

Medieval Memoria Research

Newsletter



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We wish to thank the various copyright holding institutions and individuals for giving us permission to publish images of the works of art and manuscripts in their collections.

Cover: Chasuble probably from St Agnes convent in Kampen (second half of the 15th century). The heraldic shield and the surrounding text shows that it was meant to commemorate Berta de Vos van Steenwijck van Putten and her mother: ‘Mistress Berta van Broeckhuysen, pray for her and her mother for God’s sake’. The text also indicates that Berta was the donor. See: [MeMO Memorial object ID 3893](#).

Editorial: a fond farewell

Welcome to the twenty-first and final issue of the newsletter *Medieval Memoria Research* (MMR).¹ In this online newsletter you will find information on the work of scholars who research medieval *memoria* in the broad sense of the word.

The MeMO project

The MeMO project was launched in 2008. In 2013 its main product, the MeMO database was presented during a congress held in Utrecht. After its initial presentation to the public, a scaled down team continued to update the database for many years, amending texts, adding new entries, and correcting and updating information with new research results, etc. In April 2020, these activities will also come to an end.

Finally, in the summer of 2020 the MeMO application received a technical update. This marked the official end of the MeMO project. The current issue of MMR, therefore celebrates MeMO and its history and discuss the work of those who have used MeMO for their own research.

Contents of this MMR issue

In this special MeMO-themed newsletter we look back on the history of the MeMO project. Under the header “MeMO news” you will find an article about the history and development of the MeMO database, as well as articles by scholars who have used the database to make interesting discoveries.

This issue also contains news about new *memoria* related publications. Due to the 2020 Corona Crisis symposiums and congresses have been understandably sparse, therefore the “Upcoming Symposiums and Congresses” section is not included in this issue.

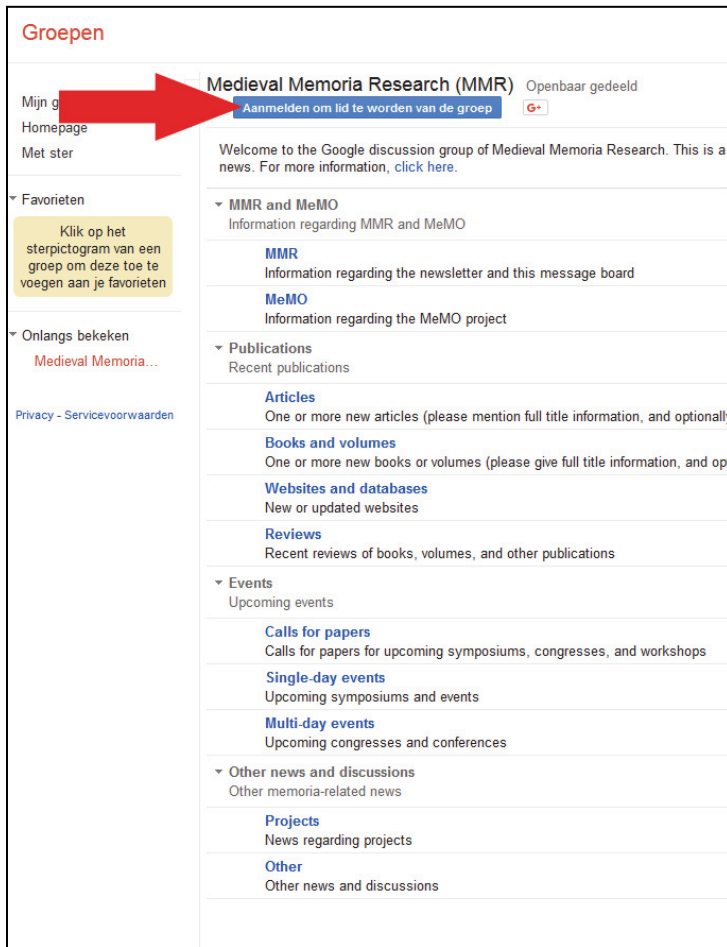
The retirement of MMR

The end of MeMO also has consequences for the future of MMR. Launched in October 2008, this newsletter was originally started as a satellite project, an integral part of MeMO but not solely *about* MeMO. The newsletter has since then broadened its scope and its website went through several redesigns.

With this final issue, we have decided to retire the newsletter. This means that all current subscribers will be automatically unsubscribed from our mailing list. Readers do not need to take any further actions.

We recognize that after the retirement of MMR, there will likely still be a demand for news regarding the latest developments in the field of medieval *memoria* research. To that end we have launched the [MMR Google Group](#), which is a public forum where members may share and comment on announcements. To become a member you will need a Google account (e.g. gmail). Send a join request by clicking on the button near the red arrow.

¹ MMR is part of the Utrecht research project *The functions of art, ritual and text in medieval memoria* and works closely with the project *Medieval Memoria Online* (MeMO). <https://memo.sites.uu.nl/>



Join requests are processed manually and may therefore take a little time. To speed up the process you may add a comment to the join request form, as demonstrated below.



Members of the group have full posting rights, though if you only wish to *read* the announcements there is no need to sign up. The group is fully public! To see all the latest topics, go to the homepage and click on “show all topics” in the upper right corner.

We hope you will enjoy this last issue of MMR. On behalf of the MeMO team and the MMR editorial board, thank you for your participation in this fascinating research field over the years. We wish you well.

Charlotte Dikken
Editor of *Medieval Memoria Research* (MMR)

MeMO News and Articles

Technical and visual update of the MeMO application

As of 2020 the MeMO application is over ten years old. This may not seem very old to the readers of this newsletter, who are used to working with far more ancient sources of information, but software is typically expected to have a lifecycle of ten to fifteen years. To extend that lifespan maintenance is required.²

In 2018 the MeMO team recognized that the application required a technical update to ensure its continuation. In collaboration with Utrecht University, which hosts the MeMO application, the team set about renewing the database and the website in several phases. At the time of writing there are still a few minor updates to be made, however many of the results of this work can already be seen.

The website with the introductory texts has been moved to a WordPress environment (fig. 1). This provides an easier means of content management, as well as a better reading experience for the user. Effort has been put into making the menus more user friendly and the texts easier to read. The new website has also been designed keep up with the demands to today's internet users. This means it can be viewed on a mobile device, unlike the previous website which was best viewed on a PC monitor.

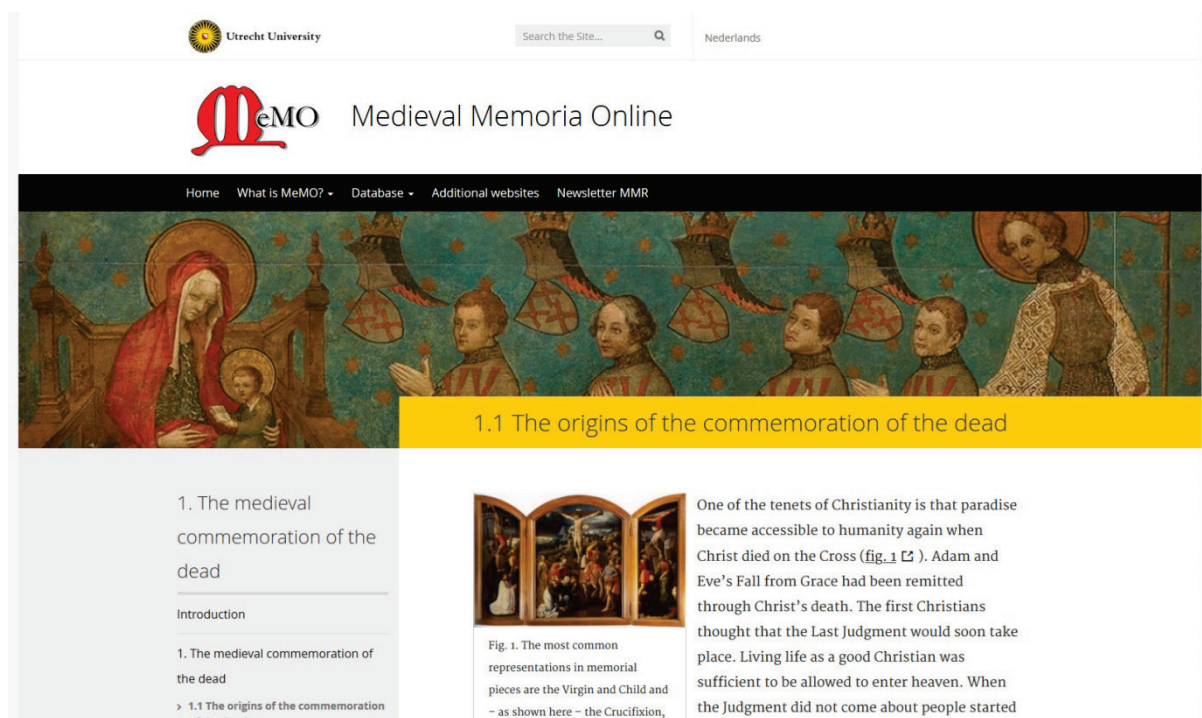


Figure 1. Screenshot of the new MeMO homepage, with improved menus and a better designed page layout for improved legibility.

Utrecht University generously offered the technical expertise required to update the database portion of the application. The MeMO team used this opportunity to not only strive for a technical update that would increase MeMO's security, performance and maintainability, but also

² See: https://www.tutorialspoint.com/software_engineering/software_maintenance_overview.htm.

a visual update that would increase its usability. Several years prior, the team conducted usability research by sending MeMO users questionnaires. MMR readers also participated in this effort. From this research, the team learned that users found certain aspects of the application's design confusing and unintuitive. Certain functionalities were difficult to find. The team has sought to remedy this, as the following description of the new application will hopefully demonstrate.

The database now offers four ways of searching:

1. Browse database
2. Search database
3. Quick search
4. Google search

The first two methods should be familiar to longtime MeMO users. **Browse database** allows users to narrow down search results using an intuitive filter system.

Search database offers several forms for searching the MeMO database. These search forms have been updated with new options. While the database is completely in English, the search forms are now also available in Dutch. In the aforementioned questionnaires, many users expressed a strong desire for this feature.

The **Quick search** option is ideal for users who are visiting museums or churches and who wish to have an overview of the objects and text carriers that they may find at these locations. The form was designed to be particularly easy to use on mobile devices, where this function will probably see most of its use (fig. 2). We expect that this function will be particularly interesting to tour guides, teachers and students on school trips, and tourists.

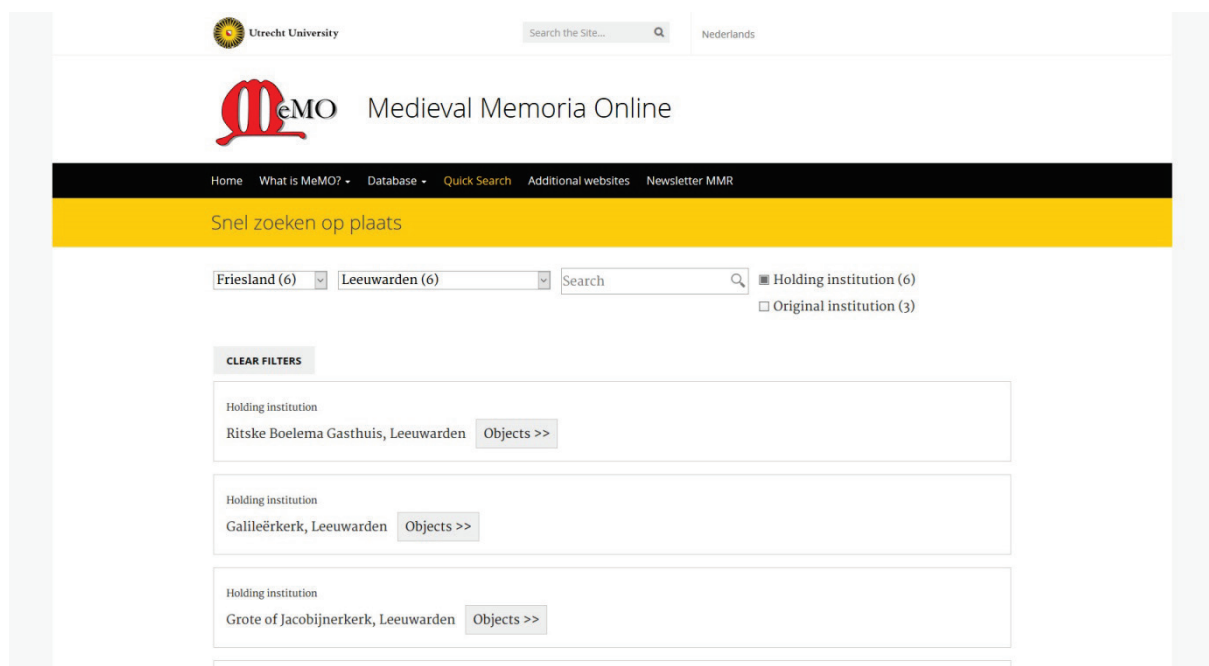


Figure 2. MeMO. The Quick Search is for all users who like to have an overview of the objects and/or text carriers in museums and other institutions they visit.

The **Google search** option employs Google's powerful search engine to quickly search the entire database for specified keywords. This function is particularly useful for broad searches, for example for references of particular family names.

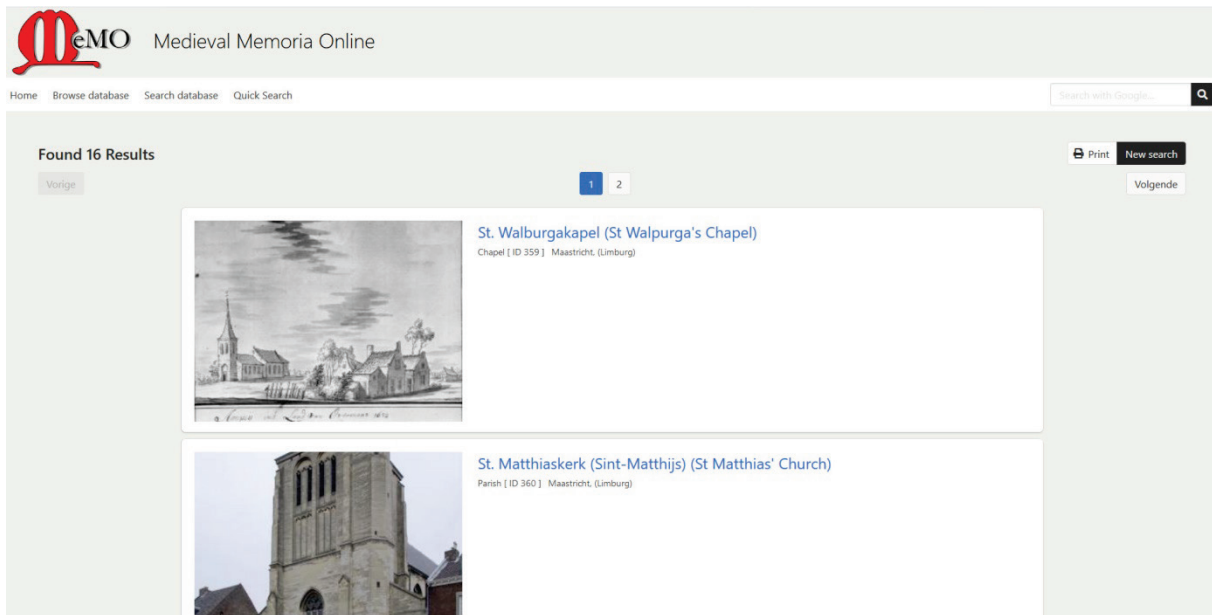


Figure 3. MeMO. The results page for the Search Database functionality.

