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COLLECTIVE MEMORY AND PERSONAL *MEMORIA*. THE CARTHUSIAN MONASTERY OF SCHEUT AS A CROSSROADS OF URBAN AND PRINCELY PATRONAGE IN FIFTEENTH-CENTURY BRABANT

Introduction

On 8 September 1455, the day of the birth of Our Lady, a solemn ceremony took place near Anderlecht, a few miles to the west of Brussels. There the suffragan bishop of Liège, accompanied by a host of men and women, armed with crosses and flags, consecrated a chapel that within a year would become the heart of the Carthusian monastery Our Lady of Grace. The abundance of source material available on the foundation is proof of the monastery's importance both for the town of Brussels and the ducal court of Burgundy.

This article analyses the use of *memoria* with respect to the Carthusian monastery of Scheut. Following Gerhard Oexle, one of the pioneers of *memoria* research, we regard the establishing of *memoria* as a social act that connected the living and the dead: commemorating one's predecessors in order to secure the salvation of their souls[1]. This, however, is only one type of memorial practices. A second type is the commemoration of past events, as written down in chronicles and diaries, or displayed in paintings and drawings[2]. In our paper we explore how these memories were constructed and used in the second half of the fifteenth and

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1   O.G. OEXLE, *Die Gegenwart der Toten*, in *Death in the Middle Ages*. Mediaevalia Lovaniensia. Series 1. Studia 9, éd. H. BRAET and W. VERBEKE, Louvain, 1983, pp. 22-26. See also a recent survey of *memoria*-research in T. VAN BUEREN, K. RAGETLI and A.J.A. BIJSTERVELD, *Researching Medieval Memoria: Prospects and Possibilities*, in *Jaarboek voor middeleeuwse geschiedenis*, t. 14, 2011, in press.

2   B. GUENÉE, *Histoire et culture historique dans l'Occident médiéval*, Paris, 1980, pp. 22-25.

the first quarter of the sixteenth century. What interests were at stake for the urban elites of Brussels, the nobility and the Burgundian and Habsburg princes? How and why were memory and remembrance used in a historical (passive) way and in a more personal (active) way?

One of the intriguing aspects of the monastery of Scheut is that both types of *memoria* were present. The construction of the monastery around 1455 was first intended to preserve the memory of the battle of Scheut of 1356 and of those who had died there, many of them citizens of Brussels. The establishment of the monastery as a monument to the battle will be the central theme of the first part of this article, and the importance of chroniclers in the process of commemoration will receive a special focus. Moreover, we will disentangle the trilateral relationship between the town, the court and the monastery.

This relationship will be further explored in the second part. We will explain how a second memorial layer was created by courtiers and patricians, who wished to be remembered by the local monks and devout visitors. Especially the officers of the Burgundian and (later Habsburg) state were eager to become associated with the monastery, through a personalised memorial. Some of these officers were instrumental in establishing links between the monastery and its high-ranking, noble patrons, most of whom had feudal possessions in the duchy of Brabant. They played a crucial role during the three periods in which stained glass windows needed to be financed for the decoration of the new buildings, for the chapel, cloister and the new church respectively.

The foundation of Scheut

The origins of the monastery of Scheut date back to 1445, when a simple shepherd called Peter van Asse, bought a small statue of the Virgin. He positioned it on a tree on the side of a road, in a place called *De Hoge Couter* (the high field), a few miles west of Brussels. A few years later, at Whitsun 1449, a mysterious light suddenly surrounded the statue. This was a miracle. Soon a popular movement developed and pious pilgrims arrived from everywhere, a total of 10,000 men and women, according to the chronicler Adriaan Dullaert (fig. 1). The statue was called *Onse Vrouwe van Gracie*, Our Lady of Grace[3].

The Brussels town council was alarmed by the new cult. It feared that the devotion would develop into social unrest, but instead of prohibiting, the town council tried to regulate it. In first instance it collected the pious gifts of the pilgrims and used the money to build a small chapel at the location. To attach some

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3   M. Soenen, *Chartreuse de Scheut, à Anderlecht*, in *Monasticon Belge*, t. VI: *Province de Brabant*, Brussels, 1972, pp. 1395-1400; R. Stein, *Van publieke devotie naar besloten orde. De stichting van het klooster Scheut*, in *Millennium. Tijdschrift voor middeleeuwse studies*, t. 23, 2009, pp. 12-39.
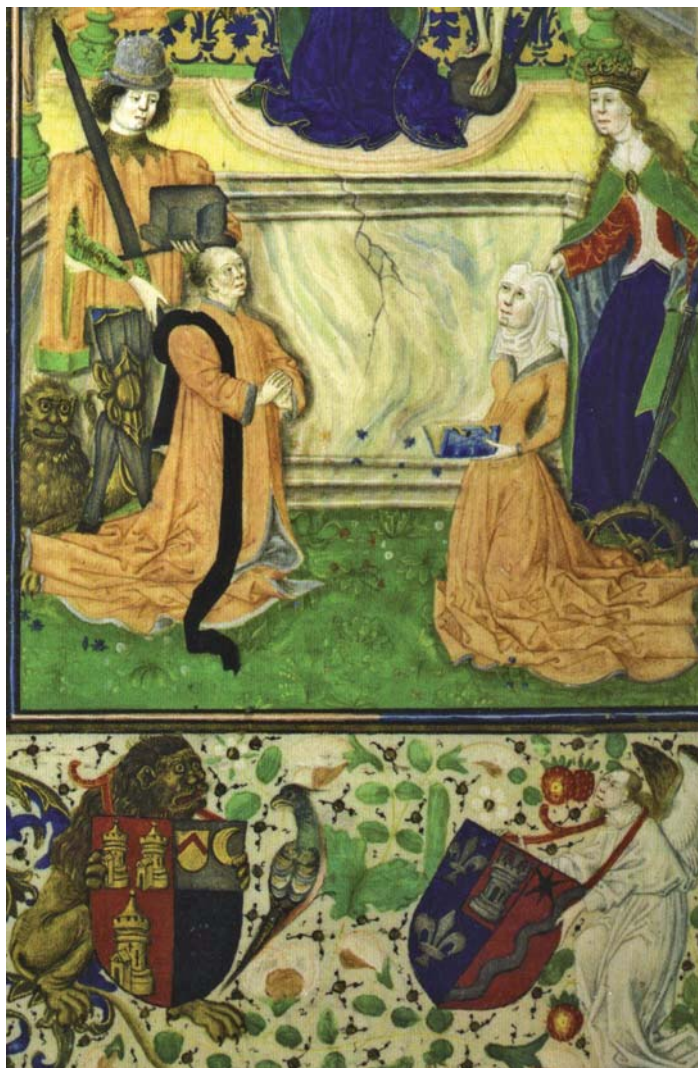
Figure 1. Adriaan Dullaert and his wife Catharina Bogaerts, identified by their coats of arms, kneeling before Our Lady. From *Origo sive exordium monasterii Nostrae Dominae de Gratia*, Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Series Nova 12.779 fol. 2v.

importance and style to the enterprise, Charles of Charolais, the later Charles the Bold (r. 1467-1477), laid the first stone of the chapel in 1450. The statue of Our Lady of Grace, with a part of the tree to which it was attached, became the focal point of the chapel.

