁵¹ MONNAS 2000: 153.

⁵² PAVIOT 2006: 56-57, 60, 73.

⁵³ Only two detail photographs were available.



37.2e
The Virgin, detail of the applied brocade

The ground colour of the applied brocade on the Virgin's cloth of honour is white, most likely an allusion to her spotless virginity; the letters on the banderole are highlighted in red. At the Virgin's right shoulder, where her shadow is cast on the cloth, the white becomes blue. John's textile has a red ground colour and dark green letters. Where the individual sheets meet, elegant four-petalled flowers are stencilled in light grey paint, to which stems and foliage are added. These decorations are also visible on the X-radiograph and seem original, despite retouchings. The flowers and stems on the Virgin's textile are at present light grey and the leaves are green; John's flowers are dark blue, and his stems and leaves are green. The colours of the highlighting were chosen to give chromatic unity and balance to the three figures. Which pigments or dyes they contain is not known for sure, however. They were described generally as 'motifs in lead white (with or without the addition of colours: azurite for the blue, madder for the red, malachite for the green, bone black for the chestnut brown)'.⁵⁵

Discussing the original material Paul Coremans and Jean Thissen observed that the reliefs on the St John panel were approximately 180 microns thick, though the fill material was not mentioned.⁵⁶ Myriam Serck-Dewaide examined the panels with the binocular microscope and noted that the brocades had a chalky filler. On a macro-photograph this indeed seems to be the case. The brown layer could perhaps be the adhesive. There is no certainty about the nature and composition of the fill material and equally little about the adhesive layer and other components. Many technical questions still remain unanswered. As this book was nearing completion an international study and conservation campaign – *Lasting Support: A proposal for an interdisciplinary research project to assess the structural condition of the Ghent Altarpiece* – was in progress, directed by Dr Ron Spronk and Anna van Grevenstein-Kruse and supported by the Getty Panel Painting Initiative (April–October 2010). This will undoubtedly lead to new insights and shed light on many technical aspects that are presently shrouded in mystery. A fresh examination of the old samples is also planned for the near future.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ Only two banderoles are inscribed.

⁵⁵ COREMANS, THISSEN 1953: 101 '...les motifs à base de blanc de plomb (avec ou sans additions colorées: azurite pour le bleu, garance pour le rouge, malachite pour le vert, noir d'os pour le brun-marron)'.

⁵⁶ COREMANS, THISSEN 1953: 75.

⁵⁷ The KIK-IRPA laboratory is planning the project *The Mystic Lamb in the Laboratory 60 Years after Paul Coremans: The Contribution of New Analytical Techniques* (2011–2014, directed by Jana Sanyova) as part of the NACHO (Non-Destructive Analysis of Cultural Heritage Objects) project in collaboration with the University of Liège.



MICHEL COXCIE, THE ADORATION OF THE LAMB

Bode-Museum, Berlin (Adoration of the Lamb, the Divine Lord, inv. 524-525)

Alte Pinakothek, Munich (the Virgin and John the Baptist, inv. 653-654)

KMSKB-MRBAB, Brussels (wing panels, inv. 6696-6701)

Polyptych

Oil on oak panels

Ghent

Signed and dated: 'Michael de Coxie me fecit anno 1558' on the fountain in the Adoration of the Lamb

1557-1559

The Divine Lord: 208.4 × 79.5 cm

The Virgin: 162 × 70 cm

John the Baptist: 162 × 70 cm

During his second stay in the Netherlands Philip II commissioned a copy of the *Adoration of the Lamb*.⁵⁸ He entrusted the work to Michiel Coxcie, who established himself in Ghent while he carried out the job. Coxcie set to work in 1557 in St Bavo's and probably finished his painting in 1559. The reproduction was conveyed to Madrid and installed on the altar of the royal chapel in the Alcázar,⁵⁹ where it probably remained until the end of the seventeenth century, at which time it was moved to another location, now unknown.⁶⁰ It was not long before the altarpiece was in need of repairs, though we do not know who carried them out.⁶¹ We do know that in 1622 Bartolomé Gonzalez apparently treated the panels in some way. In the early nineteenth century Coxcie's *Adoration of the Lamb* left Madrid for good. In 1808 it was sent to Brussels, dismembered and sold on the art market, the various panels going to different collections. The panel depicting the central deity was bought in 1823 by Friedrich Wilhelm III of Prussia for the Staatliche Museen in Berlin (Bode-Museum, inv. 524-525). Maximilian of Bavaria acquired the panels depicting the Virgin and John the Baptist in 1820: in 1836 they were given to the Pinakothek in Munich (Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, inv. 653-654). The wing panels were bought by the Belgian State (except for the Adam and Eve panels, which had already been lost in Spain), and a few years later they entered the collection of the KMSKB-MRBAB in Brussels.⁶²

The measurements of the copy are almost identical to those of the original.⁶³ Coxcie did, however, diverge from his model in a couple of respects, replacing three of the original 'Milites Christi' with portraits of Emperor Charles V, Philip II, and himself, and removing John the Baptist and the two donors from the exterior of the wings to make way for the Evangelists Matthew, Mark and Luke.⁶⁴ There are also some changes in the Annunciation, where the inscriptions are omitted. Elsewhere, the differences are rather in terms of painting technique such as colour or contrast. But by and large, Coxcie followed his model down to the smallest detail. Anne Dubois and Pascale Syfer d'Olne have studied the Brussels panels to establish how accurately some elements were copied.⁶⁵ Even the dorsers behind the three divine figures are faithfully rendered. The patterns are not painted but prefabricated in relief and glued to the panels.

We have not examined the Coxcie panels ourselves. The findings offered here are based on photographs of the Munich panels depicting the Virgin and John the Baptist. As far as appearance goes the decoration of the cloths of honour shows all the characteristics of applied brocade, but to date no data have been published that identify its components or describe its structure and it has not yet been demonstrated that tin foil was used. In the Low Countries the latest use of applied brocade dates from the 1530s or 1540s. Thereafter, the technique was abandoned in favour of the

37e-f

The Virgin and John the Baptist, 1557-1559, Ghent, Michiel Coxcie; Munich, Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen. Alte Pinakothek © Artothek

⁵⁸ STEPPE 1990: 33.

⁵⁹ Ibid. 35.

⁶⁰ Idem.

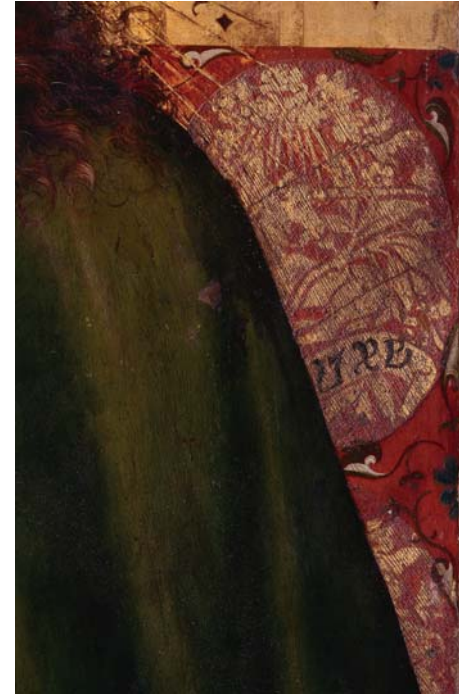
⁶¹ Ibid. 37.

⁶² Ibid. 38.

⁶³ The three upper centre panels of Coxcie's *Adoration of the Lamb* are a few centimetres smaller: Coxcie's Divine Lord is 208.4 × 79.5 cm; Van Eyck's Divine Lord is 212.2 × 83.1 cm

⁶⁴ DUVERGER 1954: 55.

⁶⁵ DUBOIS, SYFER-D'OLNE 2006: 235.



37g
The Virgin, applied brocade on the cloth of honour
 © Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, Munich

37h
John the Baptist, applied brocade on the cloth of honour
 © Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, Munich



37i
 X-radiograph of the applied brocade on the cloth of honour behind the Virgin
 © Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, Munich

37j
 X-radiograph of the applied brocade on the cloth of honour behind St John
 © Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, Munich

purely pictorial representation of the sumptuous silks the brocades had mimicked. Thus Michiel Coxcie managed to produce a convincing reproduction of the technique, even though by that time it had died out, though his working method shows that he had not fully grasped the procedure.

X-radiographs made available by the Munich Pinakothek show that instead of covering the whole cloth of honour with continuous rectangular sheets with a design worked into the relief, as Van Eyck did, he appears to have used individual fully striated ovals of metal foil without working the design into the striations. He used six ovals on the Baptist's cloth and seven on the Virgin's, each oval being made up of several pieces. The ovals are slightly smaller than Van Eyck's original pattern, and the pieces making up the ovals have not always been applied with the same precision, so that the striations are aligned in different directions. This is most evident near the Baptist's right hand, where the striations run in several directions in the same brocade. The opacity on the X-radiographs indicates the use of metal foil. The brown layer beneath the foil that can be seen on the photographs corresponds to a filler. Probably the metal foil sheets were gilded before they were glued to the panel. The design itself seems to have been stencilled onto the gilded striations in a very thin light brown paint. Then the background was painted in. That the gilding was done first and then the grey-white or red background was painted in is supported by the brushstrokes that here and there follow the body of the unicorn and the metallic gleam of the gold leaf that shines through the paint in several places. Moreover, the gold leaf does not completely fill the join between the various pieces of metal foil. Whether the stencilling and background colouring were done before or after the ovals were applied to the panel can only be conjectured. The brushstrokes show that the background of the cloth itself must have been painted after the ovals were applied, then the stems and flowers were painted between the ovals. After the application of the ovals, some of the leaves surrounding the unicorn were extended beyond the brocades and gilded. However, this working method remains hypothetical and requires more profound in situ and laboratory research.



38 ST AGNES

Ghent, St Bavo's Cathedral, crypt

Wall painting, oil(?) on lime mortar
 Between 1480 and 1520
 107 × 49 cm (including the crocketed cusping: 115 × 65 cm)

1578 (at the latest): covered with a layer of limewash¹
 1936: wall paintings rediscovered
 1936-1937: entire series uncovered and restored by Frans-Jozef Coppejans

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/44-2003/08116

From 1480 the Romanesque crypt of St Bavo's Cathedral, also known as the Jerusalem Chapel, was used as an oratory. Between that date and 1540 it was decorated with wall paintings. At the springing of the vaults, just above the capitals, the Mass of St Gregory and several episodes from the Passion – the Carrying of the Cross, the Crowning with Thorns, the Lamentation – are depicted. Most of the other images are of saints, including Gertrude, Apollonia, Simon and Clare. St Agnes appears somewhat higher on the vaults, which are also painted with musician angels and foliage. There is no material, stylistic or iconographic connection between these various images.²

St Agnes, patron saint of virgins and betrothed couples, is depicted on the vault (261 centimetres above floor level) above the west side of the second column from the altar. She has a book in her hand and a lamb on a leash. A dagger is thrust into her neck. Over her high-waisted grey-blue gown she wears a red, ermine-lined cloak. Behind her hangs a cloth of honour, illusionistically fixed in place at four points. The inscription in the black border around the rectangular image begins with 'S Agnes', but is otherwise illegible. This border is in turn set off with a frame of black, crocketed cusping.

The painting was probably executed in oil paint on a lime mortar ground.³ The surface has suffered considerable wear and is characterized by losses, conspicuous retouches and a layer of grime. This depiction of St Agnes is the crypt's only example of the use of applied brocade.⁴ Elsewhere, patterns have been stencilled onto a red background or accomplished by some other decorative painting technique.

¹ M. MARTENS 1989: 102.

² DUVERGER 1974: 23-26, esp. 23; M. MARTENS 1989: 86-103, 226-236, figs. 34-51; BUYLE, BERGMANS 1994: 122-124; BERGMANS 1998: 311-312.

³ M. MARTENS 1989: 227.

⁴ GEELLEN, STEYAERT 2003: 64, 66; GEELLEN, STEYAERT 2005: 3.

Model 38.1

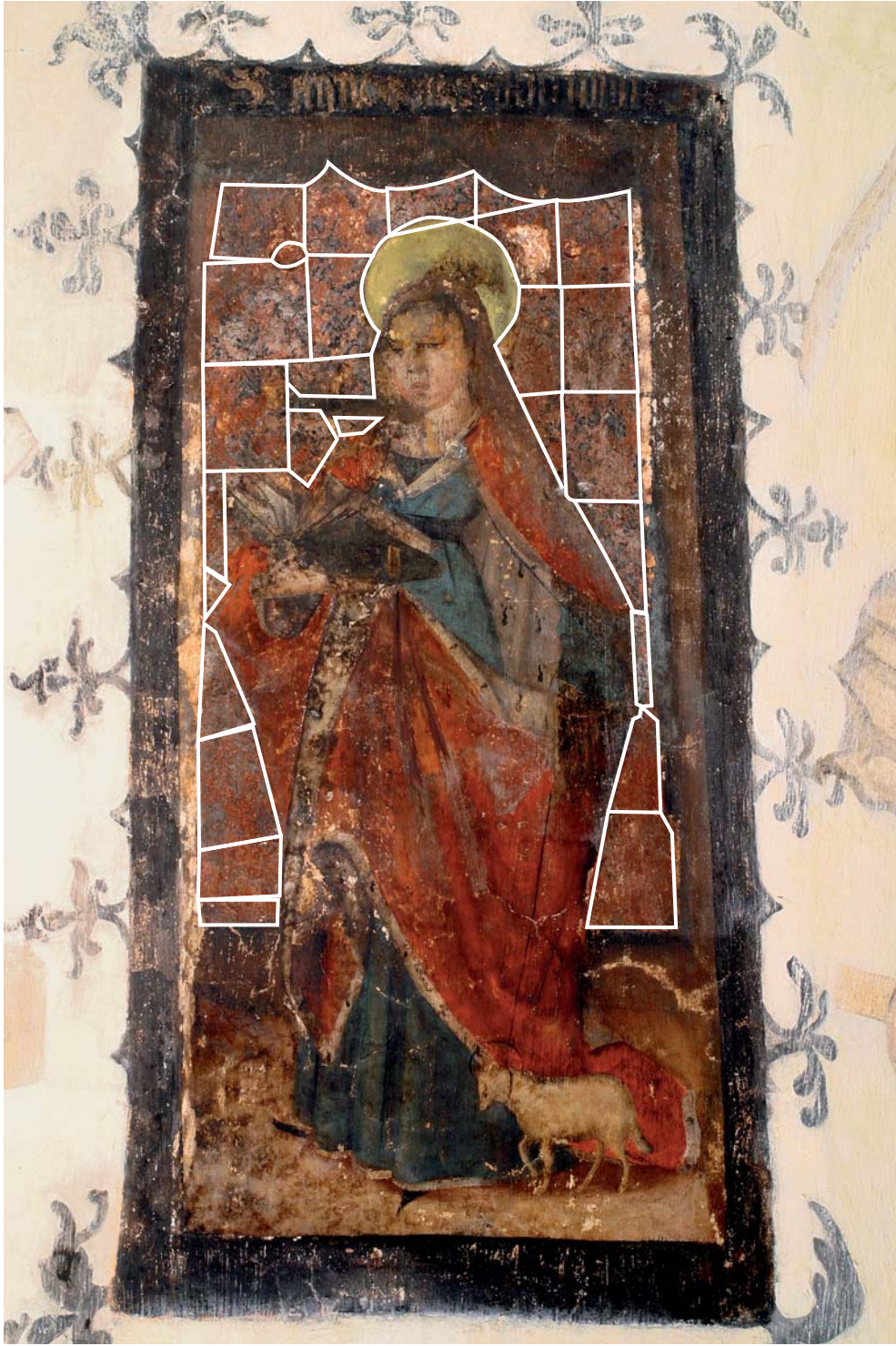


38.1a
Applied brocade on the cloth of honour behind St Agnes

38.1b
Archaeological drawing

Location:	cloth of honour behind St Agnes
Type:	continuous: straight rows
Design:	floral and foliate: stylized pomegranate with foliage(?), too incomplete for further reconstruction
Measurements:	medium: 10 x min. 7.5 cm; incomplete sheet
Relief:	striations, flat zones (Tegernsee type)
Striations:	9 per cm; vertical, straight, even in width, convex in section
Condition:	badly damaged
Overpaint:	none
Highlighting:	black on flat zones
Gilding:	none
Tin foil:	grey, badly damaged
Filler:	ochre-brown, waxy appearance, thickened with pigments (a few particles are visible in the cross section)
Adhesive:	red (red lead and vermillion)
Support layer:	yellow, thickened with pigments (sealing layer?) white chalk and size ground
Ref:	KIK-IRPA laboratory file (1 cross section)

The painted cloth of honour behind St Agnes fills the whole width of the background. There is no suggestion of drapery folds; the evocation of the textile relies entirely on the texture and pattern of the applied brocade. The flat zones have been painted matt black. The relief decoration is in a very poor state, and what the original motif may have been is hard to make out – perhaps a stylized pomegranate. Twenty-nine sheets of tinfoil were glued side by side to cover the cloth of honour. Several small pieces have been fitted around the dagger and the book in Agnes's right hand, with no account taken of the direction of the pattern or striations. There is no trace of gold leaf on the tin foil. The filler is fairly thick and is a wax mix.



38b
Position of the tin foil sheets on the cloth of honour



39 VIRGIN AND CHILD WITH SAINTS AND DONORS

Ghent, Museum voor Schone Kunsten, inv. 1969-E

Panel painting, oil on wood
Bruges(?)
Late 15th century
77 × 86,5 cm

Provenance unknown

1928: sold at auction in Berlin as produced in the workshop of Petrus Christus¹

1969: panel acquired by the MSK, Ghent

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/43-2004/08239

The Virgin sits enthroned beneath a cross-vaulted canopy decorated with a crocketed ogee arch. Her feet rest on the semicircular dais in front of the throne. The worshipping donors, accompanied by John the Baptist and St Barbara, flank the central group. The scale of the figures corresponds to their hierarchical rank. The Virgin and Child are larger than the saints, who are themselves larger than the praying donors.² Each group corresponds to a different level of reality, whereas the spatial and temporal unity is respected.

Present opinion ascribes a Bruges origin to the panels. Didier Martens links the figure of the Virgin to the Madonnas by the Master of the St Ursula Legend, a Bruges painter active in the last quarter of the fifteenth century.³ He also notes that the Child, and the position and shape of the maternal hands that hold him, are based on a model invented by Rogier van der Weyden (*Virgin and Child*, c.1440-1450; Rotterdam, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen⁴). Moreover, the Marian group seems to be borrowed from the composition of the *Virgin and Child Enthroned with Two Angels* that can be attributed with certainty to the Leuven painter Dirk Bouts. The original painting is lost but there are many imitations in late-fifteenth-century Bruges painting.⁵ The most faithful copy – ascribed to the Master of the Baroncelli Portraits, another painter active in Bruges in the last quarter of the fifteenth century – is now in the Capilla Real in Granada.

The presentation of the scene before a hanging that covers the entire background is not uncommon – the formula often occurs in the work of the Bruges painter known as the Master of the Legend of the St Lucy, for example. Conversely, it is unusual to find the applied brocade technique employed in late-fifteenth-century Bruges panel painting, although it has been identified in wall paintings in several buildings in that town (see cat. 12, cat. 17).



39a
Virgin and Child with Saints and Donors, late 15th century, Bruges(?); Ghent, Museum voor Schone Kunsten

39b
Position of the tin foil sheets on the hanging

¹ Sales catalogue cited in D. MARTENS 1998: 49 n. 20, 50. We thank Didier Martens for drawing our attention to this work.

² D. MARTENS 1998: 49-50.

³ D. MARTENS, MUND 1997: 14-15; D. MARTENS 1998: 49-53.

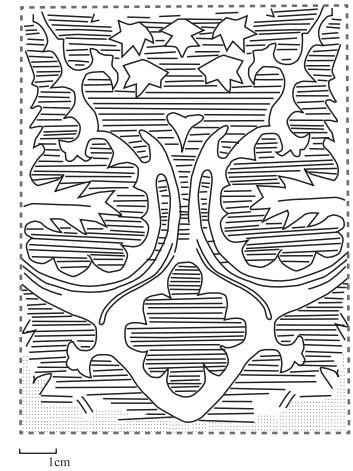
⁴ LEUVEN 2009: 394-396 (cat. 39).

⁵ D. MARTENS 1993: 129-174; D. MARTENS 2001: 191-205.

Model 39.1



39.1a
Detail of the applied brocade on the hanging



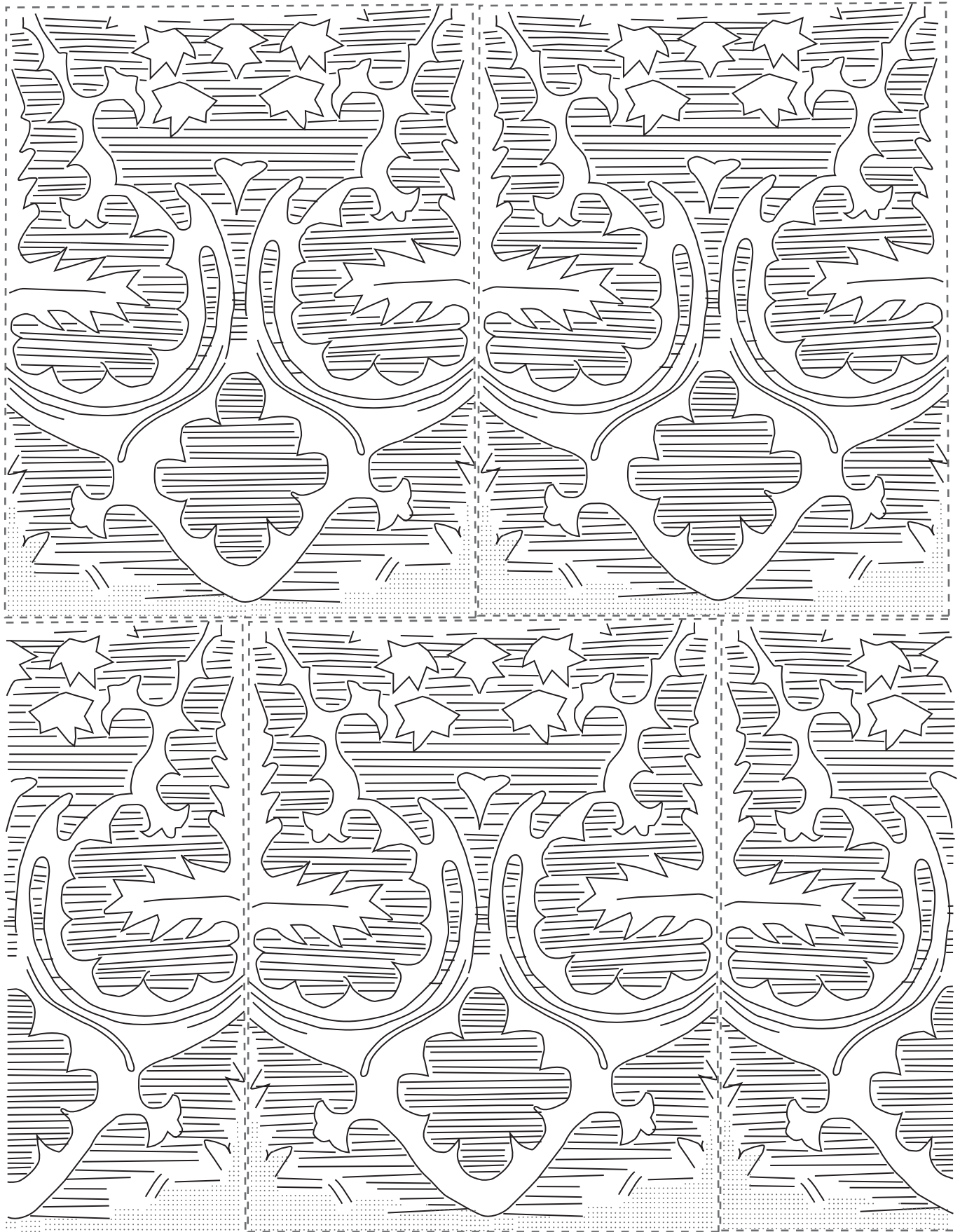
39.1b
Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	hanging	Comparable applied brocades cat. G1.1 cat. F3.2 cat. S3.1 Barnard Castle, Bowes Museum, <i>Passion Altarpiece</i>
Type:	continuous: staggered rows	
Design:	floral and foliate: stylized dentate trilobed leaf within a multilobed shape, alternating with rows of multilobed shapes and ogival rosettes dotted with stars in a quincunxial arrangement	
Measurements:	medium: 11.2-11.3 x 8.3-8.4 cm	
Relief:	striations, contour, flat zones (mixed pattern)	
Striations:	8-9 per cm; horizontal	
Condition:	locally worn	
Overpaint:	thick coat of varnish black (or brown) on contour gold leaf adhesive bronze paint white underlayer	
Highlighting:	red glaze (traces)	
Gilding:	gold leaf mordant, ochre in colour	
Tin foil:	degraded, grey	
Filler:	brown, translucent, slightly thickened with pigments (a few particles visible in the cross section)	
Adhesive:	no data	
Support layer:	no data	
Ref:	KIK-IRPA laboratory file (2 cross sections). See also Chapter Ten, Table B	

The rectangular sheets are arranged, brick-like, in staggered rows. Horizontally the brocades line up logically. Vertically, however, the continuity of the pattern is broken. The original surface is no longer visible. The applied brocade has been overpainted twice, once 'gilded' with bronze paint on a white underlayer, followed by gilding with gold leaf – the latter is the surface we see now. The pattern is picked out in black (or brown). The work is protected by a thick coat of varnish. Beneath the overpaint the relief of the applied brocade appears to be lacunate and damaged.

The same textile pattern appears, in a painted version, in the *Adoration of the Magi* (c.1450-1460, Swabia; Kempten, Alpenländische Galerie, inv. MA 2812), on the tunic of the kneeling magus on the painted wing panel.⁶ Neither a stylistic nor an iconographic link could be established between the present panel and the Kempten wing, which is earlier by several decades. The figures in the *Adoration of the Magi* have harder and more schematically rendered features, and their somewhat stiff poses are far removed from those of the Bruges panel. The painters must have been inspired by the same fabric or the same figured textile that was circulating in some graphic form.

⁶ *Graviert, gemalt, gepresst* 1996: 176-177 (cat. 5.45).



39.1c
Reconstruction with adjacent sheets



40 ALTARPIECE OF ST ANNE WITH THE VIRGIN AND CHILD

Ghent, Our Lady of ter Hoye Beguinage

Altarpiece, carved and polychromed wood, wings lost
Southern Netherlands (Brabant) or Northern Netherlands (Utrecht?)

No marks

1500-1510

81 × 53.5 × 20.5 cm

1999: examination and minor conservation in the KIK-IRPA

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/47-1999/06860

The trio of characters occupying this carved and polychromed altarpiece represent St Anne with the Virgin and Child, an iconography commonly referred to in the Low Countries as 'Sint-Anna te drieën', in Germany as 'Anna Selbdritt', and in France as 'Anne Trinitaire', and a popular theme around 1500. The three figures are arranged in a pyramidal group.¹ In one hand Anne holds a book; the other she lays protectively on her daughter's shoulder. Mary, seated at her mother's feet, is represented in three-quarter profile. The ample folds of the garments, spreading out across the width of the image, are shallow, flat and angular. The sacred space the little family group occupies resembles a Gothic chapel with windows in the walls and a vault supported on columns. The altarpiece's wings are lost.

There is little or no information regarding the provenance of the altarpiece and whether it has always belonged to the Our Lady of ter Hoye beguinage is not known. There is an almost identical St Anne with the Virgin and Child, undoubtedly from the same hand, in Amsterdam (Rijksmuseum, inv. NM 3315).² Carved in oak, it differs from the present work in only a couple of details. The facial expressions, the irregular drapery folds and the braided hair are virtually identical and there is practically no difference in the measurements. It is impossible to compare the polychromy, however, since the Rijksmuseum group has been stripped. There is no consensus as to origin and date: these vary from 'Southern Netherlands, late fifteenth century'³ and 'Lower Rhine, second half of the fifteenth century', to 'Northern Netherlands, 1520'.⁴ The facial features and the gesture of Anne's hand on Mary's shoulder may indeed point to the Northern Netherlands, possibly to Utrecht.⁵

The altarpiece case and the carved group are made up of several wooden parts; the angels' wings are in metal. The back of the group has been hollowed out. Both the construction and the polychromy have been modified on more than one occasion. The original polychromy on the figurative group consisted chiefly of burnished gilding (on red-brown bole) tempered by areas in azurite blue and by the pale pink of the flesh tones. The first overpainting was merely local; the second complete and presently visible repainting seems to have been carried out in the late nineteenth- or early twentieth century. A third intervention involved a number of retouchings. In the overpainting the initial contrast between the gleaming gilding and the matt colours was completely lost. The original polychromy survives only in minute fragments in the drapery folds.

¹ GHENT 1961: 69, pl. XVII; GHENT 1984: 235. See also DERVEAUX-VAN USSEL 1975: 82-83.

² UDEN 1992: 120-121, fig. 69.

³ BUYLE, VANTHILLO 2000: 176-177.

⁴ LEEUWENBERG 1973: 106.

⁵ Three sculptures of St Anne with the Virgin and Child of around 1500 from this region display this same gesture. They are now in the Museum Catharijnenconvent in Utrecht. VAN VLIERDEN 2004: 37, 38, 223, 228, 229 (ABM bh499, ABM bh340, ABM bh591).

Model 40.1



40.1a
Applied brocade on the rear wall of the altarpiece case



1 cm

40.1b
Archaeological drawing

Location:	rear wall of the altarpiece case
Type:	continuous
Design:	floral and foliate: medallion filled with a complex foliate motif between sections of multilobed rosettes
Measurements:	large: 14.5 x 4.2 cm
Relief:	striations, contour, local semicircles in relief, flat zones (mixed pattern)
Striations:	10 per cm; variously aligned, straight, even in width, convex in section
Condition:	locally worn
Overpaint:	red
Highlighting:	matt black on flat zones
Gilding:	gold leaf mordant
Intermediate layer:	brown transparent organic layer, fluoresces orange in UV light: resin(?); gold-imitating glaze(?)
Tin foil:	grey, well preserved
Filler:	ochre in colour, semi-transparent, waxy appearance, no additional thickening
Adhesive:	brown-red
Support layer:	white chalk and size ground
Ref:	KIK-IRPA laboratory file (2 cross sections)

It is difficult to know how this complex motif is intended to be read. It follows no obvious logic when horizontally and/or vertically reversed and repeated. In addition to the usual straight striations are semicircles in relief that were probably cut into the mould with a small gouge. The flat zones are edged with a line in relief. They were first painted black and subsequently overpainted in a granular red with a red glaze on top.

Four of the panels of the rear wall of the altarpiece were decorated with applied brocades. Only one sheet was exposed during the examination of the work. No trace of applied brocade was found beneath the overpainting on the figurative group.



41 VAULT RIBS

Ghent, 'Het Pand', former Dominican monastery, sacristy

Architectural polychromy, tempera on lime mortar
Second half of the 15th century

1980: vault paintings discovered by Guido Bral and Walter Schudel; subsequently uncovered by the Restaurateurscollectief

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/47-2003/08115

The sacristy of the former Dominican monastery known as 'Het Pand' is adjacent to the monastery church and overlooks the River Leie.¹ The walls and the late-fourteenth-century vaulting were completely covered with paintings in varying styles and degrees of elaboration. Depicted on the webs of the vault are the order's patron, St Dominic, and musician angels amidst acanthus leaves and monograms, smaller foliate motifs and rayed rosettes.² On stylistic and technical grounds these paintings can be dated to the second half of the fifteenth century. This is part of an extensive programme of wall paintings dating from several different periods. The former monastery complex has a wealth of this sort of decoration.³ Perhaps the rayed rosettes on the sacristy ceiling allude to Margaret of York, whose donation to the monastery in 1474 instigated a new period of building and renovation work.⁴

The paintings are executed in tempera on a lime mortar ground. They were overpainted for the first time in the period 1580-1584.⁵ In the course of restoration that took several years to complete, the fifteenth-century decoration beneath the overpainting was revealed. Four metres above the present floor level a rich imitation textile incorporating applied brocade also came to light on the vault ribs. This decorative technique occurs nowhere else in Het Pand.⁶

41
The vaulted ceiling
of the sacristy of
'Het Pand',
second half of the
15th century, Ghent

¹ SIMONS et al. 1991: 73-77.

² BUYLE, BERGMANS 1994: 118-119.

³ M. MARTENS 1989: 68-79.

⁴ BRAL 1994: 16, 21-22.

⁵ Ibid. 9, 12.

⁶ GEELLEN, STEYAERT 2003: 66-67; GEELLEN, STEYAERT 2005: 13.

Model 41.1



41.1a
Applied brocade on the vault ribs

Location:	junction of the ribs
Type:	continuous: straight rows
Design:	floral and foliate: diagonally-orientated ribbon work forming ogival medallions; twining stems sprouting lobed leaves and flower buds; composite flower in full bloom in the medallions
Measurements:	extra large: 27-28.5 x 30.6-32 cm
Relief:	striations, contour, flat zones (mixed pattern)
Striations:	6 per cm; horizontal in the background, diagonal in the composite flower, straight, very regular, convex in section
Condition:	well preserved
Overpaint:	none
Highlighting:	matt black on flat zones
Gilding:	no gold leaf; on the tinfoil there is a translucent layer
Tin foil:	grey, relatively well preserved
Filler:	white, opaque: CaCO ₃
Adhesive:	brown-green (ochres, earths, lead white)
Support layer:	red ochre (sealing layer?) white chalk and size ground (in three layers)
Ref:	KIK-IRPA laboratory file (1 cross section). See also Chapter Ten, Table B

The decoration is made up of four sheets applied side by side and folded around the ribs. The complex design consists of a stem that twines around diagonally-orientated ribbons with a criss-cross pattern, to end in a pomegranate or flower in full bloom. A few flower buds and lobed leaves help to fill the ogival medallions. The flat zones are highlighted with black and are marked out from the background by a raised contour. The background is striated with parallel horizontal lines. In the flower, on the other hand, the striations usually follow the direction of the foliage and petals, giving additional emphasis to the contrast between the motif and the background. Employing applied brocade in this way, on the ribs of the vault, is uncommon compared to its more general use in imitating the costly textiles of garments or cloths of honour.

The tin foil was not gilded but covered with a translucent glaze which fluoresces under UV light, perhaps indicating a resinous or oil-resin composition. This layer may have been intended as ersatz gold, but it could also have been applied as a protective layer to prevent the degradation of the tin (see Chapter Ten). As is the case in the applied brocades on the ceiling of the Oosterlingenhuis in Bruges (cat. 17), the filler is a mixture of chalk and size.



└─ 1cm

41.1b
Reconstruction of the relief



41.1c
Reconstruction of the relief with adjacent sheets



42a



42b



42c



42d

42 WALL PAINTING (CRUCIFIXION) WITH (LOST) STONE STATUES

Ghent, Convent of the Discalced Carmelites, wall of the 'Oud Huys'

Wall painting, stone statues (lost)

Late 15th or very early 16th century

The top edge of the painted cloth of honour is at 387 cm; the total painted surface is 17 m²

1995 and 1996: examination of the wall decoration by Lode De Clercq¹

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/44-1997/06254

The wall painting is in the eastern half of the so-called 'Oud Huys'. The type of brick beneath the painting is also found in parts of the convent that date from 1466 and 1526.²

The opening of a dozen large examination 'windows' has revealed the remarkable quality of a large wall painting that today is covered with successive limewashes and overpaints. The original ensemble included not only wall painting but also sculpture and applied brocade.³ Painted on the wall was a dark green damask curtain suspended from hooks by red loops, all in trompe-l'oeil, its lower edge one metre above floor level. The hanging was divided into two horizontal registers by a band carrying a text in very fine script. In the upper register at least three real statues (now lost) stood beneath three-dimensional canopies (also lost) in Avesnes stone. Each statue was backed by a cloth of honour in applied brocade (model 42.1). Painted on the wall between these sculptures were 'statues' with bases and canopies in grisaille. In the lower register was a Crucifixion set against a red background decorated with a scattering of local rosettes in applied brocade (model 42.2). The Virgin in prayer and the kneeling donor flank the Cross. The creation of this setting may have been connected with the relic of the Holy Cross that the convent received from St Adrian's Abbey in Geraardsbergen around 1470.⁴ Its various elements would have created a great impression of depth, blurring the distinction between appearance and reality and expanding the three-dimensional space of the viewer (see Chapter Eight).

A simple lime mortar was first applied with a trowel and spread with a wide brush, followed by an organic brown layer which was probably intended as a sealing coat. The surface paint layers have an oil-based binder. The curtain and the painted 'statues' with their grisaille bases and canopies seem to have been painted on a black layer (even the flesh tones). The applied brocade behind the real statues, on the other hand, has been glued directly onto the white mortar with a brown adhesive. The wall painting probably received a final protective coat of varnish.

At some unknown date – most likely at the time of the Beeldenstorm or 'Iconoclastic Fury'⁵ – the paintings were attacked with an axe. The resulting holes were filled and the paintings were reprised. In the course of the next centuries they were limewashed over on at least three occasions. Subsequently, those areas of limewash that covered an oily background having flaked, everything was coated with a thin layer of pinkish paint. Finally, in the nineteenth century, around 1840, the wall was plastered and decorated in Italian neo-Renaissance style. To give greater adhesion to the new plaster the existing layers were hammered into at regular intervals.

42a
Wall painting
(Crucifixion) with
(lost) stone statues,
late 15th or very early
16th century; Ghent,
Convent of the
Discalced Carmelites,
wall of the
'Oud Huys'
examination windows
© Walter Schudel

42b
Examination
window 1
© Walter Schudel

42c
Examination
window 2
© Walter Schudel

42d
Detail of
examination
window 4
© Walter Schudel

¹ The information in this catalogue note is based on the reports by Lode De Clercq, to whom we are indebted. DE CLERCQ 1995; DE CLERCQ 1997.

² SOULLIAERT 1994: 29-31; DE CLERCQ 1995: 3.

³ GEELEN, STEYAERT 2005: 4-5.

⁴ DE CLERCQ 1996: 3, 38; DE CLERCQ 1997: 3, n. 5.

⁵ In August 1566 Calvinist frustration at the intransigence of Spanish rule came to a head in a surge of iconoclasm across the Low Countries.

Model 42.1



42.1a
Applied brocade of the cloth of honour (examination window 1)
© Walter Schudel

Location:	cloths of honour behind the three (lost) stone statues in the upper register
Type:	continuous
Design:	unidentifiable, too incomplete for reconstruction
Measurements:	large: c.14 x 15 cm
Relief:	striations, contour, narrow flat zones (mixed pattern)
Striations:	8-10 per cm; horizontal, diagonal
Condition:	badly damaged
Overpaint:	several overpaints (except in the examination windows)
Highlighting:	no data
Gilding:	no data
Tin foil:	grey-black
Filler:	waxy appearance
Adhesive:	brown
Support layer:	sealing layer white mortar
Ref:	cross section: none

The site was not accessible at the time of the examination, but on the photographs the applied brocades look very fragmentary. Most of what remains is filler. Just a few patches of blackened tin foil are visible.

Model 42.2



42.2a
Applied brocade in the background of the
Crucifixion (examination window 4)
© Walter Schudel

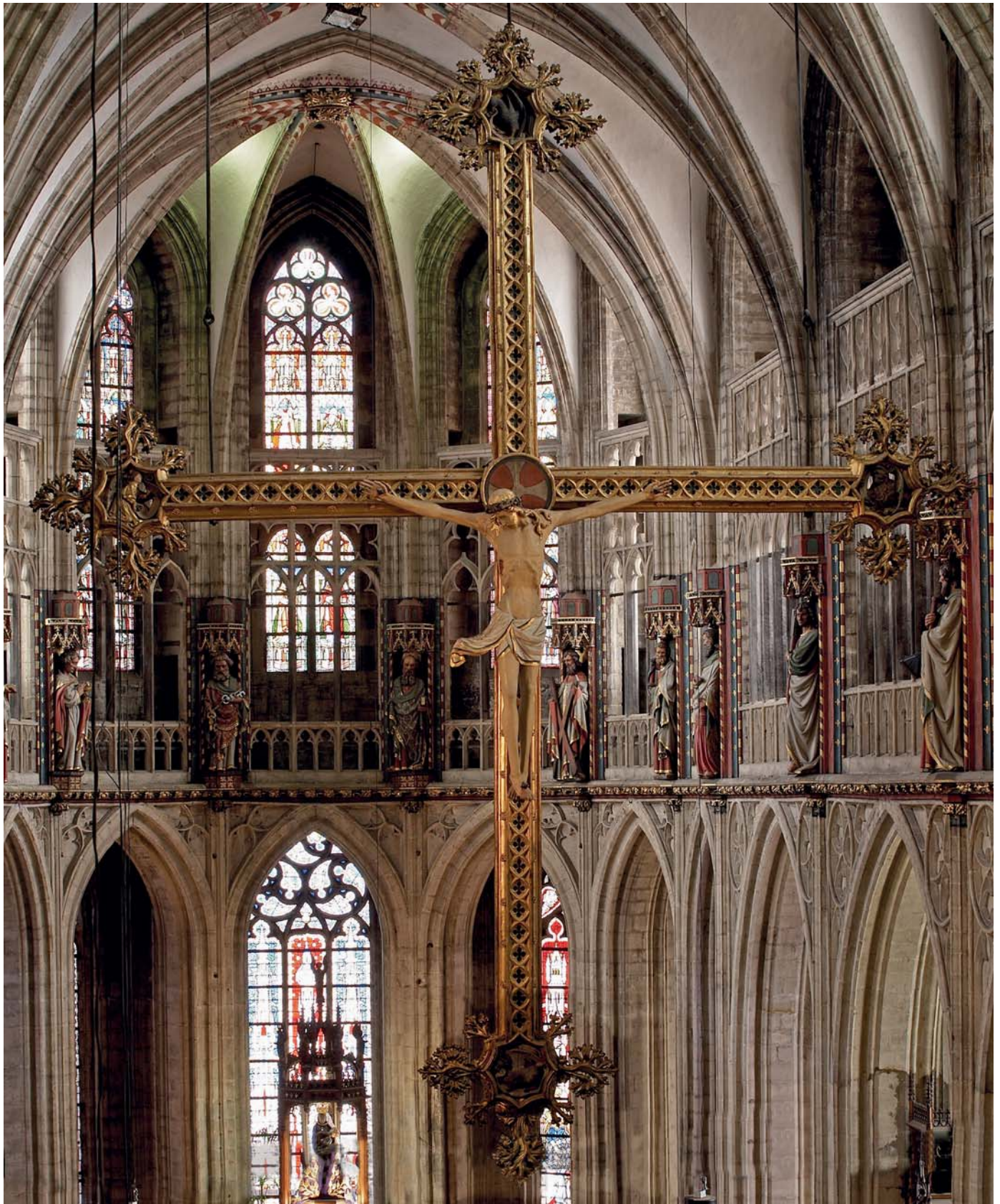


42.2b
Archaeological drawing

Location:	background of the Crucifixion in the lower register
Type:	local
Design:	floral and foliate: lozenge-shaped rosette
Measurements:	no data
Relief:	striations, contour (relief pattern?)
Striations:	no data; vertical according to photographs
Condition:	badly damaged
Overpaint:	several overpaints (except in the examination window)
Highlighting:	no data
Gilding:	no data
Tin foil:	grey-black
Filler:	waxy appearance
Adhesive:	no data
Support layer:	red sealing layer white mortar
Ref:	cross section: none

Our observations could not be carried out in situ as the room was not accessible and were therefore made entirely on the basis of photographs.

The rosettes have been glued onto the red background. On the photographs a brown-coloured filler with a waxy appearance can be seen. The tin foil, grey-black in appearance, no longer bears any trace of gilding.



43 TRIUMPHAL CROSS

Halle, Church of St Martin, chancel arch

Triumphal cross, carved and polychromed oak

Brabant, probably Brussels

Second quarter of the 15th century; the applied brocade dates from the first overpainting (second half of the 15th century or 16th century)

Christ: 220 × 214 × 37 cm

Cross: 796 × 691 cm

1864-1866: restoration, after which the cross is lengthened, rehung, and supported on a new crossbeam

1894 and 1901: removal of the neo-Gothic additions, after criticism from the Commission royale des Monuments in 1886; the cross is subsequently suspended in the chancel arch

1999: examination and conservation at the KIK-IRPA¹

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/47-1998/06577

This Christ on the Cross is the central element of a Crucifixion whose flanking figures of the Virgin and St John are long lost. The elaborately carved cross terminals incorporate medallions depicting the Evangelist symbols on the front and on the back the four Latin Doctors of the Church. The measurements of the original parts of the cross show that the Brussels foot (fractionally less than 27.6 cm) was used in calculating the proportions. It is said that the group was originally supported by a rood screen, which was removed in the eighteenth century.

The carved figure of the crucified Christ, which is of exceptional quality, evidences the early development of a style indebted to Jean Delemer and Rogier van der Weyden.² John Steyaert situates it at a point when the 'manner of the Hakendover Master intersects with that of the early Jean Delemer' and suggests that it was carved in Brussels, possibly as early as 1430-1435.³

Three pieces of oak were used to produce the figure of Christ, one for the body and two for the arms. Both arms have been re-assembled several times and the lower part of the left arm has been replaced as far as the elbow.⁴ The floating end of the *perizonium* has also been restored on several occasions.

Only traces remain of the original polychromy, which has been overpainted on three different occasions. The brocade was introduced during the first overpainting, which was carried out in the second half of the fifteenth or in the sixteenth century. It was applied to the *perizonium*, whose underside is painted blue (on a black underlayer). Vestiges of this first overpainting remain in several places, but they are very small.

43a
Triumphal Cross,
second quarter of the
15th century
Brabant, probably
Brussels; Halle,
Church of St Martin

¹ SERCK-DEWAIDE et al. 2000.

² DIDIER 1989: 65-66.

³ GHENT 1994: 66-89, esp. 72.

⁴ The fingers of the right hand and three toes on each foot have also been replaced.

Model 43.1

Location:	Christ's <i>perizonium</i>
Type:	continuous(?)
Design:	unidentifiable
Measurements:	no data
Relief:	no data
Striations:	no data; vertical
Condition:	no data
Overpaint:	several overpaints
Highlighting:	red glaze, according to KIK-IRPA file: 2L/47-1998/06577
Gilding:	gold leaf ochre mordant (lead white, ochre, silicon)
Intermediate layer:	transparent brown organic layer, fluoresces orange in UV light: resin(?); gold-imitating glaze (?)
Tin foil:	degraded, grey
Filler 1:	thin, brown, translucent
Filler 2 or adhesive(?):	thick, beige (chalk, lead white, silicon)
Support layer:	no data, probably white chalk and size ground
Ref:	KIK-IRPA laboratory file (1 cross section)

Even when first applied the fine detail of the brocade could hardly have been visible from the floor of the church: only the texture of the gilded relief with its red highlighting would have been discernable. Probably the intention was to provide a contrast to the matt blue of the loincloth's lining and the simply gilded border. It is nonetheless interesting to note that the artist chose to use a very fine technique for a work placed several metres above ground level.