The results page was updated as well (fig. 3). It is now possible to print results, and great effort has been put into making the individual results easier to navigate. Previous user feedback had indicated that the sidebars were difficult to navigate and that it could be difficult to recognise that certain fields were expandable. This created the illusion for some, that the database contained very little information about particular objects and text carriers, when this was not the case. The new individual result pages have addressed these problems (fig. 4).

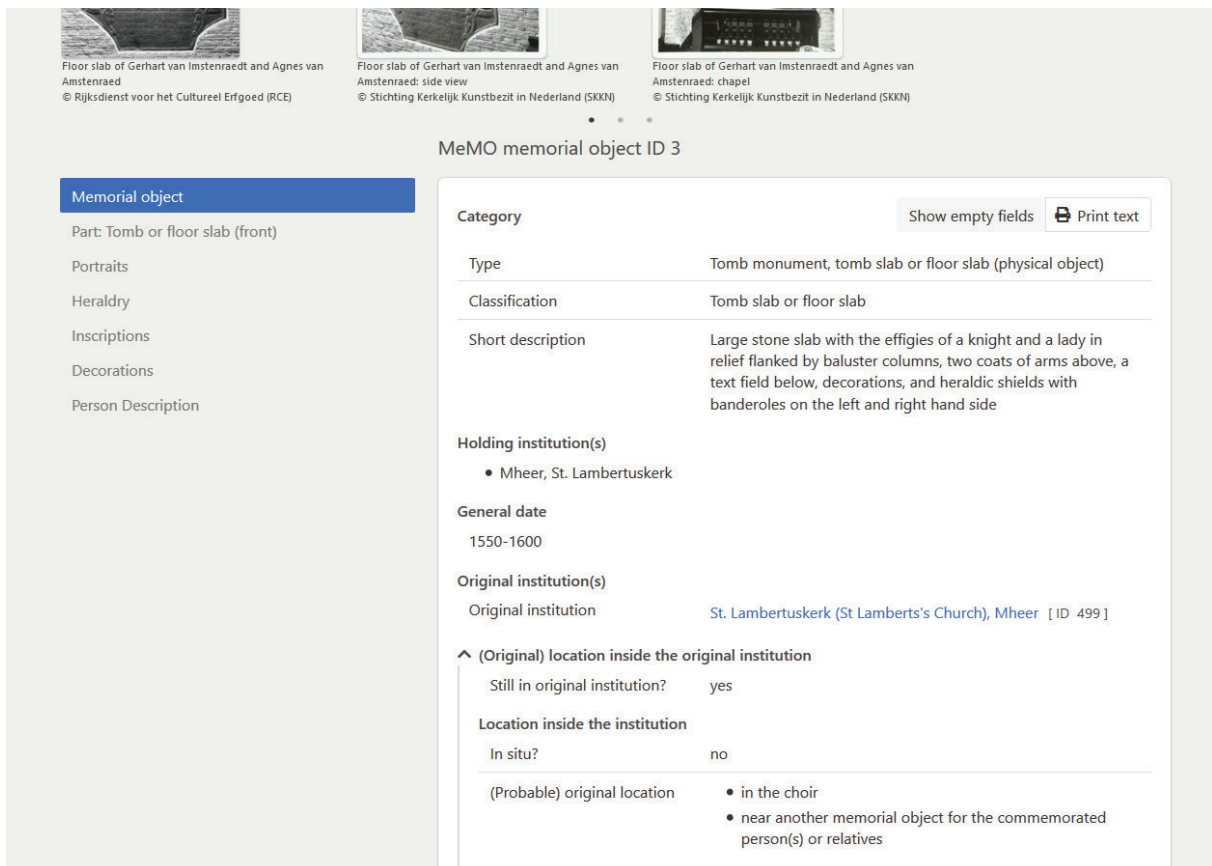


Figure 4. MeMO. Detail of an individual result page, with its improved sidebars and user controls.

The MeMO team is very proud of the work that has been done, and grateful to Utrecht University for enabling this update of the database and the website. When the work is done, the MeMO application's continuation on the web will be assured for a long time to come. We hope our users will be as pleased with the results as we are!

As a final note, some of MeMO's websites moved to a new URL as a result of these updates. Below you will find an up-to-date shortlist of our websites.

MeMO:	https://memo.sites.uu.nl/
MeMO database:	https://memodatabase.hum.uu.nl/memo-is/browse/show
Other MeMO products:	https://memo.sites.uu.nl/additional-websites/

Medieval Memoria Online. Looking back at the project. With an afterword by Truus van Bueren

In memory of Otto Gerhard Oexle († 16 May 2016), Wim Vroom († 30 August 2019), and Thomas Schilp († 28 September 2019)

Foreword

With great gratitude we dedicate this article to the memory of three scholars of medieval memoria. They played an important role in the realization of memoria research in the Netherlands.

Prof. Wim Vroom introduced Truus van Bueren to the existence of Signum, the contact group for the history of medieval religious and ecclesiastical institutions in the Netherlands, and to the research of Prof. Otto Gerhard Oexle. Prof. Vroom always attended the symposia of our project group, contributed enthusiastically to the discussions and supported us wherever he could. He died on August 30, 2019.

Prof. Otto Gerhard Oexle's article "Memoria und Memorialbild" showed Truus van Bueren the way to memoria research. Initially she focused on the function of art in the commemoration of the dead. Gradually, she immersed herself in the interdisciplinary research of the broad field of memoria, in particular when she became acquainted with a group of German memoria researchers. She also co-authored an article with Prof. Oexle. Otto Gerhard Oexle passed away on May 16, 2016.

Prof. Thomas Schilp played an important role in the *Deutsch-Niederländische Gespräche*. This discussion group concerning memoria research was initiated by Prof. Dieter Geuenich in 2007. Prof. Schilp soon took over the German part of the organization. He also played a pioneering role in the creation of the series Memoria and Remembrance Practices (Brepols Publishers). Thomas Schilp died on September 28, 2019.

In April 2020, after twelve years of diligent work by a team of dedicated researchers, the data entry phase of the MeMO Project officially ended. At the same time a revised and improved interface of the online MeMO application became available. Although new data is no longer being added to the database, researchers can continue to explore and research the vast amount of memoria related source material we brought together. Considering all this, we thought it to be an excellent opportunity to look back at the MeMO Project.

1. How it began

In the 1980s (art)historian Truus van Bueren, co-author of this article, was researching the inventories and the accounts of the convent of St John in Haarlem, when she discovered eleven mentions of an 'epitaphium'. The use of this term and the descriptions in the sources clearly indicated that at least five mentions were referring to objects consisting of a painting or sculpture with one or more religious scenes combined with texts to commemorate one or more (deceased) persons.³ She succeeded in identifying three of the paintings mentioned (fig. 5).⁴ These works of

³ Truus van Bueren, *Tot lof van Haarlem. Het beleid van de stad Haarlem ten aanzien van de kunstwerken uit de geconfisqueerde geestelijke instellingen* (Hilversum 1993), see for the inventories of 1573, p. 505-516; idem, 'Gegevens over enkele epitafen uit het Sint Jans klooster te Haarlem', *Oud Holland* 103 (1989), p. 121-151. Neither the *Middelnederlandsch Woordenboek* (MNWB) nor the *Woordenboek der Nederlandsche Taal* (WNT) mention the use of the term epitaphs for objects combining religious scenes with memorial texts. See for epitaphs as texts on floor slabs the article 'MeMO and its treasure of Neo-Latin poetry', by Koen Goudriaan in [this issue of MMR](#).

art roused her interest, because to her knowledge this type of objects never had been systematically researched for the way they functioned within the context of medieval religion and society. Shortly afterwards, it was Wim Vroom, at the time director of the history department of the Rijksmuseum, who introduced her to the 1984 article ‘Memoria und Memorialbild’ of the German historian Otto Gerhard Oexle in the highly acclaimed volume *Memoria. Der geschichtliche Zeugniswert des liturgischen Gedenkens im Mittelalter*.⁵ In his article Oexle had shown that *Memorialbilder* were important expressions of medieval memoria.



Figure 5. Entombment with Philips van Hogesteyn († 1574), commander of the Haarlem convent of St John (middle panel), his grandparents, his parents (left wing) and his brother and wife, and his sister, and probably her fiancée or husband, associated member of the Order of St John (right wing). The triptych is mentioned in an inventory of the convent of 1573: ‘Mijnsheren Epitaphium van ons heeren begravinge mit II geschilderde deuren ende vergulden lijsten’ (epitaph of my lord with the burial of our lord with two painted wings and gilded frames). The writer of the inventory mentions Philips, the commander, as ‘my lord’. MeMO Memorial object ID 739.

Since the late 1960s German scholars had started researching the medieval culture of remembrance. As Oexle wrote in 1984: ‘für die Memoria war grundlegend, dass sie soziales Handeln bedeutete, das Lebende und Tote verband’.⁶ Not only liturgical and religious aspects were involved, but also social, historical, economic and political aspects. Briefly put, memoria concerned the care for the here and the hereafter. The 1984 volume of *Memoria* also demonstrated that memoria research asks for two methodological approaches: firstly, an interdisciplinary approach using the expertise of theologians, historians, art historians, etc. and

⁴ See for the still existing epitaphs: MeMO Memorial object [ID 739](#) (fig. 5), [ID 628](#), and [ID 688](#). For these epitaphs the memorial texts are missing, probably because the original frames were either substituted with a new frame or the original paint on the frame, possibly with a text, was removed. See for a discussion on the frames of memorial paintings and text panels hanging from frames, Daan Meuwissen and Ige Verslype, ‘Praatjes rondom gaatjes. Materieel onderzoek naar lijsten en panelen van memorietafels in Museum Catharijneconvent te Utrecht’, *Album Discipulorum* J.R.J. van Asperen de Boer (Zwolle 1997), p. 127-135.

⁵ Otto Gerhard Oexle, ‘Memoria und Memorialbild’, in: Karl Schmid and Joachim Wollasch, *Memoria. Der geschichtliche Zeugniswert des liturgischen Gedenkens im Mittelalter* (München 1984; *Münstersche Mittelalter-Schriften*, vol. 48), pp. 384-440.

⁶ Oexle, ‘Memoria und Memorialbild’ (see note 5), p. 394.

secondly, the necessity to study and explore the wide variety of sources (both texts and objects) that traditionally were considered to belong to different disciplines, and that were in many cases not touched upon by scholars outside these disciplines.

In the Netherlands researchers originally also were mainly concerned with the sources that fitted best to their own discipline and research. In 1996 Van Bueren launched a research program at Utrecht University concerning memorial pieces from the Northern Low Countries (titled: *Zorg voor het hier en het hiernamaals. Memorietafels in de Noordelijke Nederlanden in de 15^{de} en 16^{de} eeuw*). The project resulted in various publications, symposia and an exhibition accompanied by a scholarly catalogue, both entitled *Leven na de dood* (Life after death; Museum Catharijneconvent Utrecht, 1999).⁷ Students collaborated extensively in seminars, papers and theses, thus helping enormously in realising the exhibition catalogue.⁸ One of the aims of the project was to study the use and function of memorial pieces. These works of art were primarily objects to be used to commemorate persons, and, if necessary, they could be adjusted after their creation. Therefore, for researching alterations in memorial paintings a grant was received from the Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research (NWO) to work with art historian Molly Faries, expert on technical research (see for instance MeMO Memorial object [ID 552](#) and [ID 563](#)).⁹ A few years later the database that had been designed to prepare for the exhibition was published online as *Memoria in Beeld* (Representations of Medieval Memoria). This was carried out by Fenna Visser who also did additional research.

Over time the project evolved into a more general approach including other types of sources that also played a key role in the commemoration of the dead, such as archival sources. In 2006 the memorial pieces project was renamed as *The functions of art, ritual and text in medieval memoria* (*De functie van kunst, ritueel en tekst in de memoria in de middeleeuwen*). Participants in the project were three PhD-students: art historian Daantje Meuwissen, historian Rolf de Weijert, co-author of this article, and art historian Charlotte Dikken. Another reason as to why the memorial pieces project changed its scope to a wider angle was because Van Bueren got involved with *Signum*, a group of Dutch and Belgian researchers of religious and ecclesiastical institutions. Research projects of its members were discussed at the yearly symposium and in the *Signum Newsletter*. Quite a few of these projects directly concerned aspects of memoria or research areas that were important for memoria research. Some of the most relevant projects were:¹⁰

- Anne Bollmann († 14 November 2018; literary historian): biographies of convent members of houses of the Modern Devotion, their didactic functions and their use in commemoration practices.¹¹
- Arnoud-Jan Bijsterveld (historian): gift exchange, memoria and conflict management.¹²
- Jeroen Deploige, Dick de Boer, Renée Nip (historians) and their team: the database *Narrative Sources* containing narrative sources such as annals, chronicles, and hagiographies.

⁷ Truus van Bueren, in collaboration with W.C.M. Wüstefeld, *Leven na de dood. Gedenken in de late Middeleeuwen* (Turnhout 1999).

⁸ See the Foreword of *Leven na de dood*.

⁹ Bueren, Truus van, and Molly Faries, 'Care for the Here and the Hereafter: using IRR in the Study of Memorial Paintings', in: Hélène Veroughstraete and Roger van Schoute with A. Dubois (ed.) *Colloque XII pour l'étude du dessin sous-jacent et de la technologie dans la peinture: La peinture dans les Pays-Bas au 16^e siècle, Pratique d'atelier* (Louvain-la-Neuve 1999), pp. 147-154.

¹⁰ Please note that we only mention the main projects of these researchers that started before 2006. See for more extensive overviews the [Bibliography of the MeMO database](#) and the websites of the mentioned scholars.

¹¹ A.M. Bollmann, *Frauenleben und Frauenliteratur in der Devotio moderna. Volkssprachige Schwesternbücher in literarhistorischer Perspektive* (Groningen 2004).

¹² Full title: *Gift exchange as the agent of social bonding and political power in the Region of Meuse, Demer, and Scheldt, circa 950-circa 1250*. The resulting articles of Bijsterveld were combined in the volume *Do ut des. Gift giving, memoria, and conflict management in the medieval Low Countries* (Hilversum 2007).

- Koen Goudriaan (classicist and historian) and his team (historians): repositories of information on monasteries, convents and religious houses: *Monasticon Trajectense* and *Kloosterlijst* (both in Dutch).
- Paul Trio (historian): confraternities, including their commemoration practices.¹³
- Gerrit Verhoeven and Hans Mol (historians): Frisian testaments until 1550, including the creation of an inventory and transcriptions of the testaments.¹⁴
- Extensive inventory work done by members of *Signum* in the early 1990s concerning memorial registers.¹⁵

2. The Medieval Memoria Online Project (MeMO)

2.1 An Investment Subsidy grant from NWO

Inspired by the research of the German memoria scholars and the contacts she had with the *Signum* community, Van Bueren came up with the idea of an interdisciplinary project cataloguing objects and texts that played a key role in the medieval commemoration of the dead. The objective of the project would be to help scholars gain new insights into the phenomenon of memoria. The first and most important condition was crossing disciplinary borders by cooperation and by improving the accessibility of the relevant sources. MeMO should enable researchers to easily compile a research corpus, without having to make inventories of relevant objects and texts over and over again. In addition, the data concerning the objects and texts should be freely accessible in an online database.