It was only a few years later, that the decision was taken to found a monastery at this spot. In 1454 a few members of the town council invited Jacob Ruebs and Hendrik van Loon, two Carthusians from Ghent and Herne, to explore various locations in the neighbourhood of Brussels for the foundation of a new monastery. They opted for Scheut. The town subsidised the foundation with a grant of 600 Rhineguilders. In 1455 the monastery was consecrated and named after the statue as the *Monasteria Nostrae Dominae de Gratia ordinis Carthusiensium,* or the *Godshuis van onze Vrouwe van Gracie* in Dutch. The monks were obliged to keep the statue and chapel accessible for pilgrims.

This was a remarkable step. Founding monasteries was a privilege reserved for individuals: princes, noblemen or individual city dwellers. And if towns, in one way or another, were involved in the foundation of a monastery, they most often gave preference to the mendicant orders. In 1243, for instance, the town of Antwerp founded a Dominican friary in cooperation with the duke of Brabant and the bishop of Cambray[4]. The Carthusians, however, did not belong to the socially involved mendicants, but to "the most rigorous of all the orders", to quote Francis Oakley[5]. They represented a group of hermits living apart together, secluded from the outside world. In other words, the Carthusian community stood for a fundamentally different piety than the earlier mass movement.

Why then did the town council take this unusual measure? We can identify two important motives. First, the council wanted to curtail a popular movement, which was potentially dangerous for the social stability in and around the town, while preserving at the same time the abundant revenues of the pious gifts. Second, the foundation appears as part of a strategy to bind the ducal court closer to the town. The presence of the duke and his courtiers was essential for the political and financial ambitions of the political faction that controlled the Brussels administration for over ten years[6]. But when asked why he did not reside more often in Brussels,

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4   M. DE SMET, P. TRIO, *The involvement of the late medieval urban authorities in the Low Countries with regard to the introduction of the Franciscan observance*, in *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique*, t. 101, 2006, pp. 37-87, 55; W. SIMONS, *Stad en apostolaat. De vestiging van de bedelorden in het graafschap Vlaanderen (ca. 1225-ca. 1350)* (Verhandelingen van de Koninklijke akademie van wetenschappen, letteren en kunsten, Klasse der letteren, t. 121), Brussels, 1987, pp. 110-117.

5   F. OAKLEY, *The western church in the Middle Ages*, Ithaca, 1979, p. 232.

6   C. DICKSTEIN-BERNARD, *La voix de l'opposition au sein des institutions bruxelloises, 1455-1467*, in: *Hommage au professeur Paul Bonenfant*, éd. G. DESPY, M.A. ARNOULD and M. MARTENS, Brussels, 1965, pp. 481-500; M. DE WAHA, *Aux origines de la chartreuse de Scheut: pèlerinage «populaire» et monastère «patricien»*, in *Annales de la Société royale d'archéologie de Bruxelles* t. 51, 1978, pp. 3-26; Y. YIU, *Discipline or security? An analysis of the power mechanisms used to regulate the late medieval pilgrimage to Notre-Dame de Grâce at Scheut near Brussels*, in: *Peregrinations* 2, 2005, http:// http://peregrinations. kenyon.edu/vol2-1.pdf (accessed on 24 January 2012); R. STEIN, *Politiek en historiografie. Het ontstaansmilieu van Brabantse kronieken in de eerste helft van de vijftiende eeuw* (Miscellanea Neerlandica, 10), Louvain, 1994, pp. 209-241.

Duke Philip the Good (r. 1419-1467) answered that there was no monastery of the beloved Carthusian order in the vicinity[7]. Thus the foundation also meant that one political faction used public funds for its own interests. Of course this political measure proved highly controversial and saw fierce opposition[8]. It was therefore essential to legitimise the foundation. A legitimation was found in Brabantine history, in the battle of Scheut.

The battle of Scheut as a *lieu de mémoire*

The battle of Scheut took place on 17 August 1356. It was the main event in the so-called Brabantine War of Succession, waged after the death of Duke John III of Brabant (r. 1312-1355). Count Louis of Flanders (r. 1346-1384), who was married to John's second daughter, wanted to incorporate large parts of Brabant's territory into his own lands. The Brabantine nobility and towns rejected these claims and gathered around the person of Duchess Joanna (r. 1356-1406), the eldest daughter of the late duke. On 17 August 1356, the Brabantine and Flemish armies assembled near Brussels at the field of Scheut. The battle resulted in a disastrous defeat for the army of Brabant. Chased by the Flemish troops, many Brabanters were killed, others drowned in the river Senne and the moats of the town. To make matters worse, Count Louis managed to capture the town of Brussels and subsequently conquer large parts of the duchy[9].

The main reason why the Brabanters lost the battle was the condemnable conduct of Lord Jan II of Asse (also called Jan II of Grimbergen, †1388) – or that was the excuse given in later historiography[10]. As lord of Asse, Jan II was the hereditary standard-bearer of the dukes of Brabant. At the height of the battle, he dropped the standard. The Brabanters thought the battle was lost and fled in the direction of Brussels, chased by the Flemings. According to some, the lord of Asse was a deliberate traitor and a secret friend of Count Louis[11].

The defeat of Scheut, its terrible consequences and the despicable conduct of the lord of Asse soon became part of the Brabantine collective memory. It developed into one of the main Brabantine *lieux de memoire*, the shared memories of a community that are crucial for the creation of collective identities[12]. The day of

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7 R. STEIN, *Van publieke devotie*, *op. cit.*, pp. 24-29.

8 C. DICKSTEIN-BERNARD, *Voix, op. cit.,* passim.

9 H. LAURENT, F. QUICKE, *La guerre de la succession du Brabant (1356-1357)*, in *Revue du Nord*, t. 13, 1927, pp. 95-97; S. BOFFA, *Warfare in medieval Brabant, 1356-1406*, Rochester, 1997, pp. 6-7, 64-67.

10 A. UYTTEBROUCK, *Le gouvernement du duché de Brabant au bas moyen âge (1355-1430)*, 2 vols, Brussels, 1975, t. II, p. 656; P. DE WIN, *Bijdrage tot de geschiedenis van het geslacht van Grimbergen van Asse*, in *Eigen schoon en de Brabander*, t. 94, 2011, p. 811.

11 [JAN VAN BOENDALE], *Les gestes des ducs de Brabant*, éd. J.F. WILLEMS and J.H. BORMANS, 3 vols, Brussels, 1839-1867 II, book VI, vs. 1326, footnote, vss. 1-8.

12 P. NORA, *Entre Mémoire et histoire. La problématique des lieux*, in *Les lieux de mémoire*, t. I: *La République*, éd. P. NORA, Paris, 1984, pp. XVII-XLII.

the battle became commonly known as *Quaden Goensdach*, Evil Wednesday. Soon after the War of Succession the Brabantine Estates publicly denounced the lord of Asse, by condemning his conduct from the balcony of the Leuven town hall[13].