43b
Crucified Christ



44 LIFE OF THE VIRGIN ALTARPIECE

Ham-sur-Heure, Church of St Martin

Altarpiece, carved and polychromed oak, wings lost

Case: Brussels(?)

Carved figures: Hainaut(?)

c.1470

167 × 230,5 × 24,5 cm

Undated overpaint followed by a local modification, also undated

1886: restoration by Henri Gosselin and a certain Tulpinck

Before 1902: overpainted

1972: examination and conservation-restoration at the KIK-IRPA

1998: examination and conservation-restoration at the KIK-IRPA¹

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/47-01997/6059

Although no archival document survives it can be assumed that the *Life of the Virgin Altarpiece* belonged to the former parish church of Ham-sur-Heure, which was destroyed in 1821. Since 1886 it has stood on the altar in the north aisle of the neo-Gothic Church of St Martin.²

The inverted T-shaped altarpiece presents five carved scenes from the Life of the Virgin. On our left are the Annunciation and Visitation; in the centre is the Nativity with the Journey of the Magi above it; and on our right, the Adoration of the Magi and the Presentation in the Temple. Most likely the iconographic cycle was completed on the wings. Each group of figures is carved from a block of local, fast-growing oak. The case and the traceried tower-like canopies are characteristic of Brussels workshops; but the style of the figures – fairly stocky with round faces and a dynamic linearity – is more akin to local Hainaut production. The figurative scenes of the altarpiece appear to be the product of a local workshop using the Brussels model then in vogue.

Small numbers have been carved into the back of the many elements that make up the canopies, presumably to aid assembly. There are six overpaints, some partial, some complete, above the original polychromy, which is still fairly well conserved except for the burnished gold (of which only 5% remains) and is typical of the fifteenth century, particularly in the contrast between the lighter flesh tones of the Virgin and the more vivid orangey ones of the male figures. A few fragments of continuous applied brocade and traces of tooling still survive.

When the altarpiece came to the KIK-IRPA in 1998 it was decided – given the extremely lacunate state of the original polychromy – to undertake only minimum treatment.³ This involved improving the surface quality of the last complete overpainting (the fourth), with its lustreless, cold colours. This polychromy does not reflect the sumptuous original colouring but it does attest to the altarpiece's material history and is in keeping with the neo-Gothic environment of the church building.

44a

Life of the Virgin

Altarpiece, c.1470,

case: Brussels(?);

carved figures:

Hainaut(?); Ham-sur-

Heure, Church of

St Martin

¹ MERCIER 2000.

² On this altarpiece, see ROUSSEAU 1896: 158-164; MERCIER 2000.

³ MERCIER 2000.

Model 44.1



44.1a
Presentation in the Temple



44.1b
Applied brocade on the robe of Anne the prophetess

Location:	youngest magus's tunic (Adoration of the Magi); robes of the attendant and the prophetess Anne (Presentation in the Temple)
Type:	continuous
Design:	no data
Measurements:	no data
Relief:	no data
Striations:	no data; vertical
Condition:	badly damaged
Overpaint:	several overpaints
Highlighting:	red glaze
Gilding:	gold leaf fairly thick mordant
Intermediate layer:	very thin, transparent brown organic layer, fluoresces orange in UV light: resin(?); gold-imitating glaze(?)
Tin foil:	degraded, grey and white
Filler 1:	brown translucent layer (strong fluorescence in UV light)
Filler 2:	thick, caramel-brown, opaque, red, orange, and large black particles of pigment
Adhesive:	thin, smooth pale pink with red particles
Support layer:	creamy white, fairly thick chalk and size ground
Ref:	KIK-IRPA laboratory file (1 cross section)

The applied brocades are damaged to the point of illegibility. The cross section described above is derived from a sample taken during the 1998 treatment from the cloak of the attendant in the Presentation in the Temple. An opaque pigmented filler reinforces a first very thin ochre or brown translucent layer, which is in contact with the tin foil and fills the relief. This layer fluoresces strongly in UV light. There is also a very thin organic layer with orange fluorescence between the tin foil and the mordant for the gold leaf – probably a glaze intended to imitate gold leaf, which was hidden by the subsequent gilding.



44b
The Adoration of the Magi (detail)



45 CRUCIFIXION

Leuven, Church of St Peter, chancel arch

Crucifixion, carved and polychromed oak

Brussels, the three principal figures of Christ, the Virgin and St John are attributed to Jan II Borman

Marks: mallet (two, base of the figure of the Virgin)

1491-1500

Virgin: c.180 × 71 × 54 cm

St John: c.180 × 66 × 61 cm

Cross: 680 × 480 cm

1667: cleaning, repainting and gilding of the rood screen and Crucifixion group

1823: renewal of the polychromy of the Crucifixion; repainting of the backgrounds of the painted figures on the back of the wooden substructure

1887: intervention by Jacobus(?) Tobback

1951-1953: conservation-restoration at the KMKG-MRAH

1996-1998: study and conservation-restoration at the KIK-IRPA

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/47-1997/6061

This monumental assemblage rises above the stone rood screen of St Peter's Church. The Crucifixion group is supported by a rectangular wooden substructure whose front is divided into blind arcades containing oak statues of SS Gregory, Peter and Jerome; on the back are the painted figures of SS Ambrose, Henry and Augustine. Above it, the Virgin and St John flank Christ on the Cross. The base of the cross is planted on a mound that symbolizes the hill of Golgotha and on which the skull and shin-bones of Adam can be seen. The three protagonists are particularly well produced, the modelling of the slightly emaciated figures being very finely rendered. These figures are attributed to Jan II Borman, while the more schematically executed Gregory, Peter and Jerome were probably produced by a workshop member.


The original polychromy is no longer visible, having vanished beneath two complete overpaints (both documented) and some local overpainting.¹ The first complete overpaint dates from 1667; the local overpainting was carried out before 1823, the date of the second complete overpaint.² The most recent retouches are from the intervention carried out and signed by Tobback in 1887³ and from the restoration by the KMKG-MRAH workshops in 1951-1953. Certain retouches in bronze paint and others that had turned brown were removed during conservation treatment at the KIK-IRPA in 1996-1998.⁴


The carved figures received an original polychromy of remarkable quality, now only locally preserved beneath the successive overpaints. In essence the colour range consists of burnished gold (on bole), red (red glaze on an orange-red underlayer) and blue (azurite on a black underlayer). The white-to-pale pink flesh tones are smooth with pinkish and bluish shading added wet in wet. The Virgin's mantle and undergown are embellished with applied brocade, likewise the cloaks of St John and St Peter, but the brocade is badly damaged and covered with overpaint, so yields very little information.


The brocades could not be observed in situ. Their examination is based on the KIK-IRPA file, photographs, and cross sections produced by the laboratory.

45a
Crucifixion,
1491-1500, Brussels;
Leuven, Church of
St Peter

45b
Location of the
applied brocades

 Local applied brocade
on blue support layer

 Local applied brocade
on red support layer

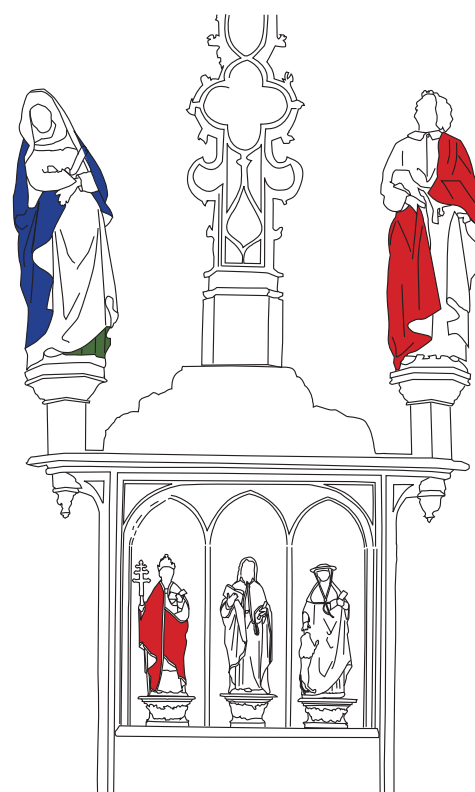
 Unidentified
continuous applied
brocades

¹ SERCK-DEWAIDE 1998b.

² LEIRENS 1998: 106; SERCK-DEWAIDE 1998b: 122-124, 128.

³ SERCK-DEWAIDE 1998b: 123, 131 (n. 8).

⁴ VAN EVEN 1895: 355-356; DE BORGHRAVE D'ALTENA 1954: 66, no. 147, pl. XL; BRUGES 1960: 194-195 (cats. 89-90); SERCK-DEWAIDE 1998b: 115-131.





45c
The Virgin and St John

Model 45.1

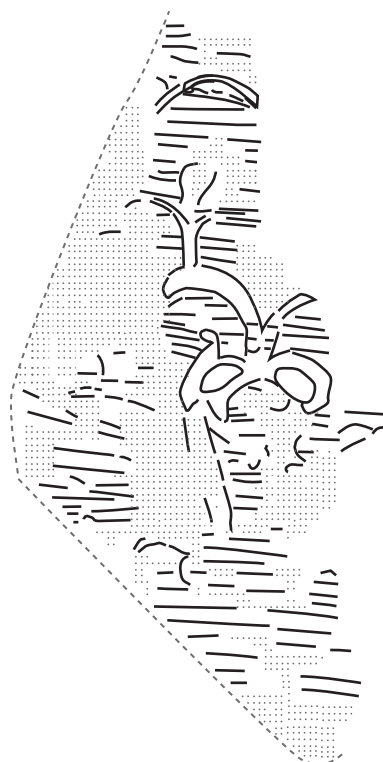
Location:	the Virgin's undergown
Type:	continuous
Design:	not identifiable, too incomplete for reconstruction and no longer visible beneath overpaint
Measurements:	no data
Relief:	no data
Striations:	no data
Condition:	badly damaged
Overpaint:	retouches two complete overpaints
Highlighting:	no data
Gilding:	no data
Tin foil:	present according to cross section
Filler:	waxy appearance, with some pigment
Adhesive:	orange (red lead)
Support layer:	orangey sealing layer chalk and size ground
Ref:	KIK-IRPA laboratory file (1 cross section)

The Virgin's undergown is entirely covered with continuous applied brocades. These have been glued in place with an adhesive coloured orange with red lead. The filler appears waxy and only slightly thickened with pigment (according to microscopic observation of sample flakes).

Model 45.2



45.2a
Examination window showing applied brocade on
the Virgin's cloak



45.2b
Archaeological drawing

Location:	the Virgin's cloak, St John's cloak	
Type:	local	
Design:	floral and foliate; not identifiable, too incomplete for reconstruction and no longer visible beneath overpaint untrimmed lozenge-shaped tinfoil sheet	
Measurements:	medium: 10-11 cm	
Relief:	striations, flat zones (Tegernsee type)	
Striations:	number unidentifiable; horizontal	
Condition:	badly damaged	
Overpaint:	retouches two complete overpaints	
Highlighting:	blue (the Virgin's cloak) black	probably red (St John's cloak)
Gilding:	no data	
Tin foil:	grey-white (damaged)	
Filler:	waxy appearance, virtually no additional pigment	
Adhesive:	no data	
Support layer:	no data white chalk and size ground	
Ref:	KIK-IRPA laboratory file (1 cross section)	

Over her gilded gown the Virgin wears a dark blue mantle (azurite on a black background) embellished with local applied brocades. The brocade exposed by scraping open a 'window' in the paint layer appears to be lozenge-shaped and is perhaps 10 to 11 centimetres in height. Horizontal striations alternate with flat zones to form what looks like a floral motif. A cross section clearly shows the presence of tin foil and a filler. St John's red cloak with its gilded edging is also decorated with local applied brocades. These are probably identical to those on the Virgin's cloak, though this is unconfirmed.

Of the three statues in the substructure only St Peter wears a garment enriched with applied brocade: there are local brocades on his azurite blue cloak. Jerome's red cloak appears to have been decorated simply with gilded motifs. There is no reference in the file to applied brocade on St Gregory's red cope.



46 EPITAPH FOR JACOBUS BOGAERT

Leuven, Church of St Peter, St Luke Chapel

Niche and epitaph inscription, polychromed stone

c.1520-1525

Niche: 98 × 55 cm

Epitaph: 53 × 28 cm

1997-1998: cleaning tests carried out by Lode De Clercq

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/47-2007/09438

This funerary monument in Avesnes stone is dedicated to Jacobus Bogaert (1440-1520). Like his uncle, Adam William Bogaert (1413-1482), Jacobus was a professor of medicine at the University of Leuven and a canon of St Peter's Church.¹ It was probably at the Bogaert family's instigation that the chapel, built in the first half of the fifteenth century, was dedicated to St Luke, the patron saint of physicians and surgeons.

Above the rectangular epitaph² is a niche with a richly carved frame in early Renaissance style. Within it the canon kneels before Christ on the Cross. The vision of the Crucifixion is vouchsafed by two angels, who draw aside the curtains of a circular canopy. Jacobus is commended by his patron saint, James the Great, while St Luke and his symbol, the ox, look on from the other side of the niche. Unusually, St Luke – who is also the patron saint of painters – is presented with his palette but without his model, the Virgin.³

The polychromy, applied over an orange-red sealing layer, is original, although there may be some doubt about certain details, such as St James's facial features or the prie-dieu.⁴ The vaulting of the niche, the underside of the canopy and the background of the niche's frame are blue (on black). The inside of the canopy curtains is covered with continuous applied brocade; the outside is painted-olive green.

The Cross, most of the garments and accessories, the ox's hide, the canopy's circular frame and the angels' wings and hair are mordant gilded and highlighted in places with red and green glazes. On the gilded garments delicate decorative dots, lines, and encircled stars are painted in glaze. Elsewhere, glazes are applied over a matt underlayer: green glaze on matt green and bright red glaze on matt red.

Apart from a few losses and cracks Jacobus Bogaert's memorial is, on the whole, remarkably well preserved. Only small islands of brocade remain, however. There are traces of tin foil in places and a minute amount of gilding.

¹ De CLERCQ 1998: 95-97.

² The funerary inscription is published in SWEERTIUS 1613: 214-215 and PAQUOT 1768: 69-73.

³ De CLERCQ 1998: 96.

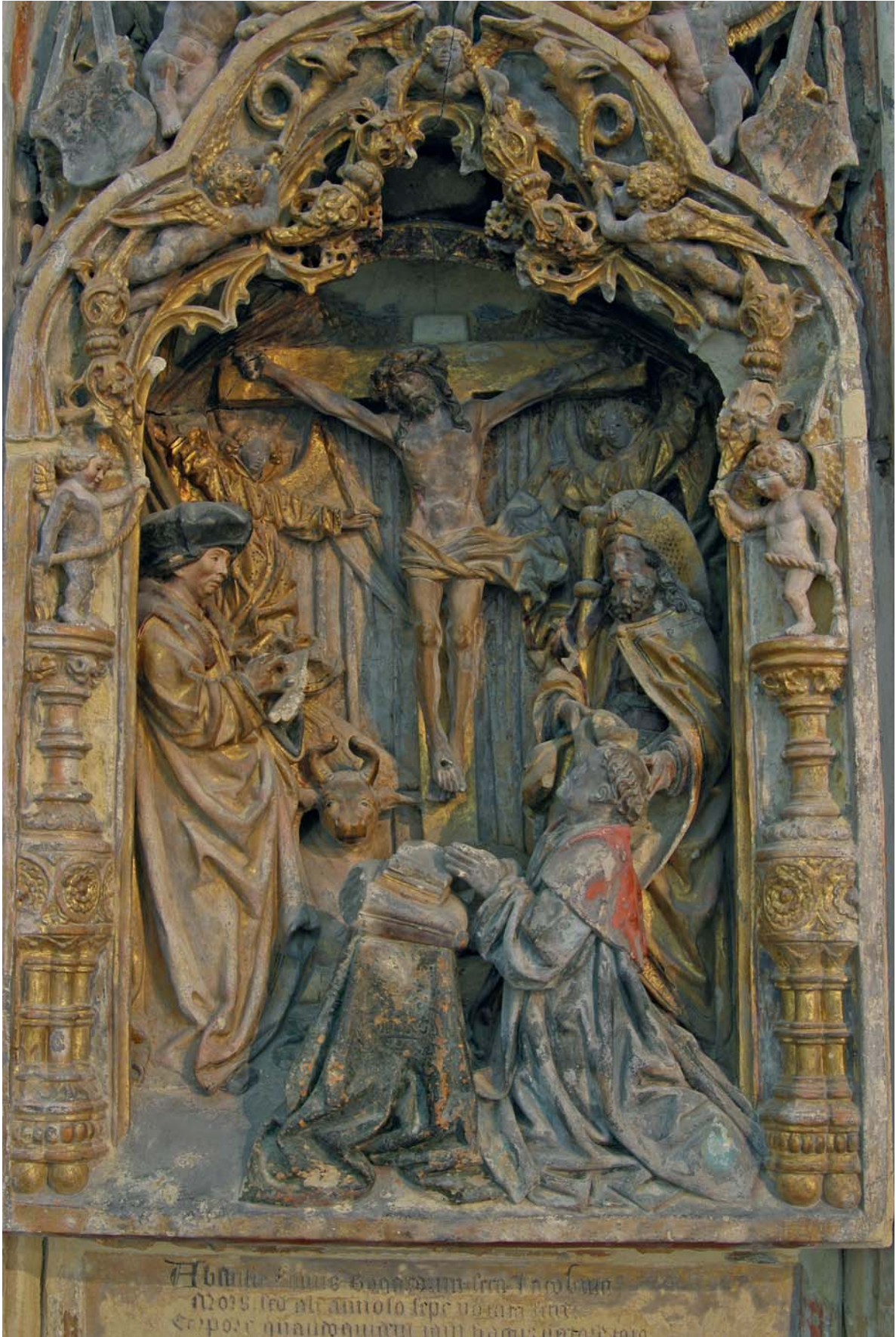
⁴ The textile draped over the prie-dieu is patterned with a very fine Renaissance design rendered in slight relief with a green glaze, which fully covers a layer of matt green that is itself applied over gilding. This is either an overpaint or a *pentimento*, or else an original process for obtaining a very particular effect.

Model 46.1

Location:	inside of the canopy curtain
Type:	continuous
Design:	not identifiable, too incomplete for reconstruction
Measurements:	medium: max. 11 cm
Relief:	striations (relief pattern?)
Striations:	c.14 per cm; variously aligned
Condition:	badly damaged
Overpaint:	none
Highlighting:	none observed
Gilding:	gold leaf (minute traces) no adhesive observed
Tin foil:	degraded, grey to black
Filler:	yellowish-beige, waxy appearance, thickened with pigment
Adhesive:	no data
Support layer:	orangey sealing layer chalk and size ground
Ref:	cross section: none



46b
St James (detail)



46c
 Epitaph for Jacobus Bogaert, niche



47 VIRGIN AND CHILD

Leuven, M – Museum Leuven, inv. C/57

Statue, polychromed oak (pedestal in walnut)

Mechelen

Marks: shield with three pales (back of the statue), a bowlegged 'M' (gilding on the pedestal)

c.1510

Statue: 36 × 13 × 7.5 cm

Pedestal: 5 × 17 × 9.9 cm

The statue formerly belonged to the Convent of the Black Sisters in Leuven; it is now owned by the Leuven OCMW

From 1967: on permanent loan to M – Museum Leuven

1967: restoration in the workshop of Leuven's municipal museum, during which the original polychromy is partially exposed;¹ unfortunately, in the process the flesh tones are abraded to the ground

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/47-2004/08305

The Virgin stands in slight contrapposto, supporting the Child with her right arm as he reaches towards her. Her left hand is lost, together with the attribute she may have held – perhaps an apple, a book or a bunch of grapes. She wears an ample cloak over her gown, which is raised at one side to reveal the tubular folds of her undergown. From around 1500 onwards Mechelen turned out large numbers of small devotional statues of this type. They were produced in series, though they are not exact replicas of one another.

The Virgin's pedestal is decorated with 'snow crystals'. These are probably made of lead and are less uncommon than once was thought, being found on the pedestals of statuettes of the infant Christ,² the base of the Cross in the *Besloten Hofje with Crucifixion and Unicorn Hunt*³ (cat. 53) and the cases of some Brussels domestic altarpieces.⁴ They also occur on the pedestals of two other Mechelen statues of the Virgin and Child, one now in the Louvre,⁵ the second in a private collection.⁶ These two Madonnas have much in common with the present statue, especially in the treatment of the drapery. But the Leuven Virgin has a particularly elongated figure, and a long face. All three statues seem to derive from a model that was popular around 1500-1510. It was established by a Mechelen wood sculpture shop working in collaboration with the Brussels polychromer known as Master I*T (see cat. 6, cat. 28, cat. 29). It is also significant that the applied brocade on the present Virgin's gown is based on a typical I*T workshop model (see below), even though the polychromy was executed in Mechelen.

The original polychromy, still partly concealed by overpainting, is fairly traditional, although the red glaze on the Virgin's gown and the Child's tunic is on gold rather than silver leaf. The cloak, the hem of the gown, and the pedestal are burnished gold. Blue overpaint remains on the lining of the cloak and probably corresponds to the original colour. The snow crystals on the pedestal were gilded and highlighted with green glaze, were subsequently regilded, and finally painted matt red. The Virgin's gown is completely covered with continuous applied brocade.

¹ GODENNE 1976: 88-89 (II/263); CAYRON-GEORGES 1999-2000, vol. II, fiche 6.

² KARRENBROCK, LICHTÉ 1999: 184, 186 (fig. 41)

³ VANDAMME 1982: 138.

⁴ WILLIAMSON 2002: 108-109 (cat. 29).

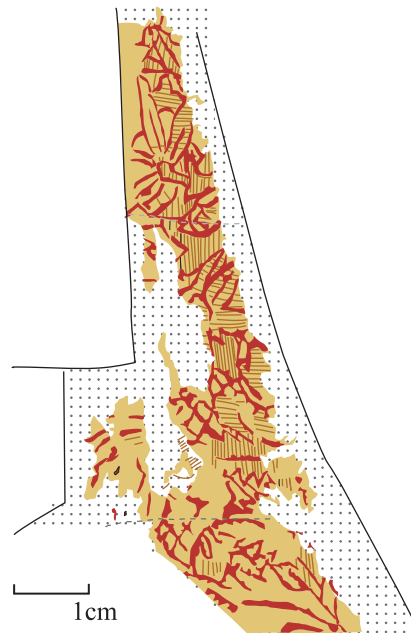
⁵ GUILLOT DE SUDUIRAUT 2001a: 104-106 (RF 2543).

⁶ GODENNE 1969: 48-50 (II/150).

Model 47.1



47.1a
Applied brocade on the Virgin's robe



47.1b
Archaeological drawing

Location:	the Virgin's gown	Comparable applied brocades cat. 6.1 cat. 7.1 cat. 19.1 cat. 24.1 cat. 66.1 cat. G4.1 cat. S1.1 cat. S7.1 cat. S9.1 cat. S10.1
Type:	continuous	
Design:	floral and foliate: flowers (larkspur?) and dentate leaves, latted background	
Measurements:	small: 4 x min. 3.5 cm	
Relief:	striations, contours, latted zones (relief pattern)	
Striations:	16 per cm; variously aligned, convex in section	
Condition:	badly damaged	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	red glaze on contour and latted background	
Gilding:	gold leaf no adhesive observed	
Tin foil:	degraded, grey	
Filler:	brown, translucent, wax-resin appearance	
Adhesive:	brown, oily appearance	
Support layer:	white chalk and size ground	
Ref:	cross section: none	

The number of sheets used on the Virgin's gown is difficult to determine, given their badly damaged state, but there are at least four rows, plus small additional pieces here and there.

The sheets of brocade were gilded before they were applied, whereas the red glaze highlights must have been painted post-application, as they often cross or overlap the sheet joins. The brocades are covered with a non-original varnish and still bear traces of a wax consolidant.

It is possible to make out a motif of flowers (larkspur?), dentate leaves and latted zones reminiscent of the continuous applied brocade of the *Saluzzo Altarpiece* (cat. 19.1). Here the brocades are smaller, however, (4 cm high, compared to 11 cm on the *Saluzzo Altarpiece*) and the striations tend to be less dense. Their arrangement is also slightly different. But this arrangement and also the highlighting of the striations does recall that of the very damaged applied brocade on Mary Magdalene's gown in the *Besloten Hofje with Crucifixion and Unicorn Hunt* (cat. 53.1). The present Madonna and the besloten hofje Magdalene are also stamped with the same Mechelen mark – a bowlegged 'M' – in the gilding. This type of M is rare, angled legs being more usual.⁷

⁷ We thank Fanny Cayron for pointing out this important detail and for her careful rereading of this note.



47b
Mechelen mark on the back of the figure



47c
Bowlegged Mechelen M on the pedestal



48 VIRGIN AND CHILD

Leuven, M – Museum, inv. C/362

Statue, polychromed oak
 Leuven, Master of the Piétrebais Madonna
 1500-1510
 94.5 × 36.5 × 20 cm

The statue formerly belonged to the Convent of the Black Sisters in Leuven: it is now owned by the Leuven OCMW; on permanent loan to M – Museum
 1970: restoration in the workshop of Leuven's municipal museum; removal of overpaint on the face

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/47-02004/08304

This Virgin's slightly contrapposto stance links the statue to a group of Madonnas produced by the Leuven carving workshop of the so-called Master of the Piétrebais Madonna.¹ The statues share characteristic features: a broad face with a high and rather massive forehead; almond eyes with cleanly carved contours and pronounced lids; a firm jutting chin, often dimpled; and a fine, well-shaped mouth with deeply indented corners. A heavy mass of waving hair cascades over the shoulders and back. The loose V-necked gown is also typical of this series of Madonnas and female saints.

At some point the surface of the statue has been shaved or planed away in the area of the Virgin's belly and some of the drapery folds. Both Virgin and Child lack their left arms.² At the back of the figure a rectangular recess extends from the shoulder to the base. The cavity's 'door' is an original part of the statue: its polychromy matches the rest and a part of the hair is carved into it.

The original polychromy is quite well preserved. The gown gleams with burnished gilding and a blue sgraffito letter-border punctuated with foliated scrolls embellishes the hem. The blue-lined cloak is covered with red glaze on an orange underlayer. Local applied brocades decorate those parts of the cloak that would have been visible to the beholder; the undergown is made rich with continuous applied brocade. The hair is matt gilded. The base of the statue is green.



48a
Virgin and Child,
 1500-1510, Leuven,
 Master of the
 Piétrebais Madonna;
 Leuven,
 M – Museum Leuven

48b
 Back of the figure

¹ DE BORCHGRAVE D'ALTENA 1937: 25, fig. II; LEUVEN 1971: 379, 403-404; CRAB 1973: 37; CRAB et al. 1977: 273 (pl. 180); LEUVEN 1979: 163-181, esp. 167-170 (cat. VI.3).

² The left hands of both the Virgin and Child, which were late additions and are visible on an old photograph (KIK-IRPA B71001), were probably removed during the 1970 restoration. They are no longer present in a photograph taken in 1971 (KIK-IRPA M100766).

Model 48.1

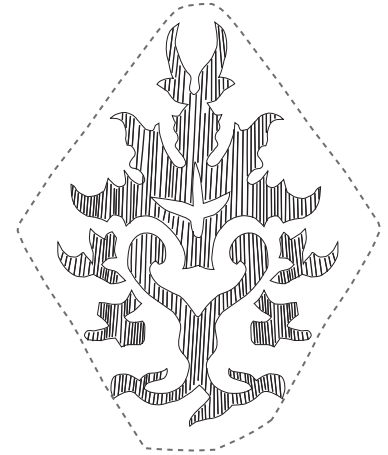


48.1a
Applied brocade on the Virgin's cloak



1cm

48.1b
Archaeological drawing



1cm

48.1c
Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	the Virgin's cloak
Type:	local
Design:	floral and foliate: stylized plant untrimmed lozenge-shaped sheet
Measurements:	small: 5.8-5.9 x 5.1-5.7 cm
Relief:	striations, contour, 3 flat zones (mixed pattern)
Striations:	11-12 per cm; vertical, convex in section
Condition:	locally worn
Overpaint:	paraffin consolidant red glaze
Highlighting:	red glaze (madder-based lake and indigo) on flat zones
Gilding:	gold leaf no adhesive observed
Tin foil:	grey-black appearance
Filler:	very thin, light brown, translucent, waxy appearance
Filler 2(?) / Adhesive(?):	light brownish ochre in colour, translucent
Support layer:	matt reddish white chalk and size ground
Ref:	KIK-IRPA laboratory file (1 cross section)

The applied brocades were trimmed not around the edge of the motif but more generously in a lozenge. The cutting seems to have been done freehand, as the lozenges differ slightly in shape. The gilded brocades were glued onto the matt reddish-orange underlayer before it was glazed with red. The red glaze highlights on the brocades were probably added during the final stage. At some point the brocades were again highlighted in red. Today they are covered with a paraffin consolidant, giving them a brilliant appearance.

Model 48.2



48.2
Applied brocade on the Virgin's undergown

Location:	the Virgin's undergown
Type:	continuous
Design:	floral and foliate: stylized plant (barely legible)
Measurements:	no data, too incomplete for precise measurement
Relief:	striations, contour (relief pattern)
Striations:	8 per cm; vertical, horizontal
Condition:	badly damaged
Overpaint:	paraffin consolidant yellow varnish (in places)
Highlighting:	red glaze on contour (overlapping slightly onto the striations) matt red underlayer
Gilding:	gold leaf mordant
Tin foil:	grey black
Filler:	thin, brown, translucent, no additional thickening
Adhesive:	fairly thick, ochre-brown
Support layer:	white chalk and size ground
Ref:	KIK-IRPA laboratory file (2 cross sections)

This continuous applied brocade is coarser than the local brocades on the cloak, with wider and less regular striations.



49 VIRGIN AND CHILD

Leuven, M – Museum Leuven, inv. C/83

Statue, carved and polychromed walnut

Carving: Mechelen

Polychromy: Brussels

No marks

1500-1510

36.5 × 12.7 × 7 cm

1938: acquired by the museum by bequest

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/47-2006/09259

This *Virgin and Child* belonged to a nun of the Augustinian priory of Our Lady 'In den Elsen' in Zichem, in the province of Flemish Brabant.¹ Sophie Guillot de Suduiraut has associated the statue with two other Madonnas, one in a private collection in Lille, the other in the Louvre.² In these cases too the gown falls obliquely to the ground, revealing the undergown beneath. A figure of St Margaret in the Louvre also features the same drapery, albeit in reverse and animated by a little dragon worrying at a fold of the fabric.³ The Child in the present sculpture lifts one hand and holds a bird (traditionally a goldfinch) in the other. The rapid execution and shallow treatment of the volumes, particularly evident when the sculpture is viewed in profile, suggest series production.

The Virgin's cloak has received a burnished gilding (on orange bole). The same gilding embellishes the neckline and hem of the obliquely-draped gown. The rest of the gown was covered with silver leaf (on orange bole) and coated with red glaze, over which local applied brocades may have been distributed. The hem of the cloak was decorated with an applied brocade braid. The face was pale pink, with rosy cheeks. The undergown was originally painted in azurite blue, but this is now only traceable in the depths of the drapery folds. It is hard to appreciate the figure in its present dilapidated condition. The original polychromy is extremely lacunate. The paint layers have been scraped off and the surface later covered with wax. Apart from the general colouration it is chiefly the applied brocade braid that allows the attribution to a Brussels polychromy workshop.

49a

Virgin and Child,

1500-1510, Mechelen-

Brussels; Leuven,

M – Museum Leuven

¹ GODENNE 1957: 95-98, fig. XXIII; LEUVEN 1971: 437.

² GUILLOT DE SUDUIRAUT 2001a: 101-102 (RF 1567).

³ Ibid. 106-108 (RF 2572).

Model 49.1



49.1a
Remnants of applied brocade on the Virgin's cloak



49.1b
Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	hem of the Virgin's cloak	Comparable applied brocades cat. 6.3 cat. 7.2 cat. 19.9 cat. 24.6 cat. 66.3 cat. G4.4 cat. S1.3 cat. S6.4 cat. S7.5 cat. S9.4 cat. S10.4 Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, <i>Female Saint</i> (1965.2230) Cologne, Schnütgen Museum, <i>St Christopher</i> (A 227) London, V&A, <i>St Barbara</i> (A.107-1937) Paris, Louvre, <i>St Margaret</i> (RF 2572) Paris, Louvre, <i>St Michael</i> (OA 310) Paris, Louvre, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (RF 1567) Paris, Musée Marmottan, <i>St Barbara</i> (622d) Private collection, <i>St Barbara</i> (former Kofler-Truniger collection) Private collection, <i>St Gudule</i> (former Kofler-Truniger collection) Private collection, <i>St Roch</i> (former Kofler-Truniger collection) Private collection, <i>St Catherine</i> (former Becker collection, Brussels) Private collection, <i>St Margaret</i> (Christie's sale, New York 1994) Private collection, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (antiquary Bruno Speybrouck sale, Kortrijk 2007) Private collection, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (Brussels, KIK-IRPA photograph N4563)
Type:	braid	
Design:	unidentifiable, too incomplete for reconstruction	
Measurements:	small: 0.9 cm	
Relief:	fully striated strip (relief pattern)	
Striations:	number unidentifiable; vertical	
Condition:	badly damaged	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	matt blue (azurite) on striations	
Gilding:	gold leaf no adhesive layer observed	
Tin foil:	degraded, black	
Filler:	none observed	
Adhesive:	none observed	
Support layer:	burnished gold leaf orange bole white chalk and size ground	
Ref:	cross section: none	

Observations were virtually impossible as less than a centimetre of the brocade survives. The use of this kind of braid was a speciality of the I*T Master.



49b
The Virgin and Child in profile



50 ST MARCOUL (MARCULF)

Liège, Church of St Remaclus

Statue, polychromed oak
 Meuse region
 Early 16th century
 120 × 50 × 40 cm

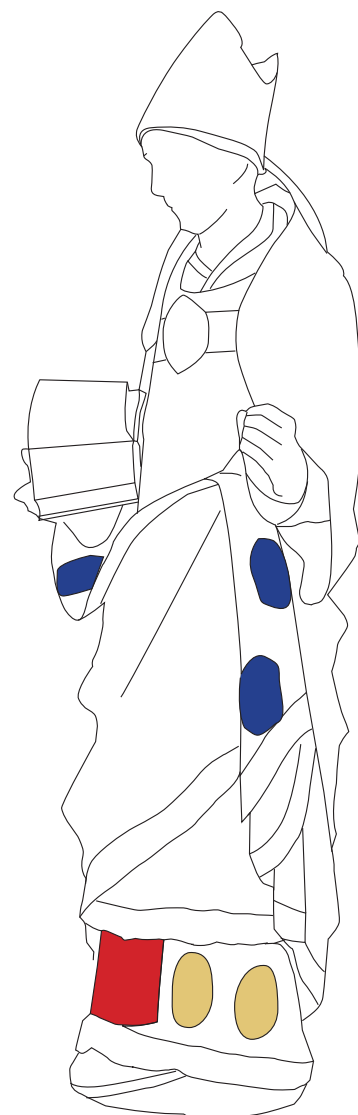
1994-1996: conservation-restoration at the KIK-IRPA as part of the 'S.O.S. Polychromies' project; overpaints removed to uncover original polychromy¹

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/47-94/5314

The saint is attired in bishop's vestments. He wears a dalmatic over an alb and a cope fastened with an oval morse – the cope has been caught up and gathered under the left arm to form a sort of apron. He holds an open book in his right hand. In the absence of specific iconographic attributes the saint's identity is difficult to establish. Until now it has been assumed that the statue represents St Marcoul (or Marculf), abbot of Nant in the diocese of Coutances, who died in 558(?). The discovery during restoration of a scattering of fleurs de lis on the dalmatic supports this identification, as this saint was venerated by the kings of France, who believed that through him came the royal power to cure scrofula – the 'king's evil' – with a touch. There has been an altar dedicated to St Marcoul in the Church of St Remaclus since the sixteenth century.²

The statue, carved from a single block of oak, is said to be Mosan.³ The figure's pronounced verticality, accentuated by the long unbelted garments, is tempered somewhat by the strong upsweep of the cope. The treatment of the drapery, with its angular, reticulated folds, suggests the influence of the Limburg carver known as the Master of Elsloo.

With the exception of certain details the visible polychromy is original. In places the ivory white ground seems to be covered by a red underlayer (beneath the mordant of the silver leaf, for example). The cope, the mitre and the mitre's lappets are covered with burnished gold leaf. The mitre is decorated with a motif painted in azurite blue. The cope is fringed in silver, with a rather sophisticated decoration: the silver is alternately left bare (perhaps with a protective layer) and highlighted with green or gold-imitating yellow glazes (lead tin yellow and ochre glaze) to form a frieze of coloured blocks on which a black fringe is painted. The dalmatic is covered with a red glaze on which are black-outlined gilded fleurs de lis. Applied brocades enrich the alb and the lining of the cope.



50a
St Marcoul,
 early 16th century,
 Meuse region; Liège,
 Church of
 St Remaclus

50b
 Position of the
 applied brocades

- Model 50.1
- Model 50.2
- Model 50.3

¹ NAMUR-GHENT 1995: 73-76.

² LIÈGE 1979: 24 and fig. p. 15.

³ NAMUR-GHENT 1995: 74. Dendrochronological analysis gives a felling date of around 1499.

Model 50.1



50.1
Applied brocade on the lining of the cope

Location:	lining of the cope
Type:	local
Design:	unidentifiable, too incomplete for reconstruction oval tin foil sheet
Measurements:	medium: 8.5 x min. 5.4 cm, incomplete sheet
Relief:	striations, flat zones (Tegernsee type?)
Striations:	no data
Condition:	badly damaged
Overpaint:	none (removed in 1994-1996)
Highlighting:	blue (azurite) (minute traces, too indistinct for certainty about location) black (charcoal, gypsum) (minute traces)
Gilding:	gold leaf (minute traces) mordant, light ochre in colour (with lead white)
Tin foil:	degraded, grey (minute traces)
Filler 1:	brown, transparent, organic layer containing gypsum, wax-resin appearance
Filler 2:	ochre in colour, opaque and granular, greasy appearance (wax-resin with oil added), thickened with pigments (lead white, ochre, chalk, silicon oxide)
Adhesive:	none
Support layer:	black (charcoal) ivory white chalk and size ground
Ref:	KIK-IRPA laboratory file (1 cross section); NAMUR-GHENT 1995: 76. See also Chapter Ten, Table B

Of the three models of applied brocade examined here, this is easily the most damaged. The losses are very inconsistent, however: the gilding is almost completely lost; in some places the tin foil is also lost; and elsewhere all the layers have gone, exposing the black background. Only a few tiny flakes of gold and its blue highlighting remain.

The applied brocades were glued to the black underlayer of the cloak lining.⁴ Then the azurite blue was painted over the black, skirting around the applied brocades. The blue highlights on the brocades also have a black underlayer.

Small gilded rectangles (gold leaf on mordant) in different sizes (0.6 × 0.4 cm; 0.1 × 0.7 cm) have been added to the blue background, between the brocades.

⁴ NAMUR-GHENT 1995: 76. The analyses were carried out by Jana Sanyova of the KIK-IRPA.

Model 50.2



50.2a
Applied brocade on the alb



50.2b
Archaeological drawing

Location:	alb
Type:	local
Design:	floral and foliate: spurs springing from a sort of bulb, itself resting on a round shape oval tin foil sheet
Measurements:	medium: 9.2-9.9 x min. 6.5 cm; incomplete sheet
Relief:	striations, contour (relief pattern)
Striations:	5 per cm; variously diagonal
Condition:	badly damaged
Overpaint:	none (removed in 1994-1996)
Highlighting:	traces of black, too indistinct for certainty about location
Gilding:	gold leaf light ochre mordant, thickened with lead white, ochre and chalk
Tin foil:	degraded, grey
Filler 1:	brown, transparent, organic layer, wax-resin appearance
Filler 2:	ochre-coloured, opaque, greasy appearance (wax-resin with oil added?), thickened with pigments
Adhesive:	none
Support layer:	ivory white chalk and size ground
Ref:	KIK-IRPA laboratory file (1 cross section)

This applied brocade is a little larger than model 50.1, though it may be the same brocade cut more generously, as here the brocades decorate a broader surface. The tin foil is almost entirely lost, leaving the fillers visible. On top of filler 2 the brocade motif can be made out in brown, which corresponds to filler 1, the transparent organic layer between filler 2 and the tin foil. This appears to have been added solely in the hollows of the relief.

It has been suggested that this applied brocade belongs to the first overpaint and is therefore not original. Yet the same fine transparent brown organic layer between filler and tin foil can be observed on all three models, indicating that they were probably produced at the same time. Moreover, the system of striations, the contour in relief and the type of motif in models 50.2 and 50.3 are the same (model 50.1 is in too poor a state for comparison). The filler in model 50.1 looks less greasy, however, and the ochre is perhaps a little lighter in colour, though this difference in appearance and colour could be due to the differently coloured background.

Model 50.3



50.3
Applied brocade apparel

Location:	bottom of the alb, apparel
Type:	local
Design:	floral and foliate: flower with rounded petals and a kind of lobed leaf square tin foil sheet
Measurements:	large: 15.5-16 x 9.9 cm
Relief:	striations, contour and latticed zone in relief, flat zones (mixed pattern)
Striations:	5-7 per cm; vertical or diagonal
Condition:	badly damaged
Overpaint:	none (removed in 1994-1996)
Highlighting:	black (traces)
Gilding:	gold leaf (traces) beige mordant
Tin foil:	grey
Filler 1:	thin, brown, transparent, organic layer, wax-resin appearance
Filler 2:	ochre in colour, opaque, greasy appearance (wax-resin with oil added?)
Adhesive(?):	matt red-brown layer (vermillion, red earth, bole)
Support layer:	ivory white chalk and size ground
Ref:	KIK-IRPA laboratory file (1 cross section)

Here, too, the motif is much damaged. As with model 50.2, traces of the brown filler 1 are visible on the surface of filler 2. Occasional vestiges of gilding remain to convey some idea of the decoration's original splendour. The red-brown layer on the white ground is probably an adhesive.



50c
St Marcoul



51 OUR LADY OF ST SEVERIN, KNOWN AS ‘MOTHER OF ALL’

Liège, Church of St Martin

Statue, polychromed wood

Meuse region, Liège, attributed to the Master of the Fize-le-Marsal Calvary or his workshop

c.1490

155 × 53 × 35.5 cm

1631: miracles are attributed to the statue, giving rise to legends and a major cult

1803: the Church of St Severin, from which the statue comes, is closed

1805: the statue is transferred to the Church of St Denis in Liège, subsequently to the Church of St Martin

1890: the statue becomes the centrepiece of a neo-Gothic retable

2008-2009: conservation-restoration at the KIK-IRPA

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/47-2007/09500

Considered miraculous since 1631, this statue of the ‘Mère de Tous’ or ‘Mother of All’ is one of the most venerated in Liège. It comes from the former Church of St Severin, and has been attributed by Robert Didier to the Master of the Fize-le-Marsal Calvary. Didier places the sculptor’s activity in Liège between 1480 and 1520.¹

The Virgin presents the Child to the viewer, supporting his heel in her right hand with a delicate gesture. The bird the Child holds, which was almost entirely remade in an undated restoration, foreshadows his Passion. Mary is clad in a gown belted at the waist and over it wears a full cloak held in place by crossed cords. The cloak is caught up at the front, producing a fan of folds that converge on the Child, emphasizing his central position. The treatment of the drapery with its billowy seemingly air-filled folds is typical of the Master of the Fize-le-Marsal Calvary and his circle. The faces of Mary and the Child are carved in large smooth planes. The volume of the brow is well marked, the features drawn with precision and the nose slightly retroussé.

The visible polychromy appears to be original (with local overpaints and a generalized patina that has been rather carelessly removed). The blue-lined cloak is covered with burnished gilding (on red-brown bole). The gown, lined in a red that is visible on the turned-back sleeves, is covered with applied brocades that are now in a very poor state. Until 1871, the statue of Our Lady of St Severin was dressed in real garments, which may partly explain why it was never stripped of its polychromy or entirely overpainted, unlike other statues attributed to the Master of the Fize-le-Marsal Calvary.

Model 51.1

Location:	the Virgin’s gown
Type:	continuous
Design:	floral and foliate: lanceolate leaves fanning out from a central stem; too incomplete for further reconstruction
Measurements:	medium: 8-8.5 cm; too incomplete for precise measurement
Relief:	striations, contour, flat zones (mixed pattern)
Striations:	8-9 per cm; vertical, diagonal
Condition:	badly damaged
Overpaint:	black patina (partly removed)
Highlighting:	red glaze on flat zones
Gilding:	gold leaf no adhesive observed
Tin foil:	degraded, black, black-grey, or white
Filler:	thin, brown, translucent, wax-resin appearance
Adhesive:	orange, oily appearance
Support layer:	white chalk and size ground
Ref:	cross section: none

51
*Our Lady of
St Severin*, c.1490,
Meuse region, Liège,
attributed to the
Master of the Fize-
le-Marsal Calvary or
his workshop; Liège,
Church of St Martin

The bottom of the skirt is enriched with four rows of applied brocade, the bodice with two and a half rows. All the brocades are badly damaged and in some places are covered with a dark patina.

The band of burnished gilding along the hem of the gown appears to have been applied at the same time as gilding of the continuous applied brocade. Its top edge is finished with a black line.

¹ DIDIER 2000: 139-143 (cat. 45); SINT-TRUIDEN 1990: I.7-I.10, II.18 (22), II.23 (32); III.13 (66), III.15 (97), III.25 (210), III.27 (244), III.48 (466). The Master of the Fize-le-Marsal Calvary seems to have led a very active workshop with a large following.



52a



52c



52b



52d

52 ST LUKE AND THE ASCENSION ST MARK AND PENTECOST

Loppem, Castle (inv. 00210 and inv. 00211)

Two panel paintings (altarpiece wings), wood, painted on both sides

Brabant(?), Brussels(?), Picardy(?)

1480-1500

St Luke panel: 120 × 64 cm (with frame: 130 × 74 cm)

St Mark panel: 120.6 × 64.5 cm (with frame: 129 × 74 cm)

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/43-2006/09256

These two double-sided panels depict the Ascension and Pentecost, with on the reverse St Luke and St Mark respectively.¹ They probably started life as part of an altarpiece.² Assuming that the chronology of the episodes was followed and that the two evangelists occupied their logical places, they would have formed the two sections of a right-hand double wing, as is borne out by the position of the hinge-marks. Closed, the retable would have resembled the Geel *Passion Altarpiece* (cat. 35) or, more closely still, the *Passion Altarpiece* in Dinslaken (cat. G1).

Each panel consists of three boards, assembled in a bevelled frame. The many mastic fillings and retouches, especially at the joins, attest to at least one conservation-restoration treatment. The surface is also very worn in places, with St Mark's face being particularly damaged.