Figure 6. Tomb monument of Engelbrecht II van Nassau, stadtholder of the Netherlands († 1504), and his wife Cimburga van Baden († 1501), one of the largest monuments in the Netherlands, with a total of eighteen heraldic shields, still in Our Lady's Church (Grote Kerk), Breda. MeMO Memorial object ID 2970.

¹³ Paul Trio, *Volksreligie als spiegel van een stedelijke samenleving. De broederschappen te Gent in de late middeleeuwen* (Leuven 1993).

¹⁴ G. Verhoeven and J.A. Mol (eds.), *Friese testamenten tot 1550* (Leeuwarden 1994; J.A. Mol (ed.), *Zorgen voor zekerheid. Studies over Friese testamenten in de vijftiende en zestiende eeuw* (Leeuwarden 1994).

¹⁵ See about these activities in 'Collaboration as a key factor' in the summary of the application, published in *MMR* May 2009.

A good opportunity for the realisation of such a project arose through applying for an Investment Subsidy from the Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research (NWO). Truus van Bueren, Rolf de Weijert, Koen Goudriaan (VU University Amsterdam) and Dick de Boer (University of Groningen) applied for a large grant.¹⁶ In 2009 the grant was awarded. In addition we received other grants from several foundations, and cultural heritage institutions, as well as photographs and expertise.

The *Memoria in Beeld* database had been created together with DANS (Data Archiving and Networked Services, The Hague) and we decided to continue this collaboration. The new database was to include inventories and descriptions of materials we considered most important for the research of memoria, i.e. memorial pieces (fig. 5), tomb monuments and floor slabs (fig. 6), memorial registers (fig. 7) and narrative sources (fig. 8). An additional fifth part of the database was to contain information concerning the institutions from which the described sources originated: parish churches, chapters, independent chapels, convents, hospitals, and orphanages (fig. 9). Unfortunately, last wills and testaments could not be included, because even making a rough estimation of the number of documents would have taken years. Including this material in our database without an estimate would guarantee the grant by NWO not being awarded.

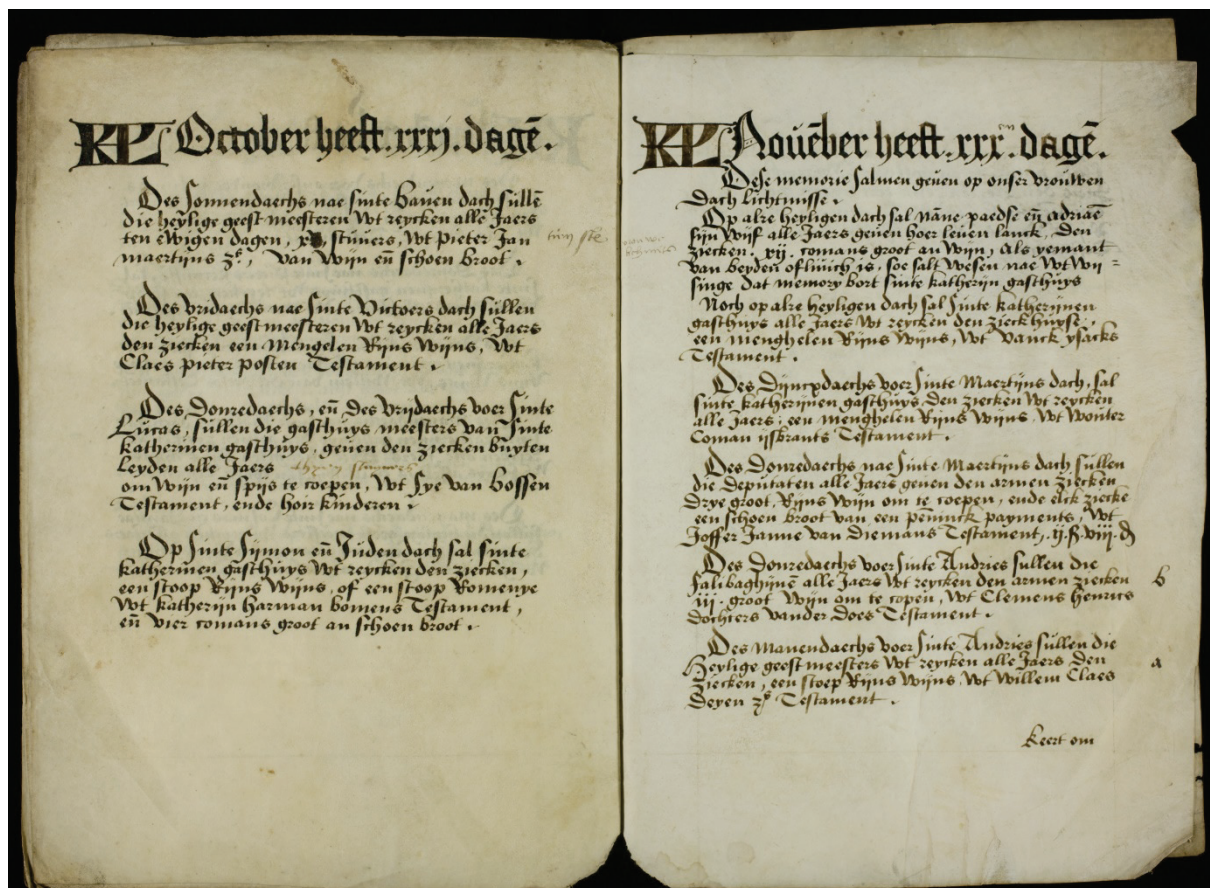


Figure 7. Memorial register of the Leprosy hospital near Leiden, with a list of pittances for the poor in testaments of benefactors, mentioned by name, to be provided by several hospitals and institutions in Leiden. The register dates from the first half of the 16th century and is set up as a calendar, but only the days on which the pittances had to be distributed are recorded. [MeMO Text carrier ID 104](#).

¹⁶ See the [summary of the application](#) and also Truus van Bueren, Kim Ragetli and Arnoud-Jan Bijsterveld, 'Researching Medieval Memoria: Prospects and Possibilities. With an Introduction to Medieval Memoria Online (MeMO)', *Jaarboek voor Middeleeuwse Geschiedenis*, 14 (Hilversum 2011), pp. 183-234.

As the geographical scope, we chose the present-day Netherlands, because much of the material we wanted to involve had already been made available in the aforementioned research projects. Additionally, we choose 1580 as a chronological marker. Around that year the Reformation had taken place in the main part of the Netherlands, as a result of which the commemoration of the dead changed in many respects.

2.2 Organisation and the team

The MeMO Project was lucky to work with many enthusiastic researchers, among them senior scholars but also many young researchers, including students and interns. The research group changed regularly. In some periods more than ten persons worked for MeMO. Most of them were based at Utrecht University, where work was being done on the memorial pieces, funerary objects, and memorial registers. Also, the development of the database was coordinated from Utrecht in collaboration with members of DANS who were responsible for the IT-development. The narrative sources specialists were stationed in Groningen, and the specialists for the original institutions and the Latin inscriptions worked at VU University.

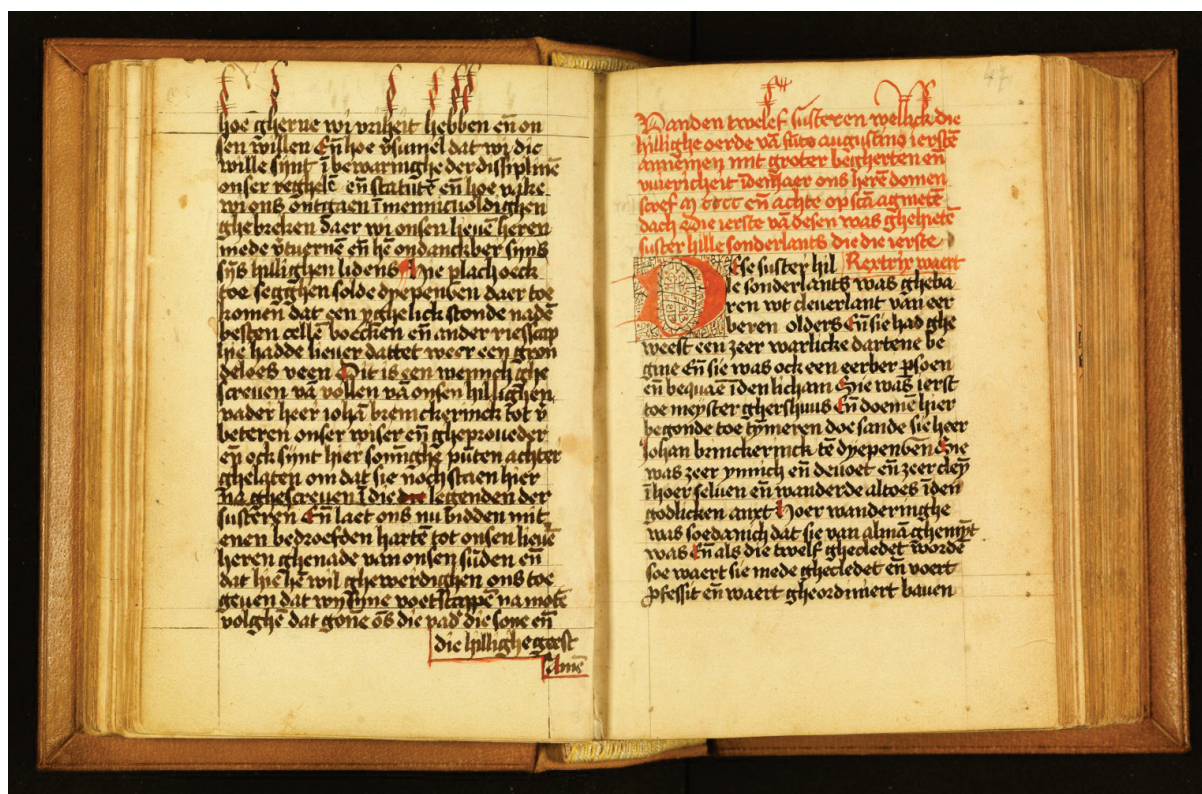


Figure 8. Manuscript from the 16th century containing the 'book of sisters' of the convent in Diepenveen and the life of their rector and founder Johannes Brinkerinck. This type of manuscripts mainly contains biographies of conventuals of religious houses. It often focuses on their virtues and special deeds, their gifts to the convent and their activities in memoria practices. [MeMO Text carrier ID 1](#).

The long list of team members and other persons directly involved can be found [here](#). For now, we confine ourselves to the names of team members most involved in the project, in alphabetical order:

Jeannette van Arenthals, UU (organisational support and English translations editor); Lianne van Beek, RUG (narrative sources); Trudi Brink, UU (floor slabs); Truus van Bueren, UU (overall project leader); Corinne van Dijk, UU (memorial pieces and floor slabs); Koen Goudriaan, VU (coordination Institutions and Latin transcriptions); Bart Holterman, UU and VU (memorial registers); André Looijenga, RUG (narrative sources);

Sophie Oosterwijk, UU (coordination floor slabs); Kim Ragetli, UU (floor slabs); Duco Vollebregt, UU (memorial registers); Rolf de Weijert, UU (project leader development database and coordination memorial registers) and Chiel Zwiers, VU (Institutions).

2.3 Creating an international standard and a database

Memoria research is, as in other fields, mainly asking the questions: who, what, how, where, and why? The last and most important question, asking for the functions of texts and objects, presupposes the other questions to be answered as correctly as possible. Therefore, to systematically include all relevant data an international description standard (MeMO DS) was created and edited by an editorial board of internationally renowned scholars. The three resulting standards were made available on the MeMO website: MeMO DS Objects (element set and definitions), MeMO DS Text carriers (element set and definitions) and MeMO DS Institutions (element set and definitions).



Figure 9. The St Walpurga's Church in Zutphen is one of the reformed churches in the Netherlands in which many memorial objects still remain: memorial sculptures and paintings, wall memorials, and a large number of floor slabs. The necrology with two registers for memorial services is still in good condition and kept in the Regional Archives in Zutphen. MeMO Institution ID 27.

Jan van Mansum of DANS designed the data entry-database (MeMO DE), suitable for the different types of sources we included in the project. As a blueprint the *Memoria in Beeld* database was used, but it was seriously extended and improved to include all types of information. The data entry-database (MeMO DE) was designed and built between 2010 and 2011, after which the data entry team could start working. In 2011-2012 the online application for researchers – or as it was officially called, the MeMO Information System (MeMO IS) – was created. This application enables users to search the MeMO database. The database was intended to be used by a wide variety of users, who could have different aims. Therefore, we wanted it to be as user-friendly as possible. For that reason, we chose three search possibilities: a) Browse database for filtering the material; b) Search database for using a search form, and c) Full Text Search for Google search of the MeMO data.

2.4 The intended users

The main objective of the MeMO Project was to bring together objects and texts that played a key role in the commemoration of the dead and to enable new approaches of memoria research. The first group of users we had in mind were the memoria scholars. However, we realised that the data of the catalogued source material could also be used by researchers outside the field of memoria, such as these four examples. Researchers of Neo-Latin poetry, for instance, may profit from the texts on floor slabs and funerary monuments, as Koen Goudriaan shows in his article ‘[MeMO and its treasure of Neo-Latin poetry](#)’. Researchers of social care in the Middle Ages will find donations for the poor in registers of gifts (see fig. 7). The substantial group of researchers looking into genealogy, family history and heraldry may benefit from the vast number of names, portraits and heraldic shields on memorial pieces and floor slabs (see fig. 10). The descriptions of memorial registers may help them find sources that could be important to look into. The database is also helpful for the interested public visiting churches and museums, as the database gives an overview of objects and text carriers in these institutions, see also below for the user-friendly Quick Search that was especially developed for this group of users.

Finally, we expected a number of users being primarily interested in the MeMO infrastructure and MeMO DS, and therefore make extensive use of MeMO. These may be memoria researchers, who want to add new databases to the MeMO application, memoria researchers who want to develop a similar application for geographical areas other than the Netherlands, and researchers of other research fields in the Humanities who are interested in applying the software and infrastructure of MeMO in other projects. For that reason, the MeMO infrastructure is fully Open Source and available through DANS.¹⁷

¹⁷ The MeMO data can be found under <http://persistent-identifier.nl/?identifier=urn:nbn:nl:ui:13-9qp4-ne>.



Figure 10. One of the many floor slabs still in churches in Zeeland, St Mary Magdalene's Church in Goes. It shows the incised effigy of Zweder van Heemvliet, knight († 1486), with a coat of arms above his head, a lion at his feet, and an inscription on the edge interrupted by eight heraldic shields (four of which quatrefoils and four in round medallions). [MeMO Memorial object ID 1551](#).

3. MeMO in progress: Pitfalls, challenges, and solutions

When researching and filling the database we encountered several underlying issues concerning the interpretation and use of objects and text carriers, we had to take into account. To illustrate this, we give two specific pitfalls and we will discuss some aspects and challenges concerning usage, re-use, and alterations of the memorial sources, both objects and texts, that had to be taken into account while selecting and describing these sources.



Figure 11. The triptych with Anna van Noordwijk and her family. It shows the usual placement of persons: men and the eldest persons go first. Anna's grandparent are placed on the right hand side (left for the viewer) in the middle panel, with the woman behind the man, her parents also on the middle panel, but on the more modest left hand side. Anna's husband and the sons are on the most important, right side wing, with the son from his first marriage directly behind his father, and the sons of the second marriage directly behind them. Anna herself and the daughter are kneeling on the most modest place, the left wing. [MeMO Memorial object ID 718](#).