The defeat was not only remembered by those who had witnessed it. The memory still proved to be very much alive in the fifteenth century. A proof of its survival can be found in the *Cornicke van Brabant*, written by Hennen van Merchtenen in 1415. It recalled how traitors dropped the Brabantine standard in order to help Count Louis of Flanders[14]. A few years later, in 1420, that is more then sixty years after the battle, its lasting impression was confirmed by the Brabantine Estates' conviction of Jan III of Asse (†1442), nephew of the former standard-bearer[15]. In fact neither the convicted nor the conviction had anything to do with the battle of Scheut, but with Jan III's involvement in a corruption-scandal concerning the ducal council. And yet, the battle did get mentioned in the sentence:

> Some of the barons, knights, noblemen and good citizens of Brabant remember, and most of them have heard how their parents and others talked about the war between Brabant and Flanders. In that time, the lord of Asse was at the battlefield where both armies were gathered. There he behaved himself so dishonourable that his disloyalty and disgrace (*ontrouwe ende scheempte*) were mentioned until this very day[16].

De Brabantsche yeesten, written in 1432, further demonstrate the impression left by the battle on later generations. Here, too, the disgrace and disloyalty of the lord of Asse are remembered:

> People will always blame the lord of Asse and his descendants for this conduct, as long as world stands, because it was never forgotten by old people, young people, women and children, because the old people inform the young ones about it[17].

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13 See footnote 11; compare: Hennen van Merchtenen, *Cornicke van Brabant*, éd. G. Gezelle, Ghent, 1896, vs. 3400-3415.

14 "Maer selke vriende die greve ryc / Hadde omtrent den Brabanschen standaert, / Dat hij onder voete wart / Gheworpen, … / Dies hij den stryt daar mede wan, / Ende greve Lodewyc, dedel man, / Was opgegeven Bruesele, die stede." Hennen van Merchtenen, *Cornicke, op. cit.,* vs. 3400-3415.

15 A. Uyttebrouck, *Gouvernement, op. cit.,* t. II, pp. 656-657; P. De Win, *Bijdrage tot de geschiedenis, op. cit.,* pp. 810-814.

16 "De sommige van den baenroitsen, ridderen, edelen ende goeden mannen van den steden ende lande van Brabant, sijn wel indenckich ende dmeeste deel van hen mogent van hoeren vorderen ende anderen wael verstaen hebben hoe op voertiden doen dorloghe was tusschen den lande van Brabant ende van Vlaenderen, de here van Assche die te dien tiden was met der bannieren van Brabant in den velde daer beyde de voirs. lande te stride vergadert waeren, alsoe ongetruwelic ende oneerlic leefde dat dontrouwe ende de scheempte daer af tot den dage toe van heden noyt verswegen en waeren." Brussels, Archives générales du Royaume, Manuscrits divers, no. 1483, f. 44r.

17 [Jan van Boendale], *Les gestes, op. cit*., II, book VI, vs. 1326, footnote, vss. 12-21: "Des men hem [Jan van Asse], vort emmermere / Scoude sal spreken ende onneere / Waer men vermaent deser dinghen, / Soe sal sinen nacoemelingen / Ewelec dat sijn verweten; / Want dat nimmer en wert vergeten; / Want ouden, jongen, wijf ende kint / Eest soe in den sin geprint, / Dat doude den jongen des doen vermaen, / Dus sal the fame ewelec staen / Soe lange als die werelt staet."

Both sources, the conviction and the *Brabantsche Yeesten*, mention that people discussed the battle, and that its memory was passed from one generation to the next.

In 1445, the memory of the battle may well have been the reason for Peter van Asse to place the statue of the Virgin at that spot. It is also possible that the popular devotion, starting in 1449, was inspired by the remembrance of the battle, and that the Brussels population wanted a place to commemorate their fallen ancestors. Although this cannot be proven absolutely, it is made likely by how the main supporters of the establishment of the Carthusian monastery in Scheut remembered the battle.

The monastery and the battle

The most important account of the foundation is recorded by Adriaan Dullaert († after 1471, fig. 1), who wrote his *Origo sive exordium monasterii Nostrae Dominae de Gratia ordinis Carthusiensium juxta Bruxellam in Schute* in 1471, that is fifteen years after the foundation. Later chronicles all borrow heavily from this account[18], which contains a detailed description of the happenings. At the time of the foundation, Dullaert was a powerful man[19]. In 1438, he had been appointed secretary of the town of Brussels. This position gave him access to the mightiest men in town and possibly to the ducal court, and we may assume that his *Origo* expressed the views of the urban elites[20]. With all his power, Adriaan was a controversial man. A contemporary characterised him as one of the *gens sans conscience*[21]. Indeed, Adriaan was discredited during the process that resulted in the foundation of Scheut[22]. In 1464 the town council condemned him to a pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela. He was sentenced again in 1467 and in 1471.

In his *Origo* Dullaert describes the events that took place from the year 1445 onwards, when Peter van Asse set up the statue at Scheut. The chronicle presents the existential fear of the masses, the *populus* or *vulgus*, as Dullaert calls them, as surmised by the urban elites[23]. But it is also a highly partial account, written by a

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18 Adriaan Dullaert, *Origine de la Chartreuse de Scheut sous Anderlecht*, éd. E. Reusens, in *Analectes pour servir à l'histoire ecclésiastique de la Belgique* t. 4, 1867, pp. 87-122. Later chronicles were written by prior Marcel Voet (+1487), see: Brussels, Royal Library, ms. 5764, and a popularized and abridged translation in Dutch of Voet's chronicle by procurator Jean Tourneur, see: The Hague, Royal Library, ms. 71 G 25.

19 A. Blevi, *Uit de geschiedenis van Scheut. De kartuizers te Brussel*, Brussels, 1957, pp. 25-26; C. Dickstein-Bernard, *Voix, op. cit.*, p. 483 n. 1.

20 C. Dickstein-Bernard, *Voix, op. cit.,* p. 486; M. De Waha, *Aux origines, op. cit.*, p. 7; Y. Yiu, *Discipline or security?, op. cit.,* p. 33.

21 J. Bartier, *Un document sur les prévarications et les rivalités du patriciat bruxellois au XVe siècle*, in *Bulletin de la Commission royale d'histoire*, t. 107, 1942, p. 342 n. 2.

22 C. Dickstein-Bernard, *Voix, op. cit.,* p. 485.

23 M. de Waha, *Aux origines, op. cit.,* p. 13.

man who had been compromised in the course of the events. In his account, the story of the battle of Scheut plays an important role. His exposition rests on four assumptions, used to show that the foundation was a godly enterprise, undertaken by pious and respectable men – among whom he counted himself, of course – brought to success despite of attempts of sabotage by envious people[24].

