In the liturgy of the western churches, the apostles Simon and Jude are generally celebrated at the same day: 28 October. This shared feast-day is based on the Latin apocryphal Acts of Simon and Jude, as they are found in the Collection of Pseudo-Abdias. In this legendary account, the martyrdom in which the apostles were united is dated on the fifth day before the Kalends of November, that is 28 October. The liturgical celebration of Simon and Jude is directly connected to the apocryphal literature about these apostles which circulated in the West, probably from the late 6th or early 7th century.

1. Development of the cult

In the New Testament, there are only few passages where the apostles Simon and Jude are mentioned. In the list of the 12 disciples of Jesus in the canonical gospels (Mt. 10:4; Mk. 3:18; Lk. 6:15) or in the book of Acts (1:13), Simon and Jude are not explicitly presented as a pair. Yet traditionally, these two apostles are identified with the brothers of James, the first bishop of Jerusalem, because a Simon and Judas are mentioned in the enumeration of Jesus’s relatives in Mt. 13:55:

Is not this the carpenter’s son? Is not his mother called Mary? And are not his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas?

---

Simon is surnamed *chananeus* (Mt. 10:5; Mk. 3:18) or *zelotes* (Lk. 6:15; Acts 1:13). The first surname has been interpreted by some as ‘born in Cana’, the Galilean city where Jesus attended the wedding as his first public appearance (John 2:1–11). In the Byzantine church, therefore, Simon is identified with Nathanael, who appears in the gospel of John as originating of Cana (John 1:46–52 and 21:2), as well as with the bridegroom of the wedding in Cana. As has already been brought up in chapter 2, Nathanael was also identified with the apostle Bartholomew. In other interpretations, the surname *chananeus* (from the Armenian) is equated with the Greek word *zelotes*, both words meaning to refer to Simon’s character as a zealous person. According to some modern authors, the nickname *Zelotes* refers to Simon’s membership of the Hebrew anti-Roman party of the Zealots.

In the canonical gospels, the apostle Jude is mentioned only once as an individual, namely where he asks Jesus for explanation about his manifestation to the disciples (John 14:22). Jude is generally identified with Lebbeus or Thaddeus (Mt. 10:3; cf Mk. 3:18), and considered as a relative of James the Less, the ‘brother of the Lord’ (Lk. 6:16; Acts 1:13), whether as his brother or as his son. Some sources, such as the *Diatesseron* in its Middle Dutch version, distinguish Jude the son of James from Jude the brother of James. In this line, Jude the apostle (James’s son) is not the same as Jude the brother of James and the author of the canonical Epistle of Jude. If this distinction is made, the Jude mentioned in Mt. 13:55 (see above) is not the same as the apostle. Many ancient authors, however, did not make these distinctions, but rather considered the apostle, the relative of Jesus, and the writer of the Epistle as one and the same person.

---

3 On the meaning of these words, see Alibert et al., ‘Passion de Simon et Jude’, p. 839.
6 Ibid.
10 Ibid.