The smooth, enamelled faces are very discreetly tinted in red and brown or grey. Features are delineated with fairly thick brown lines, creating a flat and graphic appearance intensified by the brown and black lines that reprise most of the contours and profiles. The haloes are gilded and their circumferences are restated with a thick black line. An impression of mild benignity emanates from the paintings.

There are parallels with the Dinslaken *Passion Altarpiece* (cat. G1), whose wings are attributed to the workshop of the Master of the View of St Gudule (see Chapter Five). The pictorial formula of evangelists seated before applied brocade cloths of honour is similar in both retables, and the composition of the Loppem Ascension strongly echoes that of the Ascension of the Dinslaken altarpiece, in particular in the kneeling figure of the Virgin, although the Loppem paintings are executed in a more graphic, archaic and also less expressive style. The lack of stylistic filiation renders the attribution of the Loppem wings to a Brussels painter uncertain, despite the presence of typical Brussels applied brocades (see model 52.1). Northern-French influence may also be considered in further research. These panels were previously attributed to a Picard painter by Véronique van Caloen.³

52a-d

*St Luke and the
Ascension, St Mark
and Pentecost,*

1480-1500, Brabant(?),
Brussels(?), Picardy(?);
Loppem, Castle

¹ We thank Hélène Dubois, Marc Gil, Didier Martens and Dominique Vanwijnsberghe for sharing their opinions on the origin of these two paintings.

² VAN CALOEN 2001: 174-177.

³ Idem.

Model 52.1



52.1a
Applied brocade on the cloth of honour behind
St Mark



52.1b
Detail of the applied brocade

Location:	exterior side of the wings, cloth of honour behind St Mark	Comparable applied brocades cat. 35.1 cat. F3.1 cat. G5.1 cat. S4.1 cat. S8.1 cat. S11.1 Cambridge, Queens' College Chapel, <i>St Catherine</i> , <i>St Barbara</i> and <i>St George</i> ⁴ Private collection, <i>St Sebastian</i> ⁵
Type:	continuous	
Design:	floral and foliate: large poppy-like flower head covered with dots and carried on a pair of sepals, a dot-covered bud, a five-lobed leaf, and a wide undulating stem	
Measurements:	large: 16.9-17 x 9.2 cm	
Relief:	striations, contour, lines, raised dots, plateaus (mixed pattern)	
Striations:	10 per cm; vertical	
Condition:	worn	
Overpaint:	varnish	
Highlighting:	red glaze on lines, contour, dots and plateaus	
Gilding:	gold leaf no adhesive observed	
Tin foil:	degraded, grey	
Filler:	brown, translucent, wax-resin appearance	
Adhesive:	ochre in colour	
Support layer:	white chalk and size ground	
Ref:	cross section: none	

The applied brocades are badly damaged and covered with varnish, but the difference in degradation between the relief zones and the flat zones allows the pattern to be read.

The sheets have been aligned with care. The contours follow those of the halo and the garments fairly well. Small gaps have been carefully filled with gilding or paint. In places the paint overlaps slightly onto the applied brocades.

Similar design but different technique: line gilding

- cat. 35: St John's robe (Lamentation)
- cat. F3: Balthazar's robe (Adoration of the Magi)
- cat. S4.1: St John's robe (Crucifixion)
- Paris, Musée des Arts décoratifs, *Passion Altarpiece*, Brussels, c.1490: St John's garment in the three scenes, and the robes of Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus (Deposition)

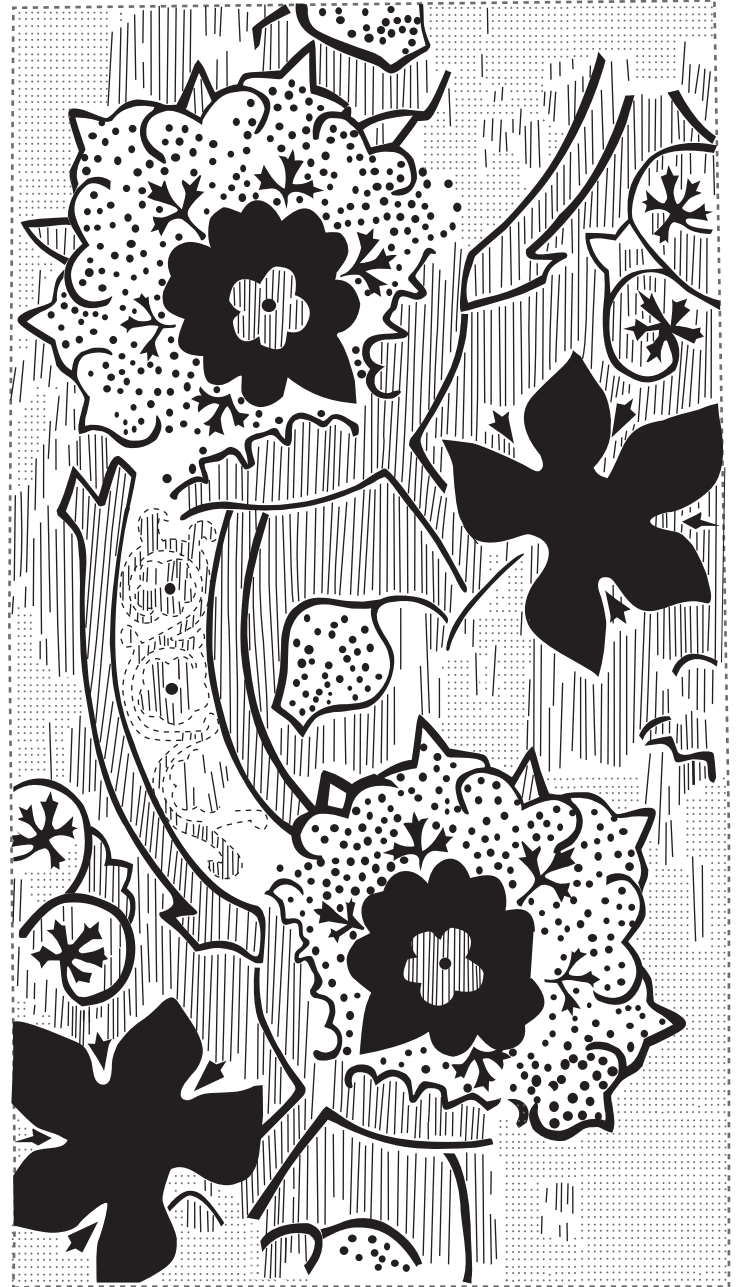
⁴ MASSING 1991.

⁵ VERONÉE-VERHAEGEN 1989-1991.



52.2b
Archaeological drawing

1 cm



52.2c
Reconstruction of the relief

1 cm

Similar design but different technique: panel painting

- Antwerp, KMSKA, *Last Supper with Christ washing St Peter's Feet*, wing of a dismembered altarpiece, attributed to the Master of the Corkscrew Curl, c.1480: St Peter's tunic⁶
- Florence, Museo Nazionale del Bargello, *Solomon and the Queen of Sheba*, c.1500, Brussels: the queen's robe
- Loppem, Castle, *Crucifixion*, last quarter of the 15th century, Bruges(?): tunic of the centurion(?) on the right⁷
- Melbourne, National Gallery of Victoria, *Triptych with the Miracles of Christ*, left wing depicting the Marriage at Cana, attributed to the Master of the Portraits of Princes, c.1490, Brussels: canopy hangings

⁶ VANDENBROECK 1985.

⁷ VAN CALOEN 2001: 174, 176.

Model 52.2



52.2a
Applied brocade on the cloth of honour behind
St Luke

Location:	exterior side of the wings, cloth of honour behind St Luke
Type:	continuous
Design:	unidentifiable, too incomplete for reconstruction
Measurements:	large: 20 x max. 10.8 cm
Relief:	striations, flat zones (Tegernsee type)
Striations:	10 per cm; vertical
Condition:	badly damaged
Overpaint:	retouches, varnish
Highlighting:	green glaze
Gilding:	gold leaf (minute traces) no adhesive observed
Tin foil:	degraded, grey-black
Filler:	brown, translucent, wax-resin appearance
Adhesive:	ochre in colour
Support layer:	white chalk and size ground
Ref:	cross section: none

The cloth of honour is made up of six or seven sheets of applied brocade. These are badly damaged and largely retouched, with lines imitating the striations. Very little of the original motif remains, which makes accurate observation problematic. The brocades are also covered with a thick layer of varnish, making it difficult to establish the layer structure.



52.2b
St Luke (detail)



53 BESLOTEN HOFJE WITH CRUCIFIXION AND UNICORN HUNT

Mechelen, Hospital of Our Lady, collection of the Augustinian hospital sisters,
on permanent loan to the Schepenhuis Museum, Mechelen, inv. BH 1

Besloten hofje, carved and polychromed wood, mixed media (metal, paper, wax, silk thread)

Mechelen

Marks: in several places the Mechelen arms (three pales) and 'M'

c.1520

91 × 138 × 21.5 cm

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/47-2006/9156

The complex iconography of this altarpiece is typical of a 'besloten hofje'.¹ The paradisaical garden is replete with Marian symbolism, reflecting the mystical and spiritual experience of women living a conventual life.² Below, behind a gated wall, is a series of charming little sculptures whose theme is largely derived from the Old Testament. From left to right are the Tower of David, Gideon, Aaron(?), the horn-blowing Gabriel, the Virgin with the unicorn, the Fountain of Life, and Moses and the burning bush from which the Lord calls to him. In the centre is the crucified Christ on an altar. Flanking the altar are John the Evangelist and Mary Magdalene. Above them are medallions containing the Agnus Dei. At the top is God the Father with the orb of the world in his hand. The background is embellished with medallions, relics, grapes and flowers.

The oak case is filled with diverse materials. The sculptures are in walnut, the ornamental elements in paper, papier-mâché, textile, metal and wax. Prior to their inclusion in the *Aspecten van de laatgotiek in Brabant* exhibition the sculptures were separately measured and examined for marks.³ The three pales of the Mechelen coat of arms are stamped on the backs of Mary Magdalene, the Virgin, Gideon and Moses. The arms are also displayed on the shield held by the tiny figure at the top of the column of the fountain of life. The 'M', which guaranteed the quality of Mechelen polychromy, appears on the same figures and also on the base of the Cross, Gideon's armour and Aaron's garments, in each case in a gilded area.

Much of the original polychromy survives, though certain parts, such as some of the blue-painted zones, have been overpainted. On St John's robe applied brocade is combined with tooling; sgraffito designs enrich Mary Magdalene's headcovering, for instance, and her overgown has a sgraffito letter-border; the Virgin's gown, the horn-blowing archangel's dalmatic, and Moses's cloak have tooled borders that seem to have been produced with a toothed wheel then dashingly painted with colourful geometric motifs. There are also metal 'snow crystal' ornaments on the base of the Cross.

¹ The 'besloten hofje' or 'enclosed garden', is a devotional object rendered in mixed media such as metal, paper and silk thread and embellished with medallions and relics, presented in a cabinet that could usually be closed with shutters. The iconography is generally complex, the subject invariably a religious scene set in a *hortus conclusus*, usually the Garden of Paradise. Mechelen was one of the main centres for the making of these works.

² BRUSSELS 1994: 93-95; MECHELEN 1998: 55-56.

³ LEUVEN 1971: 451-454. See also GODENNE 1957: 120-121, fig. xxxviii; KIK-IRPA file: 2L/47-2006/9157.

Model 53.1



53.1
Applied brocade on St John's robe

Location:	Mary Magdalene's undergown, John the Evangelist's robe	Comparable applied brocades cat. 30.1 cat. 54.1
Type:	continuous	
Design:	unidentified; glass impeded close observation	
Measurements:	unidentified	
Relief:	striations, lines in relief (relief pattern)	
Striations:	number unidentified; variously aligned	
Condition:	locally worn	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	red glaze on lines in relief	
Gilding:	gold leaf adhesive not observed	
Tin foil:	grey appearance	
Filler:	not observed	
Adhesive:	not observed	
Support layer:	white chalk and size ground	
Ref:	cross section: none	

The gilded hem of Mary Magdalene's undergown is isolated from the relief decoration by a painted black line. In John's case his entire robe is covered with applied brocade. The circumstances in which the work was examined (behind glass) did not permit really accurate observations. Moreover, the brocades are badly damaged and covered with a layer of grime.

In general the applied brocades are consistent with those on the *Besloten Hofje with SS Anne, Augustine and Elizabeth* in Mechelen (cat. 54) and the *Virgin and Child on the Crescent Moon* now in Brussels (cat. 30). The surviving fragments of brocade reveal exceptionally fine striations interrupted by a fluid linear design in relief.



53.2a
Mary Magdalene



53.2b
Applied brocade on Mary Magdalene's undergown, sgraffito border
and Mechelen mark on the overgown



54 BESLOTEN HOFJE WITH SS ANNE, AUGUSTINE AND ELIZABETH

Mechelen, Hospital of Our Lady, collection of the Augustinian hospital sisters,
on permanent loan to the Schepenhuis Museum, Mechelen, inv. BH 6

Besloten hofje, carved and polychromed wood, mixed media (metal, paper, wax, silk thread), painted shutters
Mechelen

c.1530

150 × 120 × 38 cm

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/47-2006/9157

In the lower part of this besloten hofje, in an enclosed garden among medallions, foliage and bunches of grapes in textile, paper and metal thread, are St Anne with the Virgin and Child flanked by St Augustine and St Elizabeth of Hungary (or Thuringia).¹ Above them is a large medallion with an extraordinarily complex iconography derived from the Song of Songs. The *hortus conclusus* of the Virgin and the unicorn abounds with symbols of Mary's purity and virginity, prefiguring the Virgin birth of Christ. Mary is surrounded by Gideon's fleece, the sealed fountain (*fons signatus*), a golden basket of manna, and an altar dressed with twelve candles with the dove of the Holy Spirit hovering above it. Outside the wall, which terminates in the closed gate of Ezechiel, is the horn-blowing Gabriel with a pack of hounds and *Ave gracia plena dominus tecum* on a banderole. God the Father looks over the wall while the burning bush blazes behind him. Above the medallion is the Virgin in glory, entwined by rays and clouds and attended by four hovering angels. At the very top of the hofje the blessing God the Father holds the orb of the world. Unlike the carved figures, which are still rooted in the late Gothic tradition, the hofje's painted shutters have a much more Renaissance character. On the left is St Jerome with his cardinal's hat and his lion, beating his breast with a stone; on the right is St Catherine with two diminutive kneeling nuns.

No warrant marks have been found on the hofje's case or its sculptures. The figures have typical Mechelen traits: amiable expressions, dainty noses and mouths, half-closed eyes. The sumptuous ornamentation of their garments includes painted borders, sgraffito and punchwork. St Elizabeth's gown is covered with applied brocade. The design of arabesques on St Augustine's alb, achieved in sgraffito with a white paint layer on silver leaf, recurs on the chemise of the Brussels *Virgin and Child on the Crescent Moon* (cat. 30). There are also striking similarities between the polychromy of that Brussels Virgin and the present St Elizabeth, both in the applied brocades and the sgraffito letter-border. It seems more than likely, therefore, that the polychromy of St Elizabeth and St Augustine and that of the Brussels Virgin can be attributed to the same master.



54a
*Besloten Hofje with
SS Anne, Augustine
and Elizabeth, c.1530,*
Mechelen; Mechelen,
collection of the
Augustinian hospital
sisters

54b
Medallion with
hortus conclusus

¹ GODENNE 1957: 117-120, figs. XXXIII-XXXV; LEUVEN 1971: 459-462; BRUSSELS 1994: 97, 240, 92 (fig. 84); MECHELEN 1998: 52-53.

Model 54.1



54.1a-b
St Elizabeth of Hungary, applied brocade on the gown

Location:	gown of St Elizabeth of Hungary	Comparable applied brocades cat. 30.1 cat. 53.1
Type:	continuous	
Design:	unidentified, glass impeded close observation	
Measurements:	unidentified	
Relief:	striations, lines in relief (relief pattern)	
Striations:	number unidentified; variously aligned	
Condition:	locally worn	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	red glaze on lines in relief	
Gilding:	gold leaf adhesive not observed, glass impeded close observation	
Tin foil:	dark grey	
Filler:	not observed	
Adhesive:	orange, oily appearance	
Support layer:	white chalk and size ground	
Ref:	cross section: none	

Despite the absence of the 'M' mark, and the extensive damage to the relief decoration, in appearance the applied brocades resemble those on the other Mechelen sculptures in the catalogue. Like the Brussels *Virgin and Child on the Crescent Moon* just mentioned, the relief is extremely shallow with many striations per centimetre. The brocades have been attached using an orange, oily adhesive layer, and the pattern consists of fluid lines on a fully striated background. In neither case can a design now be distinguished, but it is also possible that the lines were randomly incised in the mould, with no intent to produce a specific motif. Because of the shallow relief and the apparent lack of a deliberate pattern the applied brocades here differ quite clearly from those with more linearly structured designs produced by the Brussels workshops.



54c
Design of sgraffito arabesques on St Augustine's alb



55 BESLOTEN HOFJE WITH SS URSULA, ELIZABETH AND CATHERINE

Mechelen, Hospital of Our Lady, collection of the Augustinian hospital sisters,
on permanent loan to the Schepenhuis Museum, Mechelen, inv. BH 2

Besloten hofje, carved, polychromed and painted wood, mixed media (metal, paper, wax, silk thread)

Mechelen

Marks: 'M' and 'Doermael' (on each pedestal), 'M' (St Ursula's gown)

c.1530

134.5 × 97.5 × 22.5 cm

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/47-2005/08789

Behind a fence, in a *hortus conclusus* filled with flowers, plants and bunches of grapes in paper, textile and gold thread, are three principal figures, each on a pedestal, and two smaller figures (and a dog). In the centre is St Ursula. On her right is St Elizabeth of Hungary (or Thuringia), patron saint of the Augustinian hospital sisters to whom the hofje belonged. St Catherine, bearing her sword and spurning Emperor Maxentius beneath her foot, stands on her left on a pedestal bearing the painted inscription 'Kateln'.¹

The statues themselves, which are in walnut, have not yet been examined for the presence of the Mechelen arms. The word 'Doermael' has been stamped into the three pedestals.² This name also appears on the pedestal of a *Virgin and Child* in the Bode-Museum in Berlin³ and may allude to the painter-polychromer Jan van Dormael, who was active in Mechelen in 1523.⁴ In the present hofje, the Mechelen 'M' is stamped into the gilding, again on the pedestals and also on St Ursula's gown.

Of the three principal figures St Ursula rejoices in the most varied decoration, with sgraffito on silver and gold leaf combined with painted decoration and punchwork. The punched border closely resembles that of the Berlin *Virgin and Child*. There are also clear parallels in the elegant sgraffito calligraphy of the letters on these two sculptures, particularly the 'M' and the 'A'. Sgraffito has also been used on the statue of St Catherine but there is neither punching nor – except on Maxentius's collar – painted decoration. The polychromy on the figure of St Elizabeth is rather different. This is the only sculpture to be ornamented with applied brocades. The carving is rather more angular than that of the other two figures and the face sharper; moreover, on the pedestal is the painted inscription 'Maria'. These factors suggest that the pedestal once belonged to a figure of the Virgin polychromed by Dormael, which – given the pedestal's present position, subordinate to the central figure – may or may not have been part of this hofje, that Elizabeth is not an original occupant of the hofje, and that the polychromy of this statue is probably not by Dormael.

55a

*Besloten Hofje with
SS Ursula, Elizabeth
and Catherine, c.1530,*
Mechelen; Mechelen,
collection of the
Augustinian hospital
sisters

¹ BRUSSELS 1994: 97, 239; LEUVEN 1971: 454.

² Godenne notes that the letters on St Ursula's pedestal are a few millimetres larger than those on the other two pedestals. GODENNE 1962: 73-74.

³ DE BORCHGRAVE D'ALTENA 1959: 21-22.

⁴ VAN DOORSLAER 1933: 172.

Model 55.1



55.1a-b
Applied brocade on St Elizabeth's gown



1cm

55.1c
Archaeological drawing



1cm

55.1d
Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	St Elizabeth's gown
Type:	local
Design:	floral and foliate: stylized pomegranate or thistle-like flower
Measurements:	small: 2.5 x 2 cm
Relief:	striations, contour, flat zones (mixed pattern)
Striations:	13-14 per cm; variously aligned
Condition:	locally worn
Overpaint:	retouches
Highlighting:	red glaze
Gilding:	gold leaf adhesive not observed, glass impeded close observation
Tin foil:	grey
Filler:	not observed
Adhesive:	not observed
Support layer:	red glaze matt red underlayer white chalk and size ground
Ref:	cross section: none

The damage to the applied brocades is relatively recent, for on a photograph taken in 1957 they appear virtually intact.⁵ The stylized pomegranate or thistle-like flower consists of a bulbous central section in two parts, with leaves arranged symmetrically on either side and a flower at the top. The tin foil has not been trimmed away around the motif but left as a sheet. The brocades on the skirt of Ursula's gown are too lacunate to be certain that the motif is identical to that on the bodice. It does display largely the same characteristics, however, and is also highlighted with red glaze.

⁵ GODENNE 1957: fig. XXXII.



55b
St Elizabeth's appropriated pedestal with the painted inscription 'Maria'



55c
Detail of the 'Doermael' mark on St Elizabeth's appropriated pedestal



Two fragments of papyrus with a diamond pattern and a central circular motif, possibly containing a small inscription or decorative element.

56 TWO POLYCHROMED BOARDS

Mechelen, Courthouse (former palace of Margaret of Austria, Regent of the Netherlands 1507-1530)

Two boards (ceiling), polychromed oak
Mechelen, Jan van Battele and Paul Tuback (?)
1517-1518 (?)
Both boards: 148 × 35 × 7.5 cm

1985: restoration at the KIK-IRPA (conservation and removal of local grey overpaint)

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/47-1985/03181

These boards, which were discovered during restoration works in the 1980s, are probably from the ceiling of a room in the former palace of Margaret of Austria, regent of the Netherlands.¹ The tongued edges would have slotted into the grooved edges of adjacent boards.

The flat surface of the boards is decorated with alternating green and beige lozenges, with the letters 'M' and 'A' in applied brocade glued to the centre of each. Traces of a loop-shaped motif in applied brocade are still visible in the partial green lozenges down the sides of each board. In the beige lozenges there are also traces of a floral pattern (stylized lilies and five-petalled flowers) painted in black, probably with the help of a stencil.

The design reproduces a velvet and satin wall hanging described in Margaret of Austria's inventory of 9 July 1523² and intended to decorate the walls of the 'riche cabinet': 'Tapisseries de draps de soie et aultres pièces servans au parement du riche cabinet, estans audits armaires. Premier, sept pieces de tapisseries fetes à losainges de velours verd et damas blanc, couvert de semblable M et petiz A de brodure, contenant la première pièce, de longueur v aulnes iii cartiers et largeur, iiii aulnes et demie' ('Tapestries of silk cloth and other items serving to decorate the rich cabinet, carrying said coats of arms. First, seven tapestry items made out of lozenges of green velvet and white damask, covered with similar Ms and small As, containing the first piece, 5¾ ells long and 4½ ells wide'). The 'riche cabinet' was in the west wing of the regent's palace, built between 1507 and 1530, and was part of the private apartments.³

According to Frieda Sorber, conservator at the Modemuseum in Antwerp, the very precise description of the 'tapisseries de draps de soie' reveals that these were formed of two different fabrics – green velvet lozenges and white damask lozenges – sewn together. The inventory refers to 'M et petiz A de brodure', suggesting that the letters were embroidered. It is, however, possible that although the inventory's compiler perceived them as embroidered they were in fact woven.

The two boards were probably decorated by Jan van Battele and Paul Tuback. The Mechelen municipal accounts for 1517-1518 record that the men were paid 15 livres and 16 sous for painting several apartments in the palace.⁴ The description of their work is precise but does not include the decoration of the present boards. The two painters decorated the rooms with imitation blue and yellow 'damask'; painted both sides of the doors and windows in green, and embellished the roof beams and joists with golden daisies (marguerites) and the letter 'A'. In the inventory the blue and yellow 'damask' decoration corresponds to that of the 'first chamber'.⁵ Perhaps we can assume that it was Jan van Battele and Paul Tuback who also decorated the ceiling of the 'riche cabinet' with green and white lozenges and applied brocade.

Jan van Battele, also known as Van der Wyck (1477, Mechelen(?) – 5 July 1557) came from a family of Mechelen painter-polychromers active in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.⁶ In 1499 he was appointed official painter to the city of Mechelen, where he worked for Margaret of Austria. He gained

¹ SERCK-DEWAIDE 1990: 36-40, esp. 37; GEELLEN, STEYAERT 2005: 13-14.

² MICHELANT 1870-1871: 73.

³ EICHBERGER 2002: 72-77, 93-115.

⁴ NEEFFS 1876, I: 138-139; EICHBERGER 2002: 95-96.

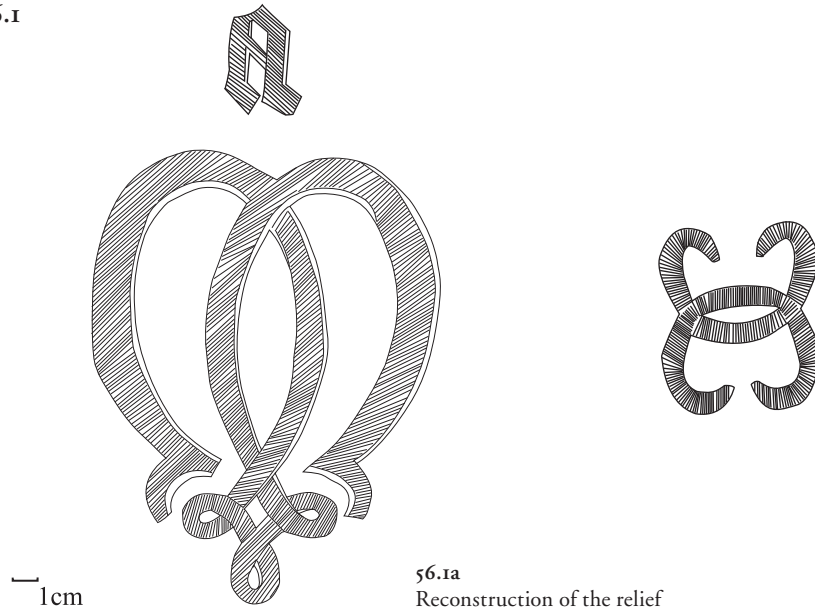
⁵ MICHELANT 1870-1871: 65, 71.

⁶ BIOGRAPHIE NATIONALE 1866, I: 776-777; NEEFFS 1876, I: 135-141; BÉNÉZIT 1976, I: 509.

the title of painter to Charles V in 1549 or 1550. His triptych depicting Charles V surrounded by the coats of arms of his territorial possessions (1517) is still in Mechelen (Museum Hof van Busleyden).

Paul Tuback (c.1485, Mechelen(?)) – after 1534) joined the Mechelen painters' guild as a free master in 1510.⁷ He worked for the palace of Margaret of Austria on several occasions between 1512 and 1530 (paid for by the city of Mechelen). He was in Margaret's service as an 'archer de corps' from 1523 until her death in 1530. He worked with Jan van Battele again in 1520-1521, on the restoration of a wall painting.

Model 56.1



56.1a
Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	surface of the boards	
Type:	local	
Design:	miscellaneous: 'A' above 'M', with traces of a loop-shaped motif	
Measurements:	large: 'M': 17.4 x 13.7-15 cm; 'A': 4-4.3 x 2.5-3 cm; loop motif 7 x 4.4 cm	
Relief:	striations, contour, narrow flat zones (mixed pattern)	
Striations:	9 per cm; diagonal, variously aligned	
Condition:	well preserved	
Overpaint:	none (removed in 1985)	
Highlighting:	none	
Gilding:	gold leaf very thin, brown, translucent	
Tin foil:	degraded, grey	
Filler:	brown, translucent, waxy-resinous appearance, sometimes with added pigments	
Adhesive:	none observed, apparently none	
Support layer:	green (painted lozenges)	beige (painted lozenges)
	ochre-coloured layer chalk and size ground(?)	
Ref:	KIK-IRPA laboratory file (2 cross sections). See also Chapter Ten, Table B	

On each board there are around fifteen 'M's with complete or partial 'A's, and five loops. The letters and loops have been cut out with care.

The letters 'M' and 'A' form the monogram of Margaret of Austria. These initials appear quite often in contemporary embroidery, though usually as the monogram of the Virgin Mary.⁸ As far as is known, there are no other examples of initials in applied brocade in the Low Countries, although similar monograms do occur on Spanish and French sculptures. In the Metropolitan

⁷ NEEFFS 1876, I: 276 ff; BÉNÉZIT 1976, X: 300.

⁸ For example, two copes embroidered with 'M's and 'A's published in DE FARCY 1890: 40-46, 91-97, pls. 60, 71 (captions pp. 129, 131).



56.1b
Applied brocade on the ceiling board



56.1c
Reconstruction of the polychromy
of the ceiling board

Museum of Art (New York) is a Castilian figurative group, known as the *Miracle of the Palm Tree*, decorated with rectangular sheets of applied brocade in which the monogram 'SM' is worked.⁹ The statue of St Aldric at Ferrières-en-Gâtinais has a whole border of letters in relief.¹⁰

⁹ FRINTA 1963: 141, 143 and fig. 7.

¹⁰ WAILLIEZ 1999: 123-125; WAILLIEZ 2002: 102-103.



57 ST ANTONY ABBOT

Nivelles, Collegiate Church of St Gertrude, 'salle impériale'

Statue, polychromed stone

Brabant

1500-1520

70 × c.29 × c.21 cm

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/15-2005/08757

This statue of St Antony Abbot is temporarily displayed in the 'salle impériale' of the Collegiate Church of St Gertrude, with a *St Lawrence* of similar size and treatment.¹ The two sculptures, whose bases are much alike in shape, probably belonged to the same assemblage, possibly the old rood screen of the church.²

St Antony Abbot is depicted in the traditional form of a bearded and hooded older man. Dressed in the habit of his order, he is accompanied by his traditional attributes. His rough homespun garb is cinched by a belt from which hang a rosary and the sheath of a knife. The saint holds an open manuscript containing the Antonite Rule in his left hand. With his right he leans on his stick as he rings his bell. The pig, St Antony's inseparable companion, is by his foot. The flames are an allusion to 'St Antony's Fire', another name for erysipelas and ergotism, an ailment cared for in particular by the brothers of this hospital order. According to Robert Didier, the full and heavy drapery is pre-1500 in style, whereas the face reflects early-sixteenth-century developments in stone carving.³

The statue's surface is now covered with a thin uniform coating of grey paint on a white ground, beneath which the remains of the original polychromy are visible. The stone was first prepared with a white sealant. This was followed by a thin orange-red layer, then an orange-pink layer. A thicker black layer was then applied to the garments, the bell's clapper and the pig's skin.⁴ The monastic robe, the edge of the cloak, the flames, the fore edge of the book and the clapper were then gilded on a beige ochre mordant. Local applied brocades were glued to the black surface of the cloak. The base is painted matt green. The polychromy of the *St Lawrence* is fairly similar, with the same orange underlayers but without the black layer. Attractive brocade-like motifs are still visible on Lawrence's gilded dalmatic, painted on the gold in dark red glaze.⁵



57a
St Antony, 1500-1520,
Brabant; Nivelles,
Collegiate Church of
St Gertrude

¹ DE BORCHGRAVE d'ALTENA 1926: 119-120.

² DIDIER 1973: 152-153.

³ Idem.

⁴ Observation of the edge of a loss on the monastic robe shows that the mordant is on a dark layer, presumably but not certainly black.

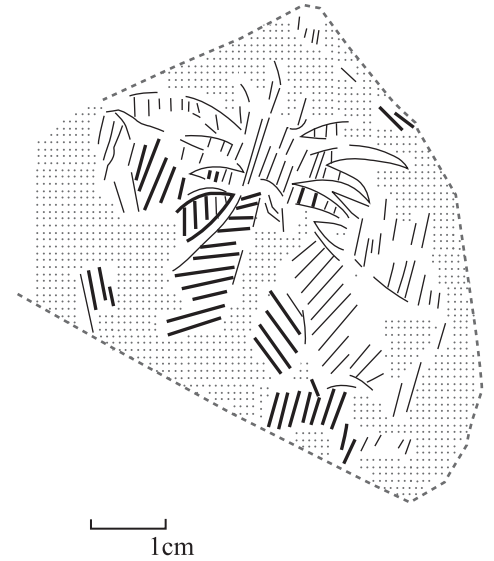
⁵ The relief lines come from the use of a tooth chisel on the stone support and from the mordant, which has been applied with a rather coarse brush.

57b
St Lawrence

Model 57.1



57.1a
Detail of the applied brocade on St Anthony's cloak



57.1b
Archaeological drawing

Location:	cloak
Type:	local
Design:	floral and foliate: fine oblong leaves bursting from a central zone
Measurements:	small: 5.3 x 6.2 cm
Relief:	striations, contour, narrow flat zones (mixed pattern)
Striations:	6-8 per cm; variously aligned, thickness according to zone, widely spaced
Condition:	badly damaged
Overpaint:	grey white ground
Highlighting:	black according to cross section (not observed in situ or on the photographs)
Gilding:	gold leaf thickish mordant
Tin foil:	degraded, grey
Filler:	khaki to ochre in colour
Adhesive:	thick, ochre in colour (lighter than the filler)
Support layer:	black orange-pink underlayer orange-red underlayer white chalk and size ground
Ref:	KIK-IRPA laboratory file (1 cross section)

On the back of the figure the applied brocades are actually visible where the grey overpainting is particularly thin or absent. On the front there is an occasional hint of the relief of the brocades beneath the overpainting.



57c
Painted brocade on St Lawrence's cloak



58 CHRIST BEFORE PILATE

ST GEORGE

Oudenaarde, Amuso (municipal museum), inv. 01248

Panel paintings, wood, painted on both sides (frame not original)

Brussels, attributed to the Master of the Corkscrew Curl

1470-1490

116 × 42 × 0.8-1.2 cm (sight)

1994-1996: study and conservation treatment at the KIK-IRPA

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/43-1995/05526

On the front of the panel Christ is brought before Pilate; on the reverse, St George slays the dragon before a cloth of honour hanging on a wall. The panel consists of two butt-joined boards, from whose bottom edge at least one centimetre has been trimmed. Both typology and iconography suggest that it would have been a left wing of an altarpiece. The panel depicting the *Last Supper with Christ washing St Peter's Feet*, thought to come from Tongerlo Abbey and now in Antwerp (KMSKA), probably comes from the same dismembered altarpiece.¹

On the front of the panel, the waving arms and crossed pikestaffs graphically suggest the turbulence of the crowd harrying Christ. The procession approaches Pilate, who is enthroned in a porch-like edifice with red marble columns. On the panel's reverse, St George thrusts his lance through the dragon's neck, the positioning of his arms and legs producing a dynamic swastika-like movement. The painting technique is quite sophisticated: for example, the purple edging of the cloth of estate behind Pilate was obtained by a combination of azurite, red glaze and a touch of carbon black.²

The contours of the gilded areas and the pattern of Pilate's tiled floor have been incised in the ground. Both St George's cloth of honour and Pilate's canopy-cum-cloth of estate are covered in continuous applied brocade.

The panel is attributed to the Master of the Corkscrew Curl, as Didier Martens has recently dubbed him.³ Stylistic and technical comparisons suggest that other panels, such as the wings of the *Passion Altarpiece* in the Hospitalkapelle in Stassfurt (cat. G5), may also be ascribed to him (see Chapter Five).

58a-b

Christ Before Pilate
and *St George*,
1470-1490, Brussels,
attributed to the
Master of the
Corkscrew Curl;
Oudenaarde, Amuso

¹ VANDENBROECK 1985: 8-12 (fig. 3); BRUSSELS 1996: 47-48.

² BRUSSELS 1996: 51-54.

³ HECK et al. 2005, II: 401-404 (cat. 55); D. MARTENS 2007.

Model 58.1



58.1
Position of the tin foil sheets on the cloth of honour behind St George

Location:	cloth of honour behind St George
Type:	continuous
Design:	unidentifiable, too incomplete for reconstruction
Measurements:	medium: max. 8.2 cm; incomplete sheet
Relief:	striations, contour(?), flat zones (mixed pattern)
Striations:	8-10 per cm; variously aligned
Condition:	badly damaged
Overpaint:	none
Highlighting:	none
Gilding:	gold leaf ochre-coloured mordant
Tin foil:	degraded, grey
Filler:	brown, translucent, wax-resin appearance
Adhesive:	ochre-brown
Support layer:	white sealing layer white chalk and size ground (?)
Ref:	KIK-IRPA laboratory file (1 cross section)

There are fifteen pieces of applied brocade, some of them very small, on the cloth of honour. Not one is complete. They have been cut out and glued on in a patchwork, irrespective of the direction of the sheets, so that the alignment of the striations varies from piece to piece.

Unlike the zones to be gilded, the contours of the surface to be decorated have apparently not been incised in advance. The position of the brocades seems to have been indicated by hatchings on the underdrawing, as can be seen in an area where the brocade has been lost. The applied brocades were glued on after completion of the underdrawing. They were then gilded, most likely together with elements such as the sword pommel and halo. Then the paint was applied, as shown by the overlaps onto the gilding of the applied brocades.

Model 58.2



58.2a
Applied brocade on Pilate's canopy



58.2b
Detail of applied brocade on Pilate's canopy



58.2c
Archaeological drawing

1 cm

Location:	canopy and cloth of estate behind Pilate	
Type:	continuous, applied in a strip	
Design:	floral and foliate: rosette	
Measurements:	medium: 8.5 x 5.5 cm; 8.6 x 5.4 cm	
Relief:	striations, flat zones (Tegernsee type)	
Striations:	9-10 per cm; vertical	
Condition:	worn	
Overpaint:	varnish	
Highlighting:	matt black (original?) on flat zones	green glaze (minute traces, original?) on striations and flat zones
Gilding:	gold leaf mordant	
Tin foil:	degraded, grey	
Filler:	brown, translucent, waxy appearance	
Adhesive:	ochre in colour (?), too indistinct for identification	
Support layer:	white sealing layer white chalk and size ground	
Ref:	cross section: none	

Pilate's canopy and cloth of estate, edged in painted green velvet, is composed of six pieces of brocade carefully cut out and assembled one above the other. All the decorations have been varnished during an undated restoration.

The front of one of the wings of the Stassfurt *Passion Altarpiece* (cat. G5) also represents Christ before Pilate with a cloth of estate in applied brocade. As mentioned above, this retable's paintings are also attributed to the Master of the Corkscrew Curl. The brocades differ, however, being somewhat larger, with a higher striation density per centimetre, and no highlighting.



59 ST REMACLUS

Spa, Church of Our Lady and St Remaclus

Statue, carved and polychromed limewood

Meuse region, Liège(?)

No marks

c.1530

144 × 40 × 38 cm

1988: conservation-restoration at the KIK-IRPA

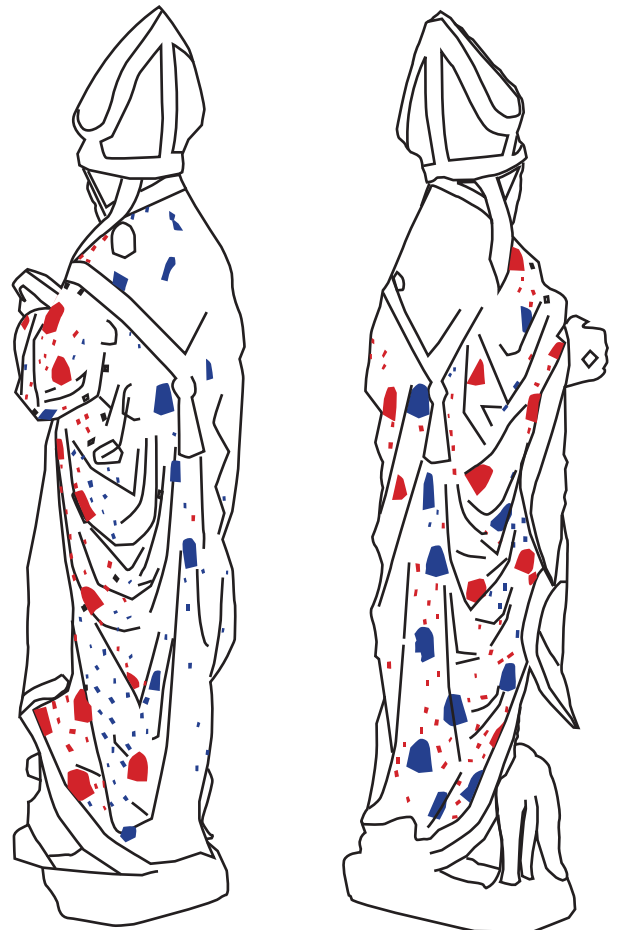
1994: conservation-restoration at the KIK-IRPA¹

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/47-1983/2769

The statue represents St Remaclus standing on a grassy knoll, an open book in his left hand. The episcopal crozier he would have held in his right hand is lost. The saddled wolf is one of the attributes of this saint, who was abbot of Solignac in the Limousin and bishop of Tongeren. Remaclus is arrayed in the vestments of an abbot or bishop, in alb and dalmatic, and a cope fastened with a square morse. He wears his mitre over a close-fitting cap that covers his ears. The gloves, maniple and amice also belong to the episcopal insignia.

The statue's original destination is unknown, though it was probably made for the church which stood on the site of the present building before 1573. Nor has it been possible to determine where or by whom it was made, as it bears no resemblance to any other surviving work. Its present location suggests that it comes from the Meuse region, and more specifically from Liège. Robert Didier dates it to the 1530s, a late date indicated by the shape of the mitre and shoes and 'a certain slackening of the form and a relative disorder of the drapery.'²

The original polychromy, revealed after the removal of seven overpaints (1994), is traditional, with burnished gilding and silver leaf on bole. The silver leaf is covered with red or green glaze (red wood and mainly verdigris, both bound with nut oil and pine resin).³ Some of the original paint layers cover tempera underlayers: red glaze on matt red, azurite blue on black. The flesh tones, the wolf's brown pelt, and the green of the grass are painted over an orange-pink underlayer. Local applied brocades and rectangular metallic decorations ornament the dalmatic, cope and mitre. They also decorate the back of the cope, suggesting that the statue was meant to be viewed in the round.



59a

St Remaclus c.1530,
Meuse region,
Liège(?); Spa,
Church of Our Lady
and St Remaclus

59b

Back of the statue,
decorations gilded
with gold leaf (red),
glazed decorations
(blue)

¹ DIDIER, OTJACQUES-DUSTIN, SANYOVA 1995: 20-29. In compiling this catalogue note we benefitted greatly from the generous collaboration of the late Dominique Otjacques-Dustin.

² 'Un certain amollissement formel et une relative désorganisation du drapé'. Robert Didier in DIDIER et al. 1995: 21.

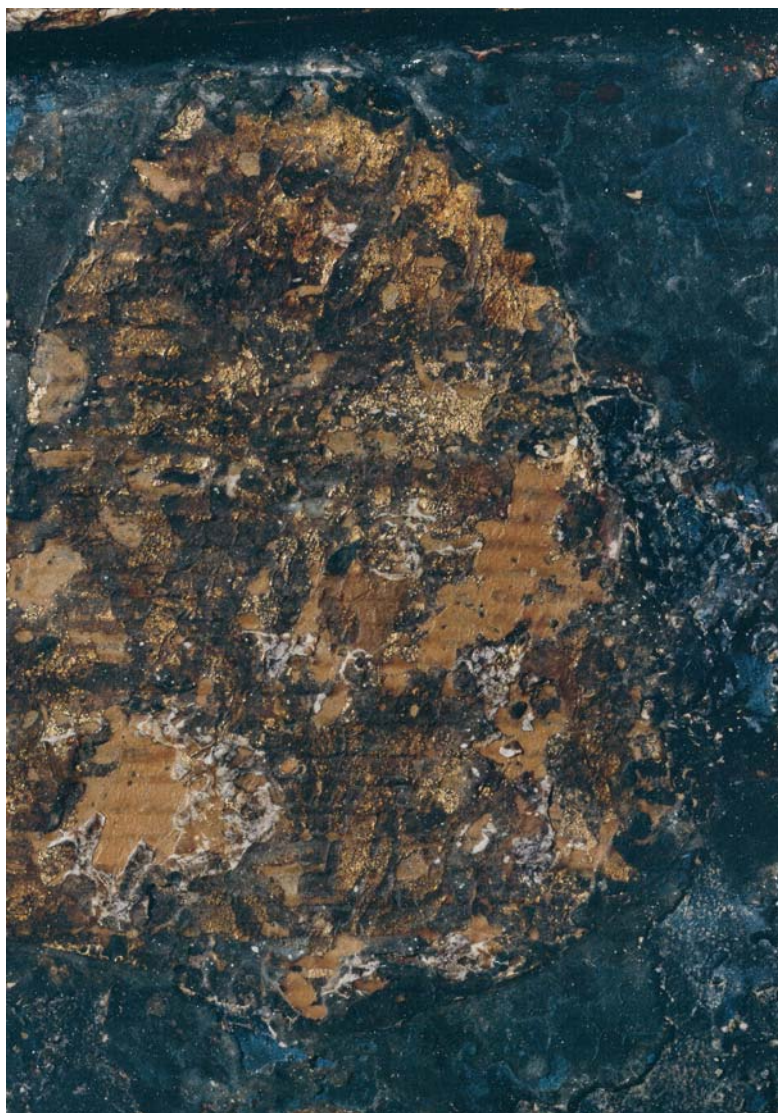
³ DIDIER, OTJACQUES-DUSTIN, SANYOVA 1995: 27.

Model 59.1



59.1a
Applied brocade on St Remaclus's cope

Location:	dalmatic, cope and mitre	
Type:	local	
Design:	floral and foliate: bell-shaped tin foil sheet with painted pomegranate	
Measurements:	small: c.5.2 x c.4.4 cm	
Relief:	fully striated (relief pattern)	
Striations:	6-8 per cm; horizontal	
Condition:	badly damaged	
Overpaint:	none (removed)	
Highlighting:	blue on striations (dalmatic, mitre)	red glaze with oleoresinuous binder on striations (cope)
Gilding:	gold leaf (front and back) very thin adhesive	gold-imitating glaze (?) (back only)
Tin foil:	degraded, grey to black	
Filler 1:	very thin, brown, translucent, organic layer: beeswax	
Filler 2:	fairly thick, ochre in colour, waxy and greasy appearance, beeswax and oil thickened with pigments (lead white, red lead, ochre)	
Adhesive:	none	
Support layer:	black, distemper (dalmatic, mitre) thin orange-red underlayer white chalk and size ground	matt red (vermillion), distemper (cope)
Ref:	KIK-IRPA laboratory file (1 cross section); DIDIER, OTJACQUES-DUSTIN, SANYOVA 1995: 26-29 (analysis by Sanyova); analysis by Saverwijn 2010 (beeswax of filler 1, beeswax and oil of filler 2). See also Chapter Ten, Table B	



59.1b
Applied brocade on St Remaclus's dalmatic

The numerous applied brocades (see ill. 59b) are glued onto the black and matt red underlayers. The azurite blue and the red glazes were added later, being worked round the brocades. A pomegranate motif is painted in red (cope) and blue (dalmatic and mitre) on the brocades' striated surface. The ochre-beige filler and the tin are separated by a very thin translucent brown waxy layer.