In the first instance Dullaert points out that the consecration of the monastery took place exactly one hundred years after the devastating battle. To do so, he assumes (wrongly) that the new monastery was consecrated in 1456, instead of 1455. Second, Dullaert argues that there is a symbolic analogy that connects the battle with the devotion of the Virgin and, therefore, with the foundation of the monastery: at the very place where the lord of Asse had dropped the Brabantine standard, the shepherd Peter van Asse erected a new standard, the standard of Our Lady. This took place in the year of Jubilee 1450 (again Dullaert is mistaken, since the miraculous light surrounded the statue for the first time at Whitsun 1449)[25]. In this context, Dullaert emphasises the remarkable coincidence that the nobleman who dropped the Brabantine standard and the humble shepherd who erected the standard of the Virgin were namesakes: Jan II of Asse and Peter van Asse. Third, he mentions that in both circumstances large crowds were attending. One hundred years ago people came carrying arms and sticks (*cum armis et fustibus*); at the consecration they came with torches, sacrifices and prayers. Finally, Dullaert concludes that in 1356 Duchess Joanna of Brabant had failed to erect a memorial at the place where so many Brabanders were slain. Now, the Virgin herself made up for this deficiency: "*Quod ducissa Johanne tunc regnans in illo loco apud corpora temporaliter forte neglexit in terris, beata virgo Maria, Dei Genitrix et Regina coeli, recuperat in coelis*". The result of her care was the foundation of the chapel, and later of the Carthusian monastery[26].

Adriaan Dullaert used the existing memory of the battle of Scheut to legitimise his own conduct and to emphasise the loving care of the Virgin for the monastery. Later writers used his biased account for their own chronicles. In the monastery of Scheut, however, the battle was soon forgotten. A sixteenth-century calendar of the monastery has survived, a type of memorial, in which all the annual masses for patrons and special purposes are mentioned. Strikingly, the date of the memorial of the battle, 17 August, was left blank (fig. 2)[27].

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24 A. Dullaert, *Origine, op. cit.*, p. 88*;* M. de Waha, *Aux origines, op. cit.,* p. 4.

25 1450 was the year of the 50-year Jubilee that pope Nicholas V had announced: W. Nolet, P. Boeren, *Kerkelijke instellingen in de Middeleeuwen*, Amsterdam, 1951, pp. 290-291.

26 A. Dullaert, *Origine, op. cit.,* pp. 117-119. Compare: Brussels, Royal Library, ms. 5764, ff. 9r-9v; "Hoe dit convent van Ons Vrouwe van gratie der ordenen van den Chartroesen gemenlick genoemt Tschuete es gefundeert buyten Brussele" (ca. 1562): The Hague, Royal Library, ms. 71 G 25, ff. 31r-37v.

27 Brussels, Ministère des affaires Etrangères, Service de la Noblesse, ms. 245. We are very grateful to Dr. Paul De Win of the ministery for giving us permission to see and photograph the entire manuscript.
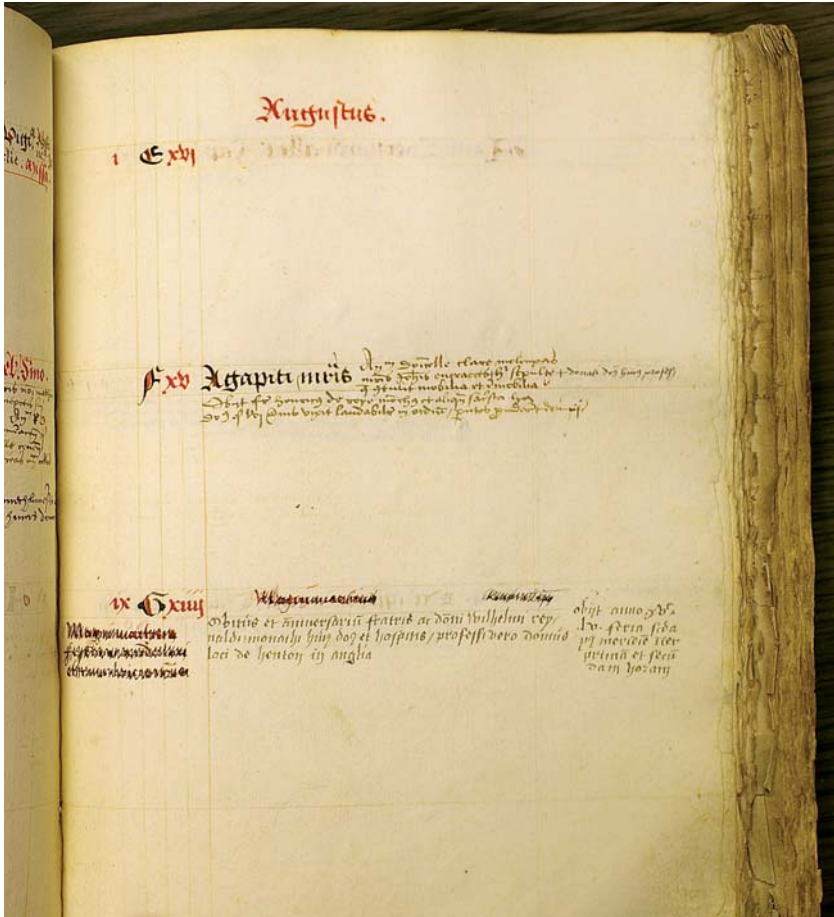
Figure 2. Calendar of the monastery of Scheut, for 17-19 August. Brussels, Ministère des Affaires étrangères, Service de la Noblesse, ms. 245 (not foliated).

Stained glass for Scheut

The chronicle of Adriaan Dullaert does not only provide us with the history of the foundation of the monastery, it also supplies us with the names of the donors of the glass windows in the chapel.[28] The time of the foundation was, however, not the only time that donors felt attracted to endow the monastery with a visible

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28 See for a list of the donors A. Dullaert, Reusens, *Origine, op. cit.*, pp. 98-100 and a translation of the text in A. Brown and G. Small, *Court and civic society in the Burgundian Low Countries c. 1420-1530*, Manchester, 2007, p. 246.

sign of their generosity. In the years 1515-1520, when the cloister of the monastery was finished, a great number of benefactors were needed to protect the cloister from the elements. In the *Liber fundationis* of prior Marcel Voet (†1487)[29] and the continuation and Dutch translation of this chronicle by Jean Tourneur (†1566), a list of 44 windows and their donors was included[30]. Moreover, there is a contemporary manuscript in which the 93 planned windows were described in detail. Probably, it functioned not only as a design for the glazier, but also as a kind of 'subscription list'; potential donors could read the iconographic descriptions of the window and possibly they could choose which window suited best their devotional intentions (fig. 3). At least, the names of 23 donors are written in a different and somewhat careless handwriting below the drawings of the windows (fig. 4)[31]. Who were they and why did they fund windows for the monastery?

Stained glass was expensive and that is why churches and monasteries did not hesitate to ask wealthy donors for offerings to have these windows made. The petitioned had good reasons to give money. They were represented for all eternity by their coat of arms or in a personal depiction, even if they were physically absent. For a relatively small amount of money donors could present themselves as generous and devote. Moreover, the subsidy for the glass was in itself considered a pious gift that could serve as a sign of penance. The window bore witness to their good deed, even though the donors' prime goal was the salvation of their soul, fostered by the pictured saint(s) and the prayers of clergy and churchgoers[32]. In other words, a glass window would remind the public of the donors even after they had died, contributing in this way to a common memorial practice[33].