3.1 Two pitfalls

Firstly, a pitfall from the memorial objects section: frequently, scholars make assumptions concerning the relationships between portrayed persons on paintings or floor slabs, based solely on portraits. These assumptions may be completely wrong, because essential information is missing. Accompanying memorial text(s) on the objects, that are now lost, may have given more specific information about interrelations. This may have been the case for the memorial triptych of Anna van Noordwijk and her family ([MeMO Memorial object ID 718](#)) of which the memorial text is missing (fig. 11). Research has shown that the boy in armour is not Anna's son, but her stepson, as he was born from the first marriage of her husband Gijsbrecht van Duivenvoorde. The boy is kneeling behind his father, and there is no indication in the painting itself that he was not Anna's son. It shows the importance of not taking an object purely on face value, and of researching the context, such as genealogical research, especially for memorial paintings without a memorial text.



Figure 12. The triptych of Pompejus Occo and Gerbrich Claes Jacob Maertgensdr. who died respectively in 1537 and 1558. The (now partly lost) text however mentions their age in the year 1515 and the style of the painting also indicates that it was made around this year. The occasion for which it was made, is not quite clear, perhaps it was their marriage. MeMO memorial object ID 711.

Secondly, an example concerning terminology and its consequences. Until today quite a few art historians use terms such as ‘donor portrait’ (*stichtersportret*) for memorial pieces and ‘donor’ (*schenker*) and ‘founder’ (*stichter*) for the portrayed persons. However, these assumptions should be considered carefully. The person(s) who commissioned the memorial object were not always portrayed or mentioned in the accompanying texts as the commemorated person(s), see for instance MeMO Memorial object ID 771 (Inscriptions).¹⁸ Besides, in many cases the husband of a portrayed family is automatically designated as the person who commissioned the object. However, many women did commission memorial pieces for their family. A case in point is the aforementioned triptych with the Last Judgement and the Van Noordwijk family, which was most likely commissioned by Anna van Noordwijk after the death of her husband and her mother (MeMO Memorial object ID 718) (fig. 11). Another example is the memorial piece depicting the Nativity scene with members of the Boelen family from Amsterdam (MeMO Memorial object ID 524). This piece was commissioned by Margriet Dirk Boelen and donated to the Carthusian monastery of St Andries-ter-Zaliger-Haven in Amsterdam, as is mentioned in the register of gifts of that institution (MeMO Text carrier ID 169). It commemorates Margriet’s parents and their offspring, including Margriet, giving the parents a prominent place in the painting.

¹⁸ For other examples see MeMO Memorial object ID 763 and ID 764.



Figure 13. The memorial painting for the Benedictine nuns Hadewych van Hardenbroeck († 1543) and Agnes van Ghent († after 1543) still has its original frame. It shows all elements of memorial pieces: a religious scene, portraits of the commemorated persons, heraldic shields and a text with their names and dates of death, although the date of death of Agnes has never been filled in. The SS. Mary and John the Evangelist who standardly figure in Crucifixions are standing behind the kneeling nuns, thus also functioning as their patron saints. **MeMO Memorial object ID 631.**

3.2 Usage of memorial objects and memorial texts

These days memorial pieces and tomb monuments are regarded as works of art, be it that some of them are considered of first-class artistic quality, while others are considered of fifth-rate quality. For medieval people, artistic quality was only important if it contributed to the functioning of the object. If a member of the nobility also wanted to show his status when commissioning a tomb monument, involving a well-known artist in the project could contribute to demonstrating the importance of the commissioner. Despite its artistic qualities it was the

religious, social and political functions of memorial objects that counted. Therefore, the objects included in the MeMO database were primarily considered as utilitarian objects.

Questions concerning the use of memorial pieces already start at the very beginning, because it is possible that a painting already existed before it was changed into a memorial piece. Paintings with portraits of a couple made to celebrate for instance a marriage could be reused to commemorate the portrayed couple later on (fig. 12). A small painting may have functioned as a devotional painting in a cell of a nun to support her in her prayers. At her death a memorial text may have been added, after which it may have been hung in the church or elsewhere in the convent. Because of the possible reuse of portraits, we decided to also include in the database paintings in which the portrayed persons are not kneeling.

In the period that objects and texts functioned in commemoration practices, making alterations was either necessary or convenient. If a memorial piece had been purchased for persons of which some were still alive, a space for the date(s) of death in the memorial texts were often left blank, to be filled later (fig. 13). Also, a little red or gold cross above the head or hands of the portrayed persons doesn't necessarily mean that the painting was made after the death of a commemorated person ([MeMO Memorial object ID 806](#)); it may easily have been added later. Therefore, in the database the dates of death of the commemorated persons were separated from the dates of construction of the object, because the memorial objects could be commissioned long before, or long after the death of the commemorated person (e.g. [MeMO Memorial object ID 2956](#) and [ID 1171](#)).

Floor slabs could also be reused. Texts and decorations could be (partly) replaced or new texts and heraldry could be added. This was common practice during the Middle Ages and the Early Modern Times, see for instance, the floor slabs at St Martin's Church in Zaltbommel ([MeMO Institution ID 29](#)). Obviously, floor slabs also served as tiling of the church floor. At the beginning of the 17th century the historiographer Arnoldus Buchelius already complained about the worn away texts and decorations. One of his intentions was to record who had been buried in the churches and therefore to give transcriptions of the texts and draw the coats of arms that were depicted on the floor slabs. At the St Nicholas's Church (Old Church) in Amsterdam ([MeMO Institutions ID 16](#)) many floor slabs are completely bare and we do not know whether they are worn or never had any texts and decorations in the first place. Other slabs show only one 'last name' or one heraldic shield. Do these represent the commemorated individuals or the owners who might not even be buried underneath the slabs? We could not always answer these questions, but we could point to the registers of graves that still exist ([MeMO Text carrier ID 127](#), [ID 168](#) and [ID 459](#)) and to the results of research of this register on the website [Graven op internet](#).

Apart from alterations and reuse of memorial objects, text carriers could also be significantly altered over time. For instance, the layout and contents of registers could simply be changed by a newly appointed scribe who considered his or her layout a better fit for the administration of the institution. Narrative sources could be reused for instance if owners decided that changes to the story were in their interest. We shall never exactly know which older stories disappeared completely. In several cases however more versions of chronicles exist, which enable researchers to analyse, make comparisons and discover changes. Luckily, we could profit from the extensive online database *Narrative Sources* and the expertise of scholars and students who were involved in this project.

Memorial registers also pose another type of problem for researchers. When Nicolas Huyghebaert published a classification of necrological documents in 1972, he was the first to point out that these sources did not always fit his classification, which he based on the way they were used, being either liturgical or administrative (see fig. 14).¹⁹ We decided to make a different classification based on the contents of the registers, because in many cases the documents could have both functions; a calendar of a convent with the names of deceased persons that had to be

¹⁹ N. Huyghebaert, *Les documents nécrologique* (Turnhout 1972).

commemorated, could also include notes on the gifts these persons gave to the institution. For this reason, these calendars could be used for liturgical as well as for administrative purposes. Our classification of necrological documents consists of registers of gifts and foundations, registers of graves (both grave owners and persons buried), registers of memorial services, registers of names and registers of pittances. The name of the register refers to the most frequently occurring type of entries, quite often other types of information are included as well. Of course this information was also described in the database (see the caption of fig. 14).



Figure 14. The calendar of saints of the parish church of St Martin in Horn is an example of a memorial register in which a combination of information was included. It contains, for instance, memorial masses, but also notes on gifts and foundations. It shows how the manuscript was used: pages are glued in and cut out. Due to a chemical treatment probably to make the text more readable for research, it is in poor condition now. [MeMO Text carrier ID 33](#).

After the Middle Ages many objects and text carriers lost their original function, but owners could continue using them. Memorial texts and heraldic shields on paintings could even be adjusted to present the commemorated persons as ancestors of the present owners. In addition, only the portraits of the commemorated persons could be retained in case the religious images of a painting were considered too ‘catholic’ for the new, protestant, owners. In the chapter churches of Utrecht that became protestant the religious scenes of sculpted memorial pieces were often removed. However, in many cases text tablets with the names of the commemorated persons remained (see fig. 15). Also, in quite a few cases the objects were hidden behind a wall or new furnishings, either on purpose to save the object or just because it was more convenient. Other historical events also had an impact. The iconoclasm of the sixteenth century caused a lot of damage, but during the French Revolution – that claimed freedom, equality, and fraternity – many heraldic shields were hacked away from floor slabs.



Figure 15. Remnants of the memorial sculpture of Petrus Bloem († 1415), canon at St. Peter's Church in Utrecht. As was common practice for canons the inscription is in Latin. [MeMO Memorial object ID 537](#).

Apart from historical damages, memorial objects and text carriers could also have been damaged while conserving them. For decades museums and art dealers were primarily focused on showing the aesthetic value of medieval objects, so for memorial paintings mainly the images were important. As a result, in many cases the memorial texts on the coloured frames and the small text panels hanging from the frames disappeared. They were replaced by new oak frames or the paint was removed to show the bare oak wood ([MeMO Memorial object ID 639](#)). The preservation of manuscripts could also cause problems. For instance, keeping text carriers in damp places caused manuscripts to become unreadable. To solve the problem chemicals were used to make the text visible again, sometimes with disastrous effects in the long run (fig. 14). Luckily times are changing, and for the better. Restorations of manuscripts and works of art are preceded by careful technical research and protocols are made to record the interventions. In addition, the colourfully painted frames are now considered part of the work of art.

Generally speaking, for the MeMO database, the objects and text carriers had to be taken as they were. Wall paintings may have once been larger than they are today, single paintings may have been part of larger memorial pieces with two or even more wings. Blank cartouches or banderols may have contained a text, but which type of text? A name and a date of death, a prayer, a didactical or historical text, who knows. Therefore, we only mention very likely possibilities: a small banderol around a skull on a floor slab may well have shown a didactic text, i.e. 'remember that you will die'. Fragments, both of text carriers and of memorial pieces and floor slabs, are described as such. Interesting information concerning the usage and alterations of the text carriers and memorial objects can be found in the physical description section of the database. They contain fields for describing alterations, technical research and restorations. Also included here are the names of persons who were added to the memorial object after 1580. These persons might be related to the persons that were initially commemorated with the object. Although, in

many cases this is far from certain, and the object might as well have been reused without erasing the older names.

3.3 A practical challenge: the availability of photographs

While making the descriptions of the objects and text carriers it was not always possible to visit the holding institution to inspect the actual object or text carrier. Floor slabs and other objects are dispersed in churches all over the Netherlands. In addition, the slabs in quite a few medieval churches are now covered with carpets or new (wooden) floors, such as at the St Eusebius's Church in Arnhem ([MeMO Institution ID 385](#)). Therefore, it was essential we had excellent photographs of the objects and text carriers we described. Fortunately, help was near. The Cultural Heritage Agency (Rijksdienst voor Cultureel Erfgoed, RCE) had granted us a photographer for photo sessions in churches. The Stichting Kerkelijk Kunstbezit Nederland (SKKN, Foundation for Ecclesiastical Art and Artefacts Netherlands) enabled us to use their photographs, and the RKD Netherlands Institute for Art History (RKD Nederlands Instituut voor Kunstgeschiedenis) provided us with photographs, especially of memorial paintings, whenever new or better photographs were available.²⁰ Likewise, a restoration firm, trainees of MeMO and volunteers interested in MeMO provided us with many very good photographs.

Nevertheless, many objects could only be described based on older literature. We owe a lot to all those historians and art historians who in the first half of the last century made inventories and descriptions of paintings and floor slabs. Scholars such as Friedländer, Hoogewerff, Belonje, and Bloys van Treslong Prins had to make descriptions on the spot, work with inadequate photographs, or depend on descriptions by others. Today's researchers can continue building on their work with the help of good photographs, catalogues of museums and visits to churches.

In many cases archives and libraries were very interested and helpful. They presented us with photographs, but also placed complete facsimiles of text carriers on their websites, enabling us to make links in the database. At the moment there are 441 text carriers in the MeMO database. Out of these 189 text carriers are available online as a digital facsimile, and an additional 28 are available as an online edition. This means that 49% of the text carriers are available online, and therefore easily accessible for researchers.

4. Successes of the MeMO Project

4.1 Some important successes

Looking back on all these years of hard work by the MeMO team and all the help we got from institutions, foundations and interested individuals we would like to summarize some important successes.

- The MeMO application presents the first database with inventories and descriptions of several types of sources that played an important role in the commemoration of the dead. Thanks to MeMO, researchers do not have to start over and over, trying to find memorial pieces and text carriers now spread all over the world, from Amsterdam to Madrid, and from St Petersburg to San Francisco.
- MeMO is the first database to present an inventory of all known tomb monuments and floor slabs in the Netherlands up to 1580.

²⁰ In 2012 the SKKN became part of Museum Catharijneconvent in Utrecht. The current name is Afdeling Erfgoed in Kerken en Kloosters (EKK; Department of heritage in churches and convents).



Figure 16. This memorial piece (circa 1555-1570) with Mary and Child and an unknown family is special, if we may go by the objects in the database. It shows an extensive didactic message warning the passers-by that it is better to give their possessions to the needy, than to avariciously keep it for themselves. This text we found only on this memorial piece and on one floor slab. Moreover, the text on the triptych is placed on the backside of the wings. MeMO Memorial object [ID 813](#) and [ID 3619](#).

- The MeMO project functioned as some sort of catalyst. Already during the project, but especially after the database was made available online, researchers started sending us photographs and additional information of objects and text carriers we did not know about. To give an impression: for our original application (2008) we asked two experts, independently, to estimate of the number of floor slabs and tomb monuments. They both mentioned circa 2500 objects for the present-day Netherlands until 1580. Now the MeMO database contains more than 3100 of these objects. The number of memorial registers also increased, because archives making new inventories discovered memorial registers that had not been identified as such before. Information was sent to us and text carriers were put on the websites of these archives. As mentioned above almost half of the text carriers in archives and libraries are now available on the internet.
- The descriptions of the heraldic shields by Henk 't Jong and Corinne van Dijk, and the transcriptions of the Latin texts by Koen Goudriaan and his team are a big help for researchers.
- In addition to the MeMO database several spin-off websites were created by members of the MeMO team and others concerning specific subjects that also dealt with memoria: *Representations of Jerusalem Pilgrims (Jeruzalemvaarders in Beeld)*, *Schenkingen van liturgische gewaden (Donations of liturgical vestments)*, and for the commemoration practices in a specific convent: *(Prayer and Politics)*. There is also the website *Kloosterkleding in Beeld (Representations of Monastic Dress)*, created by Lonneke Hoondert. It turned out that identifying female garb of religious

orders is quite problematic, so we included this website as a helpful tool. One website is the result of international cooperation. Art historian Douglas Brine who did his PhD research on sculpted memorials from the Southern Netherlands offered to present a part of his research on a website hosted by the MeMO Project, see the website *Wall-mounted memorials in the Southern Netherlands*.