On the front and sides of the statue the tin foil is covered with gold leaf on mordant. On the back, however, which would probably have been less immediately visible to the beholder, there seems to be no trace of gold on most of the brocades. Under the microscope the tin has a slightly brilliant appearance, suggesting the presence of a protective or a gold-imitating glaze. The intended effect would have been lost with the degradation of the tin, which has turned black.

The motifs differ slightly in both shape and size, suggesting that first a large striated sheet was cast, then the bell-shaped outline was drawn onto it, probably with the help of a stencil or template, and finally the brocade was cut out.

On the cope and dalmatic the applied brocades are combined with small flat rectangles of gilded tin (or lead?) which were pressed into the still tacky blue and red paint. Their dimensions vary, so presumably they were cut out freehand. The rectangles on the back of the statue were not always gilded with gold leaf; many were (probably) covered with a gold-imitating glaze that also acted as a protective layer.



60 VIRGIN AND CHILD 'CAUSA NOSTRAE LAETITIAE'

Tongeren, Basilica of Our Lady of the Nativity

Statue, polychromed walnut

Meuse region, Liège(?), Tongeren(?)

No marks

c.1479

146.5 × 48 × 34 cm

1479: the chapter of the collegiate church obtains authorization to build an altar for a statue of the Virgin, generally believed to be the present statue¹

3 August 1653: decision to renew the polychromy on the statue

1679: following the 1677 fire, the statue is placed on the main altar of the collegiate church;

it is confiscated during the French Revolution and later bought back by the people of Tongeren

1889: a papal bull grants the right to crown the Virgin under the title of 'Causa Nostrae Laetitia'

1890: first 'Coronation Festival' procession

1946: restoration by a certain Vandercapellen from Brussels, who removes the deteriorated polychromy from the Virgin's face, replacing it with a uniform layer of dark brown paint matching the flesh tones of the child, at that time blackened by candle smoke²

1988: disinfection of the wood and refixing of the polychromy in a workshop in the province of Limburg

1990: examination and proposal for comprehensive treatment at the KIK-IRPA

1992: conservation-restoration at the KIK-IRPA, removal of local retouching and repainting of the flesh tones and the bunch of grapes, reconstruction of the polychromy of the Virgin's face³

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/47-1989/04362

This statue, which is believed to be miraculous, is still venerated and carried in procession every year. Mary stands with her right foot slightly outthrust. She carries the Child in her left arm as she delicately lifts a bunch of grapes in her right hand. Her cloak, fastened by beaded brooches and a double band, covers a long gown whose deep narrow folds fall fluidly to the ground. The edge of the cloak has been gathered up to create an attractive drapery effect. The Virgin's silhouette is slender and elegant and the proportions are particularly elongated. The statue is thought to have been produced in the Meuse region, more specifically in Tongeren or Liège. The hair springing horizontally from the temples is a late interpretation of a Mosan formula that is also encountered in the works of Adriaen van Wesel of Utrecht and the Master of Varsseveld, active in Kalkar.⁴

The figure is carved in the round. Patches of textile have been locally applied to disguise faults in the wood. The polychromy features certain unusual details.⁵ The matt gold of the hair is finished with a brown glaze. The grapes' velvety appearance has been achieved by a layer of red glaze, followed by a local dab of green glaze then a dusting of azurite blue, a rather sophisticated process. The flesh tones are very pale, with local pink accents, and structured in several layers. There are three different applied brocades on this statue, one continuous, on the Virgin's gown, and two local, on the blue lining of her cloak and the Child's white linen.

60a

*Virgin and Child
'Causa Nostrae
Laetitia'*, c.1479,
Meuse region,
Liège(?), Tongeren(?);
Tongeren, Basilica of
Our Lady of the
Nativity

60b

Ground imprinted
with a coarsely-woven
textile

¹ SINT-TRUIDEN 1990: III,56 (cat. 558); OTJACQUES-DUSTIN et al. 1999-2000: 63-83.

² OTJACQUES-DUSTIN et al. 1999-2000: 64.

³ Idem.

⁴ SINT-TRUIDEN 1990: III,56 (cat. 58).

⁵ The structure, pigments and dyes of this statue's polychromy are described in detail in OTJACQUES-DUSTIN et al. 1999-2000: 68-72.



Model 60.1



60.1
Applied brocade on the Virgin's gown

Location:	the Virgin's gown
Type:	continuous
Design:	floral and foliate: rosette, too incomplete for reconstruction
Measurements:	medium: 8.8 x c.9 cm
Relief:	striations, contour, flat zones (mixed pattern)
Striations:	12-14 per cm; variously aligned
Condition:	badly damaged
Overpaint:	red highlighting gold leaf dark ochre-coloured mordant
Highlighting:	red glaze, chalk, gypsum and silicon dioxide
Gilding:	gold leaf mordant light ochre in colour
Intermediate layer:	transparent brown organic layer, fluoresces orange in UV light: resin(?); gold-imitating glaze
Tin foil:	degraded, grey-black
Filler:	yellow-orange, translucent, wax-resin appearance
Adhesive:	orangey
Support layer:	white chalk and size ground
Ref:	cross section: see OTJACQUES-DUSTIN et al. 1999-2000: 70 (fig. 6g, 6h, 6i).

The Virgin's gown is entirely covered with continuous applied brocade, albeit in a very damaged state. In several places the orange layer that can be seen on the white ground seems to have been imprinted with a textile in an attempt to imitate the texture of a brocade.⁶ This orange underlayer must have served as an adhesive layer as it comes directly below the brocade's filler.

Between the tin foil and the mordant of the gilding there is a fine, transparent layer, which is probably a gold-imitating glaze.

The colour of the filler appears to vary depending on the location of the applied brocades (gown, cloak lining, the Child's linen) but in fact this is caused by the colour of the layer beneath. Here it takes on the orange of the adhesive.

According to the cross sections the brocades have been regilded (with a darker mordant) and highlighted again with a red glaze.

⁶ Compare with the applied brocade produced by tamping the tin foil over coarse fabric in cat. S5.

Model 60. 2



60.2
Applied brocade on the lining of the Virgin's cloak

Location:	lining of the Virgin's cloak
Type:	local
Design:	miscellaneous(?): droplet shaped, too incomplete for reconstruction
Measurements:	medium: c.9 x 8-8.5 cm
Relief:	striations, flat zones(?) (Tegernsee type?)
Striations:	12-20 per cm; vertical, diagonal
Condition:	badly damaged
Overpaint:	none
Highlighting:	unidentifiable, no remaining traces
Gilding:	gold leaf light coloured mordant thickened with ochre, red lead, coal black and white lead
Intermediate layer:	transparent brown organic layer, fluoresces orange in UV light: resin(?); gold-imitating glaze
Tin foil:	degraded, grey-white
Filler:	orange-yellow, translucent, wax-resin appearance
Adhesive:	none
Support layer:	azurite carbon black underlayer sealing layer white chalk and size ground
Ref:	cross section: see OTJACQUES-DUSTIN et al. 1999-2000: 70 (fig. 6j).

The brocades are in a very poor state but their shape can be traced in the underlying blue and black layers. The cross section reveals the same transparent layer between the tin foil and the mordant as was seen in model 60.1.

Model 60.3

The local applied brocades on the Child's linen have almost entirely disappeared, leaving little more than the imprint of their outlines on the white surface. These lozenge-shaped traces are only one or two centimetres wide. The brocades were applied directly onto the white ground while it was still tacky, with no additional adhesive. The cross section reveals the presence of a red glaze highlight which was not noted in situ.⁷ And here, too, is the fine transparent layer between the tin foil and the gilding mordant already seen in model 60.1 and model 60.2.

⁷ See OTJACQUES-DUSTIN et al. 1999-2000: 70 (fig. 6f).



61 ST HELENA

From the Altarpiece of St Anne with SS Helena and Giles

Zoutleeuw, Church of St Leonard, St Anne Chapel

Statue above a carved altarpiece, carved and polychromed oak

Maastricht, Jan van Steffesweert or workshop

No marks

c.1530

91 × 39,5 × 29,5 cm

1979-1982: major conservation of St Helena and St Giles at the KIK-IRPA

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/47-79/1767

Surmounting the scrolling cornice of this Renaissance altarpiece dedicated to St Anne are the carved figures of SS Helena and Giles. Helena, holding the Cross and an open book, wears over her gown a shorter garment with long fitted sleeves and on top of that a scapular-like robe, its round neck given extra emphasis by the finely-wrought gem-studded border. The figure was probably carved by Jan van Steffesweert of Maastricht. Though it lacks his signature, the features and round smiling face are typical of his production, and Helena shares them with his figures of Mary Magdalene in St Mathew's in Maastricht, St Balbina in St Quirinus's in Millen, and St Odilia of Hoei (or Mary Magdalene) now in the KMKG-MRAH in Brussels.¹ The elegant drapery created by the hand lifting the cloak or gown is also characteristic. The wealth of detail is exemplified in the headdress and the numerous carved semiprecious stones and beads, which also feature on other sculptures by Van Steffesweert. The jewelled collar of the Christ Child aloft on St Christopher's shoulder in the Church of Our Lady in Maastricht is ornamented with the same gems in the same order as those decorating Helen's neckline.

In his stolid severity St Giles presents a striking contrast to the queenly and decorative St Helena. The sculptural folds of the habit and the deeply carved hood cannot redeem the figure's block-like character, which the position of the arms, held close to the body, does nothing to relieve. The execution differs in many respects from Van Steffesweert's formal vernacular.

SS Helena and Giles are older than the altarpiece, which bears no warrant marks but is ascribed to an Antwerp workshop and dated to the second quarter of the sixteenth century.² The *St Anne Altarpiece* bears the year 1563, a date that seems more likely to relate to the new or renewed polychromy of the moulding. The earliest church accounts in which a 'Sintte-A(n)ne(n)taefel' is mentioned are those of 1539.³ The painted wings with the Annunciation and Visitation and donor portraits on the inside and four of the seven Liberal Arts⁴ on the outside are dated 1624; the predella, depicting the four evangelists, 1575. Zoutleeuw was a port and as such had many contacts with Antwerp; indeed, Antwerp art is abundantly represented in St Leonard's. The *St Anne Altarpiece* is now in the rhetoricians' chapel and was probably commissioned by the Zoutleeuw Chamber of Rhetoric.⁵ Their emblem, the lily of the valley, makes frequent appearances on the wings.

¹ TE POEL 2000: 66-67, 74-75.

² BUYLE, VANTHILLO 2000: 228-229.

³ '.noch een ijsen ac(n) Sintte-A(n)ne(n)taefel en(de) noch II ijsers ac(n) dy selve taele daer dy ma(n)neke(n)s mede vast staenen...', church accounts, August 1539; DE MECHELEER 1997: 381.

⁴ Geometry, with tablet and stylus; Grammar, with book and rod; Dialectics, with snake; Rhetoric, with a rhetorical gesture.

⁵ We thank Ward Hendrickx, collection manager, St Leonard's Church, who kindly supplied these data. In the fifteenth century many towns in the Low Countries established Chambers of Rhetoric to encourage the practice of rhetoric by means of theatrical performances and poetry competitions, and also to provide edifying entertainment. See ARBLASTER 2006: 105-106.

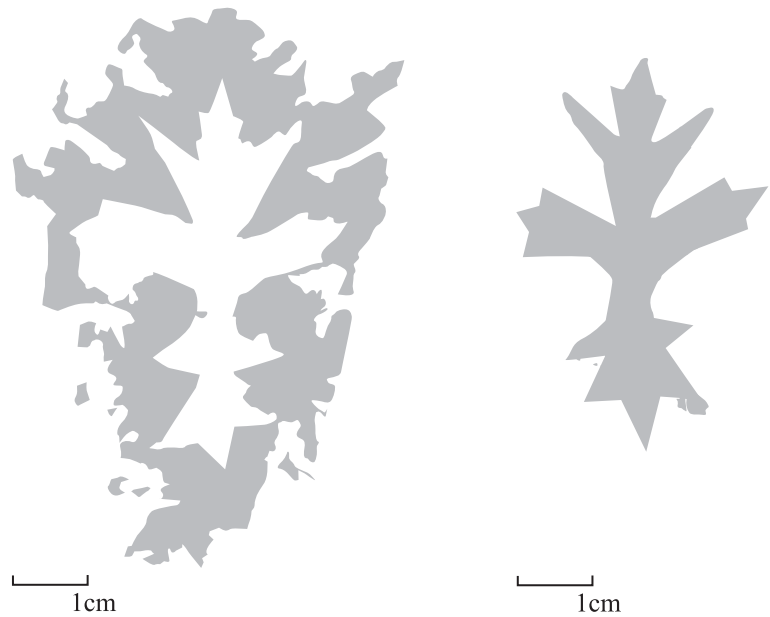
61a
St Helena, c.1530,
Brabant; Zoutleeuw,
Church of St Leonard

61b
Altarpiece of St Anne
with SS Helena and
Giles





61c
St Giles



61d-e
Archaeological drawing of the motifs in tin foil on St Giles's habit

The backs of both oak sculptures are carefully finished. They bear neither mark nor signature. The polychromer of St Helena used much metal leaf, both burnished (on pale orange bole), as on the robe and gown, and unburnished (on orange mordant) and colourfully glazed. The headdress and its flowing scarf are covered with silver leaf. For the cloak's blue lining two layers of azurite, a darker layer on a lighter one, were applied over a black undercoat. The red glaze on the scarf, the precious stones, and the sgraffito letter-borders on her garments is made of madder. The book's chemise binding is coloured with a dark green glaze over an opaque paint layer.

Other figures carved by Jan van Steffesweert are also decorated with applied brocades. On the surplice of the Bishop (St Augustine?) in the Bonnefanten Museum in Maastricht a few microscopic traces of the relief decoration still remain.⁶ And it is assumed that there are brocades beneath the nineteenth-century polychromy of the signed figure of Joseph with the Christ Child in St Nicholas's Church in Heythuysen (The Netherlands).⁷ Van Steffesweert did not necessarily carry out the surface decoration of his sculptures himself, however; archival documents reveal that the polychromy was sometimes delegated to independent painters.⁸

Giles's sober Benedictine garb offered little opportunity for rich colours. The habit is painted with a single layer of black, the tunic beneath with a layer of white. The locally applied leaf motif (in tin foil), which has been used in both a positive and a negative form on the habit, cannot be called applied brocade. There are no striations and no relief, and the structure is also atypical of applied brocade. The presently visible gilding appears to be the result of a later modification.

⁶ MAASTRICHT 2000: 216-217.

⁷ Ibid. 158-159.

⁸ VAN RENSCH 2000: 47-51.

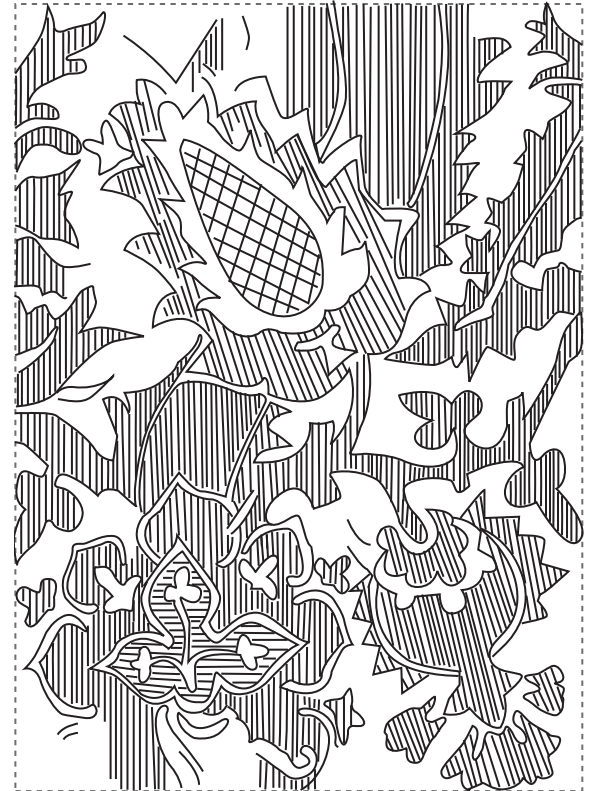
Model 61.1



61.1a
Applied brocade on St Helena's gown



61.1b
Detail of the applied brocade



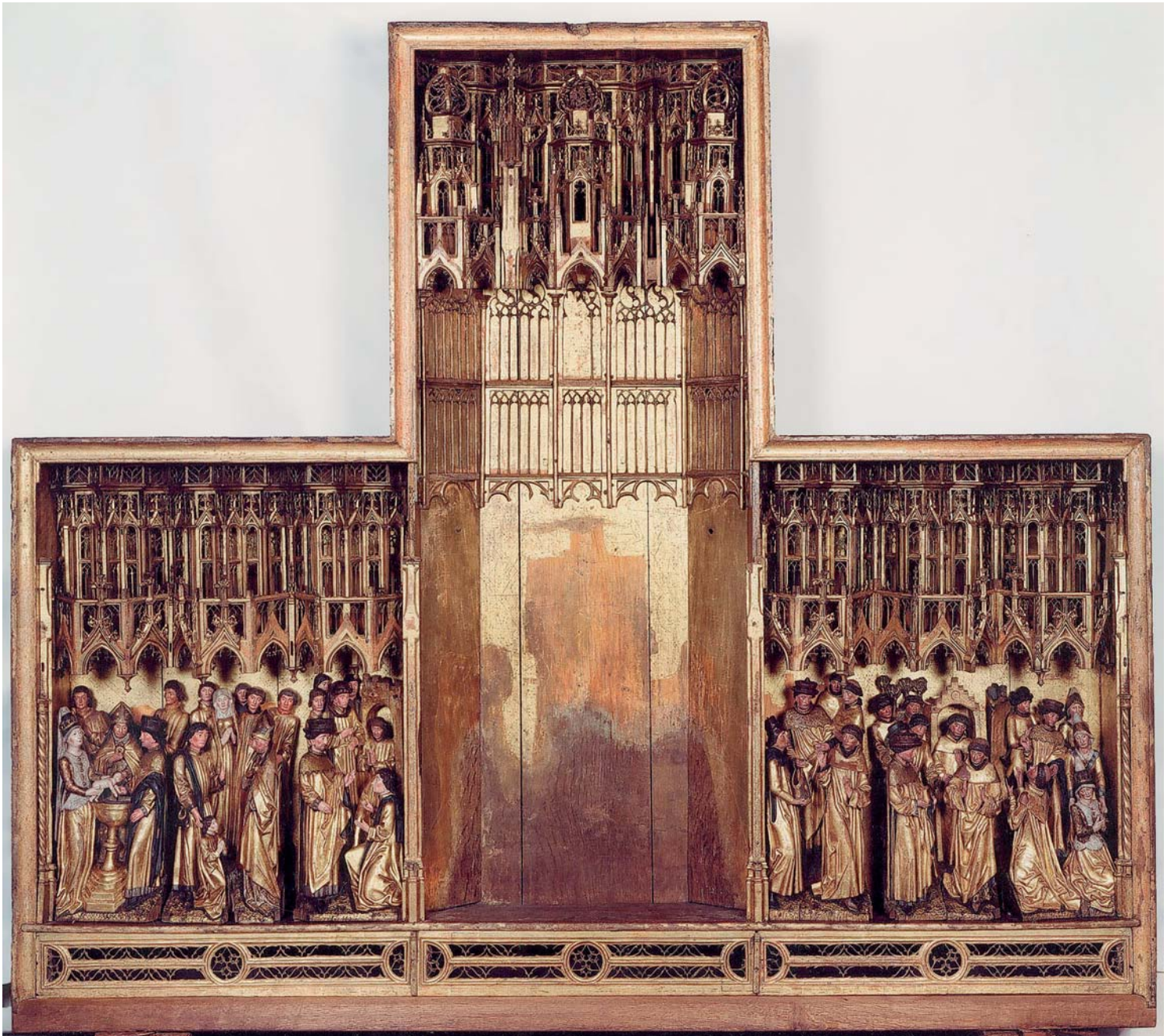
61.1c
Reconstruction of the relief

1 cm

Location:	St Helena's overgown
Type:	continuous: straight rows
Design:	floral and foliate: stylized pinecone in a wreath of foliage, pomegranate, and foliate motif in a multilobed rosette
Measurements:	medium: 10.4 x 7.4-7.6 cm
Relief:	striations, contour, flat zones (mixed pattern)
Striations:	8-12 per cm; variously aligned
Condition:	well preserved
Overpaint:	none
Highlighting:	none
Gilding:	gold leaf mordant, greenish, ochre in colour
Tin foil:	locally degraded, grey to white
Intermediate layer:	occasional thin ochre-coloured transparent layer
Filler:	orange (red lead), oily appearance
Adhesive:	ochre to brown in colour, oily
Support layer:	white chalk and size ground
Ref:	KIK-IRPA laboratory file (2 cross sections). See also Chapter Ten, Table B

The surface of the overgown is covered with fourteen applied brocade sheets and at least as many smaller pieces, glued on side by side in rows. In the centre of the pattern a stylized pinecone in a wreath of foliage emerges from a leafy twig. This is connected via a diagonally orientated curving stem to a multilobed rosette with a leaf motif in the centre. The rest of the sheet is filled with a pomegranate, stems and foliage.

Due to the lack of coloured highlighting the decoration gives the impression of monochrome cloth of gold. The gilding was carried out after the brocades were glued to the sculpture. That the relief decoration is still in good condition is due to the red lead that was mixed into the oil filler. Red lead also seems to have been used in the filler in a small number of other cases, such as the *Holy Kinship Altarpiece* now in the KMKG-MRAH (cat. 24).



62 ST LEONARD ALTARPIECE

Zoutleeuw, Church of St Leonard, south transept

Altarpiece, carved and polychromed oak, wings lost

Brussels

Marks: Brussels mallet, compasses and plane

c.1476-1478

228.4 × 261 × 26.5 cm

1873: undocumented treatment by G. Luyten

1960: the figures from the right-hand compartment are treated in preparation for their inclusion in an exhibition in Detroit¹

2002: conservation at the KIK-IRPA

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/47-1998/6382

The *St Leonard Altarpiece*, in the south transept of St Leonard's Church in Zoutleeuw, is dedicated to the church's patron saint.² It is made up of three compartments. In the centre is St Leonard, a mid-fourteenth-century statue that has replaced the lost original group. On either side, beneath a series of vaults, three compact carved groups enact scenes from the saint's life. On the left are the baptism, Leonard's instruction by Bishop Remigius, and the release of the captives. On the right, the refusal of the bishop's mitre, the king of France's visit to the monastery, and finally the safe delivery of a healthy son to the queen. The composition is lucid and straightforwardly arranged. Stylistic variations suggest the carving was carried out by more than one hand. The Leonardian iconography most likely extended onto the painted wings, which have been lost.

The entire altarpiece is in oak. Both the case and the figures are marked several times with the Brussels mallet and compasses and plane. Documents of 1476 and 1478 mention the involvement of the painter Aert de Maelder in the commission and design of the altarpiece.³ According to dendrochronological analysis the tree that provided the wood for the baptism group was felled between 1474 and 1494.⁴ Drying cracks in the wood indicate that it was worked before it was thoroughly seasoned.

The original polychromy is still well preserved. Burnished gilding on orange bole predominates; unburnished gilding occurs very occasionally. The sober decoration is limited almost entirely to painted patterns. Applied brocade has been used only on the figure of Bishop Remigius, in the baptism and instruction scenes. There are also tin foil shapes on the back of the mid-fourteenth-century Leonard now occupying the centre compartment – individual lozenge motifs on the once red cloak. Whether they belonged to the original polychromy or were applied as part of a subsequent overpaint is unclear. In any case, given the lack of pattern and striations they seem to be flat sheets of tin. No traces of gold leaf or gold-imitating glaze were noted, but may still be revealed by a more comprehensive examination.

Some of the altarpiece's figures were lost in the nineteenth century. At the back of the baptism a number of characters were then replaced. The figures belonging to the centre compartment were lost earlier still. Only the contours of the gilding on the rear walls remain to hint at the vanished groups.

62a
St Leonard Altarpiece,
c.1476-1478, Brussels;
Zoutleeuw, Church
of St Leonard

¹ DETROIT 1960: 237-239.

² DE BOODT 2005: 181-182.

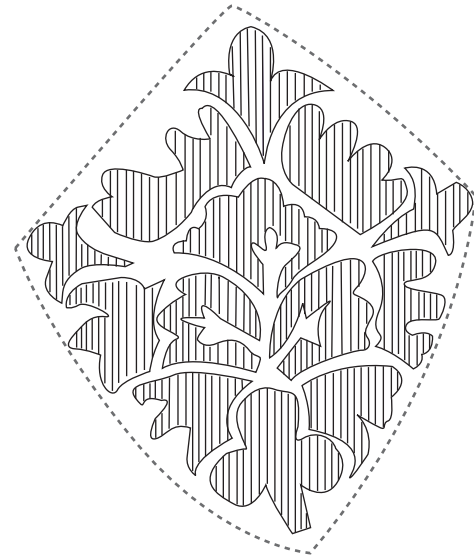
³ DE MECHELEER 1997: 106-107, 117.

⁴ Analysis by Pascale Fraiture as part of the study and conservation of the altarpiece carried out at the KIK-IRPA in 2002.

Model 62.1



62.1a
Applied brocade on Bishop Remigius's alb



1 cm

62.1b
Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	Bishop Remigius's alb
Type:	local
Design:	floral and foliate: stylized foliate motif
Measurements:	medium: 7.3 x 6.2 cm
Relief:	striations, contour, flat zones (mixed pattern)
Striations:	10-11 per cm; vertical
Condition:	well preserved
Overpaint:	none
Highlighting:	white on flat zones
Gilding:	gold leaf mordant
Tin foil:	grey
Filler:	brown, semi-transparent, waxy appearance
Adhesive:	yellow, oily, several layers
Support layer:	white chalk and size ground
Ref:	KIK-IRPA laboratory file (1 cross section)

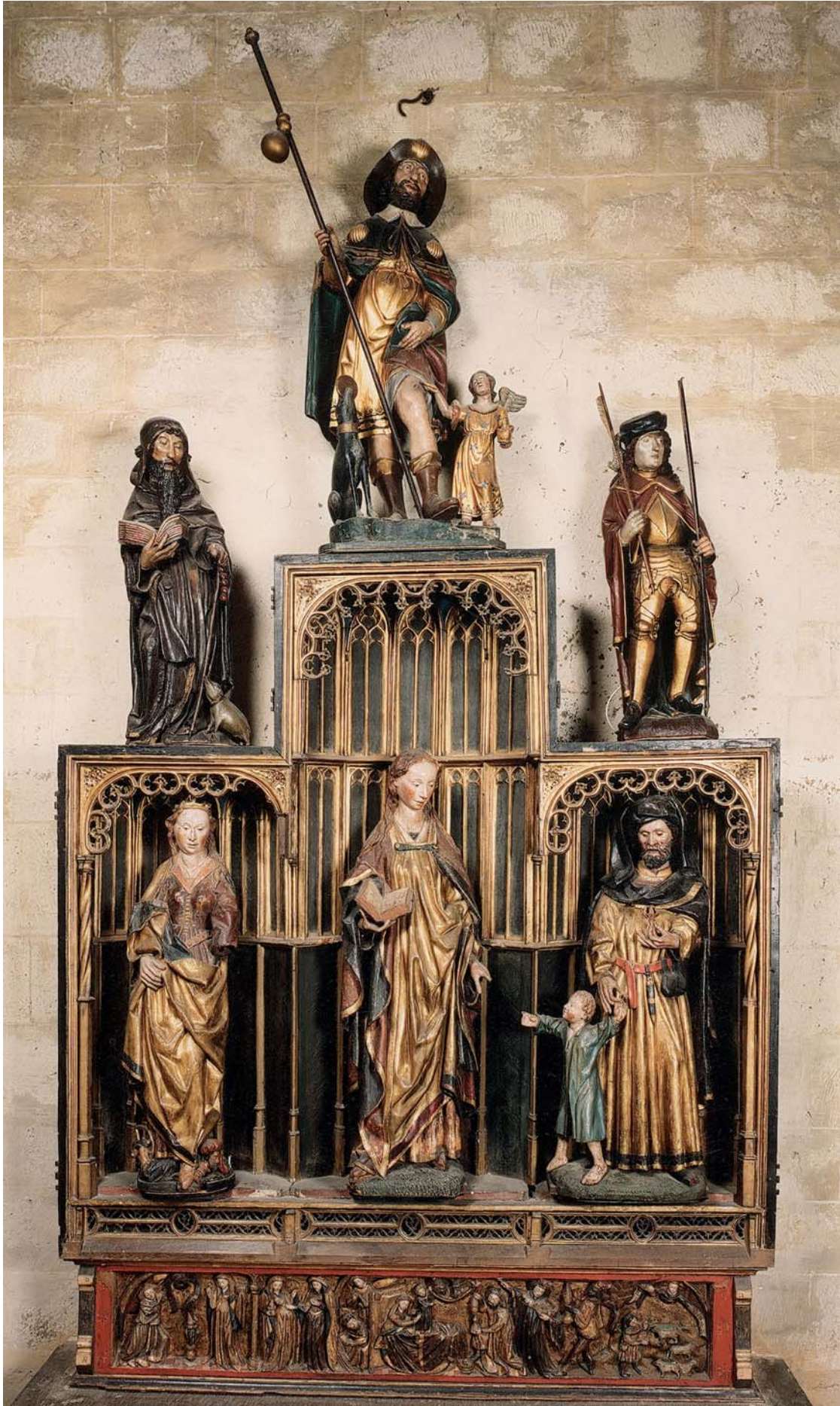
Of all the figures of the altarpiece only Bishop Remigius wears garments embellished with applied brocade. The lobed leaves are arranged so that the pattern takes on the shape of a stylized pomegranate. The sheets of brocade were completely gilded before being glued to the white ground and highlighted with white, thus creating the effect of gold thread on a white background. The leaves are outlined with a light contour line. By leaving some space between the individual sheets a lozenge design was created. The filler is wax-based.



62b
Baptism of St Leonard by Bishop Remigius



62.1c
Applied brocade on Bishop Remigius's alb



63 ALTARPIECE OF THE HOLY FAMILY WITH ST CATHERINE

Zoutleeuw, Church of St Leonard, St Roch Chapel

Altarpiece, carved and polychromed wood, wings lost

Brabant, Leuven(?), Joes Beijaert(?)

No marks

1479(?)

180.6 × 183.7 × 29.5 cm (case)

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/47-2003/08110

The *Holy Family Altarpiece*, in which the Virgin is flanked by St Catherine and Joseph with the infant Jesus, is in the St Roch Chapel on the north aisle of St Leonard's Church in Zoutleeuw. The three carved saints on the top of the altarpiece and the fourteenth-century predella are later additions. The painted wings – a larger pair for the body of the altarpiece, a smaller pair for the head – are now lost.

The dimensions of the case and the statues inside it do not correspond to the familiar Antwerp, Leuven, Brussels or Mechelen sizes of the period. Neither the case nor the figures appear to have marks, although these may be concealed on the underside of the pedestals. The attribution to Joes Beijaert derives from a reference in the church accounts for March 1497.¹ For 'eender tafelen te makene di op Synte Catelijnen autae staet' ('making an altarpiece to stand on St Catherine's altar') Beijaert was paid slightly less than seven gilders – far too small a sum for the construction of a complete altarpiece and which therefore raises questions regarding the commission. Examination of both material and style suggests that the three statues were made as a set, though whether they were originally intended to occupy this case is moot. The faces are characterized by high foreheads and long noses,² and the garments by tubular folds. In the ambulatory of the church is a figure of a female saint that can be attributed to the same sculptor or workshop.³

The sculptures in the altarpiece have been repainted at least twice, though now there are only a few fragmentary traces of this to be seen. The heavy-handed removal of these paint layers in 1954 caused significant damage to the rich decoration beneath. On each sculpture the original polychromy followed the same formula, being divided into large areas of gold leaf and red-glazed silver leaf, tempered by matt zones such as the blue linings and pale flesh tones. Decorative techniques such as tooling and applied ornament were employed in various combinations to embellish the garments and accessories of the saints. Among the prefabricated elements are small round pastilles,⁴ applied brocades, tiny beads in a semi-transparent material (3 mm in diameter, resin?), and minute inverted metal cupules (2 mm in diameter, brass⁵) and fleurs de lies (6 mm high, copper?). The cupules decorate hems, sometimes arranged in a flower shape, and are also scattered in between the applied brocades on the Virgin's cloak and Catherine's gown. The metal fleurs de lies were apparently used only on the figure of the Virgin. Analyses have shown that both the cupules and the fleurs de lies were attached with an organic adhesive, which the corrosion of the metal has turned green. On Joseph's robe, belt and scrip and the Virgin's gown are a few surviving beads made from a semi-transparent resin-like material. In the lower register of the case, almost invisible beneath an overpaint, the rear walls of the altarpiece are covered with vertical strips of fine applied brocade. Higher up, the 'windows' were created by using sheets of diamond-patterned tin foil to represent the leaded lights. Like applied brocades, there is a filler and an adhesive layer on the back of the tin foil, though whether the pattern was produced by tamping the tin foil into a mould or was simply painted on is still to be established.

63a

Altarpiece of the Holy Family with St Catherine, 1479(?), Brabant (Leuven?); Zoutleeuw, Church of St Leonard

¹ DE MECHELEER 1997: 120.

² LEUVEN 1971: 623.

³ LEUVEN 1979: 72, fig. 19.

⁴ These pastilles may have been applied at the same time as the ground, although whether they are in the same material is not clear.

⁵ Alloy of copper (73.4%) and zinc (26.6%), analysis carried out by Cécile Glaude under the direction of Jana Sanyova, KIK-IRPA.



63b
St Catherine



63c
The Virgin

Model 63.1



63.1a
Applied brocade on the rear wall of
the altarpiece case (lower register)



63.1b
Detail of the applied brocade



63.1c
Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	rear wall of the altarpiece case	Comparable applied brocades cat. 58.2
Type:	continuous, applied in strips	
Design:	floral and foliate: ogival medallion with stylized pomegranate; lobed leaves scrolling between the medallions	
Measurements:	large: 14.2 x 7.0 cm	
Relief:	striations, rows of zigzags and contours, flat zones (mixed pattern)	
Striations:	11-13 per cm; vertical, zigzags variously aligned	
Condition:	well preserved	
Overpaint:	dark green	
Highlighting:	matt red on flat zones	
Gilding:	none	
Tin foil:	matt, grey, relatively well preserved	
Filler:	ochre-brown in colour, translucent, waxy appearance	
Adhesive:	yellow ochre in colour	
Support layer:	black white chalk and size ground	
Ref:	KIK-IRPA laboratory file (2 cross sections). See also Chapter Ten, Table B	

On the rear wall of all three compartments each of the bays below the windows (except those behind the figures) is filled with a vertical row of four sheets of brocade. They have been almost entirely covered with a thick green paint, but one strip remains uncovered and retains its original appearance. The pomegranate motif is filled alternately with striations and zigzags. The alternating horizontal rows thus produced create a series of nested medallions which look different despite being identical in shape. The pattern recalls engraved and gilded motifs that occur fairly frequently on German altarpieces and panels, largely due to the zigzags and the contours in relief. The effect created by the zigzags may be intended to represent *alluciolato* velvet. The tin foil is neither gilded nor, apparently, varnished or glazed.

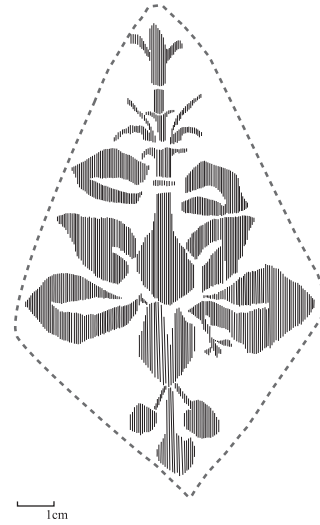
A textile with a very similar pattern is depicted in the Hours of Philip the Bold, which dates from c.1450-c.1455.⁶ The motif also recalls the applied brocades on the lining of the Vadstena Virgin's cloak (1443, Brussels; cat. S8.1). There is no immediately evident relationship between that sculpture and the *Holy Family Altarpiece*; more likely both reference the same source. The relief is, in any case, interpreted differently in the two works. As used on the Vadstena Virgin the background is fully striated while the motif is flat and highlighted. On the present altarpiece the reverse is the case, with the motif standing out in relief from the flat background.

⁶ Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum Ms. 3-1954, fol. 193v (Elevation of the Host). Philip the Bold's grandson Philip the Good had the manuscript completed. VAN BUREN 2002: 1400, fig. 11.

Model 63.2



63.2a
Applied brocade on the Virgin's gown



63.2b
Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	the Virgin's gown, St Catherine's gown (bodice), Joseph's cloak	
Type:	local	
Design:	floral and foliate	
Measurements:	medium: 13.5 x 8.5 cm	
Relief:	striations, flat zones (Tegersee type)	
Striations:	12-18 per cm; vertical, irregular	
Condition:	locally worn	
Overpaint:	traces of an old red overpaint	
Highlighting:	red glaze	
Gilding:	gold leaf mordant	
Tin foil:	degraded, grey to white	
Filler:	brown, semi-transparent, waxy appearance	
Adhesive:	ochre in colour (lead white, ochre, carbon black, calcium carbonate)	none(?)
Support layer:	orange white chalk and size ground	
Ref:	KIK-IRPA laboratory file (7 cross sections). See also Chapter Ten, Table B	

The motif occurs on all three sculptures, though in the case of Joseph it covers a fairly small area, namely the outside of his cloak.

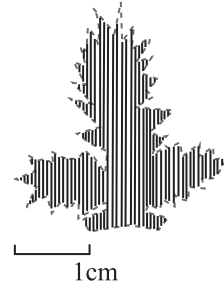
The floral motif becomes more legible when viewed upside down. Seen thus, a five-petalled flower with three stamens emerges from a central stem. The tin foil has not been trimmed away around the edge of the flower but left as a lozenge-shaped sheet. All the lozenges are more or less the same size.

It is clear from observations and cross sections that the brocades were glued onto the orange underlayer before the silver leaf was applied to the garment. The cloak was then painted with a red lake (unidentified pigments fixed with alum and dolomite).

Model 63.3



63.3a
Applied brocade on the Virgin's cloak



63.3b
Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	the Virgin's cloak, St Catherine's gown (bodice)	
Type:	local	
Design:	floral and foliate: three dentate leaves sprouting from a twig	
Measurements:	small: c.6.1 x 5.7 cm	
Relief:	fully striated (relief pattern)	
Striations:	10 per cm; vertical	
Condition:	locally worn	
Overpaint:	traces of old grey and red overpaints	
Highlighting:	none	
Gilding:	gold leaf mordant	
Tin foil:	degraded, grey to white	
Filler:	brown, translucent, waxy appearance	
Adhesive:	ochre in colour	none(?)
Support layer:	orange	red glaze
Ref:	white chalk and size ground	
Ref:	KIK-IRPA laboratory file (1 cross section). See also Chapter Ten, Table B	

Unlike model 63.2, this brocade, in the shape of three dentate leaves sprouting from a twig, was cut out of the tin foil. The motif seems to be merely decorative, rather than an imitation of a particular textile pattern. Like model 63.2, the silver leaf on the Virgin's cloak was applied to the garment and glazed in red after the brocade had been glued onto the orange underlayer. This seems a very laborious procedure and indeed is rarely encountered. Moreover, this method was not used consistently; St Catherine's bodice was first silvered and glazed with red and only then was the brocade applied.

On the Virgin's cloak this foliate motif alternates with the lozenge-shaped brocade (model 63.2) and to these has been added an abundance of glued-on metal cupules and small copper fleurs de lis.



64 PASSION ALTARPIECE

Zoutleeuw, Church of St Leonard, Lady Chapel

Altarpiece, carved, polychromed and painted oak, painted wings

Brabant, Leuven(?)

No marks

Early 16th century

260 × 220 cm

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/47-1960/129

Portrayed in the three compartments, predella and painted wings of this early-sixteenth-century altarpiece are scenes from the Infancy and Passion of Christ. Originally the Crucifixion occupied the centre, but it has been lost and replaced by a thirteenth-century *Sedes Sapientiae*. Integrated into the tracery in the upper part of each compartment are small scenes representing the Presentation in the Temple, the Flight into Egypt and Christ among the Doctors.

There is a dearth of historical data concerning this altarpiece. The absence of the traditional town marks and the carving of the rather stocky characters suggest that the retable may have been made in Leuven, a comparatively modest centre which supplied St Leonard's Church on more than one occasion.¹ The division of the case as well as certain compositional elements, such as Christ's semi-recumbent position in the Descent from the Cross, may be based on Antwerp exemplars,² although several of the faces recall Mechelen carving.

Except for the smaller scenes in the tracery virtually all the groups are made up of separately carved figures. They and the altarpiece case are all in oak. The warrant marks of centres such as Brussels, Antwerp and Mechelen are lacking but most of the figures have some other kind of mark carved on the back. These vary from rectangular shapes (chiefly on figures in the left-hand compartment), a circle, and a vertical row of three horizontal lines (chiefly in the right-hand compartment) to a single instance of a grid.³ Other figures have no marks at all. These marks are probably related to the division of labour or practice in the workshop.

At present the remains of overpaints and numerous losses give the altarpiece a heterogeneous appearance. The original polychromy involved a good deal of metal leaf, burnished on orange bole or unburnished on an orange-coloured mordant. Glazed layers alternated with matt zones such as the blue linings of garments and pale skin. Diverse decorations embellished the carving: applied brocades, sgraffito, tooled designs varying in size and form and, here and there, patterns painted on gold leaf. Among the sgraffiti are geometric and floral motifs and letter-borders. Punchwork, sometimes in combination with painted patterns, occurs on the architecture, garments, accessories and elsewhere and ranges from simple borders to intricate designs. Although the verve of the tooling points to the requisite skill, the dashed-in facial features and rapidly executed sgraffiti give the polychromy a somewhat sketchy character.

Silver leaf has been used locally on both the case and the figures. Painted canvas and painted tin foil (not worked in relief, c.10 × 5 cm) were employed to create the windows. Tin foil was also used in the predella: the sheets above the columns in the four narrow niches are virtually identical in size (10 × 7 cm). Overpaints have left these decorations difficult to decipher. Little if any relief can be discerned, which discourages their identification as applied brocade. On the rear wall of the predella's compartments, however, traces of a floral (repeat) pattern can be made out. None of these tin foil sheets is gilded, although originally they may have had a gold-imitating glaze. In many towns (Antwerp, Brussels, Tournai, Liège, Cologne) the use of this kind of *bresielvel* or 'brazilin sheet' was prohibited by the guild.⁴

64a

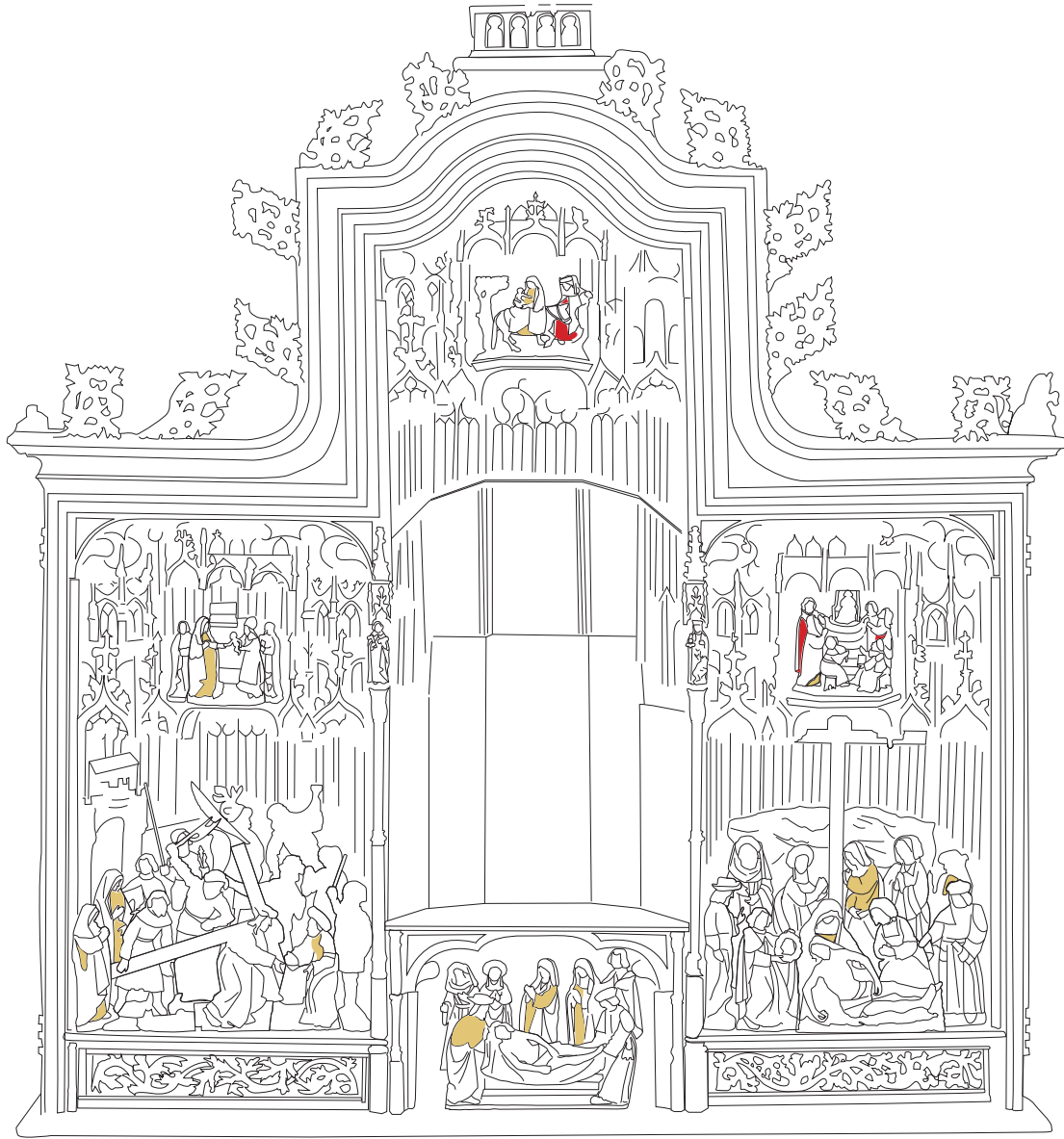
Passion Altarpiece,
early 16th century,
Brabant (Leuven?);
Zoutleeuw, Church
of St Leonard

¹ STEPPE 1997: 18-19.