Evidently, the stained glass windows in the cloister of Scheut are not to be isolated from the broader religious policy of the Burgundian-Habsburg dynasty. As a Christian lord and a protector of the church, the prince had a duty to support churches and monasteries. The Burgundian and Habsburg princes donated at least

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29 Brussels, Royal Library, ms. 5764.

30 The Hague, Royal Library, ms. 71 G 25.

31 Brussels, Ministère des affaires Etrangères, Service de la Noblesse, ms. 245. See on the iconographic programm of the windows Y. Bleyerveld and R. Stein, *De bijbelse geschiedenis in glas. Een geschreven beeldprogramma voor een reeks glasramen in de pandgang van het klooster Scheut*, in *Millennium. Tijdschrift voor middeleeuwse studies* t. 23, pp. 44-77.

32 T. van Bueren, *Care for the Here and the Hereafter: A Multitude of Possibilities*, in *Care for the Here and the Hereafter: Memoria, Art and Ritual in the Middle Ages*, éd. T. van Bueren and A.E. van Leerdam, Turnhout, 2005, pp. 13-19; M.H. Caviness, *Stained Glass Windows*, Turnhout, 1996, pp. 58-59; R. Marks, *Stained glass in England during the Middle Ages*, London, 1993, p. 8; H. van der Velden, *The donor's image. Gerard Loyet and the votive portraits of Charles the Bold*, Turnhout, 2000, p. 198.

33 H. van der Velden, *The donor's image*, *op. cit.*, pp. 213-222; A.J.A. Bijsterveld, *Do ut des. Gift giving, memoria and conflict management in the Medieval Low Countries*, Hilversum, 2007, pp. 191-196, 214.

Figure 3. A window of the monastery of Scheut. The manuscript contains a detailed description of the stained glass images and examples of the patrons and their coats of arms, which are difficult to identify. John the Baptist is standing behind the kneeling knight; St. Francis is portrayed behind his wife. Brussels, Ministère des Affaires étrangères, Service de la Noblesse, ms. 245 fol. 89.
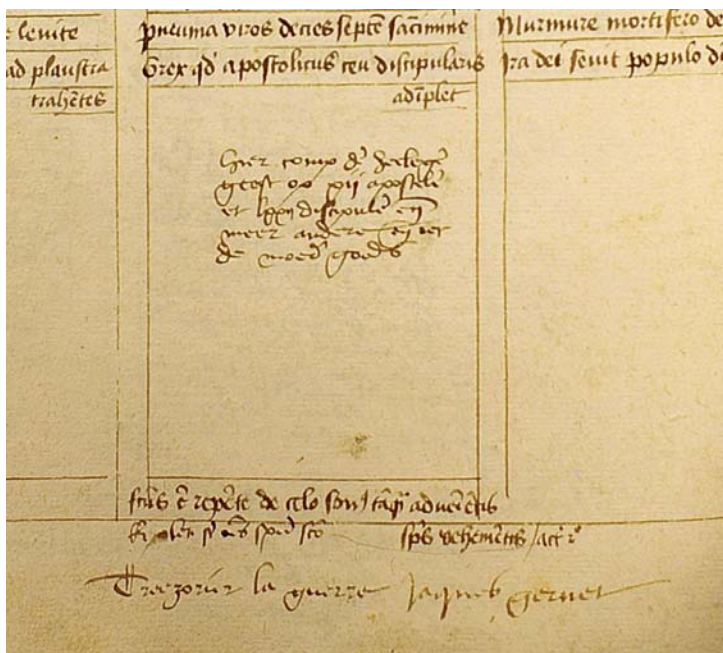
Figure 4. Detail of a description of a glass window for the monastery of Scheut.
It says that the window is donated by *treezorier la guerre Jaques Grenet*. It also
specifies that the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the twelve Apostles and other
followers of Jesus (Pentecost) should be painted between the portraits of Grenet
and his wife. Brussels, Ministère des Affaires étrangères, Service de la Noblesse,
ms. 245 fol. 21.

one hundred and fifty stained glass windows to churches and monasteries in the
Low Countries between 1419 and 1519[34].

In the case of Scheut, however, the donors were not restricted to the princely
family. The severe and sober character of the Carthusians provided the order with
an exclusive aura, and this was attractive for the higher social echelons[35]. Of course
donors could also have had more personal motives for endowing the monastery
with a window. Their incentives might further include friends or relatives joining

34 M. Damen, *Vorstelijke vensters. Glasraamschenkingen als instrument van devotie, memorie
    en representatie (1419-1519)*, in *Jaarboek voor middeleeuwse geschiedenis*, t. 8, 2005,
    pp. 193-200 ; Y. Vanden Bemden, *Le vitrail sous les ducs de Bourgogne et les Habsbourg
    dans les anciens Pays-Bas*, in *Liber Amicorum Raphaël de Smedt, t. 2. Artium Historia*,
    éd. J. Vander Auwera, Louvain, 2001, pp. 19-46.
35 S.C.M. Lindquist, *Agency, visuality and society at the Chartreuse de Champmol*, Aldershot,
    2008, pp. 190-191.

the monastic community, or a burial in the cloister. Finally, we should not discard a political motive, namely a visible association with the Burgundian-Habsburg princes who were among the prime benefactors of the monastery, as we are about to see. Commemoration was both a spiritual and a political instrument; it could benefit not only the soul of the commemorated in the future, but also their career in the present.

Jean of Enghien (†1478), lord of Kestergat, some 19 km southeast of Brussels, and a good friend of Adriaan Dullaert, played a crucial role in the establishment of the new monastery. He was a member of a lateral branch of the noble Enghien family, which was enfeoffed in Brabant and Hainault and politically active in both principalities. Just like his father Englebert, who died at the battle of Azincourt in 1415, he found a wife among the Brussels patriciate[36]. For years at a stretch, from 1430 to 1461, he was the *amman*, the most important ducal officer, in the district and town of Brussels. In the 1450s, moreover, Philip the Good appointed him as *maître d'hotel* in his household and as member of the Council of Brabant, the highest judicial court of the duchy[37]. In October 1456 he orchestrated a visit to the on-going construction of the monastery by Philip the Good, his son Charles and the French dauphin Louis. On that occasion, Philip granted the monastery a yearly delivery of firewood and charcoal[38]. With winter approaching, the delivery was crucial for the functioning of the kitchen, bakery and brewery, and for the heating of the cells. However, it seems as if the monastery of Scheut was more the project of Philip's wife Isabel of Portugal (†1471), who founded four cells in the convent, and of their son, Charles[39].

Charles, who had laid the first stone for the chapel in 1450, proved his interest for the site by leaving a clearly visible deed. In April 1457, two months after the

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36 His father was married to Elisabeth de Hertoghe, from the Coudenberg lineage, whereas Jean was married to Maria de Mol from the t'Serroelofs lineage. See F. DE CACAMP and H.-C. VAN PARYS, *Généalogie des familles inscrites au lignage de Coudenberg en 1376, d'après le Liber Familiarum de J.B. Houwaert*, in *Brabantica. Recueil de travaux de généalogie, d'héraldique et d'histoire familiale pour la province de Brabant,* t. II, 1957, pp. 50, 72; F. DE CACAMP and H.-C. VAN PARYS, *Généalogie des familles inscrites au lignage t'Serroelofs en 1376, d'après les travaux de J.B. Houwaert et les sources originales (suite)*, in *Brabantica. Recueil de travaux de généalogie, d'héraldique et d'histoire familiale pour la province de Brabant,* t. VIII, 1966, p. 898; R. GOFFIN, *Généalogies Enghiennoises I. La maison d'Enghien*, Grandmetz, 1963, pp. 132-136.