- During and after the project we disseminated the possibilities of the MeMO database for scholars and the wider audience: lectures were presented and articles were. As part of a crowdfunding program we organized several excursions for the MeMO donors. The fifth grade of the gymnasium in Barneveld researched and translated an extensive Latin inscription on a wall memorial still in the St John the Baptist Church in Gouda (MeMO Memorial object ID 1385). And at a later stage, we organized a project at Het Baarnsch Lyceum in Baarn with the medieval text of Elckerlyc as point of departure.
- Working on articles and websites the MeMO team itself also discovered the value of the database. Comparisons of large numbers of objects led to a discovery that never could have been found without MeMO (see fig. 16); Corinne van Dijk, Charlotte Dikken and Rolf the Weijert presented new results at the International Medieval Congress in Leeds (July 2018) and at the MeMO symposium *Gedeelde Vroomheid: verleden, heden en toekomst*, organised by Stichting Tot Gedachtenis (February 2019).
- While preparing for the project, and during the MeMO Project itself we created a network of international scholars who all work in the field of memoria. We already mentioned the cooperation of the international editorial board that helped create the international description standard (MeMO DS). In 2007 a collaboration started between Dutch and German researchers. Twice a year a colloquium was organised where Dutch and German scholars presented research and discussed their work. The meetings were initiated by professor Dieter Geuenich, (Duisburg-Essen University). Later on, Professor Thomas Schilp also made important contributions. At the yearly held *International Medieval Congress* in Leeds we organised multiple sessions, which led to fruitful meetings with other memoria scholars from all over the world. In 2008 the *Newsletter Medieval Memoria Research* (MMR), was launched, to inform scholars and others about projects, publications, symposia, etc. *MMR* also served as an excellent platform to inform other scholars about the MeMO Project.
- One of the direct results of the international collaboration was starting a series of publications, under the title *Memoria and Remembrance Practices* (Brepols, Turnhout, Belgium). The first volume *Reformations and their Impact on the Culture of Memoria* was published in 2016. In 2019 a second volume was published edited by Thomas Schilp and Caroline Horch: *Memoria – Erinnerungskultur – Historismus. Zum Gedenken an Otto Gerhard Oexle (28. August 1939 – 16. Mai 2016)*. For the coming years a number of international volumes are planned, with Arnoud-Jan Bijsterveld as chief editor.

4.2 Continuing the MeMO Project

Because of the successes of MeMO and because there still was a lot of work to be done, it was decided that after the initial phase (May 2009 till February 2013) the project would be continued. This lasted till April 2020. The main members of the team were:

Corinne van Dijk, UU (project leader); Truus van Bueren, UU; Charlotte Dikken, UU; Koen Goudriaan, VU; Bart Holterman, UU; Piet Looij, UU; Martine Meuwese, UU, and Rolf de Weijert, UU.

Team members continued entering new data. A new dataset concerning donations of liturgical vestments was also added. With this new dataset the website *Schenkingen van liturgische gewaden* (Donations of liturgical vestments (fig. 17)) was created by Bart Holterman and Corinne van Dijk.



Figure 17. Chasuble probably from St Agnes convent in Kampen (second half of the 15th century). The heraldic shield and the surrounding text shows that it was meant to commemorate Berta de Vos van Steenwijck van Putten and her mother: ‘Mistress Berta van Broeckhuysen, pray for her and her mother for God’s sake’. The text also indicates that Berta was the donor. [MeMO Memorial object ID 3893](#).

All this happened with the support of the Department of History and Art History (with Marco Mostert as supervisor) and the Board of the Faculty of Utrecht University. It sometimes was challenging to find the needed funds. Fortunately, we received several grants, such as from the K.F. Hein Fonds, and the Stichting Prof. van Winter Fonds which greatly supported the project right from the start. In 2015 the Stichting Tot Gedachtenis was founded to help MeMO, and to enable scholars in general, to continue researching the various aspects of memoria. The Utrecht U-Fonds enabled us to create a crowdfunding project.

Apart from looking at the successes, the question remains as to what could have been done better. Two issues concern a problem that probably will not come as a surprise: we should have applied for more money. Firstly, although we could not have foreseen the number of floor slabs newly found during the project, making a better indication of the enormous amount of work on the floor slabs should have been part of the preparation for the NWO application. For instance,

describing the more than 530 Frisian floor slabs, with their extensive decorations and their many heraldic shields, turned out to be very time-consuming. Secondly, verifying and correcting all the data was also more time-consuming than we expected. During the project we succeeded in finding subsidies to solve these problems for a large part, but we also owe a lot to the generosity of team members in donating their spare time to MeMO project. The same holds true for the final matter we would like to mention: more money and time should have been invested in creating a consortium of international research groups working on a European-wide MeMO Project. Through such a consortium grants could already have been applied for at an early stage, and a solid basis could have been laid for more international collaboration on memoria research.

To conclude

In April 2020, the data entry phase of the MeMO database officially ended. Additional and new data will no longer be added. The application and the introductory pages got a make-over, and in 2019 a new feature was added: the Quick Search. Through this basic search option, users can quickly get an overview of all the memorial objects and text carriers that are either being kept at certain holding institutions or once belonged to specific original institutions. This Quick Search is especially interesting for people visiting museums, archives, libraries or medieval religious institutions that still exist. While walking through a museum or church one can, by using a smartphone, have all the memoria-related objects and text carriers of that institution at their fingertips.

Working on MeMO has been an inspiring and fruitful journey. We sincerely hope that scholars in the Netherlands and abroad will continue using the MeMO database and find inspiration to keep working on the important and fascinating field of memoria.

Truus van Bueren and Rolf de Weijert, April 2020

Afterword by Truus van Bueren

I would like to end with a heartfelt ‘Thank you’ to all who have been involved in MeMO over the past 12 years (see [here](#) for all the people and institutions who contributed). Thank you all for your work, photographs, information, and financial and moral support. Without you the MeMO Project could not have been realized!

I thank the former Research Institute for Culture and History (OGC, Faculty of the Humanities, UU), the Department of History and Art History and the Board of the Faculty of Humanities, and especially the dean of the Faculty of Humanities, Keimpe Algra, for their moral and financial support. But most of all I thank Corinne van Dijk, project leader during the second phase of MeMO (2013-2018), for her enormous and excellent work. Also thank you Koen Goudriaan, Rolf the Weijert and Charlotte Dikken, the main members of the team in the second phase. You all did much more than could have been expected of you.

I thank Charlotte Dikken for her work, most of it in her spare time, for the *Newsletter Medieval Memoria Research*. From the offset, she was the driving force behind *MMR*. She was the contact person, gathered the information, edited *MMR* and took care of the lay-out, from September 2008 till this last issue in 2020. Altogether 22 issues (21 regular issues and 1 special issue).

Dear readers of this last issue of *MMR*, I wish you all well!

MeMO and its treasure of Neo-Latin poetry

Koen Goudriaan

In the category of memorial objects MeMO numbers over 500 tomb monuments and floor slabs with one or more Latin inscriptions, as well as 180-odd memorial items of other types containing Latin texts. All of these inscriptions have been transcribed and provided with English and Dutch translations, partly on the basis of work done by predecessors, partly wholly afresh. In 2012 Kees Thijs, then recently graduated as research master student of Greek and Latin at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, has enjoyed a temporary appointment in the MeMO team in order to make a good start with this considerable task. The present writer has supervised his work and in subsequent years updated it when a great number of new memorial objects was accruing. During the last months before the closing of MeMO on the 1st of September 2018, I had the opportunity to apply a finishing touch to the Latin inscriptions.

From an early moment, our attention was drawn to the unexpectedly high number of Neo-Latin verse texts inscribed on floor slabs and other tomb monuments. In this valedictory article I wish to highlight this genre by discussing two examples of Neo-Latin tomb inscriptions. The conclusion of the MeMO project is a fine moment for opening up hitherto unexplored fields of new research, and the poetry in the database might well be one of them.

My two inscriptions have been chosen more or less at random, except that both of them originate from Friesland. One of the surprising discoveries was the disproportionate share Friesland takes in the survival of Neo-Latin poetic tomb inscriptions dating from the period till 1580: out of a total of 52, no less than 39 are from Friesland (Neo-Latin poems on objects other than on tombs: nine, one of which is also Frisian). In general, the province of Friesland, together with Zeeland, is over-represented in the category of floor slabs. This may be explained by the modest demographic development in these provinces since the end of the Middle Ages as compared with the central part of the Netherlands. As a consequence, in these areas there was less need to extend and rebuild the many medieval parish churches, thus creating favourable conditions for the preservation of ecclesiastical monuments.

But this does not wholly account for the preponderance of Friesland in the field of Neo-Latin inscriptions. It has also been observed that Friesland was remarkably early in the production of highly refined Renaissance tomb monuments (Steensma, 82, summarizing previous literature). No doubt, both phenomena are interconnected. A closer investigation of the cultural factors at play here would be worthwhile. One of them could be the high incidence of youngsters making the academic tour to Italy, which peaked in the first and third quarters of the sixteenth century (Tervoort, 229).

Ernst van Goslinga

The first inscription I want to discuss is found on [MeMO Memorial Object ID 183](#), a floor slab in the parish church of Hallum (near the Wadden Coast):

*Nocte domum Ernestus properans de ponte cadebat,
dum nimis incaute cespitat asper equus.
Mergitur: usque adeo mors est incerta, diesque
mortis nos memores vult Deus esse sui.*

“When Ernst rushed homewards at night, he fell off a bridge, while his rough horse stumbled much too incautiously. He drowned: thus far is death uncertain, and God wants each of us to be aware of the day of one’s death.”

The verses fill a text field at the bottom of the slab, which otherwise is richly decorated in sixteenth-century style. To quote the description in MeMO: ‘Stone slab with allied arms in Renaissance architecture showing a Virtue(?) at the top, a putto with skull(s) and [...] roundels with allied arms in the corners’. The Latin text does not give the date of Ernst’s death, but we know this from the inscription in Dutch running along the four edges of the slab: Ernst died on May 2, 1558, his wife Syts van Donia on January 2, 1571. By the way, the layout we meet here – with factual information in Dutch at the edges and a Latin poem in a separate field – is quite common to this type of tombstones. The lettering is the Roman majuscule for the Dutch text on the edges, a humanist minuscule with some reminiscences of Gothic for the Latin inscription.



Figure 18. Floor slab of Ernst van Goslinga and Syts van Donia, Grote of St. Maartenkerk in Hallum (1558).

Ernst van Goslinga belonged to the Frisian nobility, as is made clear by his title in the Dutch inscription: ‘den edele, erntvesten Ernst van Goslinga’. He was the second son of Tjepcke van Goslinga, who had been ‘grietman’ (country burgomaster) of Ferwerderadeel. In 1540 Ernst lived on Goslingastate near Hallum (Wierstra, website, s.v. Goslinga).

The poem consists of two distichs: two couplets of a hexameter with a pentameter, which is the most common verse form found in the Neo-Latin poetry of MeMO. The inscription was included already by Hessel de Walle in his 2007 collection of inscriptions from Friesland (De Walle, website, nr. 2205), but in MeMO it is presented in a slightly corrected format. The general tenor is clear: the unknown author takes Ernst’s unexpected death due to a riding accident as an occasion to warn us not to be forgetful of our own death, which may occur equally sudden. The text contains one difficulty, however, which resides in the very last word *sui* (apart from the

genitive *dies* in *diesque*, which is irregular; *diei* would be normal). The possessive *sui* must refer back to a person already mentioned in the sentence in which it occurs. Grammatically, the most obvious reference would be *Deus*: the meaning then would be that we have to remember God's (i.e. Christ's) death. This has been the interpretation which was offered in MeMO till the day I am writing this (September 22, 2018). But this explanation seems logically incoherent, which is the reason why I now suggest another one. *Sui* must refer to *nos*: we have to be aware of the day of *our* death / each of us must be aware of the day of his death. The daring of this formulation is the fact that *sui* does not refer back – as it normally does – to a (grammatically) third person (he, she, they) but to the first person: 'we'.

With this interpretation, the second couplet offers an interesting variant on the phrase which is found in prose as a standard element in testaments. There it is usual to say that the drawing up of the testament is occasioned by the awareness 'that nothing is more certain than death, and nothing more uncertain than the day it comes'. In our verse text, death itself is called uncertain, whereupon our attention is drawn to the unknown day which will be the last one for each of us.

Haring van Wiarda

The second inscription to be studied here mentions a priest. It is found on [MeMO Memorial Object ID 1359](#), a stone slab in St Nicholas' church of Swichum (south of Leeuwarden). The commemorated person is Haring van Wiarda, the parish priest:

*Hic iacet Haringus Vyarda stemmate clarus,
clarior at vite qui integritate fuit.
Verba Dei docuit pastor sinceriter atque
monstravit rectum religionis iter.
Stirps dolet extinctum, miseri flent, plebs tota quoque
subdita pastorem hunc occubuisse gemit.*

“Here lies Haring van Wiarda, famous by descent but more famous still by the integrity of his life. Being a parish priest he has explained God's words in uprightness and he has shown the straight way of religion. His family deplores his passing away, the miserable ones cry, and all the flock in his obeisance moans because this parish priest has deceased.”

The general lay-out of the stone is comparable with the one for Ernst van Goslinga, with a text field reserved for a poem below the decoration and a Dutch inscription along the edges. The Dutch text informs us that Haring died July 20, 1572 and had been parish priest of Warga before switching to neighbouring Swichum. The decoration of this stone is for a large part chopped away (Steensma, 78). It combines traditional with Renaissance elements. The main decoration shows a Renaissance arch with allied arms and a chalice underneath. The four medallions in the corners are variously interpreted as showing the symbols of the Evangelists (MeMO) or heraldry (Steensma, 78). The chalice is characteristic for a priest's tomb (Steensma, 78). The lettering of the Latin inscription is Italic, i.e. the cursive alphabet of the humanists; the Dutch text shows Roman majuscules.

The inscription hints at the fact that Haring was a sprout of a distinguished family. The Wiarda's could be traced, indeed: Haring's father Jorrit was a gentleman-farmer of Roordahuizum, who at a certain point in time acted as deputy for the States of Friesland in their negotiations with Spain. He had the means to send Haring to university: we find the son in Louvain in 1551 and in Cologne in 1554. The Dutch inscription assigns him the title of Master (Wierstra, website, s.v. Wiarda; Roemeling, appendix on cd-rom, 1096; 1176).

One of Haring's predecessors as parish priest of Swichum was the famous Viglius van Aytta (Roemeling, appendix, 1095). Aytta, born in Swichum, belonged to the local gentry, as did Wiarda. But whereas Aytta left his fatherland to make a career in the Brussels government, combining it with an absentee pastorate of Swichum, Wiarda some decades later resided in his parishes and was buried in the last one.



Figure 19. Floor slab of Haring van Wiarda, Nicolaaskerk in Swichum (1572).

This difference in career sheds some light on the content of the inscription. The text, which has been transcribed on the basis of De Walle's version (De Walle, website, nr. 6243) but with quite a number of corrections, offers no difficulties. The poem consists of three distichs and has an overall laudatory character. This is in line both with the commemorative function of a tomb inscription and with current assumptions about epigrammatic poetry (more on this in the final section of this article). The eulogy first mentions Wiarda's birth from a notable regional lineage (*Vyarda stemmate*), an element which returns in the final couplet, with the *stirps* (family) as the first out of three categories of people mourning his death. But more important than this is his character and the exemplary way in which he acquitted himself of his pastoral duties. The last point is substantiated by the mentioning of two more categories of afflicted in the final couplet: the unfortunate ones and the total community of parishioners. This suggests the care with which Wiarda personally attended his flock, whereas the middle couplet portrays him as a faithful minister of the Divine Word.

This last phrase has a Protestant ring, but the next line makes clear that Wiarda was a loyal Catholic, instead. The situation in Friesland in the middle decades of the sixteenth century was characterised by a large amount of religious vacillation (Woltjer 1962). Of course, from a Catholic point of view in the face of rising Protestantism both absenteeism and ignorance among the local clergy could only aggravate the crisis. In 1554 two inquisitors, Lethmatius and Sonnius, were sent from Brussels to Friesland in order to stem the tide of Anabaptism. Among the measures they proposed was the improvement of the educational level of the clergy, in order to

make their preaching more effective. Wiarda was both a university graduate and a resident parish priest and so exemplifies the pastoral model the inquisitors had in mind.