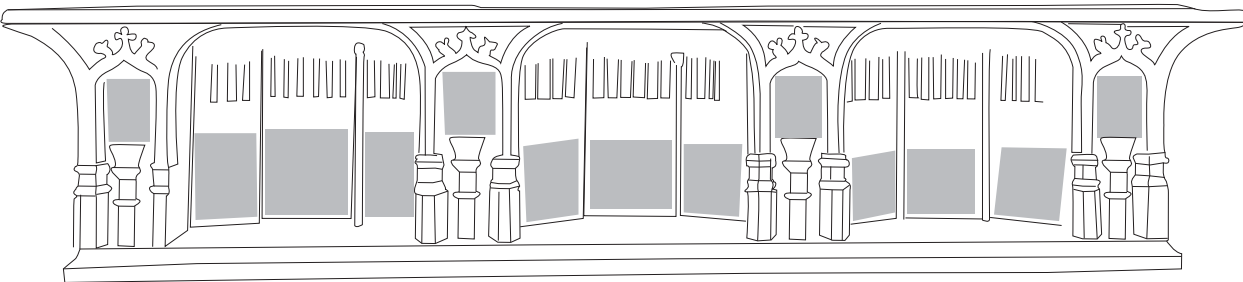
² DERVEAUX-VAN USSEL, NIEUWDORP, STEPPE 1979: 28 (no. 1).

³ This mark differs from the grid that occurs on the four carved groups in the KMKG-MRAH (cat. 23).

⁴ VANDAMME 1982: 149-156.



64b
Location of the
applied brocades
Model 64.1
Model 64.2



64c
Location of the
applied brocades in
the predella

Model 64.1



64.1a
Presentation in the Temple, applied brocade on the gown of the Virgin



64.1b
Lamentation, applied brocade on robe of the male figure at back right

Location:	gowns of Veronica, the Virgin and the holy woman (Carrying of the Cross); gowns of the Virgin and the holy woman to the right of the Cross, and tunic of the male figure at rear right (Lamentation); Nicodemus's robe and the gowns of the Virgin and a holy woman (Entombment); gown of the Virgin (Flight into Egypt); gown of the holy woman (Christ among the Doctors) (see ill. 64b)
Type:	continuous
Design:	floral and foliate(?), too indistinct for reconstruction
Measurements:	unidentifiable, too indistinct for precise measurement
Relief:	striations, contour (relief pattern)
Striations:	18-20 per cm; vertical, horizontal
Condition:	worn
Overpaint:	none
Highlighting:	red glaze (madder-based lake) on contour
Gilding:	gold leaf light brown mordant
Tin foil:	degraded, grey
Filler:	thin, brown, waxy appearance
Adhesive:	orange-brown, oily appearance
Support layer:	white chalk and size ground
Ref:	KIK-IRPA laboratory file (3 cross sections)

This continuous applied brocade covers the garments of eleven characters, both male and female, without hierarchic distinction. The design is made up of a linear pattern in relief, highlighted in red glaze on a gilded background. It is no longer possible to determine the size of the sheets. In most cases the decoration is made up of a patchwork of pieces glued next to each other. Nor is it clear whether these all come from sheets with the same design. What the filler is made of is not very clear but it seems to consist of a brown layer with a waxy appearance. The applied brocades, which were gilded prior to application, were attached in the final phase of polychroming, once gilding and painting were complete.

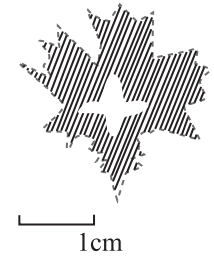
Model 64.2



64.2a
Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple,
applied brocade on Anne's gown



64.2b
Nativity, applied brocade on Joseph's tunic



64.2c
Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	Joseph's tunic (Flight into Egypt); tunics of Joseph and the hooded male figure (Christ among the Doctors); Anne's gown (Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple); Joseph's tunic (Nativity) (see ill. 64b)
Type:	local
Design:	floral and foliate: stylized leaf
Measurements:	small: 2.1 x 2.6 cm
Relief:	striations, flat zone (Tegernsee type)
Striations:	14 per cm; diagonal
Condition:	locally worn
Overpaint:	none
Highlighting:	blue on flat zone black underlayer(?)
Gilding:	gold leaf no adhesive observed
Tin foil:	degraded, dark grey
Filler 1:	thin, brown, waxy appearance
Filler 2(?) / adhesive(?):	thick layer, ochre in colour, opaque, waxy appearance
Support layer:	red glaze gold leaf no adhesive observed white chalk and size ground
Ref:	KIK-IRPA laboratory file (2 cross sections)

The local applied brocade resembles a stylized dentate leaf with a blue quatrefoil in the centre. On each figure the brocade was applied onto a red-glazed surface. The layer structure is unclear: glass impedes verification and the lack of a complete cross section makes it impossible to establish whether a separate adhesive was used or whether the glaze itself acted as the adhesive. The filler seems to be composed of two layers. The purpose of filler 2 – if it is indeed a filler rather than an adhesive – is not entirely clear. The continuous brocade on this altarpiece apparently has only one filler.



64d
Nativity (predella), applied brocade on the rear wall



65 FOUR SAINTS

Zoutleeuw, Church of St Leonard, south transept

Wall painting, oil on lime mortar
 Last quarter of the 15th century
 c.232 × 350 cm

1870-1875: discovery of the wall paintings during the removal of the overlying plaster

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/44-79/1756

Four saints are depicted on the west wall of the south transept in the Church of St Leonard. The bishop with the book, key, and dragon at his feet can be identified as St Servatus. The other bishop is shown in armour, which is difficult to reconcile with his usual designation as St Albert of Leuven.¹ St Roch, in pilgrim's garb, displays the sore on his leg. St Giles is easy to recognize by his black habit, hind, and arrow. Each saint stands beneath an arch of an arcade, his figure set off against an applied brocade cloth of honour suspended by ribbons from a horizontal rod.²

Beneath the present wall painting, which is executed in oil paint³ there seems to be an earlier composition,⁴ but the examination was too brief for this to be further documented. Nor were all the overpainted areas recorded in detail. The painting was already badly deteriorated when Camille Tulpinck made a watercolour copy of it in 1900 or thereabouts.⁵

Tin foil was used not only for the applied brocades of the cloths of honour but in other parts of the composition as well. In these places it has been applied simply as a flat decoration, without any filler, on an orange-brown adhesive layer, and is now black with corrosion. Remains can be seen on the saints' haloes, on the so-called St Albert's armour, the edging of his cope and the braid on his mitre, and on some of his and St Servatus's attributes. Although not a trace of gold leaf was found on this flat tin foil it seems very unlikely that at least the haloes would not have had the appearance of gold – and indeed, traces of yellow glaze were observed. With the applied brocade and the metallic gleam of the flat tin foil the already richly hued and almost life-sized composition must have looked precious indeed.



65a
 Four Saints,
 last quarter of the
 15th century, Zout-
 leeuw, Church of
 St Leonard

65b
 Position of the
 applied brocades
 (yellow) and the flat
 tin foil (grey)

¹ BUYLE, BERGMANS 1994: 188-189; BERGMANS 1998: 337.

² GEELLEN, STEYAERT 2005: 3-4.

³ Micro-chemical test carried out in the KIK-IRPA in 1979.

⁴ BUYLE, BERGMANS 1994: 189; BERGMANS 1998: 337.

⁵ Now in the KMKG-MRAH Brussels; inventoried by ROUSSEAU 1926: 9.



65c
 Four saints, Camille Tulpinck, c.1900; Brussels,
 KMKG-MRAH
 © KMKG-MRAH Brussels, Tulpinck archive

Model 65.1

Location:	cloths of honour behind the four saints
Type:	continuous: straight rows
Pattern:	unidentifiable, too incomplete for reconstruction
Measurements:	large: 19 x 12.6 cm
Relief:	unidentifiable
Striations:	12 per cm; vertical
Condition:	badly damaged
Overpaint:	none (removed)
Highlighting:	matt red(?) (overpaint or highlight?)
Gilding:	none observed
Tin foil:	white-grey, almost completely lost
Filler:	very thin, brown, semi-transparent, based on beeswax, slightly thickened with pigments
Adhesive:	light brown, semi-transparent
Support layer:	white chalk and size ground earlier painting (?)
Ref:	KIK-IRPA laboratory file (1 cross section). See also Chapter Ten, Table B

Analogous to the images of the three saints in Anderlecht (cat. 2) and St Agnes in Ghent (cat. 38), here too the applied brocade has been used to cover the surface of the cloths of honour (c.126 x 60 cm). The tin foil was applied in rectangular sheets, which in terms of dimension are well integrated in the composition. Unfortunately the brocade is too badly damaged to allow any inferences about the pattern, the highlighting or the working method. Except for the edges and a few small remains, virtually all the relief decoration is now lost – hence the doubt about the use of gold leaf. Analysis of the filler shows the main component to be beeswax.



65d
Remains of the applied brocade on the cloth of honour behind St Roch



66 ALTARPIECE WITH THREE SAINTS

Private collection

Altarpiece, carved, polychromed and painted wood, painted wings

Case, painted wings: Brussels

Sculpture: Mechelen

Polychromy: Brussels, Master I*T

Marks: Mechelen arms, three pales (back of St Elizabeth), Brussels compasses and plane (side of case), 'BRVESEL' (gilding of St Ursula's pedestal), I*T monogram (gilding of St Elizabeth's pedestal)

1500-1510

Open: 61 × 120 × 16 cm

Closed: 61 × 60 × 16 cm

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/47-2006/09166

St Anne with the Virgin and Child, St Elizabeth and St Ursula were among the most frequently portrayed characters in Mechelen sculpture. Devotional figures of this kind were in particular demand in beguinages and convents. Here, each saint stands on her own pedestal in the altarpiece case. In size and the refinement of the carving the figures are very reminiscent of those of the *Altarpiece of the Virgin with SS Barbara and Catherine* now in the Mayer van den Bergh Museum in Antwerp (cat. 6). In both cases the collaboration between Mechelen and Brussels resulted in ensembles of the highest quality. Although, in contrast to the Antwerp work, the altarpiece case here is simply conceived, without divisions, tracery or costly polychromy, the saints have the same graceful air, with slender hands and smooth delicate faces.

The altarpiece case, the wings, and the statues' pedestals are in oak, the statues themselves in walnut. The case has twice been stamped with the Brussels compasses and plane. On the back of St Elizabeth is the Mechelen coat of arms with its three pales; on her pedestal is the I*T monogram. The applied brocades embellishing the characters' garments appear on a whole series of sculptures, including figures in the *Saluzzo Altarpiece* (cat. 19), the *Holy Kinship Altarpiece* in the KMKG-MRAH in Brussels (cat. 24) and the *Altarpiece of the Virgin with SS Barbara and Catherine* in the Mayer van den Bergh Museum in Antwerp (cat. 6). They were all carved in the Borman circle and polychromed in the I*T workshop (see Chapter Six).

The altarpiece and its three saints are virtually intact; only the crowns on St Elizabeth's head and book have been lost. It also retains its wings: on the outside are St Christopher and St Anthony, painted in grisaille; on the inside John the Evangelist and James the Less. Applied brocade was not uncommonly used to embellish the backgrounds of painted wings. Whether that is the case here is hard to tell, however, as the backgrounds of John the Evangelist and James the Less have been thickly overpainted.

66a

Altarpiece with Three Saints, 1500-1510, Mechelen-Brussels; private collection
Wings open

66b

Altarpiece with Three Saints
Wings closed





66c
St Ursula



66d
BRVESEL mark on St Ursula's pedestal



66e
I*T monogram on St Elizabeth's pedestal



66f
Mechelen mark on the back of the figure of St Elizabeth

Model 66.1



66.1a
Applied brocade on St Ursula's gown



66.1b
Reconstruction of the applied brocade 1 cm

Location:	St Ursula's gown	Identical applied brocades cat. 6.1 cat. 7.1 cat. 19.1 cat. 24.1 cat. G4.1 cat. S1.1 cat. S7.1 cat. S9.1 cat. S10.1 Comparable applied brocades cat. 47.1
Type:	continuous: straight rows	
Design:	floral and foliate: posy of flowers and lanceolate leaves in a basket inside an ogival framework of flowering stems, on a latted background	
Measurements:	medium: 10.8 x 6.5 cm	
Relief:	striations, contour and laticing in slightly higher relief (relief pattern)	
Striations:	12 per cm; vertical, diagonal	
Condition:	locally worn	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	red glaze on contour and laticing matt red	
Gilding:	gold leaf no adhesive observed	
Tin foil:	degraded, grey to white, locally black	
Filler:	extremely thin, ochre in colour, waxy	
Adhesive:	orange, oily	
Support layer:	white chalk and size ground	
Ref:	cross section: none	

The I*T workshop employed the familiar motif of lanceolate leaves, and flowers on a latted background (see *Saluzzo Altarpiece*, cat. 19.1).

Model 66.2



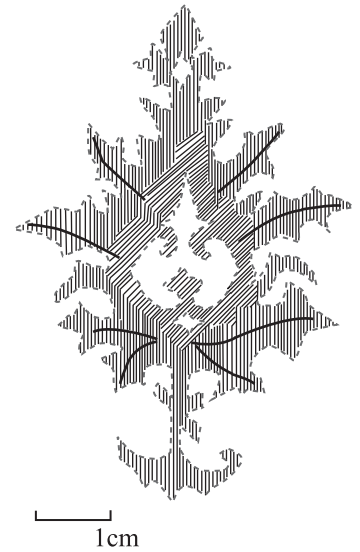
66.2a
Applied brocade on St Anne's gown



66.2b
Applied brocade on St Elizabeth's gown



66.2c
Archaeological drawing



66.2d
Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	gowns of St Anne and St Elizabeth	Identical applied brocades cat. 6.2 cat. 19.7 cat. 28.1 cat. 29.1 cat. G4.2 cat. S1.2 cat. S6.2 cat. S7.2 cat. S9.2 cat. PC1.1
Type:	local	
Design:	floral and foliate: stylized thistle leaf or acanthus leaf	Possibly identical applied brocades Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, <i>Female Saint</i> (1965.2230) London, V&A, <i>St Barbara</i> (A.107-1937) Paris, Louvre, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (RF 1567) Paris, Louvre, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (RF 1788) Paris, Louvre, <i>St Margaret</i> (RF 2572) Paris, Musée Marmottan, <i>St Barbara</i> (622d) Private collection, <i>St Gudule</i> (formerly in the Kofler-Truniger collection) Private collection, <i>St Roch</i> (formerly in the Kofler-Truniger collection)
Measurements:	small: c.6.5 x 4.5 cm	
Relief:	fully striated, veins in relief, excisions (relief pattern)	
Striations:	15-17 per cm; vertical, diagonal	
Condition:	locally worn	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	none	
Gilding:	gold leaf no adhesive observed	
Tin foil:	grey	
Filler:	white, opaque	
Adhesive:	none observed	
Support layer:	red glaze silver leaf white chalk and size ground	
Ref:	cross section: none	Comparable applied brocades cat. 24.2

The central bud emerges from its calyx and is surrounded by dentate leaves. The brocades are distributed over the surface of the gowns of St Anne and St Elizabeth. The filler is extremely thin and has a white appearance, which may indicate chalk and size or even wax contaminated by the tin foil. Neither has been confirmed by laboratory analysis, however. The motif belongs to the repertoire of Master I*T.

Model 66.3



66.3a
Applied brocade braid on St Elizabeth's cloak



66.3b
Reconstruction of the braid



66.3c
Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	St Elizabeth's cloak	Identical applied brocades cat. 19.9 cat. S1.3 cat. S7.5 cat. S9.4 cat. S10.4
Type:	braid	
Design:	floral and foliate: stemwork with cloverleaves between two parallel lines	Comparable applied brocades cat. 6.3 cat. 24.6 cat. 49.1 cat. G4.4 cat. S6.4 Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, <i>Female Saint</i> (1965.2230) Cologne, Schnütgen Museum, <i>St Christopher</i> (A 227) London, V&A, <i>St Barbara</i> (A.107-1937) Paris, Louvre, <i>St Margaret</i> (RF 2572) Paris, Louvre, <i>St Michael</i> (OA 310) Paris, Louvre, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (RF 1567) Paris, Musée Marmottan, <i>St Barbara</i> (622d) Private collection, <i>St Barbara</i> (former Kofler-Truniger collection) Private collection, <i>St Gudule</i> (former Kofler-Truniger collection) Private collection, <i>St Roch</i> (former Kofler-Truniger collection) Private collection, <i>St Catherine</i> (former Becker collection, Brussels) Private collection, <i>St Margaret</i> (Christie's sale, New York 1994) Private collection, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (antiquary Bruno Speybrouck sale, Kortrijk 2007) Private collection, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (Brussels, KIK-IRPA photograph N4563)
Measurements:	small: 0.8 cm	
Relief:	fully striated strip (relief pattern)	
Striations:	16 per cm; vertical	
Condition:	badly damaged	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	matt blue (azurite) on striations	
Gilding:	gold leaf no adhesive observed	
Tin foil:	grey	
Filler:	yellow ochre, transparent	
Adhesive:	apparently none	
Support layer:	burnished gold leaf orange bole white chalk and size ground	
Ref:	cross section: none	

St Elizabeth's cloak still bears the remains of an applied brocade braid. The 8-millimetre-wide strip of foil was completely striated, then gilded, and finally painted in azurite blue except for the stemwork and cloverleaf pattern and its confining parallel lines. The yellow ochre layer on the cloak's gilding is probably the adhesive.

This braid makes a frequent appearance in the corpus of the I*T workshop (see also cat. 19). In each case the shape of the stemwork and leaves is so similar that the same stencil can be assumed.



FI PRESENTATION OF MARY IN THE TEMPLE JOHN THE BAPTIST

Abbeville, Musée Boucher de Perthes, inv. 2090

Panel paintings (altarpiece wings), painted wood
Brussels(?)

1490-1500

114 × 44.5 cm (with frame)

1994: acquired by the Musée Boucher de Perthes

These two panels were probably once part of a carved or painted altarpiece.¹ A material study should clarify whether they were originally the front and back of the same wing panel.² The frames are apparently original; nonetheless, there are certain anomalies. One would expect to see the cloth of honour behind John the Baptist depicted in its entirety, yet it has been cut lengthways, as has the (partially repainted) angel attending the Presentation of the Virgin on the other panel.

The representation of holy figures before a cloth of honour hanging on a stone wall is a formula that was established in Brussels in the late fifteenth century for use on the exterior sides of the painted wings of carved altarpieces (see Chapter Five). The composition of the Presentation of Mary in the Temple is reminiscent of the Presentation painted by the Master of the View of St Gudule, now in the KMSKB-MRBAB in Brussels.³

Fi
*Presentation of
Mary in the Temple
and John the Baptist,*
c.1500, Brussels(?);
Abbeville, Musée
Boucher de Perthes

¹ HAZEBROUCK 1995: 77. We thank Didier Martens for drawing our attention to these two panels and curator Stéphane Paccoud for receiving us at the museum and making the file available.

² As suggested by Phillipe Lorentz, curator at the Musée du Louvre, in a letter to Christine Daudibertières, curator at the Musée Boucher de Perthes, Paris, 10 April 1994, file of the Musée Boucher de Perthes.

³ DUBOIS, SLACHMUYLDERS 2006: 366-376.

Model Fr.1



Fr.1a
Detail of the applied brocade on the cloth of honour behind
John the Baptist



Fr.1b
Archaeological drawing

1cm

Location:	cloth of honour behind John the Baptist	Comparable applied brocades cat. 31a.2
Type:	continuous: staggered rows	
Design:	floral and foliate: stylized rosette	
Measurements:	medium: c.9.8 x c.9.8 cm	
Relief:	striations, flat zones (Tegersee type)	
Striations:	6.5-7 per cm; vertical	
Condition:	locally worn	
Overpaint:	varnish	
Highlighting:	black on flat zones	
Gilding:	gold leaf no adhesive observed	
Tin foil:	degraded, grey	
Filler:	brown, translucent, waxy appearance	
Adhesive:	brown red	
Support layer:	white chalk and size ground	

The cloth of honour is made up of nine sheets of applied brocade, cut to shape around the figure. That the brocade was gilded after it had been attached to the panel but before the painting was carried out is evidenced by the occasional overlapping of paint onto the gilding. The applied brocades were designed to be arranged in staggered rows.



Fr.1c
Position of the tin foil sheets on the cloth of honour



F2 LAST JUDGEMENT ALTARPIECE

Beaune, Hôtel Dieu

Polyptych, painted oak
 Brussels, Rogier van der Weyden
 1443-1451
 Open: c.220 × 547 × 6 cm
 Closed: c.220 × 273 × 6 cm

Rogier van der Weyden's *Last Judgement* altarpiece was commissioned by Nicolas Rolin (c.1376-1462), Chancellor of the Duchy of Burgundy, to stand on the altar in the chapel at the end of the long ward of the Hôtel Dieu, the hospital he built in Beaune to care for the poor and the sick. Rolin signed the charter of foundation in 1443; the altarpiece must have been created between 1443 and 1451.¹ On the outer panels on the exterior of the wings the donors, Chancellor Rolin and his wife Guigone de Salins, kneel at their prie-dieu. In the panels between them are St Sebastian and St Anthony, painted in grisaille; above the saints the Annunciation takes place. The darkly-clad chancellor and his wife are sharply delineated against applied brocade cloths of estate hanging before the rear wall of their oratories.² The cloths are edged on the three visible sides with a painted green border.

Practically nothing remains of the twenty or more tin foil sheets that cover Guigone's cloth of estate. They were applied from top to bottom in seven rows. Virtually all the gilded relief has been lost and replaced by hatched retouching. Only the very edges of the tin foil squares are still discernable. It is clear from the slight encroachments of gold leaf onto the painted stone walls that the tin foil was gilded after it had been glued onto the panel. In two places – on a level with Guigone's right shoulder and upper arm and with her left shoulder – a very narrow strip of gold leaf seems to have been added, either to fill in the gap between the applied brocade and the outline of the painted figure, or to reduce the figure's original width. The cloth of honour behind Chancellor Rolin is about the same size and the individual tin foil sheets were carefully positioned around the figure. In a number of places here it is still possible to make out the original pattern, though it is very vague.

The polyptych has had an eventful history of neglect, evacuation (during the French Revolution and wars) and restoration. By the second half of the eighteenth century damage must have considerably affected the altarpiece's appearance. In 1875-1879 the *Last Judgement* was sent to Paris for restoration in the workshops of the Louvre.³ Photographs of the altarpiece taken around 1875-1877, before restoration, show that the applied brocade was still in a fairly good state.⁴ It can be seen that the same pattern was used for both hangings. The damage to the applied brocade therefore seems to have occurred only in the last century. Just when the retouches were done cannot be said with certainty, but they are present on the infrared photographs taken in 1968.

The X-radiographs of the donor panels have allowed Elisabeth Ravaud to suggest a first reconstruction of the pattern.⁵ It consists of a pomegranate motif set amidst foliage and twining stems. The reconstruction can be refined by a further screening of the surviving remains. The pomegranate appears to be enhanced with dots of red glaze. The many losses make it difficult to be absolutely certain about the nature of these dots, but on the 1875-1877 photographs they look as if they are raised.⁶ Given the brocade's present state, however, this can only be conjecture.

F2a

Last Judgement

Altarpiece (closed)

top: Annunciation;

bottom: Nicolas

Rolin, St Sebastian,

St Anthony,

Guigone de Salins

¹ VERONÉE-VERHAEGEN 1973.

² We thank curator Bruno François of the Hôtel Dieu, Beaune, who facilitated our examination of the painting.

³ VERONÉE-VERHAEGEN 1973: 76, 79.

⁴ Ibid. 86, pls. CCXXVI, CCXXVII.

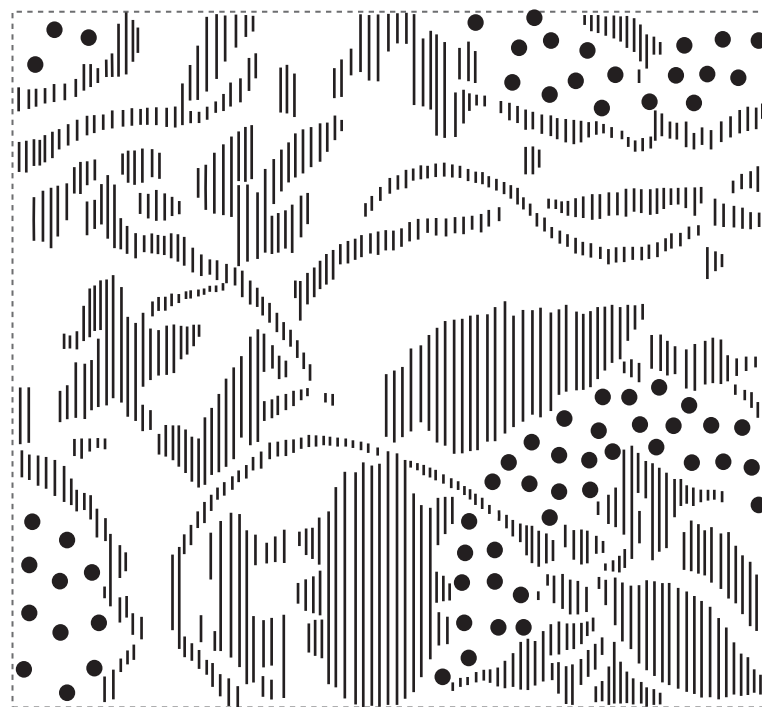
⁵ RAVAUD 1999: 179-189. See also Chapter Eleven.

⁶ VERONÉE-VERHAEGEN 1973: 86, pls. CCXXVI, CCXXVII. Ravaud's examination of the X-radiographs sheds no light on the possible relief of these dots.

Model F2.1



F2.1a
Detail of the applied brocade on the hanging
behind Nicolas Rolin



F2.1b
Reconstruction of the relief

1 cm

Location:	exterior side of the wings, hanging
Type:	continuous: straight rows
Design:	floral and foliate: pomegranate motif between foliage and twining stems
Measurements:	medium: 9.3 x 10.1 cm
Relief:	striations, raised dots, flat zones (Tegerensee type?)
Striations:	8-9 per cm; vertical
Condition:	badly damaged
Overpaint:	red retouches
Highlighting:	red glaze
Gilding:	gold leaf no adhesive observed; too indistinct for identification
Tin foil:	degraded, dark grey
Filler:	ochre in colour, semi-transparent, waxy appearance
Adhesive:	ochre in colour
Support layer:	white chalk and size ground



F2b

Last Judgement Altarpiece (exterior side of wing), 1443-1451, Rogier van der Weyden; Beaune, Hôtel Dieu
 Guigone de Salins
 © Beaune, Hôtel Dieu



F3 ALTARPIECE OF THE LIFE OF THE VIRGIN AND THE INFANCY OF CHRIST

Rouen, Musée départemental des Antiquités de la Seine-Maritime, inv. 687 (A)

Altarpiece, carved and polychromed oak, painted wings¹
Brussels

Carving: carver of the Rouen Retable c.1475-1480

Polychromy: c.1485-c.1490, attributed to the Geel Master of the Dianthus

Painted wings: painter of the Rouen Retable c.1485-c.1490

Marks: compasses and plane (five), mallet (two), C-shaped marks (six, on the back of the case)

Closed: 165 × 175 × 26 cm

The applied brocades, the other polychromy techniques, and the repertoire of motifs employed on this Marian retable suggest that its polychromy was carried out by the Geel Master of the Dianthus (see Chapters Five and Six). The pattern of the applied brocade that embellishes the cloths of honour on the outside of the painted wings is typical of a group of Brussels carved altarpieces with painted wings produced between 1480 and 1500.

F3a

Altarpiece of the Life of the Virgin and the Infancy of Christ, carving: Brussels, carver of the Rouen Retable: c.1475-1480; polychromy: c.1485-1490, Brussels, Geel Master of the Dianthus; painted wings: c.1485-c.1490, Brussels, painter of the Rouen Retable; Rouen, Musée départemental des Antiquités de la Seine-Maritime © Musée départemental des Antiquités de la Seine-Maritime, Rouen

F3b

Altarpiece of the Life of the Virgin and the Infancy of Christ, Rouen Wings closed, SS Catherine and Mary Magdalene © Musée départemental des Antiquités de la Seine-Maritime, Rouen



¹ PÉRIER-D'ETEREN 1996; GUILLOT DE SUDIRAUT 2001C.

Model F3.1



F3.1a
Cloth of honour behind St Ursula, detail of
the applied brocade



F3.1b
Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	exterior side of the wings, cloths of honour	Identical applied brocades cat. 35.1 cat. 54.1 Cambridge, Queens' College Chapel, <i>St Catherine, St Barbara</i> and <i>St George</i> Private collection, <i>St Sebastian</i>
Type:	continuous	
Design:	floral and foliate: flowers and leaves sprouting from undulating stems	Comparable applied brocades cat. 52.1 cat. G5.1 cat. S8.1 cat. S11.1
Measurements:	large: min. 15.6 x min. 5.3 cm (no sheet is complete)	
Relief:	striations, contour, raised dots, plateaus (mixed pattern)	
Striations:	6-7 per cm; vertical and fairly wide	
Condition:	badly damaged	
Overpaint:	thick varnish	
Highlighting:	absent	
Gilding:	gold leaf beige mordant	
Tin foil:	degraded, grey	
Filler:	brown red	
Adhesive:	orange-brown	
Support layer:	white chalk and size ground	

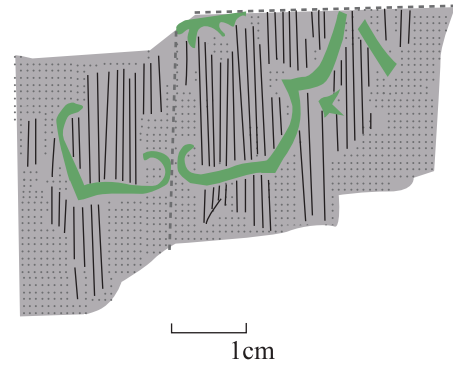


F3.1c
Cloth of honour behind St Ursula
(exterior side of wing)

Model F3.2



F3.2a
Circumcision, applied brocade on the robe of the turbaned official



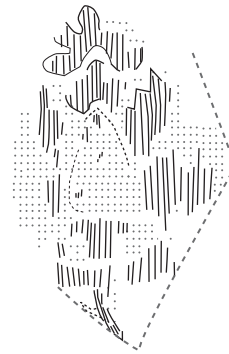
F3.2b
Archaeological drawing

Location:	robe of the turbaned official (Circumcision)	Comparable applied brocades cat. 39.1 cat. 53.1 Barnard Castle, Bowes Museum, <i>Passion Altarpiece</i>
Type:	continuous: straight rows	
Pattern:	floral and foliate: stylized rosette motif	
Measurements:	small: 5 x min. 4.1 cm	
Relief:	striations, contour, flat zones (mixed pattern)	
Striations:	12-13 per cm; vertical	
Condition:	badly damaged	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	pale matt green	
Gilding:	none observed, apparently none	
Tin foil:	degraded, grey	
Filler:	orange yellow	
Adhesive:	no data	
Support layer:	no data, chalk and size ground (?)	

Model F3.3



F3.3a
Nativity, applied brocade on the Virgin's gown



F3.3b
Archaeological drawing

Location:	the Virgin's gown (in the three scenes), holy woman's blue gown and acolyte's blue robe (Circumcision)	Comparable applied brocades cat. 18.2 cat. 19.4 cat. 19.5 cat. 22.1 cat. 24.3 cat. 24.4 cat. 35.2 cat. 35.3 cat. G4.3 cat. S3.2 cat. S4.2 cat. S7.2 cat. S7.5
Type:	local	
Design:	floral and foliate: thistle or pomegranate motif, with double corolla and lateral dentate leaves untrimmed hexagonal tinfoil sheet	
Measurements:	small: 4.6-5.1 x 2.7-4 cm (sheet sizes vary, the motif itself is 4.6 cm high)	
Relief:	striations, contour, flat zones (mixed pattern?)	
Striations:	12 per cm; vertical	
Condition:	locally worn	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	blue on flat zones	
Gilding:	gold leaf no adhesive observed	
Tin foil:	degraded, grey	
Filler:	orange yellow, opaque, waxy appearance	
Adhesive:	none observed, apparently none	
Support layer:	black underlayer white chalk and size ground	

The local brocades were combined with another decorative element – probably dots of mordant gilding, though possibly gilded metal cupules – of which only traces remain on the blue surface of the gowns. The background was painted blue once the local brocade had been glued to the black underlayer.



GI PASSION ALTARPIECE

Dinslaken, Church of St Vincent

Altarpiece, carved and polychromed oak, painted wings¹

Brussels

Painted wings: attributed to the workshop of the Master of the View of St Gudule

No discernable marks

1470-1480

Closed: 165 × 175 × 26 cm

Model GI.1



GI.1a
Detail of the applied brocade behind St Matthew



GI.1b
Archaeological drawing

1 cm

Location:	exterior side of the painted wings, cloths of honour	Comparable applied brocades cat. 39.1 cat. F3.2 cat. S3.1 Barnard Castle, Bowes Museum, <i>Passion Altarpiece</i>
Type:	continuous: staggered rows	
Design:	floral and foliate: rosette with trilobed and polylobed vegetal motifs	
Measurements:	medium: 10.5 × 8.5 cm	
Relief:	striations, contour, raised dots and plateaus (trilobed and polylobed motifs) (mixed pattern)	
Striations:	8 per cm; vertical	
Condition:	well preserved	
Overpaint:	varnish	
Highlighting:	none	
Gilding:	gold leaf no data on adhesive	
Tin foil:	degraded, grey	
Filler:	no data	
Adhesive:	no data	
Support layer:	white chalk and size ground	

◀ **GI**
Passion Altarpiece
 (detail), 1470-1480,
 Brussels, painted
 wings attributed to
 the workshop of the
 Master of the View
 of St Gudule;
 Dinslaken, Church
 of St Vincent
 St Matthew (exterior
 side of the left wing)

The applied brocades were designed to be positioned in staggered rows. The surface appears fully gilded (with a later varnish). There is no highlighting.

¹ LÖHR 1970: 107-112; BECKER 1989: 115-140; DUBOIS 1989: 49 and fig. 5; WOODS 1996: 793-794; MUND, STROO 1998: 346; JACOBS 1999: 216; DE BOODT 2005: 191-192; WOODS 2007: 297, 396, 512.



G2a



G2b



G2c

G2 PASSION ALTARPIECE

Dortmund, Church of St Reinold

Altarpiece, carved and painted wood, painted wings

Southern Netherlands

No marks

c.1420-1425

Open: 361 × 730 × 32 cm

Closed: 361 × 377 × 32 cm

◀ G2a

Passion Altarpiece,

c.1415-1420,

Southern Netherlands; Dortmund, Church of St Reinold
Wings open

KIK-IRPA file: 2L/47-2006/09162

The carved part of this altarpiece consists of a central Crucifixion flanked by the Twelve Apostles, six on either side, grouped in pairs. On the large painted wings episodes from the Infancy and Passion of Christ and the Life of the Virgin are portrayed. St Catherine and St Barbara are depicted on the smaller upper wings. The painted exterior sides of the wing panels have been lost.¹ Robert Didier and John Steyaert attribute the carving to the Master of Hakendover, creator of the *Altarpiece of the Three Virgins* in the Church of the Blessed Saviour in Hakendover;² Evelyn Bertram-Neunzig suggests it was produced in Flanders, possibly Bruges, though she does not altogether dismiss Brabant.³ Whatever the case, the Dortmund *Passion Altarpiece* illustrates the beginning of the prolific use of applied brocade in the art of the Low Countries.

◀ G2b-c

Passion Altarpiece,

Lower left wing and lower right wing



G2d

Location of the continuous and local applied brocades on the lower wings

- Model G2.1
- Model G2.2
- Model G2.3
- Model G2.4

¹ BERTRAM-NEUNZIG 2004; BERTRAM-NEUNZIG 2005b: 181-203; BERTRAM-NEUNZIG 2007. We thank Cyriel Stroo for drawing our attention to this altarpiece.

² DIDIER 1989: 51; GHENT 1994: 68-69.

³ BERTRAM-NEUNZIG 2007: 78-79.

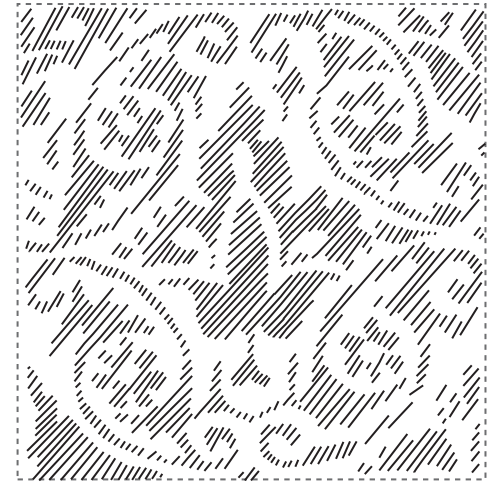
Model G2.1



G2.1a
Adoration, applied brocade on the
young magus's doublet



G2.1b
Archaeological drawing



G2.1c
Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	young magus's doublet (Adoration), high priest's robe (Presentation); bed coverlet (Dormition) (see ill. G2d)		
Type:	continuous: straight rows		
Design:	floral and foliate: palmette-like motifs with flowers and curling leaves		
Measurements:	small: 6-6.2 x 6.3 cm		
Relief:	striations, flat zones (Tegernsee type)		
Striations:	12-14 per cm; diagonal, not all equally straight		
Condition:	well preserved		
Overpaint:	none		
Highlighting:	green, white and red (young magus's doublet)	red and green (high priest's robe)	red, white and blue (bed coverlet)
Gilding:	gold leaf ochre-coloured mordant (?); too indistinct for identification		
Tin foil:	degraded, grey to black		
Filler:	grey white, dry appearance, present only in the striations		
Adhesive:	brown, translucent		
Support layer:	-	orange red for the bed coverlet	
	white chalk and size ground		

The relief of this model is extremely fine. The gilding and highlighting were carried out post-application. The brocades on the young magus's doublet (Adoration) and the high priest's robe (Presentation) were glued directly onto the white chalk and size ground. Those on the Virgin's bed coverlet (Dormition) were treated slightly differently, being glued onto an orange-red paint layer. Perhaps this indicates a change in the original composition: it may be that the painter initially planned to more or less match the bed cover used in the Nativity and had already applied the orange-red layer, but then, instead of a painted pattern, decided to use applied brocade. Lines in a brownish-red glaze on the brocades indicate the drapery folds and suggest volume.



G2.1d
Reconstruction of the relief with adjacent sheets



G2.1e
Dormition, applied brocade on the bed coverlet

Model G2.2



G2.2a
Christ before Pilate, applied brocade on Pilate's canopy



G2.2b
Archaeological drawing



G2.2c
Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	garment of the kneeling accuser and Pilate's canopy (Christ before Pilate) (see ill. G2d)	
Type:	local	
Design:	floral and foliate: palmette-like motif untrimmed tin foil sheet	
Measurements:	small: c.4.8 x c.3.7 cm	
Relief:	striations, flat zones, contour (mixed pattern?)	
Striations:	10 per cm; diagonal	
Conservation:	locally worn	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	white, green glaze, matt black on flat zones; white on untrimmed edges	red glaze, green glaze, matt black on flat zones; red glaze on untrimmed edges
Gilding:	gold leaf mordant(?), ochre in colour, too indistinct for identification	
Tin foil:	degraded, grey to black	
Filler:	grey white, dry appearance, present only in the striations	
Adhesive:	no data	
Support layer:	-	red
	white chalk and size ground	

In both cases this model is used in combination with another. On the canopy, where it forms the centre of a lozenge, it is combined with model G2.3. On the garment of the kneeling accuser it is combined with model G2.4. Here the edges of the untrimmed tin foil sheets almost touch, so that practically the entire surface is covered. Tiny trilobe leaves are painted in the interstices between the brocades, further assisting the continuity of the pattern. A related motif was used in a painted version on the *St Clare Polyptych* (c.1360; Cologne, Cathedral), on the painted 'hangings' above the gablets. There, however, the flowerhead emerges from a stem that is pecked at by birds.⁴

⁴ SCHULZE-SENGER, HANSMANN 2005: 164-167, figs. 158-161.

Model G2.3



G2.3a-b

Descent from the Cross, applied brocade on Joseph of Arimathea's cloak

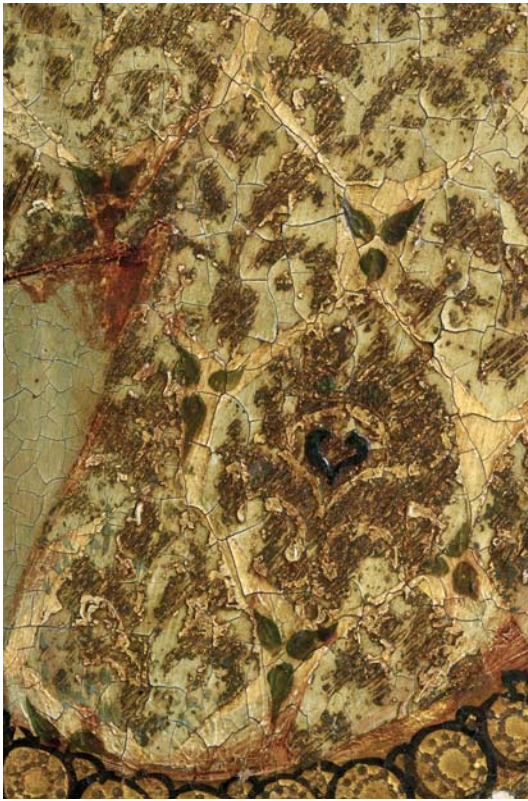
G2.3c

Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	Pilate's canopy (Christ before Pilate); Joseph of Arimathea's cloak (Descent from the Cross, Entombment) (see ill. G2d)
Type:	local
Design:	floral and foliate: cinquefoil flower untrimmed tin foil sheet
Measurements:	small: 1.6-1.7 x 1.5 cm
Relief:	fully striated (relief pattern)
Striations:	10 per cm: diagonal
Condition:	well preserved
Overpaint:	none
Highlighting:	none
Gilding:	gold leaf mordant(?), ochre in colour; too indistinct for identification
Tin foil:	degraded, grey to black
Filler:	grey white, dry appearance, present only in the striations
Adhesive:	brown, translucent, oily appearance
Support layer:	red white chalk and size ground

This simple cinquefoil flower occurs on the canopy in combination with the palmette-like motif already described as model G2.2, and with the foliate motif on Joseph of Arimathea's cloak in the Descent from the Cross, described below as model G2.4. The tin foil has not been trimmed away around the edges of the motif but left as a rough polygonal sheet. The sheets are linked by elegant painted stemwork and foliage.

Model G2.4



G2.4a
Christ before Pilate, applied brocade on the garment of the kneeling accuser



1 cm

G2.4b
Archaeological drawing

Location:	garment of the kneeling accuser (Christ before Pilate); Joseph of Arimathea's cloak (Descent from the Cross, Entombment) (see ill. G2d)	
Type:	local	
Design:	floral and foliate untrimmed tin foil sheet	
Measurements:	small: 3.6-3.8 x 3.15-3.95 cm	
Relief:	striations, contour(?), flat zones (Tegernsee type or mixed pattern?)	
Striations:	10-11 per cm; diagonal, not all equally straight	
Condition:	badly damaged	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	green on flat zones and untrimmed edges (Joseph of Arimathea)	white on flat zones and untrimmed edges (kneeling accuser)
Gilding:	gold leaf mordant(?), ochre in colour; too indistinct for identification	
Tin foil:	degraded, grey to black	
Filler:	grey white, dry appearance, present only in the striations	
Adhesive:	brown, translucent, oily appearance	
Support layer:	white chalk and size ground	

This model tends to be more badly damaged than others on the altarpiece. The structure is identical to that of the other models but in this case the fill material is much more difficult to distinguish. The tin foil has not been trimmed away around the edges of the motif but left in a rough polygonal sheet. The colour used for the highlighting matches that of the respective backgrounds: on Joseph of Arimathea's robe in both his appearances the brocades, which are combined with model G2.3, are set among pale green painted stems on a dark green ground; on the garment of the kneeling accuser in Christ before Pilate, they are combined with model G2.2 and set on a white background.

Model G2.5

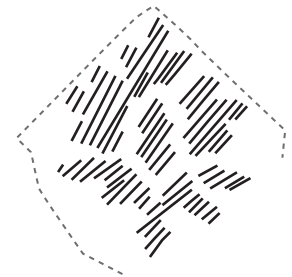


G2.5a
St Catherine, applied brocade on the gown



1 cm

G2.5b
Archaeological drawing



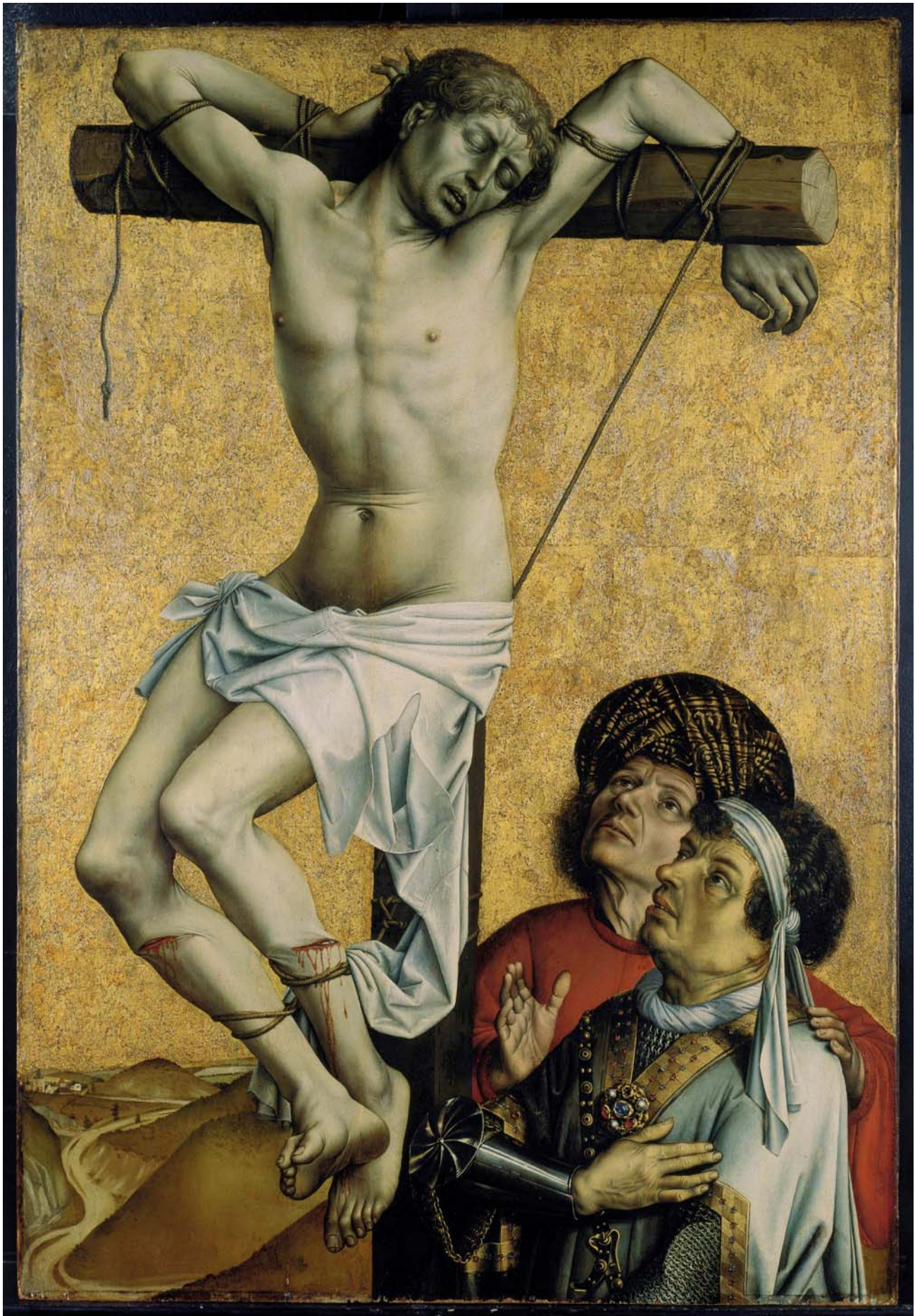
1 cm

G2.5c
Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	St Catherine's gown
Type:	local
Design:	floral and foliate: palmette-like untrimmed tin foil sheet
Measurements:	small: 3.7-4 x 3.3-3.7 cm
Relief:	striations, flat zones (Tegernsee type)
Striations:	10 per cm; diagonal
Condition:	well preserved
Overpaint:	none
Highlighting:	red glaze
Gilding:	gold leaf mordant(?), ochre in colour; too indistinct for identification
Tin foil:	degraded, grey to black
Filler:	grey white, dry appearance, present only in the striations
Adhesive:	red brown
Support layer:	white chalk and size ground

The stylized motif amongst the painted stems on St Catherine's blue gown is very similar to the painted floral motif on St Barbara's gown in the *Calvary of the Tanners* in Bruges (c.1400; Bruges, St Saviour's Cathedral). Very close parallels have recently been shown between the Dortmund panels and the Bruges *Calvary*.⁵ The figures, gestures and garments of the graceful female saints are strikingly similar. Indeed, the affinity between the two works suggests that they were produced in the same workshop. The gilded applied brocades on St Catherine's gown were glued to the ground, then the untrimmed edges were painted blue with the rest of the gown, leaving the striated motif to stand out in gold. Finally the drapery folds were drawn in brown-red glaze on top of the brocades.