37 P. GODDING, *Le Conseil de Brabant sous le règne de Philippe le Bon (1430-1467)* (Académie Royale de Belgique. Classe des lettres et des sciences morales et politiques, 19), Brussels, 1999, p. 92; Prosopographia Curiae Burgundicae (1407-1477) id. no. 1588 (see www.prosopographia-burgundica.org, accessed on 24 January 2012).

38 On the princely visit and the role of Jean of Enghien see THE HAGUE, ROYAL LIBRARY, ms. 71 G 25, ff. 102v-103r and M. SOENEN, *La chartreuse, op. cit.*, p. 1400.

39 THE HAGUE, ROYAL LIBRARY, ms. 71 G 25, ff. 158r-v. See also M. SOMMÉ, *Isabelle de Portugal, duchesse de Bourgogne. Une femme au pouvoir au XVe siècle*, Villeneuve d'Ascq, 1998, pp. 50, 454, 463-467.

birth of his daughter Mary in the ducal palace in Brussels, he paid 42 pounds for the installation of a *grand voirrière*, a big window. It was installed at the most honourable and prestigious place of the chapel, right behind the altar with the statue of Our Lady of Grace on the tree-stump. The window right next to that of Charles was donated by Jean of Enghien[40]. It is difficult to say who took the initiative for having these windows installed: the prince or the local potentate. However, it seems more likely that Enghien was the one who mobilised other donors of windows for this part of the chapel. He was a central node in a large social and political network, involving the duke's household as well as the town and district of Brussels. Among the donors that he managed to attract we find a high-ranking household-officer, a Portuguese nobleman, both connected to Isabel of Portugal which proves again her commitment with the site, an Italian banker residing in Brussels, the ex-attorney general of Flanders and two members of the Brussels patriciate[41].

The choir of the Carthusian monks was not open to pilgrims, and this meant that the social profile of its donors was quite different. Whereas most donors of the chapel can be related to Burgundian court and administration, the donors of the six windows in the choir tended to be middle class burghers of Brussels: Adriaan Dullaert, the town-secretary, financed a window together with his wife (fig. 1), whose mother and grandmother also donated windows. The three other stained glass panes were given by a butcher, a clerk and the receiver of the chapel[42]. The two separate parts of the church were endowed by two different social circles of donors. This divergence could be explained by the different interests which the donators initially had. Whereas Charles and his court-connections tended to focus on the devotion of the statue of Our Lady – in 1457 he visited the chapel no less than 22 times – Dullaert and his peers were more inclined to favour the Carthusians. It has to be stressed that the stained glass windows in the chapel had a more public function than the windows in the choir, which could only be seen by the monastic community.

Bureaucrats as intermediaries for glass donations

The years 1515-1517 mark a second period when new stained glass windows were needed. In these years the new cloister of the monastery was being finished and there is evidence that the majority of its 44 stained glass windows was given

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40 J. HELBIG, *De glasschilderkunst in België. Repertorium en documenten* I-II, Antwerp, 1943-1951, no. 1724; H. VAN DER VELDEN, *The donor's image*, *op. cit.*, pp. 184-185 and H. VAN DER VELDEN, *Karel de Stoute op bedevaart: de aanschaf van pelgrimstekens door de graaf van Charolais*, in *Heilig en profaan 2. 1200 Laatmiddeleeuwse insignes uit openbare en particuliere collecties*, éd. H.J.E. VAN BEUNINGEN, Rotterdam, 2001, pp. 236-237.

41 See on the details of these donations and the connections with Isabel of Portugal M. DAMEN, *De schenkers van Scheut. Het glasmecenaat van een kartuizerklooster, 1450-1530*, in *Millennium. Tijdschrift voor middeleeuwse studies,* t. 23, 2009, pp. 87-88.

42 Ibidem.

in these years. According to the chronicler Jean Tourneur, Jean Micault (†1539), receiver general of all finances, "came walking to the monastery and by God's inspiration he wished that stained glass windows should be made, and most of them were realised through his mediation"[43]. To what extent can this remark of the chronicler be supported by the surviving evidence? Was it really his own initiative or was it a princely project of which he was a simple executioner?

During Micault's term of office, Margaret of Austria (†1530), aunt of Charles V, was governor of the Low Countries. She played an active role as a patron of the arts and was closely involved in the glazing of St. Waltrudis collegiate church in Mons (1510-11), the churches of the Sablon (1512-14) and St. Gudula (1517-1520) in Brussels and St. Gummarus (1517-1519) in Lier[44]. The genealogy of the Burgundian-Habsburg dynasty was an important feature of the stained glass windows in these churches, with the images and coats of arms of Philip the Fair (r. 1494-1506) and Mary of Burgundy (r. 1477-1482) as central elements. On these panes the image of Emperor Maximilian's (†1519) first wife is omnipresent, whereas the image of his second wife, Bianca Sforza (†1510), was omitted. The explanation is simple. The presence of Mary of Burgundy demonstrated Habsburg's link with the Burgundian dynasty and was proof of its legitimacy, which was severely contested in the Low Countries during the 1480s[45].

The glazing of the cloister of Scheut fits exactly into this broader pattern of patronage, since, on the first six windows, the key members of the princely dynasty were portrayed: Emperor Maximilian on the first, his son Philip the Fair on the second, his daughter Margaret on the fourth, his grandsons Charles and Ferdinand on the third and fifth, and his granddaughter Eleanor on the sixth window[46]. The prominence of the ruling family seems to imply that Margaret of Austria was actively involved in the glazing of the cloister.

However, when we take a closer look at the other donors, the intermediary role of Jean Micault does become clear. Jean apparently convinced seven of his financial colleagues in the Habsburg administration to donate a window: a master of the *Chambre des Comptes* of Brussels[47], for example, but also the

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43 The Hague, Royal Library, ms. 71 G 25, f. 134r.

44 D. Eichberger, *Leben mit Kunst, wirken durch Kunst. Sammelwesen und Hofkunst unter Margarete von Österreich, Regentin der Niederlande*, Turnhout, 2002, pp. 45-152; Y. Vanden Bemden, *Les vitraux de la première moitié du XVIe siècle conservés en Belgique. Province du Hainaut 1: La collégiale Sainte-Waudru Mons*, Namur, 2000, pp. 77-78.

45 M. Damen, *Memoria y propaganda. Las vidrieras de Felipe el Hermoso en los Países Bajos*, in *Felipe I, el Hermoso. La belleza y la locura*, éd. M.A. Zalama and P. Vandenbroeck, Madrid, 2006, pp. 165-184.