Neo-Latin ‘epitaphs’ and their functionality

So far, I have designated the poems under discussion neutrally, but also somewhat clumsily, as ‘tomb inscriptions’. In connection with the study of classical literature, the term which immediately forces itself upon one’s mind to cover the shape and function of this type of poetry, would be ‘epitaph’, which literally means ‘(text) on the tomb’. I have avoided this term so far, however, in order not to create confusion with the meaning assigned to it by art historians. In their discipline, an epitaph is defined as a funerary monument which mentions the name of the deceased and the date of his or her death, and contains a portrait and a religious scene, but is not identical with the tomb itself; instead, it is placed independently from the tomb against a church wall (Olbrich; Turner). An illustration is to be found in the sources from Haarlem discussed by Van Bueren in her doctoral thesis (Van Bueren, 296-306; 507ff; cp. See also the article by Van Bueren and De Weijert in this issue). This amounts to saying that the ‘literary’ and the ‘art historical’ epitaph are mutually exclusive.

In the remainder of this article, however, I would ask the reader permission to follow literary scholarship in the application of the term ‘epitaph’, because it is from that perspective that the innovative character of the Neo-Latin funerary poetry discussed here may best be explained. I feel encouraged to do so by the fact that MeMO itself does not use the term ‘epitaph’ in the art historical sense, speaking instead of ‘wall memorials’, ‘memorial tablets’, ‘tomb monuments’ and so on.

The 52 Neo-Latin verse inscriptions in the MeMO collection may be situated at the crossroads of two trends: the long-standing medieval tradition of inscribing tomb stones (in Latin, but in the Later Middle Ages increasingly in the vernacular), and the humanist preoccupation with imitating and emulating classical genres, including the epitaph. Due to the chances of transmission, the sixteenth-century memorial monuments included in MeMO—whether or not inscribed—outweigh the number of objects preserved from previous centuries. Nevertheless, MeMO contains quite a number of tomb inscriptions from before 1500 as well, and some of these are also in verse. The funerary inscription has a long medieval tradition (Kloos, 73-80).

A special case, worth to be mentioned separately, is [MeMO Memorial Object ID 3738](#), an inscribed sarcophagus for the layman Ratger, found at the Utrecht Domplein and now in the Centraal Museum. The inscription is in fully classical distichs and could have been included among the 52 epitaphs discussed here, but for the fact that it dates from the Carolingian or Ottonian period. It is the (only?) representative of the Carolingian Renaissance in MeMO.

But most verse epitaphs antedating the sixteenth century are not classical at all. Sometimes they are in leonine hexameters ([MeMO Memorial Objects ID 1210; 2962](#)): a verse form exhibiting internal rhyme. Rhyme was a device avoided like the plague by the authors of classical Latin poetry. However, all of these epitaphs share one characteristic: they are eminently functional, reminding the lookers-on of their duties with respect to the deceased— not seldom in a very concrete manner, if a memorial contract had been concluded— while at the same time admonishing them to prepare for their own death.

In sum, the composition of verse inscriptions on tombstones was far from being a new phenomenon in the sixteenth century. New, however, is the way in which the epitaphs of the new era were influenced by the revival of classical literature in the orbit of Renaissance and humanism. Let us see what Neo-Latin scholarship has to say about this topic. In addition to the term ‘epitaph’ two additional technical terms have to be introduced: ‘distich’ and ‘epigram’.

The full designation for the verse form used in the majority of our Neo-Latin epitaphs is ‘elegiac distich’. A distich is a couplet of a dactylic hexameter (a verse containing six times the element ‘long-short-short’ or variants of it) followed by a pentameter (two truncated halves of a

hexameter). It is called ‘elegiac’ because it was originally favoured by writers of elegies such as Catullus, Ovid, Tibullus and Propertius. An elegy is a poem of mourning, although already in Antiquity the term was applied by extension to other middle-sized poems expressing personal feelings such as love as well (Ijsewijn and Sacré, 80-85; De Beer).

But writing a poem of regret in the event of the death of a beloved one is not the same as composing a tomb inscription. The sorrow caused by the loss may be so deep as to entail an effusion of words surpassing the amount of space available at the tomb. It is here that the epigram comes into the picture. ‘Epigram’ literally means ‘inscription’, a text to be inscribed on an object. That object could be a statue or other work of art, a building, or a tomb. Common to the various types of inscriptions is that they have to be concise. The epitaph may now be seen as a subspecies of the epigram, while at the same time sharing its funerary character with the elegy. Epitaphs may or may not borrow the elegiac distich as the metre in which they express themselves, but in any case the number of couplets must be restricted.

The obligatory brevity of the epigram quite naturally constituted a challenge to classical poets. ‘Go tell it to the Spartans, passer-by, that here we lie, obedient to their word’, the epitaph written by the lyric poet Simonides of Ceos for the Spartan casualties in the battle of Thermopylae (480 B.C.), is the famous starting point in the development of the Greek epigram. In the Hellenistic period, poets began to practise the epigram even if there was no real object onto which to inscribe the verse. The epigram became a literary genre and was extended to topics not directly related to identifiable objects, including even obscenities and invectives. At this point, the Romans took over, producing Catullus and Martialis as the champions of the epigrammatic genre (Enenkel; Nisbet).

During the Middle Ages, the poetry of Martialis remained ever in vogue, but Catullus was forgotten. The reintroduction of the epigram during the Renaissance was triggered mainly by two events: the *editio princeps* of the poems of Catullus in 1472 and the rediscovery of the Greek epigram. The fall of Constantinople in 1453 set in motion the migration of a number of Greek scholars to the west. As a consequence, Italy made its acquaintance with hitherto unknown literature from Greek Antiquity, which was quickly made available by the printing press. One of these new acquisitions was the Greek Anthology, a huge collection of epigrams, including a book of epitaphs. A manuscript edition of this Anthology had been made by the Byzantine scholar Maximus Planudes (around 1300), and it was this edition that was seen through the press by the emigrant scholar Janus Lascaris (Florence 1494) (Lauxtermann).

The Greek Anthology is directly relevant to MeMO: one of the epitaphs in the collection found its way to Friesland and was incised on the floor slab of Gercke van Hoytema in the church of Oudega ([MeMO Memorial Object ID 1162](#); I thank my colleague Gerard Boter, Professor of Greek at the Vrije Universiteit, for his help in identifying this epigram). The textual variant on the slab proves that the stonemason based himself on the 1494 Planudes/ Lascaris edition. It is the only Greek inscription in MeMO: a full quotation of a piece of classical poetry, not a newly composed poem. The salient point, however, is that we witness here no less than the reapplication of a piece of poetry borrowed from literature to the practical function of filling one of the text fields of a real tombstone.

‘Since Hellenistic times [...] epigrams were at least partly composed as texts to be read in private and displayed all characteristics of written poetry. Yet their original function as inscriptions always remained a dormant force in the poetic genre’ (Rijser, 103). Recent Neo-Latin scholarship on the epigram stresses alternately its fictional, literary character and its functionality. On the one hand, the development of the literary epigram into the multiform and flexible genre it eventually became, is declared to have been dependent on its emancipation from real objects on which to be inscribed (Cummings). In contrast, the introductory chapter to a recent volume on *The Neo-Latin Epigram* discusses as one of its characteristics the reference – either realistic or metaphorical – to a material object, thus at least preserving its potentiality for practical application (Enenkel, 10). In that same volume, one article discusses the reintroduction of the

epigram on new monuments in Renaissance Rome under the inspiration of visible examples surviving from Antiquity. When Raphael died on Good Friday 1520, an epigram contest was held, and eventually the winning epitaph – not more than one distich, from the pen of either Pietro Bembo or Tebaldeo – was inscribed on the funerary monument which had been devised by Raphael himself (Rijser).

It is exactly here that the 52 funerary epigrams in MeMO have to be situated. ‘A major difficulty [in the study of the epigram] is caused by the fact that most modern poetic theory denies the existence of close ties between poetry and historical reality or its historical and social context, whereas Neo-Latin epigrammatic poetry is characterized to a large degree precisely by these connections’ (Enenkel, 2). The collection of epitaphs inserted in MeMO is a case in point, because it is absolutely impossible to deny their functional character. So it may be worthwhile to draw the attention of Neo-Latinists to this treasure. Inversely, historians (including art historians) who are primarily interested in *memoria*, the cult of remembrance, and who wish to use the sixteenth-century epitaphs as their sources, would be ill-advised if they neglected the expertise available among literary historians.

Interesting questions lie ahead. These are not restricted to technicalities in the field of metre, such as the iambic dimeters of MeMO Memorial Object ID 1051 or the asclepiads of ID 1257. Is it correct, for instance, to state that the epigram/ epitaph always refers to the object on which we find it? A case in point could be the formula *Hic iacet* (‘Here lies’) in our second example. In the first of the two inscriptions discussed here, however, a corresponding formula is lacking. An epigram is supposed to show wit, preferably manifesting itself in a closing punch-line. Is the allusion to the testamentary formula in the first inscription above intended as such a pun? Raphael’s tomb contained two texts: a prose one with factual information, and the distich which gives a pointed comment on his worth. Is it a mere coincidence that many Frisian tombs exhibit exactly the same functional division? And which cultural infrastructure do we have to invoke in order to explain the great quantity of Neo-Latin epigrams in a specific area of the Netherlands? In general, among humanists the epigram was ubiquitous (Enenkel). In a study on the Dutch humanist teacher Murellius it has been observed that he ordered his pupils in the highest grade of the Latin School to write a letter or an epigram each day (Groenland). But this still does not explain the preponderance of Friesland; Murellius worked in Alkmaar.

These are questions which need not to be answered now. I have been involved in MeMO for ten years, from the start to the end. Being a classical scholar by education, I enjoyed very much the task of making available the Latin memorial inscriptions to a wide audience. Now I will be a lucky man if this short article succeeds in eliciting some kind of follow-up.

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Survey of Neo-Latin inscriptions

-with * asterisk: Friesland

-underlined: other than distichs

-*cursive*: other than grave inscriptions

49, 54, 104*, 112*, 114*, 116*, 125*, 127*, 129*, 133*, 155*, 161*, 164*, 179*, 180*, 182*, 183*, 201*, 205*, 222*, 265*, 266*, 328*, 374*, 376*, 402*, 464*, 470*, 563, 570, *644*, *823**, *914*, 960*, 1051, 1116*, 1121*, 1152*, 1171*, 1199*, 1211*, 1229, 1234*, 1257*, 1342*, 1359*, *1385*, 1405, 1731, *2125*, *2134*, 2481, 2564, 2752, 3006, 3079, 3606*, 3627*, 3659, 3798, 3936

Quotations from classical poetry

16 (Horace), 156* (Publilius Syrus), 158* (Horace), 1162 (Greek Anthology), 1214* (Horace), 1330* (Horace), 3578 (Terence, adapted), 3620* (Horace, adapted)

Carolingian/ Ottonian

3738

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Memorial Books as Sources of Shared Devotional Reading Culture

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[...] *Item Herman van Dorsten, steenmesleer, gaf ons II boecke Der sielen troest ende een evangeli boeck inde vasten daer Die vier utersten in sijn.*²¹

[Item Herman van Dorsten, bricklayer, gave us two books *Der sielen troest* and a gospel book for Lent which also contains *Die vier utersten*].²²

The above excerpt is found in the memorial book of the Adamanshuis, a community of Sisters of the Common Life (also known as St Agnes convent) founded in 1397 and located in Zutphen.

This memorial book is one of the sources I have investigated within the framework of my PhD research, as part of the project *Cities of Readers: Religious Literacies in the Long Fifteenth Century*. The PhD project investigates the participation of laypeople in the religious reading culture of the late medieval Low Countries, through the processes of reading, writing, collecting and exchanging religious texts. One of the aspects which is researched is the ‘shared devotional reading culture’ of laypeople and religious professionals. Rather than discussing lay religiosity and the religiosity of religious professionals as two separate spheres, ‘shared devotional culture’ focuses on that which is shared between these groups. Reconstructing this shared devotional culture by focusing on the social-cultural context of late medieval religious life, and on the role of laypeople as agents in devotional practice, helps to nuance the traditional divide between laypeople and religious professionals. One way of exploring shared devotional reading culture is to reconstruct the practice of book donation of laypeople to religious institutions. Such a reconstruction not only gives us insight in the type of books and texts that laypeople owned, but also in which typology of books they choose to share with the members of religious communities.

One type of source which is extremely suited to research this topic are sources connected to the field of medieval memoria culture. Although these sources have often been used for research on monastic culture, they also offer valuable information on the devotional practices of laypeople. It is evident that the MeMO database is an essential tool in tracing these sources. The detailed description of memorial books and gift registers of religious houses in this database, make it easy to find a way through relevant sources.

The above example from the memorial book of the Adamanshuis is one of those sources found in the MeMO database.²³ The memorial book of the community holds entries from the fifteenth to the early seventeenth century.²⁴ In the list of benefactors in this memorial book (f. 1r-6r) we find ten cases in which books, or money to acquire books, were donated to the convent. In five of these cases the donors were certainly or probably laypeople. All of these donations (except maybe for one of which the date is unknown) take place in the second half of the fifteenth century. As we have already seen one of them is bricklayer Herman van Dorsten. Herman is also recorded on the calendar, found in the same memorial book, on the date of his

²¹ ZUTPHEN, NL-ZURAZ, ADAMANSHUIS, 0209, inv, nr. 1, f. 3v.

²² *Der sielen troest* [The consolation of souls] is either the text *grote der sielen troest*, which discusses the ten commandments or the so called *kleine der sielen troest* which was written by a different author but was meant as an addition to the first work, discussing the sacraments. Both texts are written in the form of a dialogue between a spiritual father and his spiritual child and consist of many exempla.

Vanden Vier utersten is a Middle Dutch translation by Gerard van Vliederhoven (d. 1402) of the *Cordiale de quatuor novissimis*, a text which discusses death, the final judgement, hell and heaven.

²³ MeMO text carrier ID 388.

²⁴ Shelfmark: ZUTPHEN, NL-ZURAZ, ADAMANSHUIS, 0209, INV, NR. 1; date: second half fifteenth to seventeenth century; size: 198x135, 145x104 and 102x73mm; ff; 40, 19 and 8; material: paper and parchment.

death: 14 January 1467. There are no specific instructions for the commemoration per person in the calendar so we may assume that they were all commemorated through an *anniversarium* [*jaargetijde*]. Besides Herman van Dorsten, books are also donated by Willem Leerinck, mayor of Zutphen and neighbor of the sisters of the Adamanshuis, who donated money for books.²⁵ Gaeverit van Oldewater donated another gospel book.²⁶ Mechtelt ten Corenblecke donated a *Onses Heren leven* [Life of our Lord] to the sisters.²⁷ This was possibly a copy of the text *Van den levne ons heren* [on the life of Our Lord] or the Pseudo-Bonaventure-Ludolphian Life of Jesus. Trude van Grolle who lived with the sisters, but probably kept her lay status, and donated money for a Missal and a copy of *Der meechden spiegel*, a Middle Dutch translation of the *Speculum Virginum*.²⁸

Memorial books help us gain insight on which books were donated, and on the social background of the donors. Furthermore, the sometimes rather detailed descriptions of the gifts help us to form an image of the type of religious texts which laypeople owned themselves, but also of the type of texts that they deemed appropriate to donate to a convent.