⁵ DENEFFE, PETERS, FREMOUT 2009: 141-145.



G3 CRUCIFIED THIEF

Frankfurt, Städelsche Kunstinstitut Frankfurt, inv. 886

Panel painting, oak, painted on both sides

Robert Campin

c.1430

134.2 × 92.5 × 1.1 cm



◀ G3a
Crucified Thief,
 c.1430, Robert
 Campin; Frankfurt,
 Städelsche Kunst-
 institut Frankfurt
 © Artothek

G3b ▶
 Position of the
 tin foil sheets on the
 background

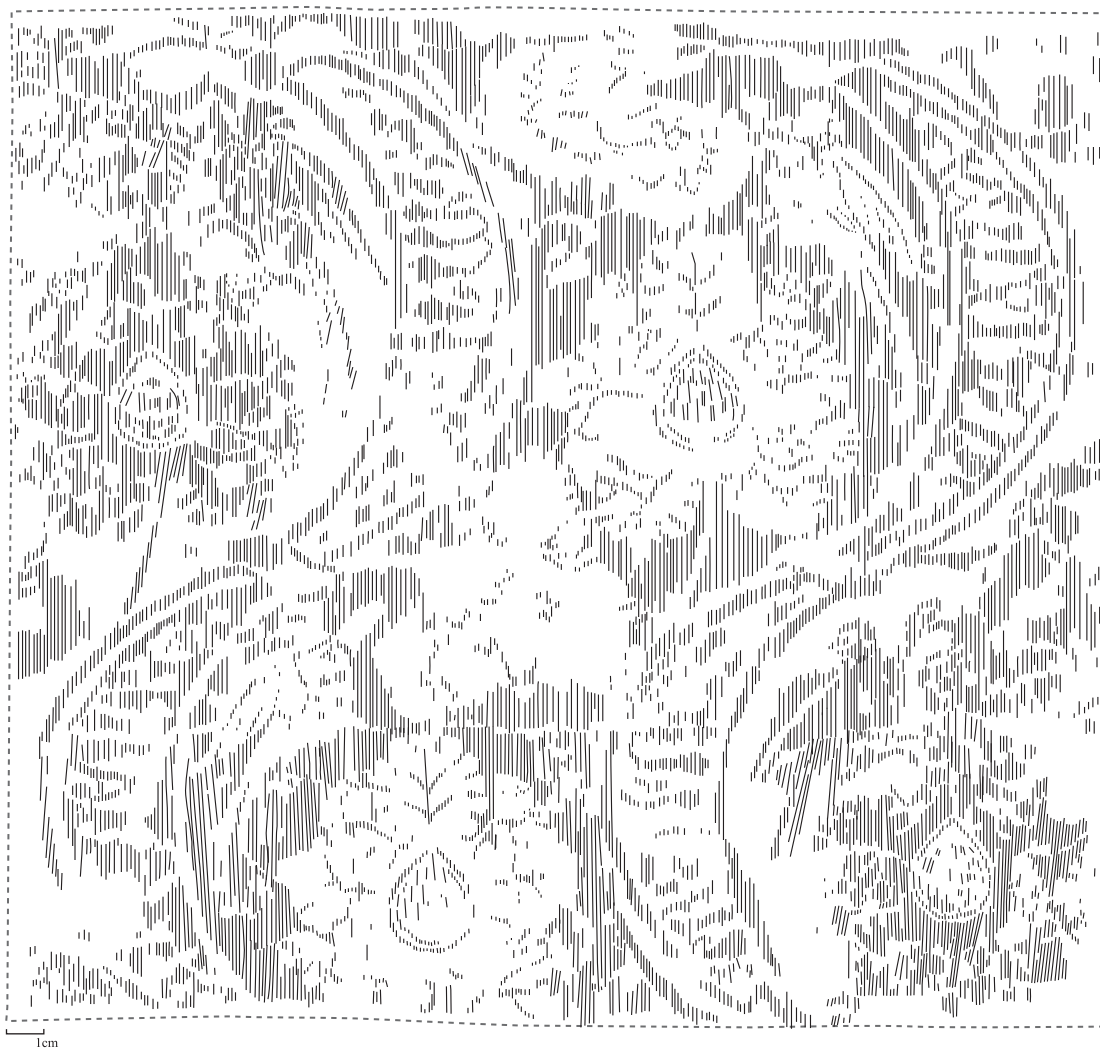
Model G3.1



G3.1a-b

Detail of the applied brocade

Location:	background
Type:	continuous: straight rows
Design:	animal: birds, pomegranate, foliage between banderoles
Measurements:	extra large: c.27 x 29 cm
Relief:	striations, flat zones (Tegernsee type)
Striations:	10-11 per cm; vertical
Condition:	well preserved
Overpaint:	none
Highlighting:	none
Gilding:	gold leaf yellowish-white mordant gold leaf no adhesive observed
Tin foil:	partially degraded, dark grey to black
Filler:	ochre in colour, semi-transparent, waxy appearance
Adhesive:	brown, transparent (darker than the filler)
Support layer:	white chalk and size ground
Ref:	cross section: VAN ASPEREN DE BOER 1996: 22, pl. 3-4.



G3.1c

Reconstruction of the relief

The *Crucified Thief* was part of a monumental Passion triptych that is now lost. It was long regarded as the first example of applied brocade produced in the Low Countries, though it is now known to be predated by some ten years by the applied brocades on the Dortmund *Passion Altarpiece* (cat. G.2).¹ The tin foil sheets were attached in rows, working from right to left and from bottom to top. The design consists of vertical curving banderoles with foliage and a pomegranate between them and a parrot-like bird tucked into each curve and facing alternately right and left. The inscription in the banderole is illegible, and may be purely fantastical. The complete surface is gilded and there is no trace of coloured highlighting. The pattern is derived from fourteenth-century Italian silks, cloths of gold or lampas, which would themselves have been based on oriental textiles – the horizontal rows of creatures and the diagonally orientated foliage manifest eastern influence. The filler is apparently wax-based, although it still awaits proper analysis. The sheets of brocade were glued to the ground layer with a brown transparent adhesive. Curiously, at the time of production the tin foil was gilded twice. Perhaps the first gilding did not adhere well enough – there is no obvious adhesive layer between the tin foil and the first layer of gold leaf. A pale-coloured mordant was used for the second gilding.²

¹ SANDER 1993: 145-146; FRANKFURT - BERLIN 2008: 223. We thank Jochen Sander, deputy director and curator of Flemish, Italian, French and Spanish paintings before 1800, Städel Museum, Frankfurt am Main, who gave us every facility to examine the Frankfurt panels at close quarters.

² VAN ASPEREN DE BOER 1996: 22, pls. 3-4.



G4 PASSION ALTARPIECE

Güstrow, Church of Our Lady

Double-winged altarpiece, carved and polychromed oak, painted wings¹

Brussels

Carving: Jan III Borman (signature) and collaborators

Polychromy: Master I*T

Painting: workshop of Bernard van Orley

Marks: compasses and plane (two, on the wings), BRVESEL (seven, on the gilding), head of a young man in profile (St Michael?) (three)

Before 1522

Open: c.430 × c.550 cm

The polychromy of the Güstrow altarpiece has been attributed to the Master I*T and his workshop thanks to the study of the applied brocades (see Chapter Six). The altarpiece has undergone several restorations in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and also more recently, at the start of the last decade. It was probably during the 1880 treatment of the carved case – though it may also have been later – that a good part of the applied brocades were reworked and renewed.² Otherwise the applied brocades seem fairly intact.



◀ **G4a**
Passion Altarpiece
 (detail), before 1522,
 Brussels, carving:
 Jan III Borman and
 collaborators;
 polychromy:
 Master I*T;
 painting: workshop
 of Bernard van Orley;
 Güstrow, Church
 of Our Lady
 Carrying of the Cross

G4b
 Crucifixion, renewed
 applied brocade
 on Mary Magdalene's sleeve

G4c
 Predella, renewed applied
 brocade on apostle's robe

¹ On this altarpiece and for the bibliography, see D'HAINAUT-ZVENY 1986: 5-39; DE BOODT 2005: 193. See also GUILLOT DE SUDUIRAUT 2002a: 285-286; EHLICH 2000; PÉRIER-D'ETEREN 2002: 331 n. 17.

² On the state of the polychromy and conservation of the altarpiece, see EHLICH 2000.

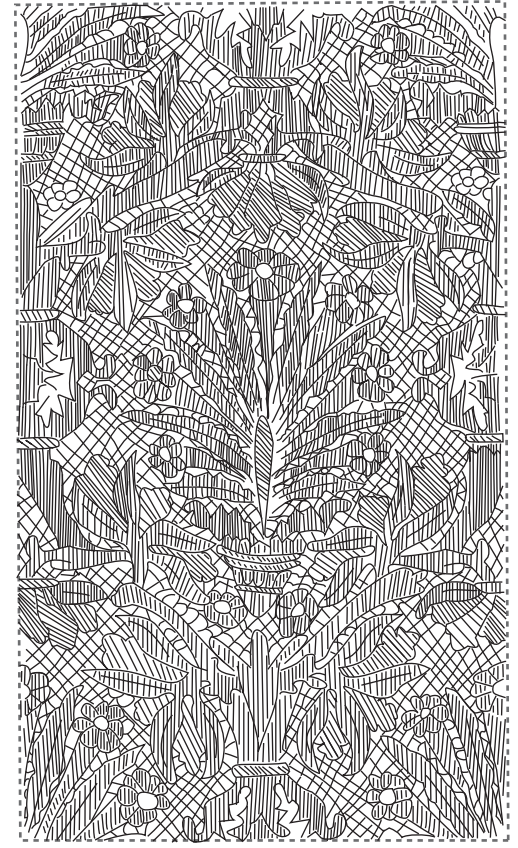
Model G4.1



G4.1a
Way to Emmaus, applied brocade
on St Paul's or St James's(?) robe



G4.1b
Ascension, applied brocade on apostle's robe



G4.1c
Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	the Virgin's gown (every scene); Caiaphas's overgarment and canopy, two soldiers' garments (Christ before Caiaphas); a soldier's garment (Carrying of the Cross); doublet of the unrepentant thief, holy woman's sleeve, garments of Longinus, the Centurion and a witness (Crucifixion); Mary Magdalene's surcote (Deposition); tunic of figure holding the Crown of Thorns, holy woman's gown (Lamentation); Nicodemus's tunic (Entombment); robes of St Paul and St James(?) (Way to Emmaus); robes of three apostles (Ascension); robes of Paul, Judas Thaddeus, Simon and Philip (predella)	Identical applied brocades cat. 6.1 cat. 7.1 cat. 19.1 cat. 24.1 cat. 66.1 cat. S1.1 cat. S7.1 cat. S9.1 cat. S10.1 Comparable applied brocades cat. 47.1
Type:	continuous: straight rows	
Design:	floral and foliate: posy of flowers and lanceolate leaves in a basket inside an ogival framework of flowering stems, in relief on a latticed background	
Measurements:	medium: 11-11.3 x c.6.5 cm	
Relief:	striations, contour and laticing in slightly higher relief (relief pattern)	
Striations:	16-20 vertical per cm; 12-18 diagonal per cm, convex in section	
Condition:	well preserved	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	blue on the contour and laticing (the Virgin's gown, canopy, the two soldiers' garments, witness's garment, Mary Magdalene's surcote, robes of St Paul and St James(?), robe of an apostle, robe of Paul)	red glaze on the contour and laticing (Caiaphas's overgarment, unrepentant thief's doublet, holy woman's sleeve, garments of Longinus and the Centurion, tunic of figure holding the Crown of Thorns, holy woman's gown, Nicodemus's tunic, robes of two apostles, robes of Simon and Philip)
Gilding:	gold leaf no adhesive observed	
Tin foil:	degraded, grey	
Filler:	waxy appearance	
Adhesive:	orange-ochre in colour	
Support layer:	white chalk and size ground	

Model G4.2



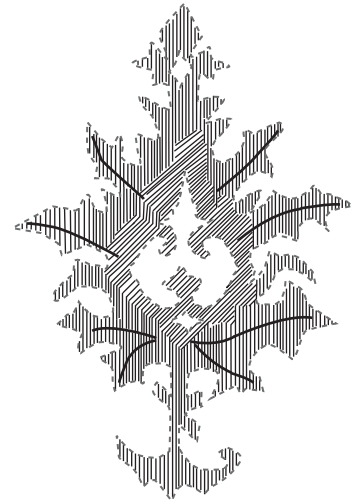
G4.2a

Carrying of the Cross, applied brocade on soldier's tabard



G4.2b

Archaeological drawing



G4.2c

Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	soldier's tabard (Carrying of the Cross)	Identical applied brocades cat. 6.2 cat. 19.7 cat. 28.1 cat. 29.1 cat. 66.2 cat. S1.2 cat. S6.2 cat. S7.2 cat. S9.2 cat. PC1.1 Possibly identical applied brocades Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, <i>Female Saint</i> (1965.2230) London, V&A, <i>St Barbara</i> (A.107-1937) Paris, Louvre, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (RF 1567) Paris, Louvre, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (RF 1788) Paris, Louvre, <i>St Margaret</i> (RF 2572) Paris, Musée Marmottan, <i>St Barbara</i> (622d) Private collection, <i>St Gudule</i> (formerly in the Kofler-Truniger collection) Private collection, <i>St Roch</i> (formerly in the Kofler-Truniger collection) Comparable applied brocades Cat. 24.2
Type:	local	
Design:	floral and foliate: stylized thistle leaf or acanthus leaf	
Measurements:	small: c.6.5 x min. 3.5 cm	
Relief:	fully striated, veins in relief, excisions (relief pattern)	
Striations:	14 per cm; diagonal, vertical	
Condition:	well preserved	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	none	
Gilding:	gold leaf adhesive	
Tin foil:	degraded, grey	
Filler:	none observed	
Adhesive:	apparently none	
Support layer:	red glaze silver leaf bole(?) white chalk and size ground	

Model G4.3



G4.3a
Resurrection, applied brocade on the gown of one of the Three Maries



G4.3b
Archaeological drawing



G4.3c
Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	gown of one of the Three Maries, angel's alb (Resurrection)	Identical applied brocades cat. 18.2 cat. 19.5 cat. 24.4 cat. 57.3 Possibly identical applied brocades cat. 22.1 Comparable applied brocades cat. 19.4 cat. 24.3 cat. 35.2 cat. 35.3 cat. F3.3 cat. S3.2 cat. S4.2
Type:	local	
Design:	floral and foliate: stylized thistle or pomegranate, lozenge-patterned centre surrounded by dentate leaves and double corolla, lily-like stem (pomegranate 2)	
Measurements:	small: min. 4 cm; incomplete sheet	
Relief:	fully striated, leaf veins, contour and centre latticing (relief pattern)	
Striations:	18 per cm; vertical, horizontal	
Condition:	well preserved	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	none	
Gilding:	gold leaf adhesive	
Tin foil:	degraded, grey	
Filler:	not observed	
Adhesive:	none	
Support layer:	red glaze silver leaf bole(?) ground not observed	

Model G4.4



G4.4
Resurrection, remnants of applied brocade on
Christ's cloak

Location:	edges of gilded cloaks	Comparable applied brocades cat. 6.3 cat. 7.2 cat. 19.9 cat. 24.6 cat. 49.1 cat. 66.3 cat. 51.3 cat. 56.4 cat. 57.5 cat. 59.4 cat. S10.4 Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, <i>Female Saint</i> (1965.2230) Cologne, Schnütgen Museum, <i>St Christopher</i> (A 227) London, V&A, <i>St Barbara</i> (A.107-1937) Paris, Louvre, <i>St Margaret</i> (RF 2572) Paris, Louvre, <i>St Michael</i> (OA 310) Paris, Louvre, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (RF 1567) Paris, Musée Marmottan, <i>St Barbara</i> (622d) Private collection, <i>St Barbara</i> (former Kofler-Truniger collection) Private collection, <i>St Gudule</i> (former Kofler-Truniger collection) Private collection, <i>St Roch</i> (former Kofler-Truniger collection) Private collection, <i>St Catherine</i> (former Becker collection, Brussels) Private collection, <i>St Margaret</i> (Christie's sale, New York 1994) Private collection, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (antiquary Bruno Speybrouck sale, Kortrijk 2007) Private collection, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (Brussels, KIK-IRPA photograph N4563)
Type:	braid	
Design:	unidentifiable, too incomplete for reconstruction	
Measurements:	small: 0.8 cm	
Relief:	no data	
Striations:	number unidentifiable, too incomplete for precise measurement	
Condition:	badly damaged (minute traces remain)	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	no data	
Gilding:	no data	
Tin foil:	no data	
Filler:	no data	
Adhesive:	no data, traces	
Support layer:	gold leaf orange bole white chalk and size ground	



G5 PASSION ALTARPIECE

Stassfurt, Hospitalkapelle

Altarpiece, carved and polychromed oak, painted wings¹
 Brussels
 Painted wings: Master of the Corkscrew Curl
 Marks: Brussels mallet (on the back of the Carrying of the Cross)
 1480-1490
 Closed: c.207 × 238 cm

1688: acquired by St John's Church in Stassfurt

The Stassfurt *Passion Altarpiece* can be dated to 1480-1490. The Brussels mallet mark on the back of the Carrying of the Cross suggests that it was produced in Brussels.² The paintings on the wings bear a marked resemblance to a number of wing panels from dismembered altarpieces: the Oudenaarde panel (cat. 58),³ the wing panel depicting the *Last Supper with Christ washing St Peter's Feet* now in Antwerp (KMSKA),⁴ and two panels in the Palais des Beaux-Arts in Lille.⁵ Several art historians have attributed all these works to the same hand, called by Didier Martens the Master of the Corkscrew Curl. Now the wings of the Stassfurt *Passion Altarpiece* can be added to his oeuvre (see Chapter Five).

There seems to be a deliberate affinity between the carved scenes and the painted wings. The tubular folds in the garments of the painted characters are recapitulated in the attire of the carved figures. This is particularly conspicuous in the group surrounding the swooning Virgin at the foot of the Cross in the central compartment, for example. The carved figures can be compared to those of the painted appearance of Christ to the Three Maries.

The pattern of the applied brocade on the cloths of honour on the outside of the painted wings is typical of a group of Brussels carved altarpieces with painted wings produced between 1480 and 1500 (see Chapters Five and Six).



◀ G5a
Passion Altarpiece,
 1480-1490, Brussels,
 painted wings:
 Master of the Cork-
 screw Curl; Stassfurt,
 Hospitalkapelle

G5b ▶
Passion Altarpiece,
 Stassfurt
 John the Baptist

¹ LINSSE 1961: 809-818; DE SMEDT 1965: 32 (fig. 5); DE BOODT 2005: 195-196. The sculptures were heavily repainted and regilded at the end of the nineteenth century, and possibly regilded once again during the early-twenty-first-century restoration.

² LINSSE 1961: 809-818; DE BOODT 2005: 195-196.

³ BRUSSELS 1996: 44-54 (cat. 1).

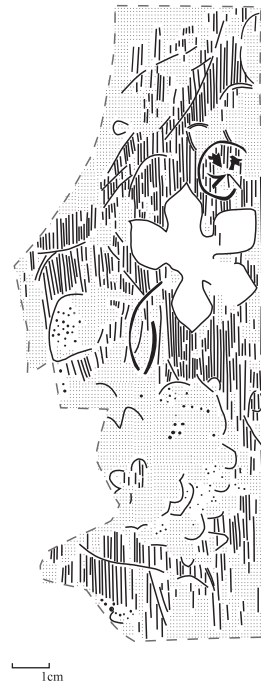
⁴ VANDENBROECK 1985: 8-12 (fig. 3).

⁵ GIL 1999: 199-203; HECK et al. 2005: II, 401-404 (cat. 55); D. MARTENS 2007: 116-126.

Model G5.1



G5.1a
Applied brocade on the cloth of honour behind
John the Baptist

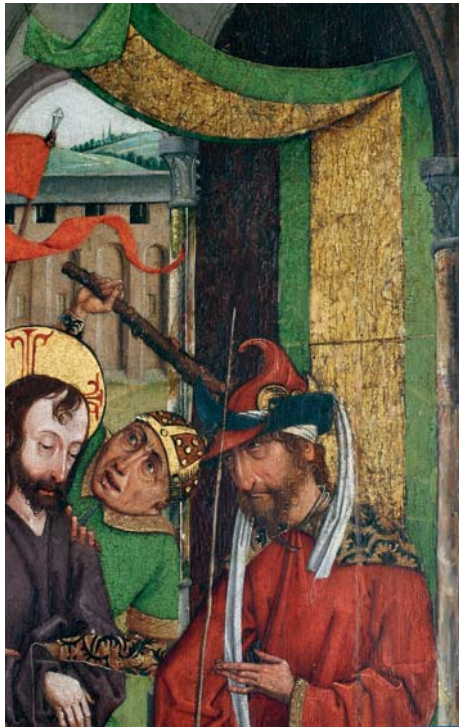


G5.1b
Archaeological drawing

Location:	exterior side of the painted wings, cloths of honour	Comparable applied brocades cat. 35.1 cat. 52.1 cat. 58.1 cat. S11.1 cat. F3.1 cat. S4.1 Cambridge, Queens' College Chapel, <i>St Catherine, St Barbara</i> and <i>St George</i> Private collection, <i>St Sebastian</i>
Type:	continuous: straight rows	
Design:	floral and foliate: large poppy-like flower head covered with dots and carried on a pair of sepals, a dot-covered bud, a five-lobed leaf, and a wide undulating stem	
Measurements:	large: 17.5 x min. 7.6 cm	
Relief:	striations, lines, raised dots, flat zones (mixed pattern)	
Striations:	10 per cm; vertical	
Condition:	worn	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	none	
Gilding:	gold leaf mordant	
Tin foil:	degraded, grey	
Filler:	no data	
Adhesive:	no data	
Support layer:	white chalk and size ground	

Although the applied brocade on the cloth of honour behind St Mark on the painted Loppem panel (model 52.1) is almost identical, some slight differences indicate that it is unlikely to have been cast in the same mould.

Model G5.2



G5.2a
Christ before Pilate

Location:	interior side of the painted wing, cloth of honour (Christ before Pilate)
Type:	continuous, applied in a strip
Design:	unidentifiable, too incomplete for reconstruction
Measurements:	large: 14 x 6 cm; incomplete sheet
Relief:	striations, flat zones (Tegernsee type)
Striations:	11 per cm; vertical
Condition:	badly damaged
Overpaint:	varnish
Highlighting:	none
Gilding:	gold leaf adhesive not observed
Tin foil:	degraded, grey
Filler:	brown, waxy appearance
Adhesive:	no data
Support layer:	white chalk and size ground



SI ALTARPIECE OF THE GLORIFICATION OF THE VIRGIN

Sala, Parish Church

Altarpiece, carved, polychromed and painted oak, painted wings¹

Brussels

Carving: attributed to the Borman circle

Polychromy: attributed to Master I*T

Painted wings: attributed to Jan II van Coninxloo

No discernable marks

c.1515-1520

Closed: 175 × 129 × 35 cm



Si.a

Altarpiece of the Glorification of the Virgin, c.1515-1520, Brussels, carving: attributed to the Borman circle; polychromy: attributed to Master I*T; painted wings: attributed to Jan II van Coninxloo; Sala, Parish Church

Si.b

Location of the applied brocades



Model Si.1



Model Si.2



Model Si.3



Model Si.4



Remnants of unidentified local applied brocade

¹ On this altarpiece and for the bibliography, see especially: ENGELLAU-GULLANDER 1992: 71-74; GUILLOT DE SUDUIRAUT 2002a: 280-281, 285, 293-294; DE BOODT 2005: 212-213.

Model Sr.1



Sr.1a
Applied brocade on the falconer's doublet



Sr.1b
Reconstruction of the applied brocade

1cm

Location:	textile covering the pope's prie-dieu, pope's chasuble, border of the cope of the bishop at the pope's left shoulder, falconer's doublet		Identical applied brocades cat. 6.1 cat. 7.1 cat. 19.1 cat. 24.1 cat. 66.1 cat. G4.1 cat. S7.1 cat. S9.1 cat. S10.1 Comparable applied brocades cat. 47.1
Type:	continuous: straight rows (used once as a braid)		
Design:	floral and foliate: posy of flowers and lanceolate leaves in a basket inside an ogival framework of flowering stems, in relief on a latticed background		
Measurements:	medium: 11-11.3 x 6.5 cm		
Relief:	striations, contour and latticing in slightly higher relief (relief pattern)		
Striations:	16-20 vertical per cm; 12-18 diagonal per cm, convex in section		
Condition:	badly damaged		
Overpaint:	none		
Highlighting:	red glaze on contour and latticing (prie-dieu, border of the bishop's cope, falconer's doublet)	matt blue on contour and latticing (pope's chasuble)	
Gilding:	gold leaf no adhesive observed		
Tin foil:	degraded, grey		
Filler:	brown beige, translucent, waxy appearance		
Adhesive:	orange brown		
Support layer:	white chalk and size ground		

Model S1.2

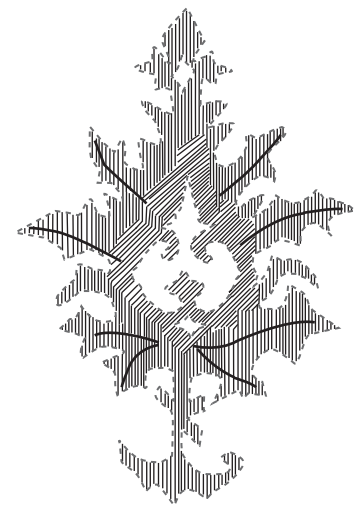


S1.2a
Applied brocade on the king's robe



1 cm

S1.2b
Archaeological drawing



1 cm

S1.2c
Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	cardinal's cloak, chasuble of the bishop on the cardinal's left, robe of the king behind the emperor (see ill. S1b)	Identical applied brocades cat. 6.2 cat. 19.7 cat. 28.1 cat. 29.1 cat. 66.2 cat. G4.2 cat. S6.2 cat. S7.2 cat. S9.2 cat. PC1.1
Type:	local	
Pattern:	floral and foliate: stylized thistle leaf or acanthus leaf	
Measurements:	small: min. 5 cm; incomplete sheet	
Relief:	fully striated, veins in relief, excisions (relief pattern)	
Striations:	number unidentifiable, insufficient for measurement; vertical, diagonal	
Condition:	badly damaged	
Overpaint:	none	Possibly identical applied brocades Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, <i>Female Saint</i> (1965.2230) London, V&A, <i>St Barbara</i> (A.107-1937) Paris, Louvre, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (RF 1567) Paris, Louvre, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (RF 1788) Paris, Louvre, <i>St Margaret</i> (RF 2572) Paris, Musée Marmottan, <i>St Barbara</i> (622d) Private collection, <i>St Gudule</i> (formerly in the Kofler-Truniger collection) Private collection, <i>St Roch</i> (formerly in the Kofler-Truniger collection)
Highlighting:	none	
Gilding:	gold leaf no adhesive observed	
Tin foil:	degraded, grey	
Filler:	no data	
Adhesive:	none observed, apparently none	
Support layer:	red glaze (cardinal's cloak, king's robe) silver leaf	
	white chalk and size ground	green glaze (bishop's chasuble) no data on underlayer
		Comparable applied brocades cat. 24.2

Model S1.3



S1.3a
Applied brocade braid on the bishop's cope



S1.3b
Applied brocade braid on the king's cloak

Location:	border of the cope of the bishop on the cardinal's left; borders of several cloaks (see ill. S1b)	<p>Identical applied brocades cat. 6.3 (arabesque 1) cat. 19.9 (arabesque 1, arabesque 2, foliage, flowers, cloverleaves) cat. 66.3 (cloverleaves) cat. S7.5 (arabesque 1, arabesque 2, foliage, flowers, cloverleaves) cat. S9.4 (arabesque 1, arabesque 2, flowers, cloverleaves) cat. S10.4 (arabesque 1, flowers, cloverleaves) Paris, Louvre, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (RF 1788) (arabesque 2, flowers) Private collection, <i>St Catherine</i> (former Becker collection, Brussels) (arabesque 1 and another unidentified arabesque) Private collection, <i>St Roch</i> (former Kofler-Truniger collection) (arabesque 1 and another unidentified arabesque)</p> <p>Comparable applied brocades cat. 6.3 (arabesque 3) cat. 7.2 (arabesque 3) cat. 24.6 (arabesque 3) cat. 49.1 cat. G4.4 cat. S6.4 Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, <i>Female Saint</i> (1965.2230) Cologne, Schnütgen Museum, <i>St Christopher</i> (A 227) London, V&A, <i>St Barbara</i> (A.107-1937) Paris, Louvre, <i>St Margaret</i> (RF 2572) Paris, Louvre, <i>St Michael</i> (OA 310) Paris, Louvre, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (RF 1567) Paris, Musée Marmottan, <i>St Barbara</i> (622d) Private collection, <i>St Barbara</i> (former Kofler-Truniger collection) Private collection, <i>St Gudule</i> (former Kofler-Truniger collection) Private collection, <i>St Margaret</i> (Christie's sale, New York 1994) Private collection, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (antiquary Bruno Speybrouck sale, Kortrijk 2007) Private collection, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (Brussels, KIK-IRPA photograph N4563)</p>
Type:	braid	
Design:	floral and foliate: arabesques, cloverleaves, flowers and foliage between two parallel lines	
Measurements:	small: 0.7 cm	
Relief:	fully striated strip (relief pattern)	
Striations:	15 per cm; vertical	
Condition:	well preserved	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	matt blue or red glaze on the striations	
Gilding:	gold leaf no adhesive observed	
Tin foil:	degraded, grey	
Filler:	beige, translucent	
Adhesive(?):	orange, transparent(?)	
Support layer:	gold leaf orange bole white chalk and size ground	

The cope of the bishop on the cardinal's left and the cloak of the king on the far right are trimmed with two different braids.



Sr.3c-g
Reconstruction of the applied brocade braids



Sr.3h
Reconstruction of the relief

Model Sr.4



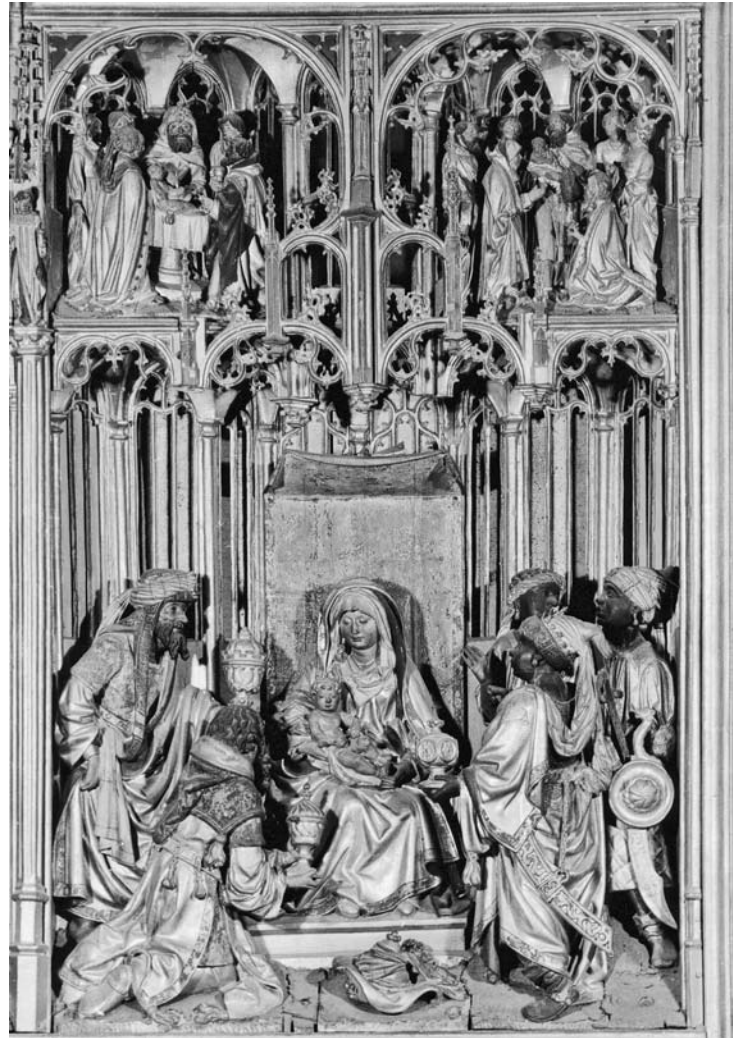
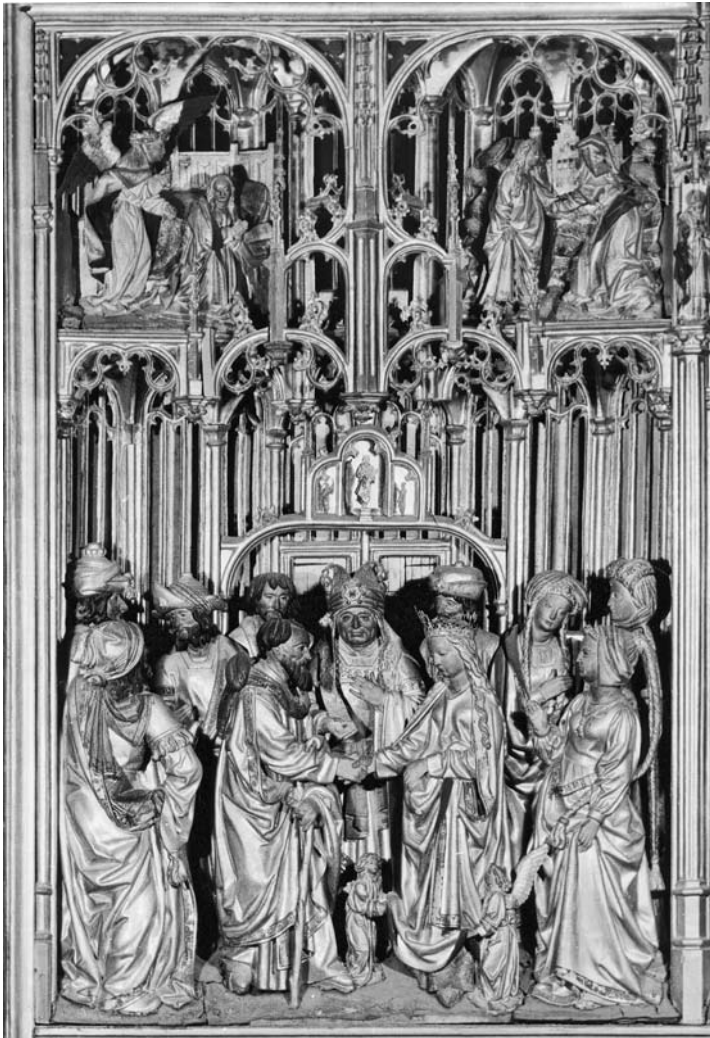
Sr.4a
Applied brocade on the border of the pope's cope



1 cm

Sr.4b
Archaeological drawing

Location:	border of the pope's cope (see ill. S1b)	Identical applied brocades cat. 19.10 cat. S7.6 Comparable applied brocades cat. 14.1 cat. 31b.4
Type:	braid (orphrey)	
Design:	miscellaneous: painted motif of a saint standing in a traceried niche	
Measurements:	small: 6.2 x 2 cm	
Relief:	fully striated (relief pattern)	
Striations:	18 per cm, horizontal	
Condition:	badly damaged	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	black, blue, red glaze, green glaze	
Gilding:	gold leaf no adhesive observed	
Tin foil:	degraded, grey	
Filler:	orange, transparent	
Adhesive(?):	apparently none	
Support layer:	gold leaf bole white chalk and size ground	



S2 ALTARPIECE OF THE VIRGIN

Skeptuna, Parish Church

Altarpiece, carved, polychromed and painted oak, painted wings

Carving: Brussels, attributed to Jan Borman and collaborators

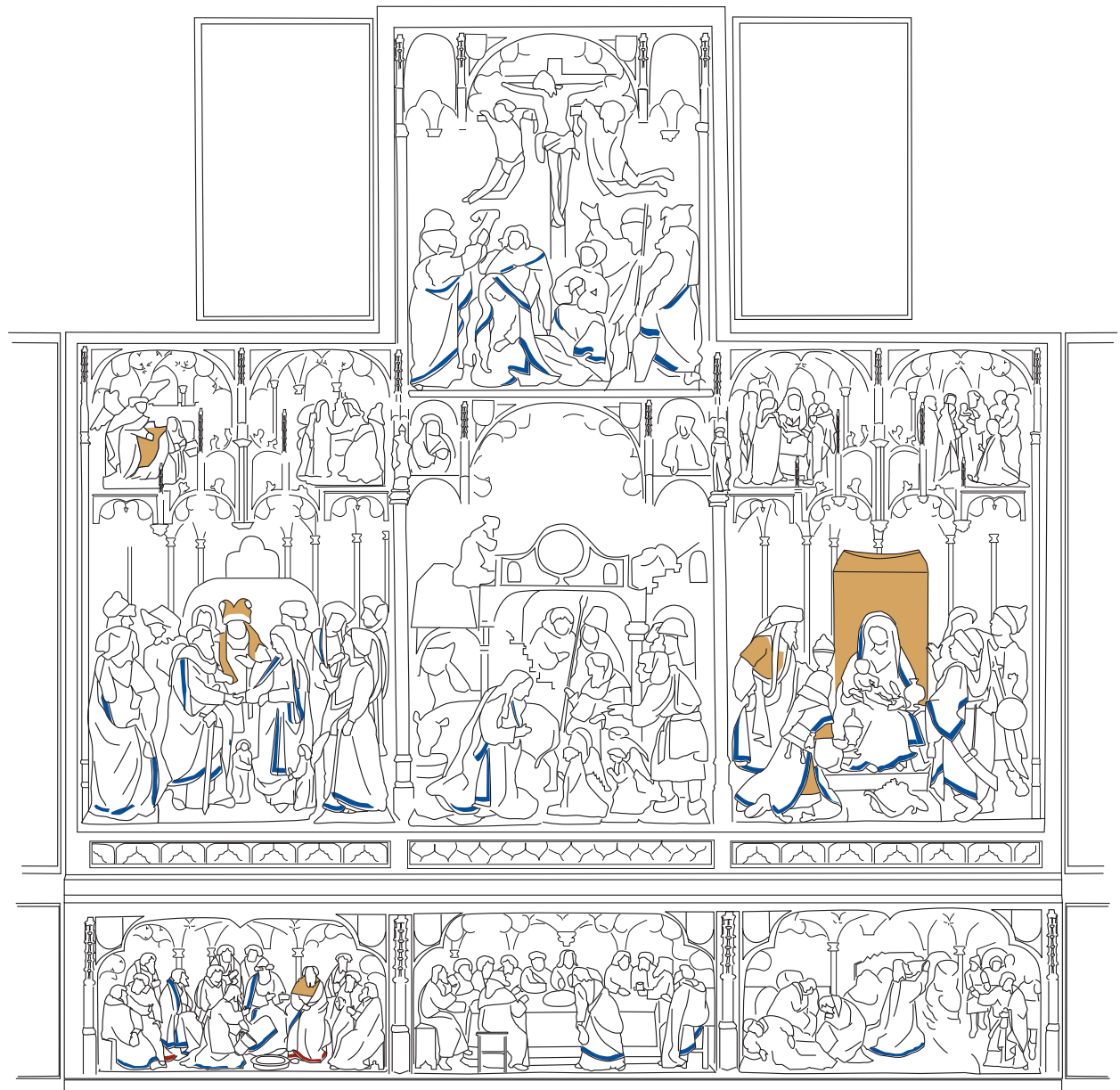
Polychromy: Cornelis I Schernier

Painted wings: Brussels, attributed to Valentijn van Orley¹

Marks: compasses and plane, mallet

c.1515-1520

Closed: 270 × 248 × 25 cm



S2a-b

Altarpiece of the Virgin (details),
c.1515-1520, carving:
Brussels, attributed to
Jan Borman and
collaborators;
polychromy:
Cornelis I Schernier;
painted wings:
Brussels, attributed to
Valentijn van Orley;
Skeptuna,
Parish Church
Marriage of the
Virgin and Adoration
of the Magi

S2c

Location of the applied brocades

- Model S2.1
- Model S2.2
- Model S2.3

¹ DE BOODT 2005: 213-215; GUILLOT DE SUDUIRAUT 2002a: 273-310.

Model S2.1



S2.1a
Adoration, applied brocade on the cloth of honour behind the Virgin



S2.1b
Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	stole and headdress of the high priest (Marriage of the Virgin); cloth of honour behind the Virgin, tunic of the eldest magus, tunic of kneeling magus (Adoration); bed coverlet (Annunciation); disciple's shoulder cape (Washing of the Disciples' Feet) (see ill. S2c)	Comparable applied brocade cat. 5.2 Arras, Musée des Beaux-Arts, <i>Altarpiece with the Nativity and the Adoration of the Shepherds</i> London, V&A, <i>Adoration of the Magi Altarpiece</i>
Type:	continuous: straight rows	
Design:	floral and foliate: stylized pomegranate in a wreath of lanceolate leaves	
Measurements:	medium: 8.2 x 7 cm	
Relief:	fully striated, contour (relief pattern)	
Striations:	13 per cm; vertical	
Condition:	badly damaged	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	red glaze and matt blue on the contour	
Gilding:	gold leaf no adhesive observed	
Tin foil:	degraded, grey to black	
Filler:	not observed; too indistinct for identification	
Adhesive:	orange ochre in colour	
Support layer:	white chalk and size ground	

The stylized pomegranate is surrounded by a wreath of lanceolate leaves. It bears a certain resemblance to the pattern in the background of the domestic *Nativity Altarpiece* now in the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Arras, and there are also some similarities with the *Passion Altarpiece* in the Museum Mayer van den Bergh in Antwerp (cat. 5).

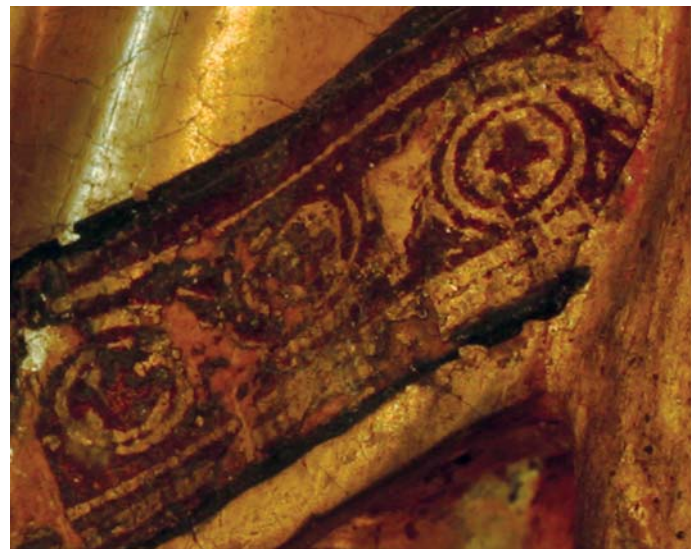
Model S2.2



S2.2a
Nativity, applied brocade braid on the Virgin's cloak



S2.2b
Adoration, applied brocade braid on the Virgin's cloak



S2.2c
Marriage of the Virgin, applied brocade braid on Joseph's cloak



1cm



S2.2d-g
Archaeological drawings



S2.2h
Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	garments of many characters (see ill. S2c)		Comparable applied brocades cat. S2.3
Type:	braid		
Design:	A. geometric: row of quatrefoils on alternate sides of an undulating line, between parallel lines	B. miscellaneous: text between a pair of parallel double lines	
Measurements:	small: 0.8-1.2 cm		
Relief:	fully striated strip (relief pattern)		
Striations:	13-14 per cm; vertical		
Condition:	locally worn		
Overpaint:	none		
Highlighting:	red glaze on striations	matt blue (azurite) on striations	
Gilding	gold leaf no adhesive observed		
Tin foil:	grey to black		
Filler:	orange, semi-transparent, waxy appearance		
Adhesive:	ochre in colour, oily appearance		
Support layer:	burnished gold leaf orange bole white chalk and size ground		

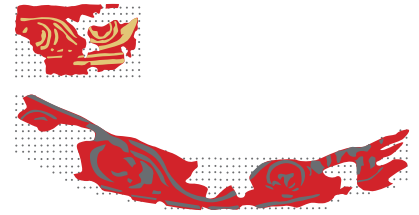
The method used to create these braids is the same as that used for the braids of Master I*T. The design employs a fully striated and painted braid, the pattern itself – which consists of a row of quatrefoils on alternate sides of an undulating line – being left unpainted and thus appearing to be woven in gold. On other braids a text replaces the pattern. For instance, the name of the painter Cornelis Schernier appears in various scripts, as well as the words BINNEN and RINNEN (see also Chapter Six).