46 See for a complete list of all donors M. Damen, *De schenkers*, *op. cit.*, pp. 106-108.

47 Pierre Boisot (window no. 13). His granddaughter Marie Boisot would marry Nicholas, son of Jean Micault. J. Th. de Raadt and E. de Munck, *Les Micault Belges. Leurs portraits et leur histoire*, Brussels, 1889, pp. 32-33.

treasurer-general[48], the treasurer of war[49] and the treasurers of Naples[50] and Spain[51]. Undoubtedly, Micault maintained regular contacts with these officers and found it easy to approach them. It is striking that in the list of donors, most of these officers are mentioned directly after the royal family. This may indicate that their response to Jean's request was quick and they were enlisted directly in the monastery's 'register of glass donors'. At the same time the position of 'their' windows right next to those of the princely family is an indication of the social rise of these officers, not all of whom had a noble background.

The social rise of Jean Micault himself – he donated window no. 12 – can serve as an example. Micault was born in the duchy of Burgundy where his father was castellan of Pommard (Côte-d'Or). He made a rapid career rise in the Habsburg financial administration. In 1506 he was in charge of the expenses made by Philip the Fair and Charles on their trip to Spain[52]. In 1507 he was appointed receiver-general of all finances[53]. He established himself in Brussels and acquired two residences, held in fief from the duke of Brabant, in the immediate surroundings of the town. As a confirmation of his social promotion he married Lieve van Kats, the daughter of a nobleman from Zeeland (fig. 5)[54].

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48 Jean Ruffault appointed 26 March 1515 as treasurer-general, an office that he would occupy until 1542. A. WALTHER, *Die burgundische Zentralbehörden unter Maximilian I. und Karl V.*, Leipzig, 1909, p. 80; M. JEAN, *La Chambre des Comptes de Lille. L'institution et les hommes (1477-1667)*, Paris, 1992, pp. 338-339.

49 Jacques Grenet, lord of Wencourt (window no. 21). He was treasurer until 1517. See A. WALTHER, *Die burgundische Zentralbehörden, op. cit.*, p. 80.

50 Charles le Clercq (window no. 11) preceded Jacques Grenet (window no. 21) as treasurer of war. In 1516 he was appointed as commissioner and controller of the offices of Naples. A. WALTHER, *Die burgundische Zentralbehörden, op. cit.*, pp. 79-80; M. JEAN, *La Chambre, op. cit.*, p. 318.

51 Not mentioned by name (window no. 40). The patron was probably Luis Sánchez, treasurer-general of Aragón, an office that he held since 1505. After the death of Fernando II of Aragón on 23 January 1516, he travelled to Charles's court in Brussels where Charles confirmed him as treasurer. He died in 1530. J. MARTÍNEZ MILLAN, *La Corte de Carlos V. Los consejos y los consejeros de Carlos V* III, Madrid 2000), 384-385. This officeholder does not refer to Francisco de Vargas, treasurer-general of Castile from 1507 onwards. Charles confirmed him in his office on 24 February 1517 in Brussels, but Vargas never travelled to the Low Countries. *Ibidem*, pp. 442-445.

52 A. WALTHER, *Die burgundische Zentralbehörden, op. cit.*, pp. 54, 79.

53 E. AERTS and H. COPPENS, *Ontvangerij-generaal van financiën. Koninklijke schatkist (1387-1795)*, in *De centrale overheidsinstellingen van de Habsburgse Nederlanden (1482-1795)* t. 2, Brussels, 1994, p. 536.

54 A. WAUTERS, *Histoire des environs de Bruxelles* II, Brussels, 1855, pp. 540-542 ; J.Th. DE RAADT and E. DE MUNCK, *Les Micault Belges, op. cit.*, pp. 23-25; A. VAN STEENSEL, *Edelen in Zeeland. Macht, rijkdom en status in een laatmiddeleeuwse samenleving*, Hilversum, 2010, passim. See also a short biography of Micault by H. DE RIDDER-SYMOENS in P.G. BIETENHOLZ and T.B. DEUTSCHER éd., *Contemporaries of Erasmus. A biographical register of the Renaissance and Reformation*,Toronto, 1985, pp. 441-442.

Figure 5. Left part of a triptych of Jean Micault and his wife Lieve van Cats with the resurrection of Lazarus. Jean Micault and his son Charles directly behind him are depicted as knights. Brussels, Musées royaux des Beaux-Arts. Photo © IRPA / KIK, Brussels.

As the most important financial officer of the Low Countries, it must have been easy for him to approach the thirteen nobles who would also donate a window to the cloister. An ideal occasion for this could have been the gathering of the Order of the Golden Fleece in Brussels in October-November 1516[55]. Micault was present at this major event, for which he had to make numerous expenses. It appears that seven members of the knightly order donated a window to the Scheut cloister, of whom four were admitted during the Brussels meeting[56]. Most of them boasted additional connections with Brussels and the duchy of Brabant. For example, several Golden Fleece members possessed not only residences in Brussels, but also lordships with high jurisdiction in the duchy (e.g. Aarschot, Breda, Diest, Hoogstraten, Kranendonk and Zevenbergen) and can be qualified as the *baanrotsen,* or bannerets, of Brabant[57]. Moreover, they occupied important functions in the household and were therefore closely connected to the princely family. We could say that they imitated the princely patronage of the Carthusian monastery, as they did when they donated stained glass windows to the churches of St. Gudula and the Sablon[58].

However, the windows in the cloister differed in form and function from the windows in these parochial churches: they were much smaller and cheaper, and could moreover only be seen by a more limited audience, than the windows in the parochial churches of the big towns. Thus, showing off their generosity and piety cannot have been the first incentive for their donation.

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55 F. DE REIFFENBERG, *Histoire de la Toison d'Or, depuis son constitution jusqu'a la cessation des chapitres généraux,* Brussels, 1830, pp. 293-295, 314.

56 See the lists in DAMEN, *De schenkers*, *op. cit.*, pp. 107-108, 110.

57 This applies to Guillaume of Croÿ, lord of Aarschot (†1521, window no. 7), Henry III of Nassau, lord of Breda and Diest (†1538, window no. 30), Antoine of Lalaing, lord of Hoogstraten (†1540, window no. 8), Frederik of Egmond, lord of Kranendonk (†1521, window no. 17) and Maximilien of Glymes, lord of Zevenbergen (†1522, window no. 18). On the Brabantine bannerets see M. DAMEN, *Heren met banieren. De baanrotsen van Brabant in de vijftiende eeuw*, in *Bourgondië voorbij. De Nederlanden 1250-1650. Liber alumnorum Wim Blockmans*, éd. M. DAMEN and L. SICKING, Hilversum, 2010, pp. 139-158.

58 Y. VANDEN BEMDEN, *Les vitraux*, *op. cit.*, pp. 161, 178, 202, 217, 237, 259, 275.

Their intention may have been to show loyalty to the dynasty, despite their clearly devotional and commemorative motives.

These religious motives become more evident when looking at the middle category. The donor of window no. 19 of the cloister, Anton of Asse († after 1533, also called of Grimbergen), for example, was the grandson of Jan III of Asse. He was knighted in 1519 and politically active as alderman and receiver in the town administration of Brussels between 1492 and 1533[59]. There are other examples from Brussels patrician families who donated windows for the cloister, like Philippe Cotereau († before 1537), or Jeroen van der Noot (†1541), chancellor of Brabant from 1514 to 1531[60]. For these men the bond with the monastery was meant to go beyond them as individuals and to include their families. Some of their ancestors had founded cells of the monastery or were even buried in the cloister[61]. Once again, this proves that the Carthusians did not operate completely secluded from the world. They had to take into account the interests of their patrons and benefactors, who assumedly wanted to visit the graves of their deceased relatives buried in the cloister once in a while.