Those benefactors who donated books to religious communities aimed to benefit their soul's salvation with their gifts, but at the same time they transferred and circulated religious knowledge. The sources which attest to this active role provide us with a better understanding of the flow of books between lay and religious people and, with that, of an aspect of shared devotional culture. It is thanks to the MeMO project that such an analysis is possible and this has opened and will open new research avenues and deepen our understanding of late medieval (religious) cultures.

²⁵ ZUTPHEN, NL-ZURAZ, ADAMANSHUIS, 0209, inv, nr. 1, f. 5r.

²⁶ ZUTPHEN, NL-ZURAZ, ADAMANSHUIS, 0209, inv, nr. 1, f. 3r.

²⁷ ZUTPHEN, NL-ZURAZ, ADAMANSHUIS, 0209, inv, nr. 1, f. 3r.

²⁸ ZUTPHEN, NL-ZURAZ, ADAMANSHUIS, 0209, inv, nr. 1, f. 4v.

Musings and meditations on medieval monuments made of (precious) metal – a discussion paper

Sophie Oosterwijk



Figure 20. Tomb monument with cast gilt copper-alloy effigy to Mary of Burgundy (d. 1482), cast by the Brussels founder Renier van Thienen after a model by Jan Borremans, with gilding by Pieter de Backere or Beckere, church of Our Lady, Bruges (Belgium). Photo: Ann Adams

Regular readers of the MMR Newsletter or of the publications of the Church Monuments Society and the Monumental Brass Society will be aware of my continuing interest in medieval ‘precious-metal’ effigial tombs in Europe, especially those made in bronze or, more correctly, copper alloy, between 1080 and 1430.²⁹ This interest developed during my work as researcher with the MeMO project, coordinating the inventory of medieval Dutch tomb monuments. Yet whereas we do find

²⁹ See the survey article S. Badham and S. Oosterwijk, “‘Monumentum aere perennius’? Precious-metal effigial tomb monuments in Europe 1080–1430”, *Church Monuments*, 30 (2015), pp. 7–105, and subsequent articles, such as S. Oosterwijk and S. Badham, ‘Relief copper alloy tombs in medieval Europe: image, identity and reception’, in: N. Thomas and P. Dandridge (eds), *Cuivre, bronzes et laitons médiévaux: Histoire, archéologie et archéométrie des productions en laiton, bronze et autres alliages à base de cuivre dans l’Europe médiévale (12^e-16^e siècles)*. / *Medieval copper, bronze and brass: History, archaeology and archaeometry of the production of brass, bronze and other copper alloy objects in medieval Europe (12th-16th centuries)*, *Actes du colloque de Dinant et Namur, 15-17 mai 2014* / *Proceedings of the symposium of Dinant and Namur, 15-17 May 2014*, Études et documents, Archéologie, 39 (Namur, 2018), 365-375; and S. Oosterwijk, “‘All that glisters is not gold ...’ New discoveries about precious-metal effigial monuments in Europe”, in: C. Steer (ed.), *The monuments man: essays in honour of Jerome Bertram F.S.A.* (Donington, 2020), pp. 286–310, ‘A new Age of Bronze? Copper-alloy tomb monuments in medieval Europe’, in: E. Georgitsoyanni (ed.), *Ancient Greek art and European funerary art*, Proceedings of the 2017 ASCE conference (Newcastle upon Tyne, 2019), pp. 3–31, and ‘The two tombs of Bernhard I, margrave of Baden (1364-1431): evidence and interpretation’, *Church Monuments*, 35 (2020), forthcoming.

extant (and lost) flat brasses in the MeMO database, such as on the splendid tomb monument to Catherine of Bourbon (d. 1469) in the Stevenskerk in Nijmegen (Id 2324), no Dutch copper-alloy relief effigies are known that predate the MeMO cut-off date of c.1580: antiquarian records describe the lost tomb of Count Jan van Egmond (d. 1516) in the court chapel at Egmond as a 'koperen afbeeldsel' (*representation in copper*), but it was most likely an engraved flat brass and not a relief effigy.³⁰ The situation is very different in Belgium where a number of gilt cast copper-alloy tombs survive, notably those of Mary of Burgundy (d. 1482) (fig. 20) and her father Charles the Bold (d. 1477) in the church of Our Lady in Bruges, while others in Bruges, Lille, Brussels and Liège are known to have been destroyed over time.³¹

Medieval bronze tomb monuments appear to have originated in Germany, the oldest known example – at least in western Europe³² – being that of the Rudolf of Rheinfelden, duke of Swabia (d. 1080) and anti-king to Emperor Henry IV, in Merseburg Cathedral (Saxony-Anhalt) (fig. 21).³³ From then on the concept of relief and flat copper-alloy tomb monuments spread rapidly across Europe to set a new standard in funerary splendour and status. One may assume that the excuse given by Abbot Norbert of Iburg for using stone instead of bronze for the founder's tomb of Bishop Benno II of Osnabrück (d. 1088) at his Benedictine convent at Bad Iburg (Lower Saxony), *viz.* 'metallis non potuit' (*he was unable to make it from metals*),³⁴ indicates the almost immediate impact of Rudolf's bronze tomb monument, even though Benno as a close advisor of Henry IV might not even have wanted his own memorial modelled on that of the anti-king. Early examples elsewhere include the sumptuous lost monument to Count Henri I of Champagne (d. 1181) in his collegiate foundation of Saint-Étienne at Troyes (Aube, France) and that of his younger son Thibaut III (d. 1201) in the same church. England appears to have lagged behind with clerical monuments such as the lost cast copper-alloy effigies at Wells Cathedral (Somerset) to local bishops Jocelyn (d. 1242) and William Bitton I (d. 1264) and that of Bishop Robert Grosseteste (d. 1253) at Lincoln Cathedral.

³⁰ J. Wap and J. Cannabich, *Aardrijkskundige beschrijving van de Nederlanden, na 1830* (Ooukoop, 1834), p. 97. I am grateful to my late friend Hans Does for this find.

³¹ Losses include the triple monument in Lille to Louis of Mâle, Count of Flanders, his wife Margaret of Brabant and their daughter Margaret of Flanders (wife of Philip the Good), commissioned in 1453 by Louis's great-grandson Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy; the monument to Jacques de Bourbon (d. 1468) in the church of St Donatian in Bruges, commissioned by his niece Mary of Burgundy around 1476–79; the double monument in the church of Our Lady in Bruges to Lodewijk van Gruuthuse (d. 1492), and his wife Margarethe van Borselen, commissioned after 1472; the effigies of Philip the Good's nephew Adolf of Cleves, Lord of Ravenstein (d. 1492), and his second wife Anne of Burgundy (an illegitimate daughter of Philip the Good) on their tomb in the Dominican church in Brussels; the kneeling *priants* of Adolf's son Philip of Cleves, Lord of Ravenstein (d. 1528), and his wife Françoise of Luxembourg in the same church; and the monument of Cardinal Érard de la Marck, Prince-Bishop of Liège (d. 1538), with its kneeling *priant* and the beckoning figure of Death in the cathedral of Saint-Lambert in Liège, commissioned in 1528. A recent study is A. Adams, 'Spiritual provision and temporal affirmation: Tombs of *Les Chevaliers de la Toison d'Or* from Philip the Good to Philip the Fair', unpublished PhD dissertation (The Courtauld Institute of Art, University of London, 2018).

³² Further investigation is needed into the tomb of John I Tzimiskes (d. 976), general and senior Byzantine emperor, who is said to have been buried in the crypt of the church of Christos Chalkites in Constantinople in what has been described as a magnificent tomb, plated with gold, enriched with enamel and niello: see R. Janin, *Constantinople Byzantine* (2nd edn, Paris, 1964), p. 111.

³³ B. Hinz, *Das Grabdenkmal Rudolfs von Schwaben: Monument der Propaganda und Paradigma der Gattung* (Frankfurt, 1996), pp. 13–17, and B. Hinz (ed.), *Das Grabdenkmal König Rudolfs von Schwaben im Dom zu Merseburg* (Petersberg, 2019); T.E.A. Dale, 'The Individual, the Resurrected Body, and Romanesque Portraiture: The Tomb of Rudolf von Schwaben in Merseburg', *Speculum*, 77:3 (2002), pp. 707–743.

³⁴ H. Körner, *Grabmonumente des Mittelalters* (Darmstadt, 1997), p. 100.



Figure 21. Copper-alloy tomb slab of Rudolf of Rheinfelden, duke of Swabia (d. 1080), Merseburg Cathedral (Saxony-Anhalt, Germany). Photo: Vereinigte Domstifter zu Merseburg und Naumburg und des Kollegiatstifts Zeitz, Bildarchiv Merseburg

In Christian culture bronze has strong biblical connotations. Solomon's temple in Jerusalem is said to have featured various bronze objects created by Hiram of Tyre, including two bronze columns flanking the entrance (1 Kings 7: 13–47), and these probably inspired early-medieval bronze artefacts such as the famous Bernward Column of c.1000 AD in Hildesheim, incidentally a place where a veritable cluster of medieval copper-alloy effigial tombs once

existed.³⁵ No less important – certainly as the inspiration for Rudolf’s tomb in view of his imperial aspirations – are the imperial connotations of bronze and the (indirect) influence of antique bronze statues. Greek bronzes were highly prized by the Romans, who continued to use the material for portrait busts and public monuments. A famous survivor and a source of inspiration for later sculptors such as Donatello is the gilded bronze equestrian statue of Marcus Aurelius (d. 180 AD), which was erected in Rome around 175 AD and probably owes its survival to its misidentification as the Christian emperor Constantine the Great (who may indeed once have had such a statue in Rome). Another, later example is the Colossus of Barletta (Apulia), a 5.11 m high bronze statue of an unidentified later Roman emperor from the 5th or 6th century AD, which possibly came from Ravenna (fig. 22). There were once many more bronze monuments throughout the Roman Empire, placed prominently in public places, e.g. the bronze *Regisole*, a late antique equestrian statue originally from Ravenna, which was later moved to Pavia and finally destroyed by Jacobins in 1796.³⁶ The bronze head of a horse from a similar monumental statue of c.40 AD now in the Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore (Maryland, USA), is one of several such fragments to survive.³⁷



Figure 22. Colossus of Barletta, bronze, 5.11 m high, representing an unidentified later Roman emperor from the 5th or 6th century AD, now situated in front of the Castello Svevo, Barletta (Apulia, Italy). Photo at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Colosso_di_Barletta.jpg

³⁵ S. Oosterwijk and S. Badham, ‘*Monumentum aere perennius?* The ongoing search for precious-metal effigial tombs in medieval Europe (1080-1430)’, *Monumental Brass Society Bulletin*, 135 (2017), pp. 688–691.

³⁶ S. Lomartire, ‘La statua del Regisole di Pavia e sua fortuna tra medioevo e rinascimento’, in: J. Poeschke, T. Weigel and B. Kusch-Arnhold (eds), *Praemium virtutis III. Reiterstandbilder von der Antike bis zum Klassizismus*, Symbolische Kommunikation und gesellschaftliche Wertesysteme – Schriftenreihe des Sonderforschungsbereichs, 496, vol. 22 (Münster, 2008), pp. 31–73.

³⁷ <https://art.thewalters.org/detail/7158/head-of-a-horse/>. The city of Lyon (Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes, France) also once housed at least two Roman bronze equestrian statues: fragments are housed in Lugdunum, formerly known as the Gallo-Roman Museum of Lyon-Fourvière.



Figure 23. Modern replica of the late Roman, gilt, cast bronze 'Emona Citizen' on its marble column, Congress Square, Ljubljana (Slovenia). Photo: Sophie Oosterwijk (2018)

Even if the majority of antique bronze statues were melted down or otherwise lost, enough examples and fragments survive to suggest the large numbers that could once still be observed as the Roman Empire fell into its fatal decline. An example is the Emona Citizen in Ljubljana (Slovenia), a commemorative, gilt cast bronze portrait statue of a young male civilian in a toga, dating from the early 2nd century AD and discovered in 1836.³⁸ At 145 cm high, it is less than life size, but originally placed on a Corinthian capital atop a column of some 5 m high, with a rectangular white marble base nearly 30 cm high, the monument would have been a striking landmark (fig. 23). There would originally have been an inscription and presumably an urn with the ashes of the deceased. What is remarkable is that this was not an imperial monument in the heart of the Rome, but a memorial to a young civilian in the northern cemetery of the city of Emona, on the eastern fringe of the Empire. Apart from missing its right hand and the damage it suffered in a fall in 1947(?), the figure is in a remarkably good condition. It appears to have been carefully taken down and buried to protect it from damage, possibly in the mid 5th century AD when Emona was attacked by the Huns, which suggests a desire to preserve, remember and perhaps re-erect it at a later, safer time.

Yet cast bronze figures were also in use as functional statues in Roman palaces and villas, such as the magnificent ‘Xanten Youth’ (Berlin, Neues Museum).³⁹ This nude male bronze figure of the 1st century BC, discovered in the Rhine in 1858, was intended to serve as a *lychnouchos* or dumb waiter with a tray at banquets. Many more such bronze statues, also employed as *trapezophoroi* or lamp bearers, survive from elsewhere in the Roman Empire.⁴⁰

Considering these examples of both monumental and ‘functional’ bronze figures, a number of questions arise that relate not just to these antique statues but also to medieval and renaissance bronze monuments. This paper is thus a very wide-ranging meditation on ideas that may be worth pursuing further in greater detail and with a clearer focus, so comments and suggestions will be very welcome.

1. Were all these bronze figures – medieval as well as antique – originally gilded?

The colour of bronze relies greatly on the alloy used, *i.e.* the proportions of especially copper and tin (but zinc, lead, and even silver and gold could also be added), and can range from yellow to red.⁴¹ A crucial question about bronzes of any period relates to patina and finish. The present dark and often even dull appearance of many bronzes (cf. figs 21, 24, 26, 33) may not always have been the original intention of their creators, even if a dark patina may have been admired in Antiquity for the contrast it offered with added details in other materials, such as silver eyelashes or nipples, red copper lips, and eyes inlaid with ivory, obsidian or glass paste (fig. 24).⁴² Colour was evidently an important characteristic of antique bronzes, just as it appears to have been of many medieval copper-alloy monuments, also because it made statues ‘come alive’.

³⁸ See <https://www.nms.si/en/collections/highlights/709-Emona-citizen> and J. Istenič, ‘Column grave monument from Emona’, *Arheološki vestnik*, 63 (2012), pp. 149–175.

³⁹ See <https://artsandculture.google.com/asset/the-xanten-youth-unknown/BgEVp8QsJAfL9w?hl=en>. Additional illustration:

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Bronze_statue_of_the_Xanten_Youth,_1st_century_AD,_discovered_in_1858_in_the_Rhine_at_Luttingen_\(Germany\)_not_far_from_Xanten,_Neues_Museum,_Berlin_\(8169152461\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Bronze_statue_of_the_Xanten_Youth,_1st_century_AD,_discovered_in_1858_in_the_Rhine_at_Luttingen_(Germany)_not_far_from_Xanten,_Neues_Museum,_Berlin_(8169152461).jpg)

⁴⁰ Besides examples in, for example, Naples, Florence, and Rabat (Morocco), there is the so-called ‘Efebo’ of Antequera (Andalusia): see N. Lenski, ‘Working models: functional art and Roman conceptions of slavery’, in: M. George (ed.), *Roman slavery and Roman material culture* (Toronto/Buffalo/London, 2013), pp. 129–157; P. Rodríguez Oliva, ‘La estatua en bronce del “Efebo de Antequera”’, in: *El Efebo de Antequera* (Antequera, 2011), pp. 81–105.