Model S2.3



S2.3a

Washing of the Disciples' Feet, applied brocade braid on disciple's garment



S2.3b-c

Archaeological drawings



S2.3d-e

Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	hems of garments of two disciples (Washing of the Disciples' Feet) (see ill. S2c)	Comparable applied brocades cat. S2.2
Type:	braid	
Design:	geometric: row of quatrefoils on alternate sides of an undulating line, between parallel lines	
Measurements:	small: 1.1-1.2 cm	
Relief:	lines, contour, flat zones (mixed pattern?)	
Striations:	none	
Condition:	badly damaged	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	red glaze	
Gilding:	gold leaf no adhesive observed	
Tin foil:	grey	
Filler:	orange, semi-transparent, waxy appearance	
Adhesive:	ochre in colour, oily appearance	
Support layer:	burnished gold leaf orange bole white chalk and size ground	

The design replicates braid S2.2 but here it is worked in relief and there are no striations.



S3 PASSION ALTARPIECE CALLED STRÄNGNÄS I

Strängnäs, Cathedral

Double-winged altarpiece with carved wings, carved, polychromed and painted oak

Carving: Brussels, attributed to Jan II Borman and workshop

Polychromy: Brussels, Master of the Strängnäs I Altarpiece

Painted wings (exterior side): Colijn de Coter (signature)

Marks: compasses and plane, head of a young man in profile (St Michael?) (on the case), mallet, BRVESEL

Inscription on the painted wing depicting the Presentation in the Temple: ISTVD FACIENBATVR IN BRUXELLA

c.1490

Closed: 259 × 344 × 43 cm

The high quality of the carving in the *Passion Altarpiece* called Strängnäs I and the extremely refined, sober polychromy with its lavish gilding and restrained use of colour combine to produce an overwhelming effect.¹ Similarities in the gilding techniques and the applied brocades suggest that the polychromer was influenced or inspired by the oeuvre of the Geel Master of the Dianthus (see Chapter Five).



S3a

Passion Altarpiece called Strängnäs I (detail), c.1490, carving: Brussels, attributed to Jan II Borman and workshop; polychromy: Brussels, Master of the Strängnäs I Altarpiece; painted wings (exterior side): Colijn de Coter; Strängnäs, Cathedral
Ecce Homo

S3b

Location of the applied brocades

- Model S3.1
- Model S3.2

¹ PÉRIER-D'ETEREN 2002: 315; DE BOODT 2005: 214-215.

Model S3.1



S3.1a
Ecce Homo, applied brocade on the garment
of the soldier



S3.1b
Archaeological drawing

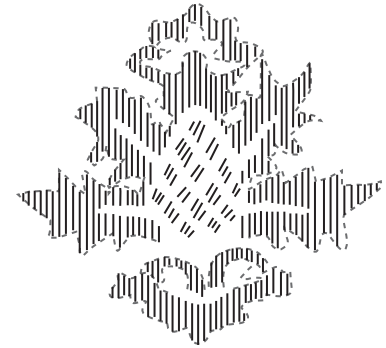
Location:	garment of the onlooker in the foreground (Ecce Homo) (see ill. S3b)	Comparable applied brocades cat. 39.1 cat. G1.1 cat. F3.2 Barnard Castle, Bowes Museum, <i>Passion Altarpiece</i>
Type:	continuous: straight rows	
Design:	floral and foliate: dianthus-like in a rosette, too incomplete for further reconstruction	
Measurements:	small: min. 3.5 x 4 cm; incomplete sheet	
Relief:	striations, contour in relief, flat zones (mixed pattern)	
Striations:	11-12 per cm; vertical	
Condition:	badly damaged	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	black on flat zones	
Gilding:	gold leaf no adhesive observed	
Tin foil:	dark grey	
Filler:	ochre in colour, waxy appearance	
Adhesive:	not identifiable, too indistinct for identification	
Support layer:	white chalk and size ground	

The pattern consists of alternating rows of palmette-like and multilobed rosettes, but too much has been lost to allow a reconstruction. The design appears to have been extremely popular and is related to the pattern on Joseph of Arimathea's garment in the Entombment on the Ternant *Passion Altarpiece*, which was produced more than thirty years earlier (1455-1460, Church of St Roch and Our Lady of the Assumption, Ternant) and which itself had antecedents in the painted cloth of honour behind the *Virgo Lactans* from the workshop of Rogier van der Weyden (c.1451; Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum) (see Chapter Four). Other related patterns can be seen in the applied brocades on the Dinslaken and Barnard Castle Passion altarpieces, and also on the *Altarpiece of the Life of the Virgin and the Infancy of Christ* in Rouen (c.1475-1490, Brussels; Rouen, Musée départemental des Antiquités de la Seine-Maritime).

Model S3.2



S3.2a
Ecce Homo, applied brocade on Pilate's cushion



1 cm

S3.2b
Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	Pilate's cushion (Ecce Homo) (see ill. S3b)	Comparable applied brocades cat. 18.2 cat. 19.4 cat. 19.5 cat. 22.1 cat. 24.3 cat. 24.4 cat. 35.2 cat. 35.3 cat. F3.3 cat. G4.3 cat. S4.2 cat. S7.2 cat. S7.5
Type:	local	
Design:	floral and foliate pattern: pomegranate; lozenge-patterned centre with dentate leaves and double corolla	
Measurements:	small: min. 4.6 x 4.8 cm	
Relief:	fully striated (relief pattern)	
Striations:	6 per 0.5 cm; vertical, diagonal	
Condition:	well preserved	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	none	
Gilding:	gold leaf no adhesive observed	
Tin foil:	grey	
Filler:	no data: too indistinct for identification	
Adhesive:	no data: too indistinct for identification	
Support layer:	dark green or darkened blue (?) white chalk and size ground	

The local applied brocade on Pilate's cushion is very closely related to those on the Geel *Passion Altarpiece* and the *Passion Altarpiece* called Strängnäs II. Later a differently-sized variant of this pomegranate motif appeared in the repertoire of Master I*T, being used on the *Saluzzo Altarpiece* (cat. 19.5) and the *Holy Kinship Altarpiece* (cat. 24.3, cat. 24.4). The scattering of tiny metal cupules on the cushion was probably intended to mimic an *alluciolato* velvet.



S4 PASSION ALTARPIECE CALLED STRÄNGNÄS II

Strängnäs, Cathedral

Altarpiece, carved and polychromed oak, painted wings¹

Carving: Brussels

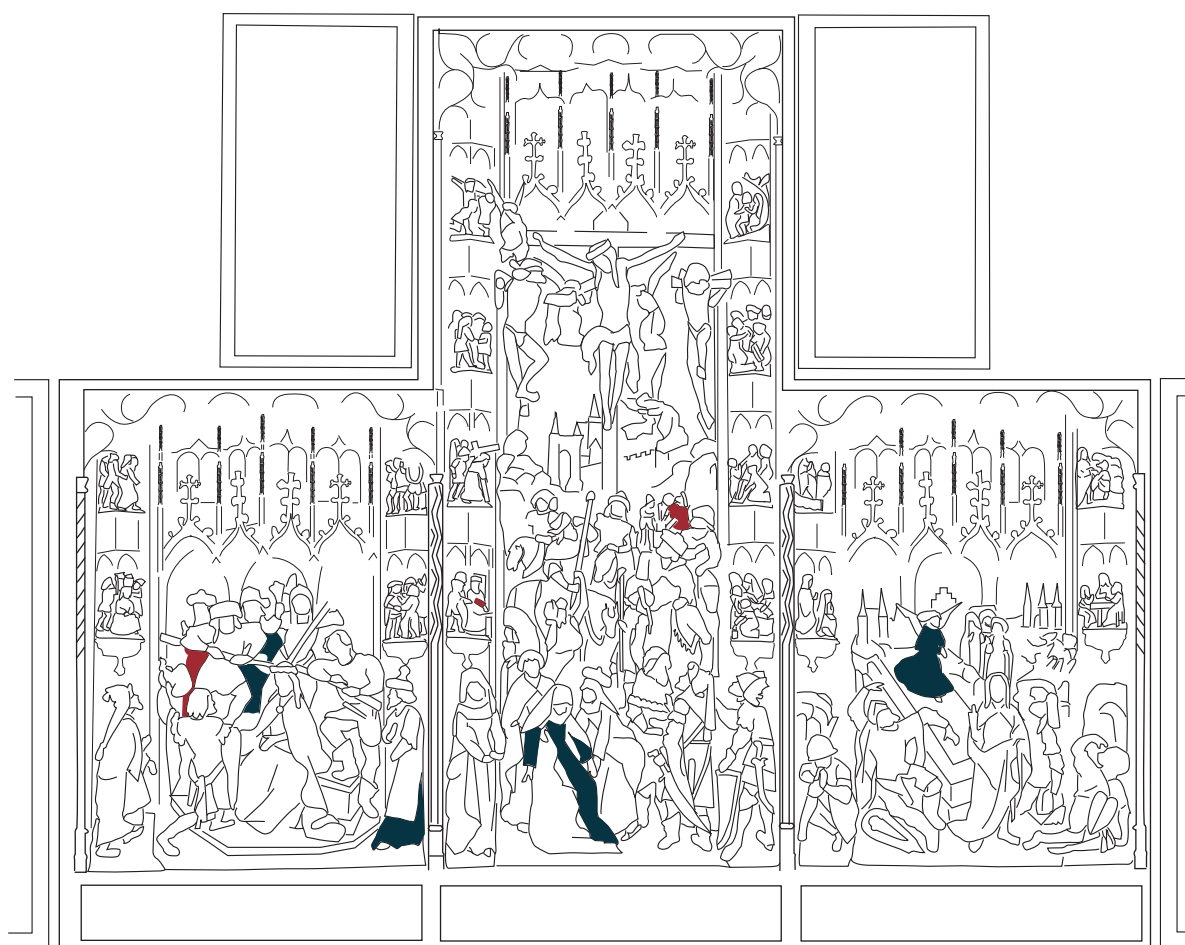
Polychromy: attributed to the Geel Master of the Dianthus

Painted wings: attributed to the workshop of the Master of the View of St Gudule or rather to a master 'producing a synthesis of the manner of this workshop and the spirit of the compositions of the Master of the St Catherine legend'²

Marks: compasses and plane (case), BRVESEL (gilding of the case)

c.1500

Closed: 243 × 291 × 30 cm



S4a

Passion Altarpiece
called Strängnäs II
(detail), c.1500,
carving: Brussels,
polychromy:
attributed to the
Geel Master of the
Dianthus; painted
wings: attributed to
the workshop of the
Master of the View
of Saint Gudule;
Strängnäs, Cathedral
Detail of St Jerome

S4b

Location of the applied brocades

- Model S4.1
- Model S4.2

¹ On this altarpiece and for the bibliography, see especially D'HULST 1953: 142-145; CASCIO, LÉVY 2002: 131, 133, 147, 155, 157-159; GUILLOT DE SUDIRAUT 2002a: 295; PÉRIER-D'ETEREN 2002: 323-325; DE BOODT 2005: 215-246; WOODS 2007: 296-297.

² PÉRIER-D'ETEREN 1984: 37-39, 43, 95-96.

Model S4.1



S4.1a
Detail of the applied brocade on the cloth of honour behind St Jerome



S4.1b
Reconstruction of the relief

1cm

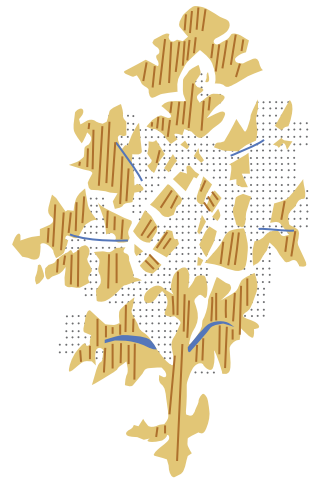
Location:	exterior side of the painted wings, cloths of honour		Identical applied brocades cat. 35.1 cat. F3.1 Cambridge, Queens' College Chapel, <i>SS Catherine, Barbara and George</i> Private collection, <i>St Sebastian</i> Comparable applied brocades cat. 52.1 cat. G5.1 cat. S8.1 cat. S11.1
Type:	continuous: straight rows		
Design:	floral and foliate: flowers and leaves sprouting from undulating stems		
Measurements:	large: 16.2-17 x 9 cm		
Relief:	striations, contour, lines, raised dots, plateaus (mixed pattern)		
Striations:	7-8 per cm; vertical, fairly coarse and somewhat irregular		
Condition:	badly damaged		
Overpaint:	none		
Highlighting:	green glaze on the contour, raised dots and plateaus (Augustine and Jerome)	red glaze on the contour, raised dots and plateaus (Gregory and Ambrose)	
Gilding:	gold leaf ochre mordant		
Tin foil:	degraded, grey		
Filler:	translucent brown		
Adhesive:	brown		
Support layer:	no data, probably white chalk and size ground		

The applied brocades were gilded after they had been glued to the panel and before the actual painting stage. Some of the outer sheets seem to have been trimmed after they had been applied to the panel, as shown by the traces of cutting. The coloured highlights (red or green glaze) were added during the final phase, after the figures and painted details were complete.

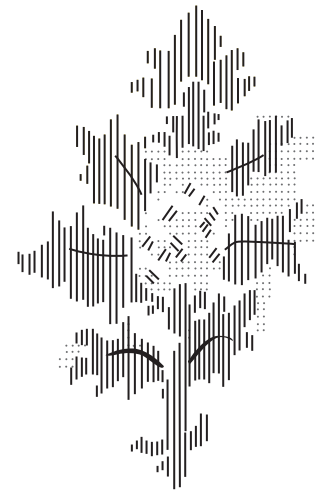
Model S4.2



S4.2a
Crowning with Thorns, applied brocade on a witness's robe



S4.2b
Archaeological drawing



S4.2c
Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	under-robe of male figure in foreground, robe of a witness in background (Crowning with Thorns); the Virgin's gown (Crucifixion); angel's alb (Resurrection) (see ill. S4b)			Comparable applied brocades cat. 18.2 cat. 19.4 cat. 19.5 cat. 22.1 cat. 24.3 cat. 24.4 cat. 35.2 cat. 35.3 cat. F3.3 cat. G4.3 cat. S3.2 cat. S7.2 cat. S7.5
Type:	local			
Design:	floral and foliate: pomegranate, lozenge-patterned centre with dentate leaves and double corolla untrimmed lozenge-shaped tinfoil sheet or tinfoil sheet trimmed to the pattern			
Measurements:	small: c.4.7 cm			
Relief:	striations, veins and contour in relief, flat zones (mixed pattern)			
Striations:	10-12 per cm; variously aligned			
Condition:	locally worn			
Overpaint:	none			
Highlighting:	black on flat zones and centre latticing (witness)	red on flat zones and centre latticing (under-robe of male figure in foreground)	no highlighting (angel's alb, the Virgin's gown)	
Gilding:	gold leaf ochre mordant			
Tin foil:	degraded, grey			
Filler:	brown ochre in colour, translucent			
Adhesive:	apparently none			
Support layer:	black (witness's robe)	burnished gold (under-robe male figure)	blue (Virgin's gown) white (angel's alb)	
	white chalk and size ground			

On the witness's black tunic (Crowning with Thorns), the Virgin's blue robe (Crucifixion) and the angel's white alb (Resurrection) the brocades are combined with small cupules. A similar design though executed in a different technique (silver leaf on mordant) occurs on the frame on the exterior side of the wings.

There are small pieces of applied brocade on several garments – such as that of the man holding the pail of sour wine in the background of the Crucifixion and Pilate's sleeves in the Washing of Pilate's Hands – but the model could not be identified



S4c
Pomegranate motif, probably in silver leaf, on the frames of the wings



S5 ALTARPIECE OF THE VIRGIN CALLED STRÄNGNÄS III

Strängnäs, Cathedral

Altarpiece, carved, polychromed and painted oak, painted wings

Carving: Brussels, Borman workshop or circle

Polychromy: Brussels

Painted wings: pupil of Colijn de Coter

Marks: mallets (two, on the figures)

c.1507-1508

Closed: 202 × 245 × 25 cm

The original polychromy's extravagant use of sgraffito, tooling, painted motifs and applied brocade creates a most dynamic and theatrical effect.¹ Only the continuous type of brocade has been used. The tin foil does not have the usual striations but rather a sort of shallow latticing reminiscent of the structure of linen or hessian – probably achieved by pressing down the tin foil onto a piece of coarsely woven textile. The brocades were gilded before they were applied to the figures whose clothes they adorn. The gilded tin foil was then highlighted freehand in either red or blue.

Although not an applied brocade as such, it is worth noting that the sleeves of the robe worn by the man who leans on his staff in the compartment illustrating the Holy Kinship group are covered with flat, ungilded, unpainted(?) tin foil, whose grey metallic appearance is strikingly well preserved.



S5a

Altarpiece of the Virgin called Strängnäs III, c.1507-1508, carving:

Brussels, Borman workshop or circle; polychromy: Brussels; painted wings: pupil of Colijn de Coter; Strängnäs, Cathedral

S5b

Location of the applied brocades

¹ PÉRIER-D'ETEREN 2002: 317-318; GUILLOT DE SUDUIRAUT 2002a: 281, 295-296; DE BOODT 2005: 216-217.

Model S5.1

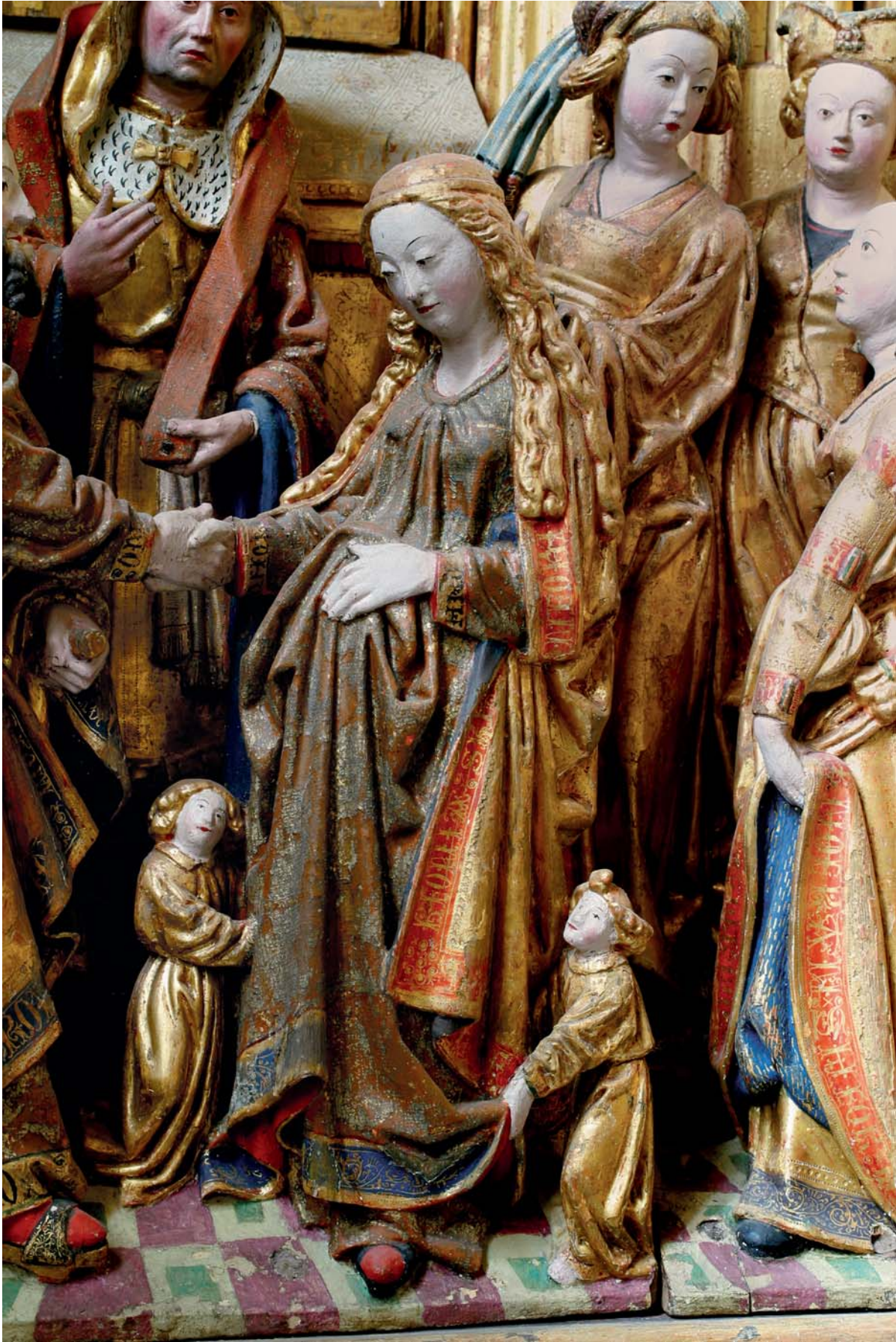


S5.1a
Applied brocade on the Virgin's gown

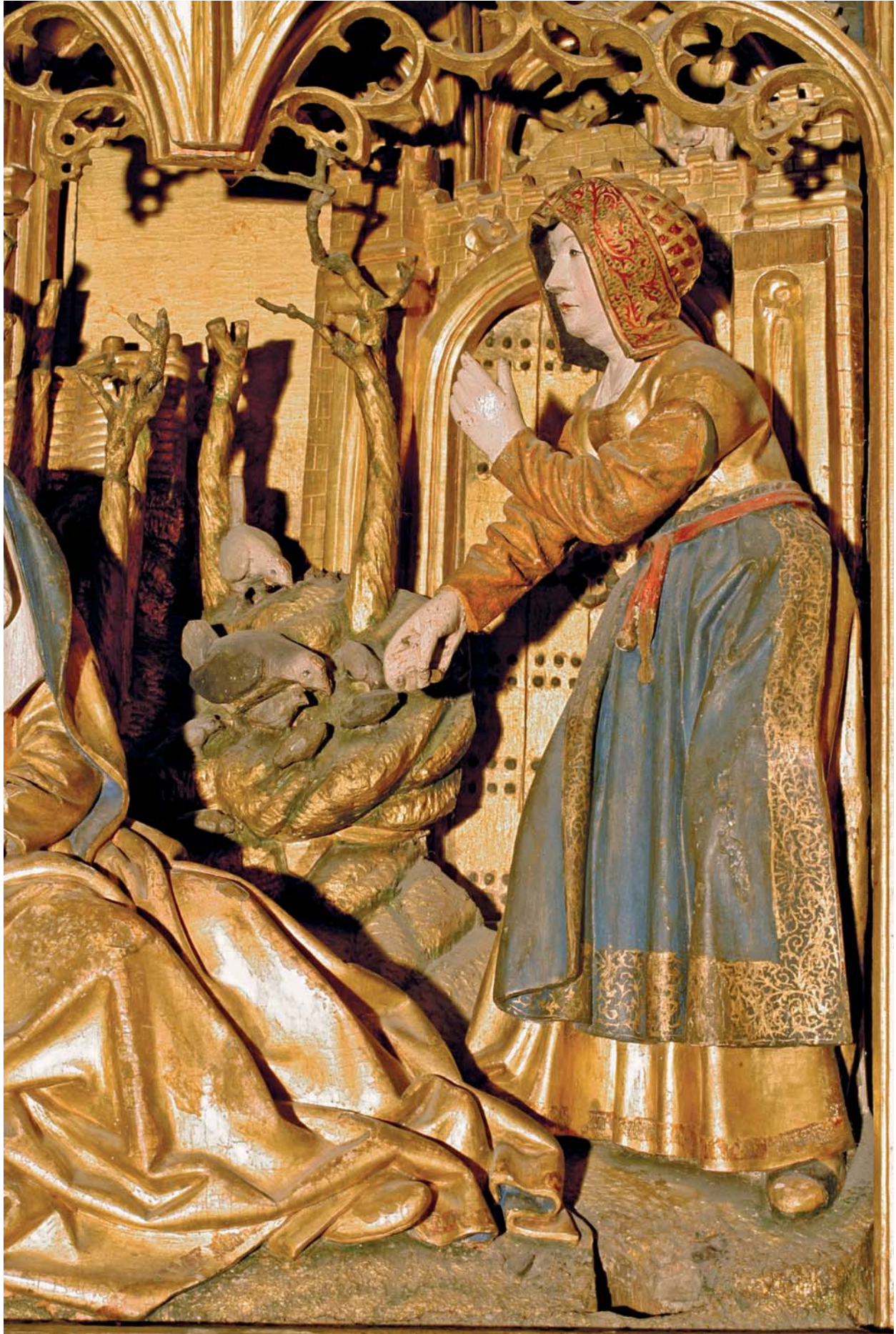


S5.1b
Holy Kinship, applied brocade on the sleeve
of the male figure left of the Virgin

Location:	Virgin's gown (every scene); Joseph's robe (Marriage of the Virgin, Nativity); high priest's stole and sleeves, tunic of male witness on high priest's right (Marriage of the Virgin); black magus's cloak (Adoration); gowns of St Anne, Mary Cleophas and Mary Salome, sleeve of male figure leaning on his stick (Holy Kinship) (see ill. S5b)	
Type:	continuous: straight rows	
Pattern:	floral and foliate	
Measurements:	medium: min. 12.5 cm	
Relief:	weave structure	
Striations:	none	
Condition:	worn	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	matt blue (Virgin's gown, high priest's stole and sleeves, gown of Mary Cleophas)	red glaze (Joseph's robe, tunic of male witness, black magus's tunic, St Anne's gown, gown of Mary Salome, sleeve of male figure left of the Virgin)
Gilding:	gold leaf no data on adhesive	none
Tin foil:	grey	
Filler:	dark brown	
Adhesive:	orange brown	
Support layer:	white chalk and size ground	



S5.1c
Marriage of the Virgin (detail)



S6 ST ANNE ALTARPIECE

Uppsala, Cathedral

Altarpiece, carved and polychromed oak, painted wings¹

Brussels

Carving: attributed to the Borman workshop or circle

Polychromy: attributed to Master I*T

Painted wings: attributed to Jan II van Coninxloo

Marks: head of a young man in profile (St Michael?) (on the case)

c.1520-1525

Closed: 170 × 180 × 26,5 cm

1547: the altarpiece is still in the church at Skånela for which it was made²

1912: acquired by Uppsala Cathedral

The two local applied brocades (models S6.2, S6.3) and the applied brocade braid (model S6.4) on the *St Anne Altarpiece* are typical of the repertoire of Master I*T (see Chapter Six). The master's first examples of polychromy are dated around 1500-1510 (see cat. 19, for example) so this work seems to have been produced late in his career. It is worth mentioning the lavish use of sgraffito on this work. Master I*T had certainly employed this technique before (see cat. S9, cat. S10), but much more discreetly. The sgraffito technique is also well represented in the Vadstena altarpiece (cat. S7).



S6a

St Anne Altarpiece
(detail), c.1520-1525,
Brussels, carving:
attributed
to the Borman work-
shop or circle; poly-
chromy: attributed
to Master I*T;
painted wings:
attributed to Jan II
van Coninxloo;
Uppsala, Cathedral
Anne's Sorrow,
maidservant

S6b

Location of the applied brocades



Model S6.1



Model S6.2



Model S6.3



Model S6.4



Remnants of unidentified local
applied brocade

¹ On this altarpiece and for the bibliography, see especially DE BOODT 2005: 217-218; GUILLOT DE SUDURAUT 2002a: 280-281, 296; PÉRIER-D'ETEREN 2002: 327.

² We thank Lars Åstrand, cathedral chaplain, and Gunnel Berggren, textile conservator, Uppsala Cathedral.

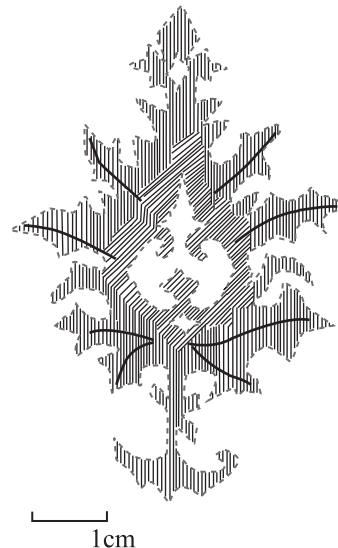
Model S6.1

Location:	servant's cap (Birth of the Virgin); sleeves of the maidservant's dress (Anne's Sorrow); high priest's chasuble (Presentation of Mary in the Temple); Anne's gown (Holy Kinship) (see ill. S6b)
Type:	continuous
Design:	unidentifiable; too incomplete for reconstruction
Measurements:	no data
Relief:	striations, flat zones
Striations:	insufficient for measurement; variously aligned
Condition:	badly damaged
Overpaint:	none
Highlighting:	black(?)
Gilding:	gold leaf no data on adhesive
Tin foil:	degraded, grey
Filler:	waxy appearance
Adhesive:	brownish orange
Support layer:	white chalk and size ground

Model S6.2



S6.2a
Meeting at the Golden Gate, remnant of
applied brocade on the maidservant's sleeve



S6.2b
Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	Joachim's robe (in his various scenes); shepherd's garment (Annunciation to Joachim); maidservant's sleeve and shepherdess's gown (Meeting at the Golden Gate); Anne's bed cover (Birth of the Virgin) (see ill. S6b)	Identical applied brocades cat. 6.2 cat. 19.7 cat. 28.1 cat. 29.1 cat. 66.2 cat. G4.2 cat. S1.2 cat. S7.2 cat. S9.2 cat. PC1.1
Type:	local	
Design:	floral and foliate: stylized thistle leaf or acanthus leaf	Possibly identical applied brocades Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, <i>Female Saint</i> (1965.2230) London, V&A, <i>St Barbara</i> (A.107-1937) Paris, Louvre, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (RF 1567) Paris, Louvre, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (RF 1788) Paris, Louvre, <i>St Margaret</i> (RF 2572) Paris, Musée Marmottan, <i>St Barbara</i> (622d) Private collection, <i>St Gudule</i> (formerly in the Kofler-Truniger collection) Private collection, <i>St Roch</i> (formerly in the Kofler-Truniger collection)
Measurements:	small: too incomplete for precise measurement	
Relief:	fully striated, veins in relief (relief pattern)	
Striations:	number unidentifiable, too incomplete for precise measurement; vertical, diagonal	
Condition:	badly damaged	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	none	
Gilding:	gold leaf no data on adhesive	
Tin foil:	degraded, grey	
Filler:	no data	
Adhesive:	beige ochre	Comparable applied brocades cat. 24.2
Support layer:	red glaze (Joachim's robe, bed cover, shepherd's garment) silver leaf bole(?) (none observed) white chalk and size ground	
	green glaze (maidservant's sleeve, shepherdess's gown) underlayer not observed	

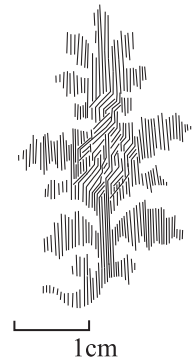
Model S6.3



S6.3a
Presentation of Mary in the Temple (detail)



S6.3b
Presentation of Mary in the Temple, applied
brocade on angel's robe



S6.3c
Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	priest's alb, angel's robe (Presentation of Mary in the Temple) (see ill. S6b)	Identical applied brocades cat. 19.6 cat. 57.4 Possibly identical applied brocades cat. 24.5 Comparable applied brocades cat. 21.2
Type:	local	
Design:	floral and foliate: stylized, thistle leaf or acanthus leaf	
Measurements:	small: c.5 cm; too incomplete for precise measurement	
Relief:	fully striated	
Striations:	vertical, diagonal	
Condition:	badly damaged	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	none	
Gilding:	gold leaf no data on adhesive	
Tin foil:	degraded, grey	
Filler:	brown translucent, waxy appearance	
Adhesive:	apparently none	
Support layer:	white (priest's alb) pale blue (angel's robe) white chalk and size ground	

Model S6.4



S6.4a

Meeting at the Golden Gate, applied brocade braid on the edge of Joachim's cloak

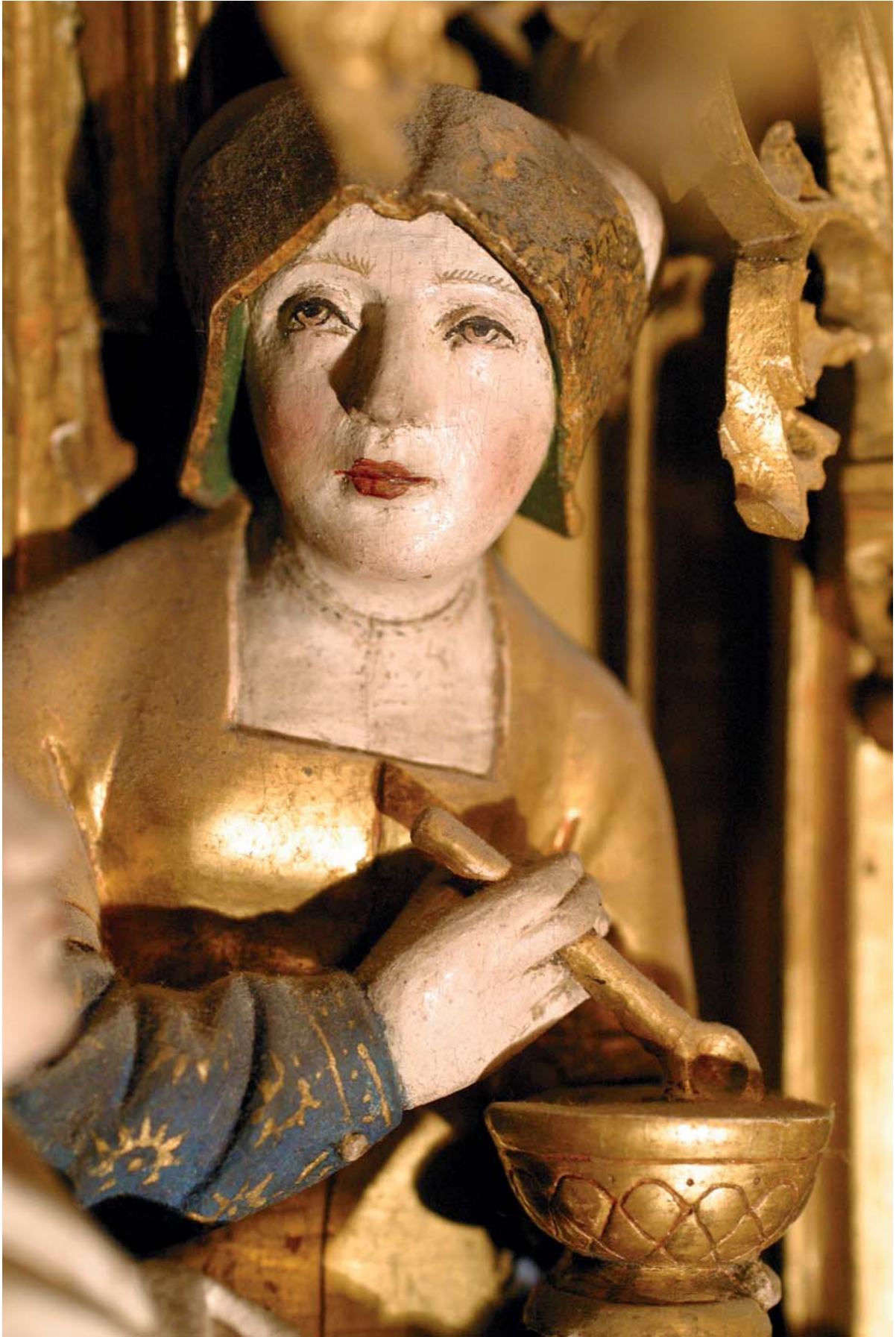


S6.4b

Reconstruction of the applied brocade braid

Location:	edges of Anne's and Joachim's gilded cloaks (various scenes) (see ill. S6b)	Comparable applied brocades cat. 6.3 cat. 7.2 cat. 19.9 cat. 24.6 cat. 49.1 cat. 66.3 cat. G4.4 cat. S1.3 cat. S7.5 cat. S9.4 cat. S10.4 Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, <i>Female Saint</i> (1965.2230) Cologne, Schnütgen Museum, <i>St Christopher</i> (A 227) London, V&A, <i>St Barbara</i> (A.107-1937) Paris, Louvre, <i>St Margaret</i> (RF 2572) Paris, Louvre, <i>St Michael</i> (OA 310) Paris, Louvre, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (RF 1567) Paris, Musée Marmottan, <i>St Barbara</i> (622d) Private collection, <i>St Barbara</i> (former Kofler-Truniger collection) Private collection, <i>St Gudule</i> (former Kofler-Truniger collection) Private collection, <i>St Roch</i> (former Kofler-Truniger collection) Private collection, <i>St Catherine</i> (former Becker collection, Brussels) Private collection, <i>St Margaret</i> (Christie's sale, New York 1994) Private collection, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (antiquary Bruno Speybrouck sale, Kortrijk 2007) Private collection, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (Brussels, KIK-IRPA photograph N4563)
Type:	braid	
Design:	unidentifiable; too incomplete for reconstruction	
Measurements:	small: 0.7-0.8 cm	
Relief:	fully striated strip	
Striations:	13-14 per cm	
Condition:	badly damaged	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	blue azurite (Joachim) red glaze (Anne)	
Gilding::	gold leaf no data on adhesive	
Tin foil:	degraded, grey	
Filler:	dark brown, translucent(?)	
Adhesive(?):	orange, translucent(?)	
Support layer:	gold leaf orange bole white chalk and size ground	

The applied brocade braids on the Uppsala *St Anne Altarpiece* have 13 to 14 striations per centimetre rather than the more usual 15 per centimetre in the braids produced by Master I*T. They are also narrower, being 7 millimetres wide instead of 8 to 9. Nevertheless, the one recognizable motif (an arabesque) is quite consistent with those of Master I*T.



S6c
Birth of the Virgin, maidservant



S7 ALTARPIECE OF THE GLORIFICATION OF THE VIRGIN

Vadstena, Abbey Church

Altarpiece, carved, polychromed and painted wood, painted wings

Carving: Brussels

Polychromy: Master I*T

Painted wings, main altarpiece: attributed to the circle of Colijn de Coter

Painted wings, predella: attributed to the workshop of Jan II van Coninxloo

c.1515-1520

Marks: BRVESEL (two, on the case), head of a young man in profile (St Michael?) (two, on the case)

Closed: 270 × 227 × 34 cm

The altarpiece probably comes from the altar that was dedicated in 1521 in the Chapel of the Brotherhood of the Rosary founded by the wealthy merchant Marten Skinnare in St Peter's Church in Vadstena.

The altarpiece has survived in a remarkably good state. In 2005 it underwent conservation treatment in the restoration workshop of the Östergötlands Länsmuseum Linköping, and the polychromy is now revealed in all its glory.¹ All three types of applied brocade are abundantly represented; all the designs belong to the I*T repertoire (see Chapter Six).

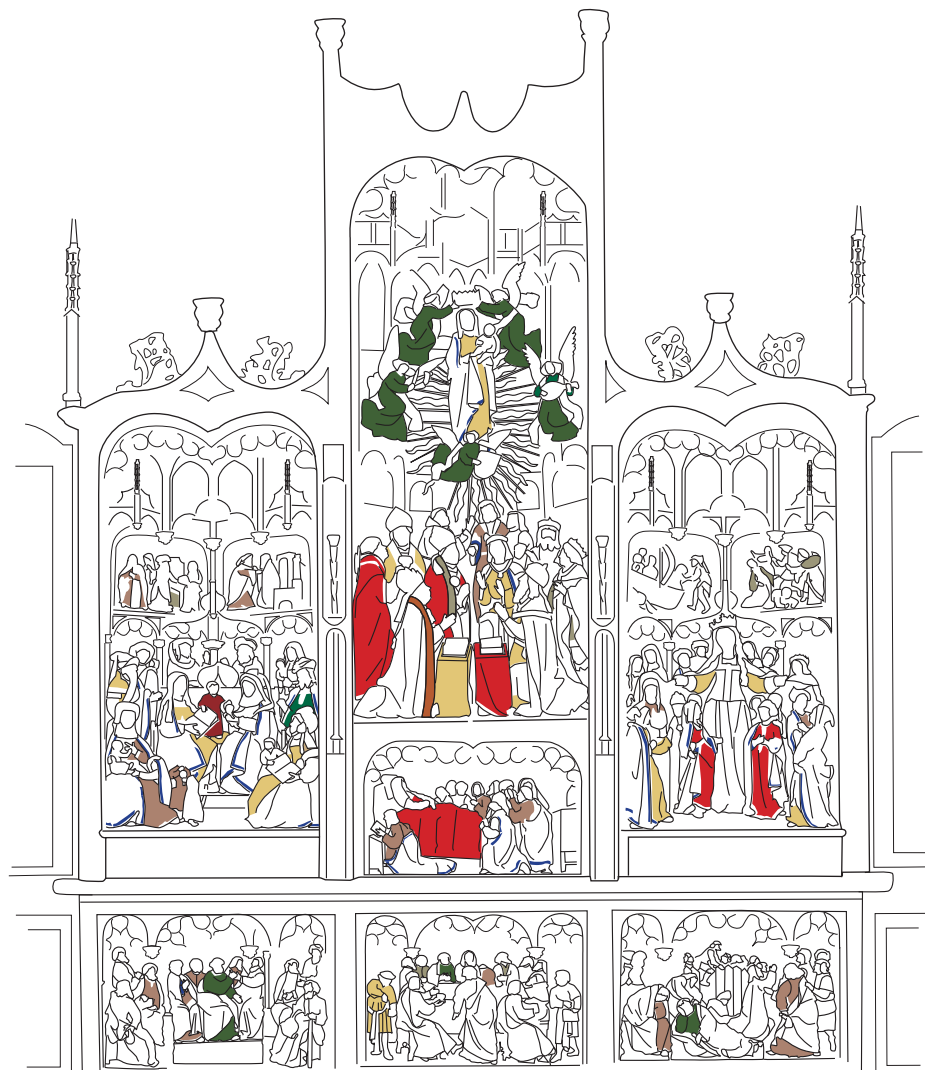
◀ S7a

Altarpiece of the Glorification of the Virgin (detail), c.1515-1520, carving: Brussels; polychromy: Master I*T; painted wings, main altarpiece: attributed to the circle of Colijn de Coter; painted wings, predella: attributed to the workshop of Jan II van Coninxloo; Vadstena, Abbey Church Holy Kinship

S7b ▶

Location of the applied brocades

- Model S7.1
- Model S7.2
- Model S7.3
- Model S7.4
- Model S7.5
- Model S7.6
- Remnants of unidentified local applied brocade
- Remnants of unidentified continuous applied brocade



¹ GUILLOT DE SUDUIRAUT 2002a: 296-297; PÉRIER-D'ETEREN 2002: 327; DE BOODT 2005: 219-220. We thank Kjell Karlsson, priest at the Vadstena Abbey Church, and Eva Nyström Tagesson, conservator at the Östergötlands Länsmuseum Linköping.

Model S7.1



S7.1a
Glorification, applied brocade on the prie-dieu cloth



S7.1b
Reconstruction of the applied brocade

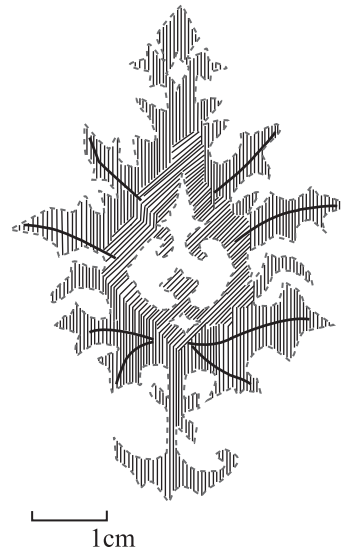
1cm

Location:	the Virgin's gown, standing Christ Child's cushion (Holy Kinship, Glorification); Mary Salome's gown, Joachim's(?) shoulder cape (Holy Kinship); the kneeling pope's chasuble and prie-dieu cloth, kneeling emperor's cushion and tunic, robe of the king behind the emperor's prie-dieu, cope of the bishop above the pope's prie-dieu (Glorification); Ursula's sleeves, gowns of the female figures in the extreme left and right foreground (St Ursula and the 11,000 Virgins); garment of manservant on left (Last Supper) (see ill. S7b)	<p>Identical applied brocades cat. 6.1 cat. 7.1 cat. 19.1 cat. 24.1 cat. 66.1 cat. G4.1 cat. S1.1 cat. S9.1 cat. S10.1</p> <p>Comparable applied brocades cat. 47.1</p>
Type:	continuous (straight rows)	
Design:	floral and foliate: posy of flowers and lanceolate leaves in a basket inside an ogival framework of flowering stems on a latticed background	
Measurements:	medium: 10.8 x 6.5 cm	
Relief:	striations, contour and latticing in slightly higher relief (relief pattern)	
Striations:	12-20 per cm; vertical, diagonal	
Condition:	locally worn	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	matt blue on contour and latticing (Virgin's gown, Mary Salome's gown, textile covering the kneeling pope's prie-dieu, kneeling emperor's tunic, tunic of king behind the emperor's prie-dieu)	red glaze (Ursula's sleeves, gowns of the female figures in the extreme left and right foreground, Joachim's(?) shoulder cape, standing Christ Child's cushion, kneeling emperor's cushion, garment of manservant on left)
Gilding:	gold leaf no adhesive observed	
Tin foil:	grey	
Filler:	no data	
Adhesive:	no data	
Support layer:	white chalk and size ground	

Model S7.2



S7.2a
Glorification, applied brocade on the bishop's cope



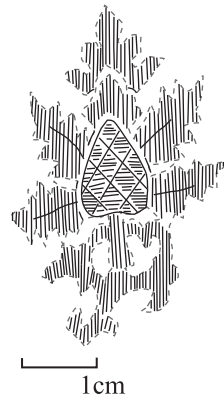
S7.2b
Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	bed cover (Death of the Virgin); cope of the bishop behind the pope's prie-dieu, cardinal's red cassock, textile covering the emperor's prie-dieu (Glorification); gowns of the virgins on Ursula's immediate left and right (Ursula and the 11,000 Virgins) (see ill. S7b)		Identical applied brocades cat. 6.2 cat. 19.7 cat. 28.1 cat. 29.1 cat. 66.2 cat. G4.2 cat. S1.2 cat. S6.2 cat. S9.2 cat. S10.2 cat. PC1.1	
Type:	local			
Design:	floral and foliate: stylized thistle leaf or acanthus leaf			
Measurements:	small: min. 5.2 x min. 4 cm; sheet incomplete			
Relief:	fully striated, veins in relief, excisions (relief pattern)			
Striations:	15-17 per cm; diagonal in the centre, vertical in the leaves and the top			
Condition:	locally worn			
Overpaint:	none		Possibly identical applied brocades Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, <i>Female Saint</i> (1965.2230) London, V&A, <i>St Barbara</i> (A.107-1937) Paris, Louvre, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (RF 1567) Paris, Louvre, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (RF 1788) Paris, Louvre, <i>St Margaret</i> (RF 2572) Paris, Musée Marmottan, <i>St Barbara</i> (622d) Private collection, <i>St Gudule</i> (formerly in the Kofler-Truniger collection) Private collection, <i>St Roch</i> (formerly in the Kofler-Truniger collection)	
Highlighting:	none			
Gilding:	gold leaf no adhesive observed			
Tin foil:	grey			
Filler:	white, opaque, present only in the striations (?)			
Adhesive:	none observed			
Support layer:	green glaze (bishop's cope, green gown of the virgin on Ursula's left) matt green	red glaze (bed cover, cardinal's cassock, prie-dieu, gowns of the virgin on Ursula's right) silver leaf		
	white chalk and size ground			
				Comparable applied brocades cat. 24.2

Model S7.3



S7.3a
Holy Kinship, applied brocade on the Christ's
Child tunic

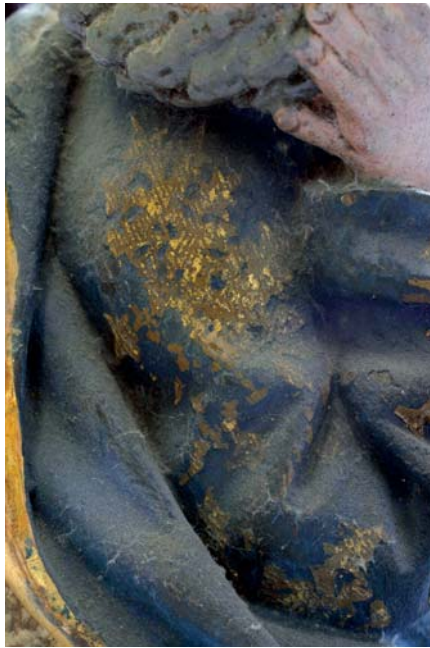


S7.3b
Reconstruction of the relief

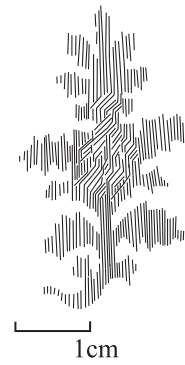
Location:	Christ Child's robe (Holy Kinship) (see ill. S7b)	Identical applied brocades cat. 18.2 cat. 24.4 cat. 19.5 cat. G4.3 Comparable applied brocades cat. 19.4 cat. 22.1 cat. 24.3 cat. 35.2 cat. 35.3 cat. F3.3 cat. S3.2 cat. S4.2
Type:	local	
Design:	floral and foliate: stylized thistle or pomegranate, lozenge-patterned centre surrounded by dentate leaves and double corolla, lily-like stem (pomegranate 2)	
Measurements:	small: min. 3 x 3.5 cm; sheet incomplete	
Relief:	fully striated, leaf veins, contour and centre latticing in relief (relief pattern)	
Striations:	number unidentified; vertical, horizontal	
Condition:	locally worn	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	red glaze(?) on leaf veins, contour and centre latticing	
Gilding:	gold leaf no adhesive observed	
Tin foil:	grey	
Filler:	no data	
Adhesive:	no data	
Support layer:	purple white chalk and size ground	

The applied brocades on the figures in the predella are extremely badly damaged. Although they can no longer be identified as a specific model, they show all the characteristics of models 19.4 or 19.5 on the *Saluzzo Altarpiece*.