And this brings us to the third new building on the site of the monastery and the intermediary role of Mercurino di Gattinara (†1530), president of the parliament of Dole and a trustee of Margaret of Austria[62]. The fact that this devout but lay top officer, together with two servants, stayed with the Carthusians from August 1517 to May 1518 demonstrates once more that the walls separating the monastery from the world were actually rather porous. During his visit, di Gattinara wore the same white habit as the monks – whom he paid for board and lodging – while passing his time studying and praying to do penitence, as stated in the chronicle of the monastery[63]. After his stay, when he was appointed chancellor of Charles V, he was

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59 P. De Win, *Bijdrage tot de geschiedenis, op. cit.,* p. 857-861.
60 See on him the short biography by H. De Ridder-Symoens in P.G. Bietenholz and T.B. Deutscher éd., *Contemporaries of Erasmus, op. cit.,* pp. 18-19.
61 Cotereau's mother, Margareta Herdincx (†1494), was buried in the cloister (A. Wauters, *Histoire* I, *op. cit.*, p. 441) and so was his aunt Marie de Cotereau (†1506) and his cousin Karel de Groote (†1485), chancellor of Brabant and founder of a cell in the monastery. P. De Win, *De familie Cotereau, een uitgesproken casus van sociale promotie in de Bourgondische Nederlanden (15de eeuw - begin 16de eeuw)*, in *Eigen schoon en de Brabander,* t. 92, 2009, pp. 613, 623, 646-650; P. De Win, *De kanseliers van Brabant in de vijftiende eeuw*, in *Handelingen Koninklijke kring voor Oudheidkunde, Letteren en Kunst van Mechelen*, t. 111, 2007, pp. 110-111, 140-142.
62 H. Cools, *Mannen met macht. Edellieden en de moderne staat in de Bourgondisch-Habsburgse landen (1475-1530)*, Zutphen, 2001, pp. 210-211; A. Kohler, *Persoonlijkheid en macht*, in *Carolus. Keizer Karel V 1500-1558*, ed. H. Soly and J. van de Wiele, Gent, 1999, pp. 45-46; A. Walther, *Die burgundische Zentralbehörden*, *op. cit.*, pp. 30-37. See also the short biography by J.M. Headly, in P.G. Bietenholz and T.B. Deutscher éd., *Contemporaries of Erasmus, op. cit.,* pp. 76-80.
63 The Hague, Royal Library, ms. 71 G 25, f. 137r. See also I. Kodek, *Der Grosskanzler Kaiser Karls V. zieht Bilanz. Die Autobiographie Mercurino Gattinaras aus dem Lateinischen übersetzt*, Münster, 2004, pp. 141-142, especially footnote 338.

of unique value to the monastery. Not only did he contribute 400 Rhineguilders for the completion of the cloister, for which he had already donated window no. 31, he also persuaded Charles V to give 3,000 golden ducats for the realisation of the new church of the monastery.[64]

This new church was consecrated in July 1531. Di Gattinara had died by then, but he – or his close family – had left a stained glass window with a depiction of the resurrection for the choir of the new church[65]. The four central glass panels of the choir were donated by members of the royal family: Emperor Charles donated the two central and most prestigious windows with the depiction of the bearing of the cross and the crucifixion, flanked by the donations of his aunt Margaret and his sister Mary. Among the other donors of stained glass in the new church we encounter high-ranking nobles and officers, such as Antoine of Croÿ (†1546), lord of Sempy, and Philippe II of Croÿ (†1549), lord of Aarschot, members of the Golden Fleece since the Brussels chapter of 1516 – although they did not donate a window for the cloister – and Philippe of Cleves (†1528), lord of Ravenstein in Brabant[66]. His father Adolph of Cleves (†1492) had laid the first stone of the new church together with Charles the Bold in 1469[67].

It is clear that due to the relatively low number of windows in the church, the social background of these donors was higher than of those who donated to the cloister. In this sense, patronage of the monastery became more restricted and was dominated by high nobles with top positions in the princely household and the state-institutions. The thirteenth and last window, however, with a depiction of the Last Judgment, was donated by the town of Brussels. Apparently, the town administration wanted to maintain its links with the monastery it had founded some 75 years ago. A collective donation, and not a personalised memorial, was the way in which the town wanted to visualise this relationship. Thus, over time, the patronage of the monastery connected different networks, including the princely court. In that sense one of the original goals of the town – attracting the presence of the prince and his courtiers – was achieved.

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64 THE HAGUE, ROYAL LIBRARY, ms. 71 G 25, f. 141r where it is specifically mentioned that the Charles's donation was made *door middele van Marcurinus de Gattinaria*. See also A. WAUTERS, *Histoire* I, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

65 THE HAGUE, ROYAL LIBRARY, ms. 71 G 25, ff. 144r, 145r-v. See also J. HELBIG, *De glasschilderkunst*, *op. cit.*, nrs. 1726-1736.

66 THE HAGUE, ROYAL LIBRARY, ms. 71 G 25, ff. 145r-v. See for a complete overview of the donors M. DAMEN, *De schenkers*, *op. cit.*, pp. 109-110.

67 A. WAUTERS, *Histoire* I, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

Conclusion

In the 1450s the battle of Scheut had become a popular *lieu de mémoire*. It was used by the urban elites of Brussels to legitimise the highly controversial foundation of the Carthusian monastery in 1456, which fulfilled more of a political than religious role. At the same time the cult of a miraculous statue of the Virgin was appropriated and attached to the monastery. Scheut became a site where the diverse interests of urban and courtly networks could meet.

Through the donation of stained glass windows, the focus of the memory changed from the battle to the individual donors and their families. Evidently, the donors' personal memory was generally not restricted to the sole site of Scheut; the chapel and the cloister were only two of many places where they established memorials for themselves and their relatives. Furthermore, the battle of Scheut seemed to have been of little importance to the donors of the stained glass windows. These were concerned about their own *memoria*, the commemoration by later generations to secure the salvation of their souls. For them, the donation of a window was the expression of their personal piety, their care for the hereafter and, at the same time, of a particular *esprit de corps.*

The monastery of Scheut allowed the social and political elites of the Low Countries to create a symbolic bond with the ruling dynasty. Men like Adriaan Dullaert, Jean of Enghien, Jean Micault and Mercurino di Gattinara played a central role in connecting the different networks. These officers were more capable than anyone else of linking the monastery with the ruling dynasty, wealthy nobles and officers of the state-apparatus, which had its centre in the nearby Brabantine towns of Brussels and Malines. Thus, the local devotion of a miraculous statue was given both a wider geographical scope and a higher social profile. This was closely connected to the development of Brussels as the administrative capital of the Low Countries in the last quarter of the fifteenth and first quarter of the sixteenth century.