Model S7.4



S7.4a
Agony in the Garden, applied brocade on
St Peter's garment



S7.4b
Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	angels' albs, St Peter's garment (Last Supper, Agony in the Garden) (see ill. S7b)	Identical applied brocades cat. 19.6 cat. S6.3 Possibly identical applied brocades cat. 24.5 Comparable applied brocades cat. 21.2
Type:	local	
Design:	floral and foliate: stylized thistle leaf or acanthus leaf	
Measurements:	small: min. 4 x 2.5 cm	
Relief:	fully striated (relief pattern)	
Striations:	number unidentifiable; vertical, diagonal	
Condition:	badly damaged	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	none	
Gilding:	gold leaf no adhesive observed	
Tin foil:	grey	
Filler:	no data	
Adhesive:	no data	
Support layer:	white (albs) azurite blue (apostles) white chalk and size ground	

Model S7.5



S7.5a
Holy Kinship, applied brocade braid on the edge of a cloak

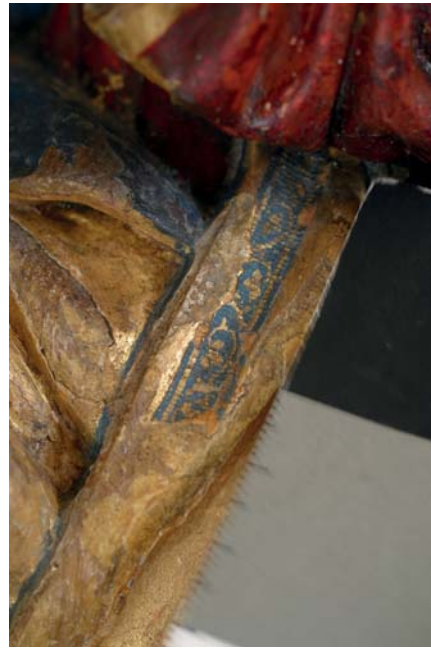


S7.5b
Ursula and the 11,000 Virgins, applied brocade braid on the gown of one of the Virgins (right)

Location:	edgings on the garments of many characters (see ill. S7b)	Identical applied brocades cat. 6.3 (arabesque 1) cat. 19.9 (arabesque 1, arabesque 2, foliage, flowers, cloverleaves) cat. 66.3 (cloverleaves) cat. 51.3 (arabesque 1, arabesque 2, foliage, flowers, cloverleaves) cat. 59.4 (arabesque 1, arabesque 2, flowers, cloverleaves) cat. 510.4 (arabesque 1, flowers, cloverleaves) Paris, Louvre, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (RF 1788) (arabesque 2, flowers) Private collection, <i>St Catherine</i> (former Becker collection, Brussels) (arabesque 1 and another unidentified arabesque) Private collection, <i>St Roch</i> (former Kofler-Truniger collection) (arabesque 1 and another unidentified arabesque)
Type:	braid	
Design:	floral and foliate: arabesques, cloverleaves and flowers between two parallel lines	
Measurements:	small: 0.7 cm	
Relief:	fully striated strip (relief pattern)	
Striations:	15 per cm; vertical	
Condition:	locally worn	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	matt blue on striations red glaze on striations	
Gilding:	gold leaf no adhesive observed	
Tin foil:	degraded, grey	Comparable applied brocades cat. 6.3 (arabesque 3) cat. 7.2 (arabesque 3) cat. 24.6 (arabesque 3) cat. 49.1 cat. G4.4 cat. 56.4 Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, <i>Female Saint</i> (1965.2230) Cologne, Schnütgen Museum, <i>St Christopher</i> (A 227) London, V&A, <i>St Barbara</i> (A.107-1937) Paris, Louvre, <i>St Margaret</i> (RF 2572) Paris, Louvre, <i>St Michael</i> (OA 310) Paris, Louvre, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (RF 1567) Paris, Musée Marmottan, <i>St Barbara</i> (622d) Private collection, <i>St Barbara</i> (former Kofler-Truniger collection) Private collection, <i>St Gudule</i> (former Kofler-Truniger collection) Private collection, <i>St Margaret</i> (Christie's sale, New York 1994) Private collection, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (antiquary Bruno Speybrouck sale, Kortrijk 2007) Private collection, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (Brussels, KIK-IRPA photograph N4563)
Filler:	beige, translucent(?)	
Adhesive(?):	orange, transparent(?)	
Support layer:	gold leaf orange bole white chalk and size ground	



S7.5c
Ursula and the 11,000 Virgins, applied brocade
braid on the cloak of one of the Virgins (left)



S7.5d
Holy Kinship, applied brocade braid on
St Anne's cloak



S7.5e-i
Reconstruction of the applied brocade braids

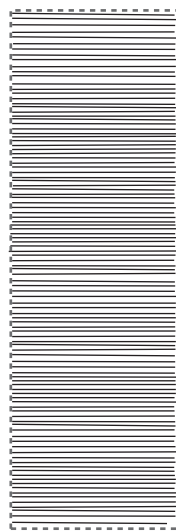


S7.5j
Reconstruction of the relief

Model S7.6



S7.6a
Glorification, applied brocade on the pope's cope



S7.6b
Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	pope's cope (Glorification) (see ill. S7b)	Identical applied brocades cat. 19.10 cat. 51.4
Type:	braid (orphrey)	
Design:	miscellaneous: painted traceried niche (with saint?)	Comparable applied brocades cat. 14.1 cat. 31B.4
Measurements:	small: 6.2 x 2 cm	
Relief:	fully striated (relief pattern)	
Striations:	18 per cm, horizontal	
Condition:	badly damaged	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	black	
Gilding:	gold leaf no adhesive observed	
Tin foil:	degraded, grey	
Filler:	no data	
Adhesive:	orange, transparent	
Support layer:	gold leaf bole white chalk and size ground	

There are small pieces of applied brocade on several garments – such as those of Peter and John in the Last Supper – but the model could not be identified.



S7c
Holy Kinship (detail)



S8 VIRGIN AND CHILD

Vadstena, Abbey Church

Statue from an altarpiece, carved and polychromed walnut

Brussels

No marks

1443

110 × 41 cm

This Madonna started life as part of an altarpiece that was commissioned for the Lady altar dedicated in 1443 in the Church of St Brigitte, the abbey church of Vadstena Abbey.¹ The church still has a carved St Jerome from the same altarpiece, but the case and the other figures are lost. The present statue is one of the exemplary masterpieces that were created in Brussels around 1440 and which had a determining influence on the appearance of Brabantine sculpture almost to the end of the fifteenth century.



S8.1a

Applied brocade on the Virgin's gown

© Hakån Lindberg



S8.2a

Applied brocade on the lining of the Virgin's cloak

S8

Virgin and Child,

1443, Brussels;

Vadstena,

Abbey Church

¹ DIDIER 1989: 51-52; GHENT 1994: 67-89, esp. 85.

Model S8.1



S8.1b
Detail of the applied brocade



S8.1c
Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	the Virgin's gown	Comparable applied brocades cat. 35.1 cat. 52.1 cat. F3.1 cat. G5.1 cat. S4.1 cat. S11.1 Cambridge, Queens' College Chapel, <i>St Catherine, St Barbara and St George</i> Private collection, <i>St Sebastian</i>
Type:	continuous: straight rows	
Design:	floral and foliate: flowers and foliage sprouting from undulating stems	
Measurements:	large: 17 x min. 7 cm	
Relief:	striations, contour and raised dots, flat zones (mixed pattern)	
Striations:	13 per cm; vertical	
Condition:	locally worn	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	red glaze on flat zones	
Gilding:	gold leaf no data on adhesive	
Tin foil:	locally degraded, grey	
Filler:	fairly thick, brown, waxy appearance	
Adhesive:	no data	
Support layer:	white chalk and size ground	

The motif is based on the same pattern as that on the archangel's cope in Jan van Eyck's *Annunciation* (1434-1436; Washington, National Gallery of Art). It enjoyed prolonged popularity, recurring with only slight variations decades later in the applied brocades on the Loppem panels (cat. 52), the Stassfurt *Passion Altarpiece* (cat. G5), and the Ytterselö *Altarpiece of the Virgin* (cat. S11) (see also Chapter Five).

Model S8.2

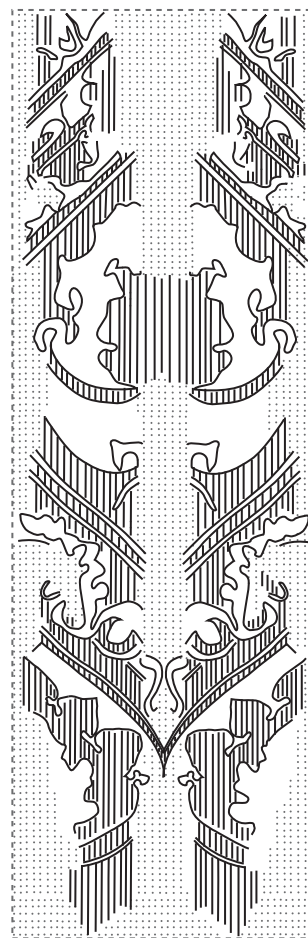


S8.2b
Applied brocade on the lining of the Virgin's cloak



1cm

S8.2c
Archaeological drawing



1cm

S8.2d
Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	lining of the Virgin's cloak	Comparable applied brocades cat. 63.1
Type:	continuous: straight rows	
Pattern:	floral and foliate: ogival medallion enclosing stylized pomegranate; lobed leaves scrolling between the medallions	
Measurements:	medium: min. 12.5 x 4 cm	
Relief:	striations, contour, flat zones (mixed pattern)	
Striations:	10 per cm; vertical	
Condition:	badly damaged	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	matt blue on flat zones	
Gilding:	gold leaf no data on adhesive	
Tin foil:	grey	
Filler:	brown, waxy appearance, fairly thick	
Adhesive:	no data	
Support layer:	white chalk and size ground	

There is a similar motif on the rear wall of the case of the *Altarpiece of the Holy Family with St Catherine* in Zoutleeuw (cat. 63), but the size is not the same and the relief is interpreted rather differently. The pattern must have circulated widely as a piece of textile design. It also appears in the miniature depicting the Elevation of the Host (1451) in the Hours of Philip the Bold.²

² Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum Ms. 3-1954, fol. 193v. Philip the Bold's grandson Philip the Good had the manuscript completed. HAGOPIAN VAN BUREN 2002: 1400, fig. 11.



S9 PASSION ALTARPIECE CALLED VÄSTERÅS III

Västerås, Cathedral, Chapel of the Apostles

Altarpiece, carved, polychromed and painted wood, painted wings

Carving: Brussels, attributed to the circle of Jan III Borman

Polychromy: workshop of Master I*T

Painted wings, main altarpiece: Mechelen

Painted wings, predella: workshop of Jan II van Coninxloo¹

No discernable marks

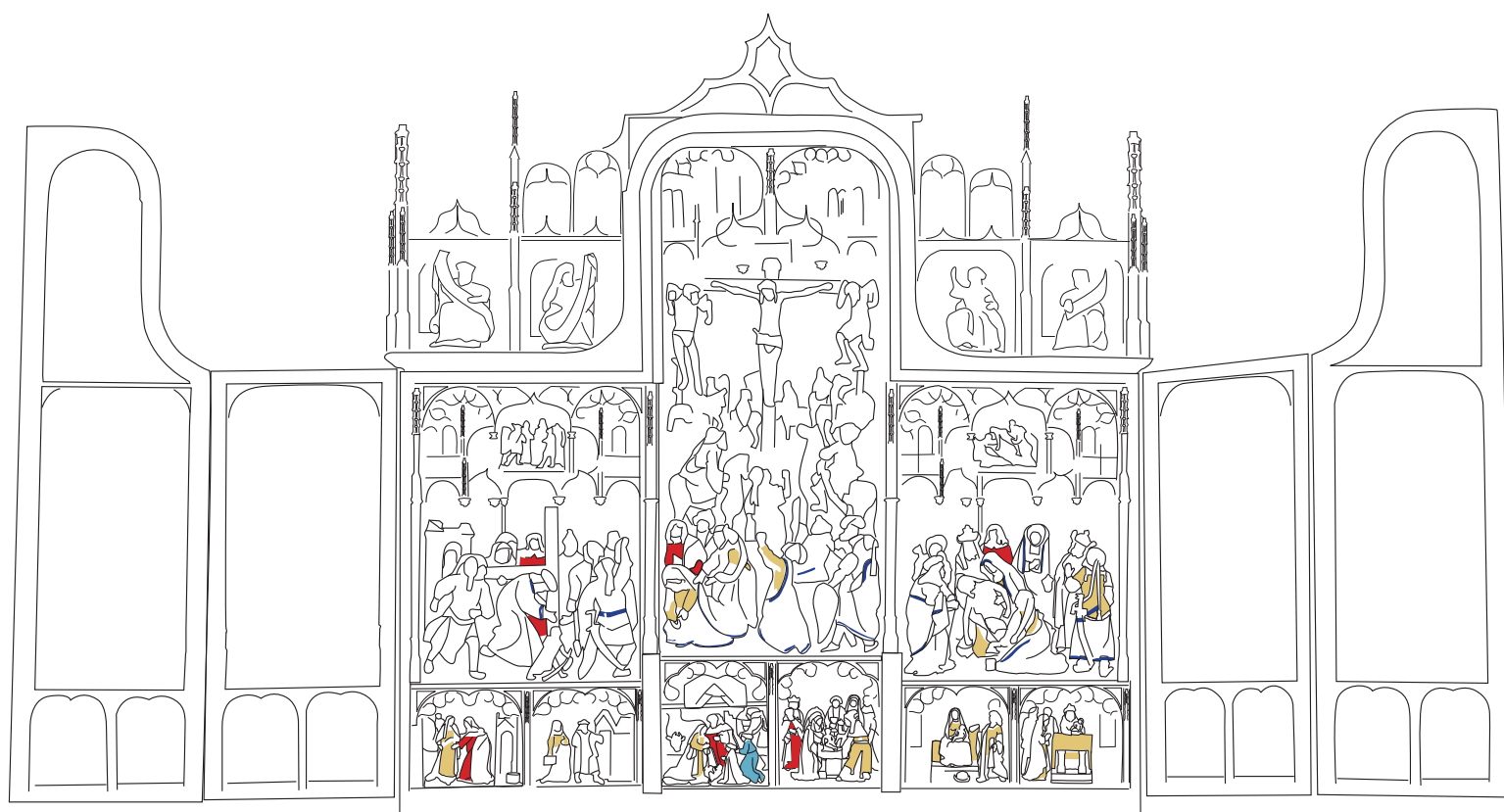
1515-1520

Closed: 224,5 × 227 × 27,3 cm

1514: purchase of the altarpiece in Brussels by Bishop Otto Svinhuvud for Västerås Cathedral (according to oral tradition)

1571: the presence of the altarpiece in the Cathedral is documented

Applied brocade was lavished on the principal scenes of this *Passion Altarpiece*, though none was used in the small scenes above. All three types of brocade have been employed, one continuous, one local, and one braid, albeit with variant painted patterning. They are all drawn from the repertoire of Master I*T.



S9a

Passion Altarpiece called Västerås III (detail), 1515-1520, carving: Brussels, attributed to the circle of Jan III Borman; polychromy: workshop of Master I*T; painted wings, main altarpiece: Mechelen; painted wings, predella: workshop of Jan II van Coninxloo; Västerås, Cathedral, Chapel of the Apostles

S9b

Location of the applied brocades

- Model S9.1
- Model S9.2
- Model S9.3
- Model S9.4

¹ GUILLOT DE SUDUIRAUT 2002a; PÉRIER-D'ETEREN 2002: 314, 319, 323, 326-329; DE BOODT 2005: 220-221.

Model S9.1



S9.1b
Crucifixion, applied brocade on the Virgin's gown



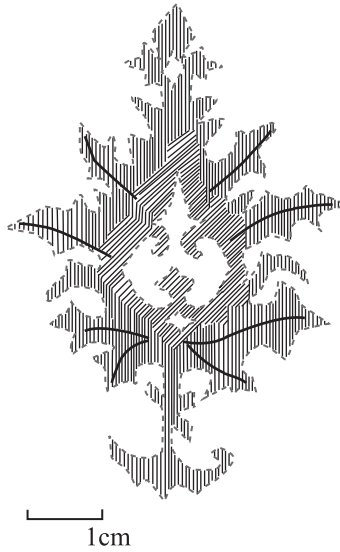
S9.1a
Lamentation, applied brocade on the tunic of the man with the sword



S9.1c
Reconstruction of the applied brocade ┌
└ 1 cm

Location:	the Virgin's gown (every scene); undergowns of two holy women (Crucifixion); Mary Magdalene's bodice, tunic of man with sword (Lamentation); the Virgin's bed cover, magus's cloak (Adoration); high priest's dalmatic (Circumcision); high priest's dalmatic, altar cloth (Presentation in the Temple) (see ill. S9b)	Identical applied brocades cat. 6.1 cat. 7.1 cat. 19.1 cat. 24.1 cat. 66.1 cat. G4.1 cat. S1.1 cat. S7.1 cat. S10.1
Type:	continuous: straight rows	
Design:	floral and foliate: posy of flowers and lanceolate leaves in a basket inside an ogival framework of flowering stems on a latticed background	Comparable applied brocades cat. 47.1
Measurements:	medium; limited access impeded precise measurements	
Relief:	striations, contour and latticing in slightly higher relief (relief pattern)	
Striations:	vertical, diagonal; limited access impeded precise measurement	
Condition:	locally worn	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	blue on contour and latticing (Virgin's gown) red contour and latticing (elsewhere)	
Gilding:	gold leaf no data on adhesive	
Tin foil:	no data	
Filler:	no data	
Adhesive:	orange-brown	
Support layer:	white chalk and size ground	

Model S9.2



S9.2

Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	John's robe (Carrying of the Cross, Crucifixion, Lamentation); Elizabeth's gown (Visitation); Joseph's robe (Nativity); robe of bearded man on left (Joseph?) (Circumcision) (see ill. S9b)	Identical applied brocades cat. 6.2 cat. 19.7 cat. 28.1 cat. 29.1 cat. 66.2 cat. G4.2 cat. S1.2 cat. S6.2 cat. S7.2 cat. S10.2 cat. PC1.1
Type:	local	
Design:	floral and foliage: pomegranate, stylized thistle-like flower	
Measurements:	small: limited access impeded precise measurements	
Relief:	fully striated, veins in relief, excisions (relief pattern)	
Striations:	vertical, diagonal; limited access impeded precise measurement	
Condition:	locally worn	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	none	
Gilding:	gold leaf no data on adhesive	Possibly identical applied brocades Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, <i>Female Saint</i> (1965.2230) London, V&A, <i>St Barbara</i> (A.107-1937) Paris, Louvre, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (RF 1567) Paris, Louvre, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (RF 1788) Paris, Louvre, <i>St Margaret</i> (RF 2572) Paris, Musée Marmottan, <i>St Barbara</i> (622d) Private collection, <i>St Gudule</i> (formerly in the Kofler-Truniger collection) Private collection, <i>St Roch</i> (formerly in the Kofler-Truniger collection)
Tin foil:	no data	
Filler:	no data	
Adhesive:	no data	
Support layer:	red glaze gold leaf orange bole white chalk and size ground	Comparable applied brocades cat. 24.2

Model S9.3



S9.3

Reconstruction of the applied brocade

Location:	angel's alb (Nativity) (see ill. S9b)	Identical applied brocades cat. 19.8
Type:	local	
Design:	miscellaneous: star and rays (two separate elements)	
Measurements:	small: limited access impeded precise measurements	
Relief:	dots on rays (relief pattern)	
Striations:	none	
Condition:	well preserved	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	none	
Gilding:	gold leaf no data on adhesive	
Tin foil:	no data	
Filler:	no data	
Adhesive:	none	
Support layer:	light blue white chalk and size ground	

Model S9.4



S9.4a-e

Reconstruction of the applied brocade braids



S9.4f

Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	garments of several characters (see ill. S9b)	Identical applied brocades cat. 6.3 (arabesque 1) cat. 19.9 (arabesque 1, arabesque 2, foliage, flowers, cloverleaves) cat. 66.3 (cloverleaves) cat. 51.3 (arabesque 1, arabesque 2, foliage, flowers, cloverleaves) cat. 57.5 (arabesque 1, arabesque 2, foliage, flowers, cloverleaves) cat. 510.4 (arabesque 1, flowers, cloverleaves) Paris, Louvre, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (RF 1788) (arabesque 2, flowers) Private collection, <i>St Catherine</i> (former Becker collection, Brussels) (arabesque 1 and another unidentified arabesque) Private collection, <i>St Roch</i> (former Kofler-Truniger collection) (arabesque 1 and another unidentified arabesque)
Type:	braid	
Design:	floral and foliage: arabesques, flowers, cloverleaves, between two parallel lines	Comparable applied brocades cat. 6.3 (arabesque 3) cat. 7.2 (arabesque 3) cat. 24.6 (arabesque 3) cat. 49.1 cat. G4.4 cat. S6.4 Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, <i>Female Saint</i> (1965.2230) Cologne, Schnütgen Museum, <i>St Christopher</i> (A 227) London, V&A, <i>St Barbara</i> (A.107-1937) Paris, Louvre, <i>St Margaret</i> (RF 2572) Paris, Louvre, <i>St Michael</i> (OA 310) Paris, Louvre, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (RF 1567) Paris, Musée Marmottan, <i>St Barbara</i> (622d) Private collection, <i>St Barbara</i> (former Kofler-Truniger collection) Private collection, <i>St Gudule</i> (former Kofler-Truniger collection) Private collection, <i>St Margaret</i> (Christie's sale, New York 1994) Private collection, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (antiquary Bruno Speybrouck sale, Kortrijk 2007) Private collection, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (Brussels, KIK-IRPA photograph N4563)
Measurements:	small: 0.7-0.8 cm	
Relief:	fully striated strip (relief pattern)	
Striations:	vertical; limited access impeded precise measurements	
Condition:	well preserved	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	matt blue (azurite) on striations	
Gilding:	gold leaf no data on adhesive	
Tin foil:	dark grey	
Filler:	no data	
Adhesive:	no data	
Support layer:	burnished gold leaf orange bole white chalk and size ground	



S10 PASSION ALTARPIECE

Villberga, Parish Church

Altarpiece, carved and polychromed oak, painted wings¹

Brussels

Carving: attributed to the Borman workshop

Polychromy: attributed to Master I*T

Painted wings: attributed to the workshop of Colijn de Coter

Marks: compasses and plane (two, on the case and the frame of the wings), BRVESEL (three)
c.1514

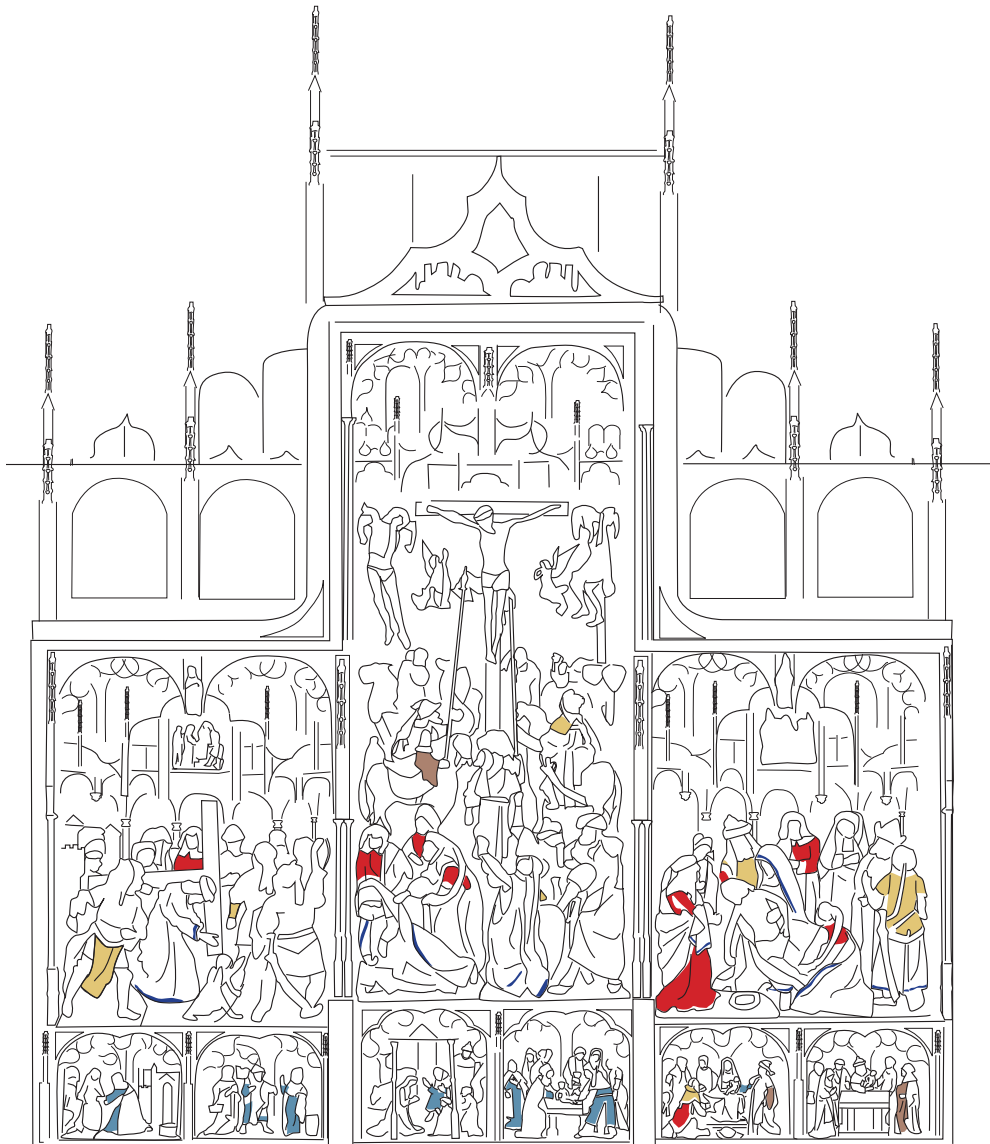
Closed: 221 × 242.5 × 26.5 cm

The superb polychromy of this altarpiece devoted to the Infancy and Passion of Christ is remarkably well preserved. The red glazes still retain their brilliance, which is most exceptional as they tend to have a much duller appearance, generally due to the corrosion of the silver leaf beneath, which darkens with time. The applied brocades are typical of the I*T workshop (see Chapter Six), although model S10.3 seems particular to this altarpiece.

◀ S10a
Passion Altarpiece
(detail), c.1514,
Brussels, carving:
attributed to the
Borman workshop;
polychromy: attrib-
uted to Master I*T;
painted wings:
attributed to the
workshop of Colijn
de Coter; Villberga,
Parish Church
Adoration of
the Magi

S10b ▶
Location of the
applied brocades

- Model S10.1
- Model S10.2
- Model S10.3
- Model S10.4
- Remnants of uniden-
tified local applied
brocade

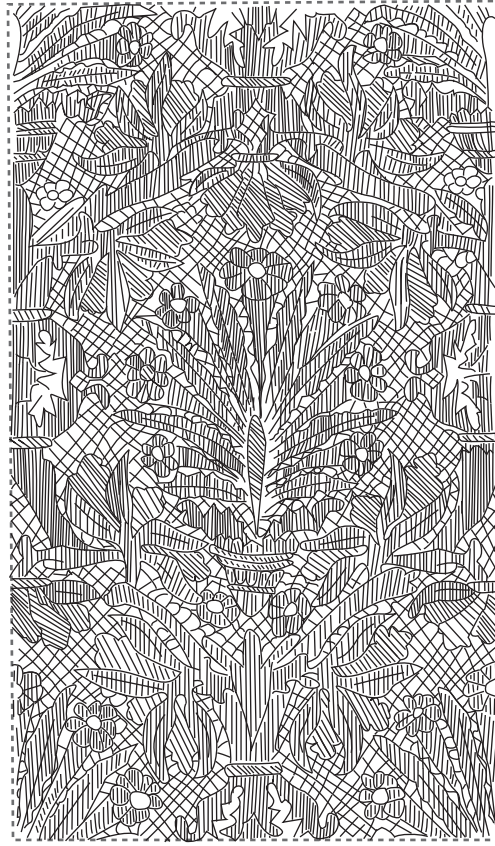


¹ On this altarpiece and for the bibliography, see especially: PÉRIER-D'ETEREN 1984: 69, 74-76; TÅNGEBERG 1986: 188, 237-238, 240, 251; GUILLOT DE SUDUIRAUT 2002a: 280, 286, 287, 298, 308; PÉRIER-D'ETEREN 2002: 321-323, 327; DE BOODT 2005: 222-224.

Model S10.1



S10.1a
Lamentation, applied brocade on the tunic of the man
with the sword



S10.1b
Reconstruction of the relief

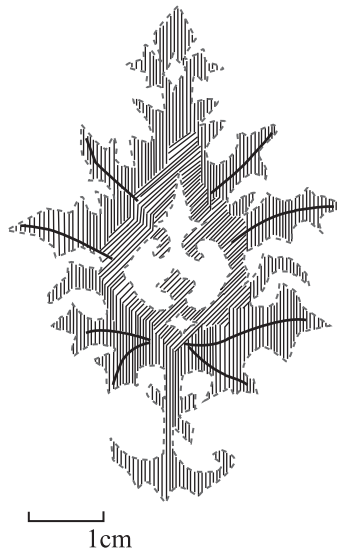
1cm

Location:	sleeve of turbaned soldier, tabard of soldier on left (Carrying of the Cross); dress of at least two soldiers (Crucifixion); robe of Joseph of Arimathea, tunic of man with sword (Lamentation); kneeling magus's hood (Adoration) (see ill. S10b)	Identical applied brocades cat. 6.1 cat. 7.1 cat. 19.1 cat. 24.1 cat. 66.1 cat. G4.1 cat. S1.1 cat. S7.1 cat. S9.1 Comparable applied brocades cat. 47.1
Type:	continuous: straight rows	
Design:	floral and foliate: posy of flowers and lanceolate leaves in a basket inside an ogival framework of flowering stems on a latted background	
Measurements:	medium: 11-11.3 x 6.5 cm	
Relief:	striations, contour and laticing in slightly higher relief (relief pattern)	
Striations:	16-20 vertical striations per cm and 12-18 diagonal striations per cm; convex in section	
Condition:	badly damaged	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	red glaze on contour and laticing	
Gilding:	gold leaf no adhesive observed	
Tin foil:	degraded, grey	
Filler:	no data	
Adhesive:	orange brown	
Support layer:	white chalk and size ground	

Model S10.2



S10.2a
Carrying of the Cross, applied brocade
on St John's robe



S10.2b
Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	John's and Mary Magdalene's robes (in the various scenes); holy woman's robe (Crucifixion); robe of holy woman in the foreground, robe of holy woman in the background; Nicodemus's(?) sleeve (Lamentation); kneeling magus's tabard (Adoration of the Magi) (see ill. S10b)			Identical applied brocades cat. 6.2 cat. 19.7 cat. 28.1 cat. 29.1 cat. 66.2 cat. G4.2 cat. S1.2 cat. S6.2 cat. S7.2 cat. S9.2 cat. PC1.1 Possibly identical applied brocades Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, <i>Female Saint</i> (1965.2230) London, V&A, <i>St Barbara</i> (A.107-1937) Paris, Louvre, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (RF 1567) Paris, Louvre, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (RF 1788) Paris, Louvre, <i>St Margaret</i> (RF 2572) Paris, Musée Marmottan, <i>St Barbara</i> (622d) Private collection, <i>St Gudule</i> (formerly in the Kofler-Truniger collection) Private collection, <i>St Roch</i> (formerly in the Kofler-Truniger collection) Comparable applied brocades cat. 24.2
Type:	local			
Design:	floral and foliate: stylized thistle leaf or acanthus leaf			
Measurements:	small: c.6 x 4.5 cm			
Relief:	fully striated (relief pattern)			
Striations:	number unidentifiable; vertical, diagonal			
Condition:	badly damaged			
Overpaint:	none			
Highlighting:	none			
Gilding:	gold leaf no adhesive observed			
Tin foil:	degraded, grey			
Filler:	no data			
Adhesive:	apparently none			
Support layer:	red glaze (John's and Mary Magdalene's robes, Nicodemus's(?) sleeve)	green glaze (holy woman's robe in the foreground, magus's tabard)	old rose (matt) (holy woman's robe in the background)	
	white chalk and size ground			

Model S10.3



1 cm

S10.3a-b
Arrival at Bethlehem, Joseph's robe

S10.3c
Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	Elizabeth's gown (Visitation); Joseph's robe (Arrival at Bethlehem, Nativity); gown of inkeeper's wife (Arrival at Bethlehem); the Virgin's gown, the high priest's dalmatic, robe of bearded man (Joseph?) on left (Circumcision); bed cover (Adoration of the Magi) (see ill. S10b)	Comparable applied brocades cat. 5.3 cat. 22.2
Type:	local	
Design:	floral and foliate: stylized thistle leaf or acanthus leaf (pomegranate 1)	
Measurements:	small: 3.3-4 x 2 cm	
Relief:	fully striated, excision (relief pattern)	
Striations:	14 per cm; vertical	
Condition:	locally worn	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	none	
Gilding:	gold leaf no adhesive observed	
Tin foil:	degraded, grey	
Filler:	no data	
Adhesive:	apparently none	
Support layer:	red glaze (Elizabeth's gown, Joseph's robe, high priest's dalmatic, robe of bearded man, bed cover) silver leaf(?) white chalk and size ground	green glaze (gown of inkeeper's wife, the Virgin's gown) green underlayer(?)

Model S10.4



S10.4a

Lamentation, applied brocade braid on Mary Magdalene's cloak



S10.4c



S10.4d



S10.4c-e

Reconstruction of the applied brocade braids



S10.4b

Lamentation, applied brocade braid on the robe of the holy woman in the foreground



S10.4f

Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	hems of many garments (see ill. S10b)		Identical applied brocades cat. 6.3 (arabesque 1) cat. 19.9 (arabesque 1, flowers, cloverleaves) cat. 66.3 (cloverleaves) cat. S1.3 (arabesque 1, flowers, cloverleaves) cat. S7.5 (arabesque 1, flowers, cloverleaves) cat. S9.4 (arabesque 1, flowers, cloverleaves) cat. S10.4 (arabesque 1, flowers, cloverleaves) Paris, Louvre, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (RF 1788) (flowers) Private collection, <i>St Catherine</i> (former Becker collection, Brussels) (arabesque 1 and another unidentified arabesque) Private collection, <i>St Roch</i> (former Kofler-Truniger collection) (arabesque 1 and another unidentified arabesque)
Type:	braid		
Design:	floral and foliate: stemwork with arabesque, flowers or cloverleaves between two parallel lines		
Measurements:	small: 0.7 cm		
Relief:	fully striated strip (relief pattern)		
Striations:	c.15 per cm; vertical		
Condition:	locally worn		
Overpaint:	none		
Highlighting:	matt blue (azurite) on striations	red glaze on striations	
Gilding:	gold leaf no adhesive observed		
Tin foil:	degraded, grey		
Filler:	brownish beige, translucent(?)		
Adhesive:	no data (transparent yellow?)		
Support layer:	burnished gold leaf orange bole white chalk and size ground		
			Comparable applied brocades (according to photographs or traces) cat. 6.3 (arabesque 3) cat. 7.2 (arabesque 3) cat. 24.6 (arabesque 3) cat. 49.1 cat. G4.4 cat. S6.4 Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, <i>Female Saint</i> (1965.2230) Cologne, Schnütgen Museum, <i>St Christopher</i> (A 227) London, V&A, <i>St Barbara</i> (A.107-1937) Paris, Louvre, <i>St Margaret</i> (RF 2572) Paris, Louvre, <i>St Michael</i> (OA 310) Paris, Louvre, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (RF 1567) Paris, Musée Marmottan, <i>St Barbara</i> (622d) Private collection, <i>St Barbara</i> (former Kofler-Truniger collection) Private collection, <i>St Gudule</i> (former Kofler-Truniger collection) Private collection, <i>St Margaret</i> (Christie's sale, New York 1994) Private collection, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (antiquary Bruno Speybrouck sale, Kortrijk 2007) Private collection, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (Brussels, KIK-IRPA photograph N4563)



SII ALTARPIECE OF THE VIRGIN WITH SS BOTVID AND ESKIL

Ytterselö, Parish Church

Altarpiece, carved and polychromed oak, painted wings

Brussels

Carving: attributed to the Borman circle

c.1500

184 × 135 × 34 cm

The Ytterselö Altarpiece of the Virgin presents the Virgin and Child flanked by SS Botvid and Eskil, two missionaries who played a crucial role in the spread of Christianity in Sweden. Botvid is portrayed in his monk's habit with a knife and rosary hanging from his belt and holding his customary axe and fish. Eskil is arrayed in episcopal vestments, pronouncing a blessing and bearing the stones with which he was martyred. The Child held on the right arm of the crowned and raptly gazing Virgin rumples the pages of the illuminated book. The figure of the Prophet Isaiah is perched at the pinnacle of the altarpiece case. The original composition on the painted wings has been replaced; the predella with its painted prophets was produced in Sweden. The Brussels-made Ytterselö altarpiece is unusual in several respects, such as the uncommon finishing of the higher centre compartment with a rounded arch, and the extremely successful, highly individualized portrait-like rendering of the figures. The clearly visible Gothic 'A' on Botvid's axe is also noteworthy.

The altarpiece's original polychromy is relatively well preserved and includes applied brocade on the rear wall of the altarpiece case. The garments of the saints are also extensively embellished with elegant patterns rendered in punchwork and line gilding on silver leaf (see Chapter Five).



SIIa

*Altarpiece of the
Virgin with SS Botvid
and Eskil, c.1500,*

Brussels; carving:
attributed to the
Borman circle;
Ytterselö, Parish
Church

SIIb-d

St Botvid, the Virgin, St Eskil

Model SII.1



SII.1a
Applied brocade on the rear wall of the lateral compartment



SII.1b
Reconstruction of the relief

1cm

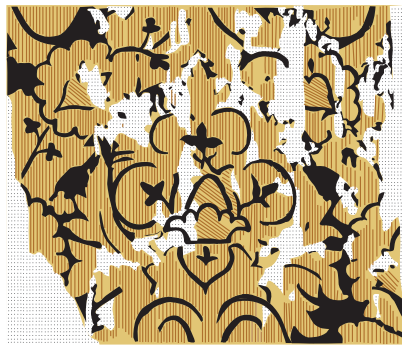
Location:	rear wall of the altarpiece case, lateral compartments	Comparable applied brocades cat. 35.1 cat. 52.1 cat. F3.1 cat. G5.1 cat. S4.1 cat. S8.1 Cambridge, Queens' College Chapel, <i>St Catherine, St Barbara and St George</i> Private collection, <i>St Sebastian</i>
Type:	continuous: straight rows	
Design:	floral and foliate: flowers and foliage sprouting from a wide undulating stem	
Measurements:	large: 17 x 10 cm	
Relief:	striations, contour, raised dots, flat zones (mixed pattern)	
Striations:	10 per cm; variously aligned, straight, even in width, convex in section	
Condition:	locally worn	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	red on contours, dots and flat zones	
Gilding:	gold leaf adhesive	
Tin foil:	degraded, grey	
Filler:	wax-resin appearance	
Adhesive:	brown orange	
Support layer:	white chalk and size ground	

Model SII.2



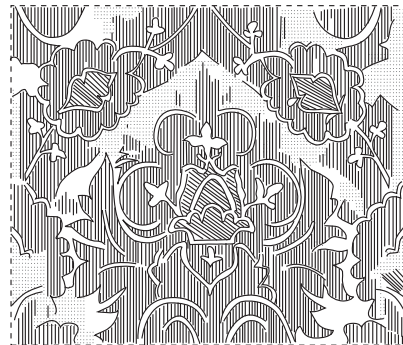
SII.2a

Applied brocade on the rear wall of the central compartment



SII.2b

Archaeological drawing



SII.2c

Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	rear wall of the altarpiece case, central compartment
Type:	continuous: straight rows
Design:	floral and foliate: stylized floral motif
Measurements:	medium: 8.5 x 10.8 cm
Relief:	striations, contour, flat zones (mixed pattern)
Striations:	12-13 per cm; vertical
Condition:	locally worn
Overpaint:	none
Highlighting:	black on the flat zones
Gilding:	gold leaf adhesive
Tin foil:	degraded, grey
Filler:	wax-resin appearance
Adhesive:	brown orange
Support layer:	white chalk and size ground



PCI THREE ANGELS

Private collection

Figures from an altarpiece, carved and polychromed oak(?). Three angels, probably from a group depicting the visit of the three angels to Abraham and Sarah

Brussels

Carving: Borman workshop or circle

Polychromy: attributed to Master I*T (original polychromy with some old retouches)

c.1500

47.5 × 31 × 9.7 cm

Offered for sale by antiquarian Brimo de Laroussilhe (Paris) at TEFAF 2007 in Maastricht¹

Despite the locally worn condition of these figures a local applied brocade typical of Master I*T can be recognized on the angels' albs (see Chapter Six). The use of tooling on the borders of the cloaks is rarely encountered in the I*T repertoire, however, the master preferring to enrich his gilded mantles with applied brocade braids.

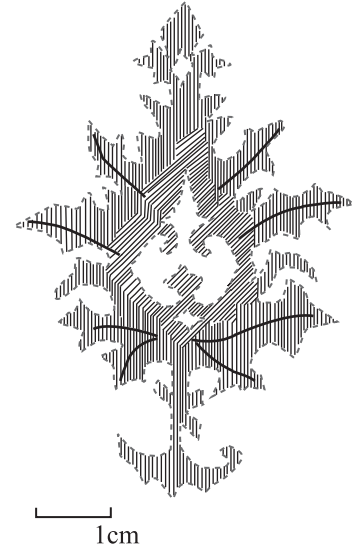
Model PC1.1



PC1.1a
Detail of the applied brocade on the angel's alb
(angel on the right)



PC1.1b
Archaeological drawing



PC1.1c
Reconstruction of the relief

Location:	angels' albs	Identical applied brocades cat. 6.2 cat. 19.7 cat. 28.1 cat. 29.1 cat. 66.2 cat. G4.2 cat. S1.2 cat. S6.2 cat. S7.2 cat. S9.2 cat. PC1.1 Possibly identical applied brocades Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, <i>Female Saint</i> (1965.2230) London, V&A, <i>St Barbara</i> (A.107-1937) Paris, Louvre, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (RF 1567) Paris, Louvre, <i>Virgin and Child</i> (RF 1788) Paris, Louvre, <i>St Margaret</i> (RF 2572) Paris, Musée Marmottan, <i>St Barbara</i> (622d) Private collection, <i>St Gudule</i> (formerly in the Kofler-Truniger collection) Private collection, <i>St Roch</i> (formerly in the Kofler-Truniger collection) Comparable applied brocades cat. 24.2
Type:	local	
Design:	floral and foliate: stylized thistle leaf or acanthus leaf	
Measurements:	small: min. 6.2 cm; sheet incomplete	
Relief:	fully striated, veins, excision (relief pattern)	
Striations:	10 per cm, diagonal in the centre; 21 per cm, vertical in the leaves and the top	
Condition:	locally worn	
Overpaint:	none	
Highlighting:	none	
Gilding:	gold leaf no adhesive observed	
Tin foil:	degraded, grey	
Filler:	ochre-beige, waxy appearance	
Adhesive:	none observed	
Support layer:	discoloured red glaze burnished silver(?) leaf white chalk and size ground	

List of Bibliographic Abbreviations

- Annales ULB
Annales d'Histoire de l'Art et d'Archéologie de l'Université Libre de Bruxelles
- Bulletin KIK-IRPA
Bulletin van het Koninklijk Instituut voor het Kunstpatrimonium | Bulletin de l'Institut royal du Patrimoine artistique
- Bulletin KMSKB-MRBAB
Bulletin van de Koninklijke Musea voor Schone Kunsten van België | Bulletin des Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique | Bulletin of the Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium
- Bulletin KMG-MRAH
Bulletin van de Koninklijke Musea voor Kunst en Geschiedenis | Bulletin des Musées royaux d'Art et d'Histoire
- CIETA
Centre International d'Etude des Textiles Anciens
- HKKOLKM
Handelingen van de Koninklijke Kring voor Oudheidkunde, Letteren en Kunst van Mechelen
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Picture Acknowledgements

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Catherine Fondaire

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