⁴¹ J. Devogelaere, ‘The colour palette of antique bronzes: an experimental archaeology project’, *EXARC journal* (2017/2) at <https://exarc.net/ark:/88735/10289>.

⁴² For example, see S. Descamps-Lequime, ‘The colour of bronze. Polychromy and the aesthetics of bronze surfaces’, in: J. M. Daehner and K. Lapatin (eds), *Power and pathos. Bronze sculpture of the Hellenistic world* (Los Angeles, 2015), pp. 150–165; S. Oosterwijk, ‘A new Age of Bronze? Copper-alloy tomb monuments in medieval Europe’, in: E. Georgitsoyanni (ed.), *Ancient Greek art and European funerary art*, Proceedings of the 2017 ASCE conference (Newcastle upon Tyne, 2019), pp. 3–31.

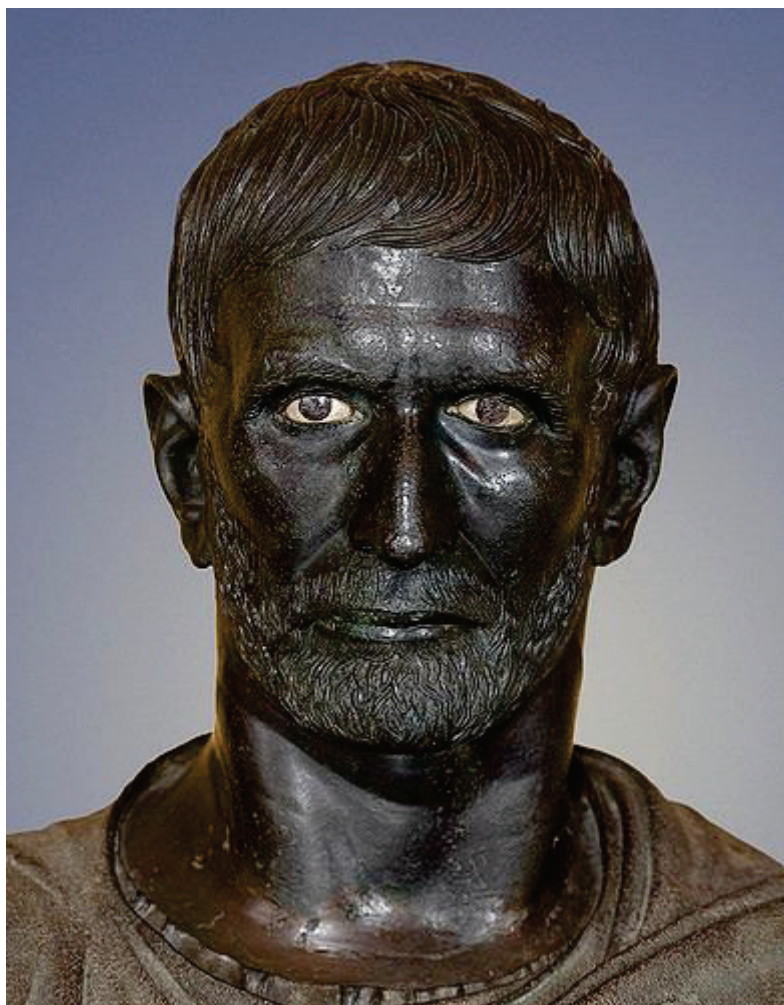


Figure 24. So-called *Capitoline Brutus*, Roman bronze portrait head with inlaid eyes, presumably from a full-length statue, late 4th to early 3rd (or even 2nd to 1st) century BC, on a 16th-century bust, Capitoline Museums, Rome. Photo at <https://alchetron.com/Capitoline-Brutus>

Unfortunately the surface of bronze artefacts will discolour and corrode over time. Unless it is regularly polished it will turn dark or nearly black, or worse: corroded antique bronze mirrors thus no longer convey the reflective quality they once possessed. Gilding was rarely applied to bronzes before the Roman period, but we know that the ancients could treat bronze statues with an artificial coating to preserve them from oxidisation, especially when they were intended for display in the open air. It is debatable whether mercury or fire-gilding, which came to be used in medieval Europe, was already known in Roman times, but statues could be gilded by applying sheets of fine gold leaf to the bronze surface, which may have been the method used on the Emona Citizen.⁴³ The gilding on the equestrian statue of Marcus Aurelius is also remarkably well preserved, but on medieval monuments any evidence of gilding may be almost entirely lost: on Rudolf's tomb monument in Merseburg it has disappeared along with the inlaid semi-precious stones and enamel eyes.

Some medieval and antiquarian records make reference to 'gold' and 'gilding', or otherwise suggest a gilded or golden appearance. For example, the coloured drawings made for the French genealogist and antiquary François Roger de Gaignières (1642–1715), which are a vital source for medieval French tomb monuments, not only show lost copper-alloy effigies as bright yellow but also often include other colours to suggest the use of inlaid gems and enamel (fig. 25).

⁴³ Istenič, 'Column grave monument from *Emona*', p. 152.

Although we cannot be sure that the evidence of these drawings is always reliable,⁴⁴ many accompanying descriptions mention ‘cuivre’ rather than ‘bronze’, or even ‘cuivre jaune’ (*yellow copper*), and the use of gilding and inlaid gems and enamel on monuments would fit in with the opulent appearance of medieval reliquaries and shrines.



Figure 25. Lost copper-alloy tomb of Alix of Thouars, hereditary duchess of Brittany (d. 1221), and her daughter Yolande (d. 1272) formerly at the Cistercian abbey church at Villeneuve, near Nantes, Gough Drawings Gaignières 1, fol. 99, Bodleian Library, Oxford, at <https://www.collecta.fr/p/COL-IMG-12297>

⁴⁴ A. Ritz-Guilbert, *La Collection Gaignières. Un inventaire du royaume au XVIIe siècle* (Paris, 2016), esp. p. 141 for the reliability of the colours used.

Yet even if gilding had been envisaged, it was evidently not always applied. A late example is the series of statues surrounding the cenotaph of Maximilian I in Innsbruck, which are known locally as the *Schwarze Mander* or black men (fig. 26): although it had been Maximilian's intention to have these male and female 'kinship' figures gilded, just like the surviving monument of his late wife Mary of Burgundy in Bruges (fig. 20), this plan was soon abandoned, and only in exposed areas can the bright yellow colour of almost pure copper still be observed.⁴⁵ Furthermore, tastes and aesthetic choices changed over time: see question 6 below.



Figure 26. The bronze *Schwarze Mander* gazing upon the cenotaph of Maximilian I, Hofkirche, Innsbruck (Austria). Photo: Sophie Oosterwijk (2018)

⁴⁵ O. Knitel, *Die Giesser zum Maximiliangrab. Handwerk und Technik* (Innsbruck, [1987]), and, for a recent discussion, Oosterwijk, “All that glisters is not gold ...”.

Nonetheless, a comparison with flat memorial brasses shows that the overall intention of medieval patrons must indeed have been the appearance of bright gold that copper alloy could provide, along with a reflective quality, be it used for lecterns, candelabra or tomb monuments. One may compare the words of Lorenzo in *The Merchant of Venice* (V, i): ‘Sit Jessica, – look how the floor of heaven / Is thick inlaid with patens of bright gold’.

2. Could antique (gilt) bronze statues have become part of historical or collective memory in early-medieval Europe?

There can surely be little doubt that surviving antique cast bronze statues – and perhaps the memory of lost examples – signalled the lost glory of the Roman Empire in the period often referred to as the Dark Ages. They provided a standard of craftsmanship that later artists and patrons were keen to emulate. This is evident in the Carolingian period, *e.g.* in the bronze equestrian statuette that may represent Charlemagne or his grandson Charles the Bald (Louvre, Paris), although it is possible that the horse was a re-used antique figure and its rider a Carolingian addition.

In fact, antique bronzes were also often stolen and re-used for ideological reasons: for example, Charlemagne himself removed, with papal permission, bronze as well as marble objects from Rome and Ravenna, including a bronze equestrian statue of Theodoric the Great (d. 526 AD), since lost, that he installed in the courtyard between the audience hall and the palatine chapel in his newly founded capital, Aachen, to signal his own imperial status.⁴⁶ Another famous example is the Triumphal Quadriga in Venice, the four gilt copper-alloy horses that were displayed at the Hippodrome in Constantinople, from which they were looted in 1204 during the infamous Fourth Crusade and taken to Venice: there they came to be installed on the façade of St Mark’s Basilica, only to be stolen by Napoleon and taken to Paris in 1797 to be incorporated in the design of the Arc de Triomphe du Carrousel, and finally returned to Venice in 1815.

The physical evidence of surviving antique bronzes, and their enduring propaganda value, may thus have been a source of inspiration for early medieval patrons and artists. This certainly applies to the tomb monument to Rudolf of Rheinfelden, who was elected and crowned anti-king in 1077 but died from wounds sustained in the Battle of Elster against Henry IV’s imperial troops in 1080 (see fig. 21).

Yet could the *memory* of gilt bronze monuments from Antiquity have lingered in the minds of much later generations, even without the physical presence of surviving examples? Reception is usually difficult to prove, but references in written records and contemporary literature might support such a hypothesis if more such evidence could be found from across Europe.

3. What was the wider cultural impact of ‘bronze’ figures, *e.g.* on medieval literature, medieval chroniclers and painters, foreign visitors and antiquarian writers?

It is striking that Shakespeare makes various references to gold/gilding, bronze and brass in relation to monuments, as in the observation ‘All that glisters is not gold [...] Gilded tombs do worms infold’ (*Merchant of Venice*, II, vii), or in the grieving Montague’s promise ‘For I will raise her statue in pure gold’ (*Romeo and Juliet*, V, iii). Yet Shakespeare could have been familiar with the royal cast copper-alloy effigies in Westminster Abbey, London, or even the gilt copper-alloy monument to Richard Beauchamp (d. 1439) in his native Warwickshire.

We actually find such literary allusions to gold and copper monuments much earlier. There is the scathing description of a male love rival as ‘inaurata pallidior statua’ (*paler than a gilt statue*) by the Roman poet Catullus (d. 54 BC), for example, or the above-mentioned allusion to

⁴⁶ B. Brenk, ‘Spolia from Constantine to Charlemagne: aesthetics versus ideology’, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 41 (1987), pp. 103–109, at p. 108; I. Weinryb, ‘The bronze object in the Middle Ages’, in: D. Ekserdjian (ed.), *Bronze*, exhibition catalogue (London, 2012), pp. 69–77, at pp. 69, 71, 73. The dating of the surviving bronze pine cone and she-bear included by Weinryb as Charlemagne’s spolia from Rome is debatable, however.

metal tombs in Norbert of Iburg's *Vita* of Bishop Benno. The twelfth-century romance *Floire et Blancheflor*, which was translated into different languages, features a semi-royal tomb as a crucial part of the plot. In the French version Floire's mother proposes a false tomb for Blancheflor to convince her son of the death of his beloved: 'un tomblel gent; / Fait soit de marbre et de cristal / D'or et d'argent, et a esmal' (*a noble tomb should be made of marble and crystal, of gold and silver, and with enamel*) (lines 530–32). The Middle English version has only a very brief description of Blancheflor's tomb, which is described as 'A new feire peynted ston, / With letters al aboute wryte' (lines 212–13), without any reference to gold or copper, whereas the lengthy account in the Middle Dutch version by Diederic van Assenede (d. 1293) relates how a goldsmith is employed to create a sumptuous cenotaph of crystal, marble, silver, gold and precious gems (lines 875–79 and 892–1036), which featured two figures of the young lovers 'al gewracht van goude' (*all wrought of gold*, line 922) as well as an inscription in gold letters.

Descriptions of actual tombs, or mere allusions to them, can be found in chronicles, too, although finding them requires serendipity or help from other scholars. Thus we know through a passing reference by Zbraslav chronicler Peter of Žitava or Zittau (d. 1339) that King Wenceslaus II (d. 1305) first received a stone effigy before being honoured with a (lost) copper-alloy effigy at the Cistercian convent of Zbraslav near Prague that he had founded in the late thirteenth century, which later became the burial place of the Bohemian kings and known as the *Aula Regia*. Peter recounted a miracle happening at this royal founder's tomb, adding: '[...] imago vero lapidea illa, que tunc super sepulchrum iacens percussa fuerat in maxilla, hodie in columpna sanctuarii Aule Regie stat erecta. Nondum enim imago enea per magistrum Johannem de Brabancia fuit fusa' (*However, that stone figure that then lay on his tomb and that had damage to the chin, has now been placed upright against a column in the sanctuary of the Aula Regia, for the copper-alloy figure had not yet been cast by Master John of Brabant*).⁴⁷ Interesting is the specific mention of a Brabantine artist working in Bohemia: the same John of Brabant was probably also responsible for the lost gilt copper-alloy effigy of Bishop Jan of Dražice (d. 1334), described by one chronicler as an 'imagine de auricalco' (*image of copper alloy*), which was originally situated in the romanesque basilica and later transferred to the cathedral of St Vitus in Prague Castle.

Visitors could also leave interesting accounts. The Bohemian nobleman Jaroslav Lev of Rožmitál (d. 1486?) described seeing in London in the mid-1460s 'twenty gilded tombs, decorated with precious stones, and in the whole kingdom as many as eighty, similarly encrusted with gold and decorated with precious stones'.⁴⁸ While one should always check the original wording in such texts, even such brief allusions can help us obtain a better idea of the numbers, production and spread of these high-status monuments across Europe.

Artistic impressions are also of interest, such as the fictional tomb monument of Gillion de Trazegnies and his two wives in a manuscript of the *Roman de Gillion de Trazegnies* in the Getty Collection. Although the Middle French text itself does not mention material, the miniature by the Flemish illuminator Lieven van Lathem (d. 1493) appears to depict three recumbent gilt copper-alloy effigies with polychromed or enamelled faces and hands (fig. 27). I am not aware (yet) of any medieval depictions of Blancheflor's fictional tomb monument, but I would be very interested to learn of any such illustrations. Images of such gilt copper-alloy tombs do occur in other manuscripts, e.g. in a miniature of the Office of the Dead by the Master of James IV of Scotland (Gerard Horenbout?) on fol. 185r of the Spinola Hours, illuminated in Ghent or Bruges around 1510–20.⁴⁹

⁴⁷ Information on this and other lost Bohemian 'precious-metal' tombs was generously provided by Petr Uličný, author of the article 'Prostor a ritual: Velikonoční slavnosti v bazilice sv. Jiří na Pražském hradě', *Studia Mediaevalia Bohemica*, 4 (2012), pp. 7–33.

⁴⁸ M. Letts (ed.), *The travels of Leo Rozmital through Germany, Flanders, England, France, Spain, Portugal and Italy 1465–1467* (Cambridge, 1957), p. 92. I am grateful to Ann Adams for this reference.

⁴⁹ Spinola Hours, MS Ludwig IX 18, fol. 185r, J. Paul Getty Museum Los Angeles, at <https://www.getty.edu/art/collection/objects/3926/master-of-james-iv-of-scotland-office-of-the-dead-flemish-about-1510-1520/>, illustrated in R. Suykerbuyk, 'The swan song of Philip of Cleves (1456–1528): innovative tomb



Figure 27. The narrator admires the monument to Gillion de Trazegnies and his two wives, miniature by the Flemish illuminator Lieven van Lathem in a manuscript of the Middle French *Roman de Gillion de Trazegnies* commissioned in 1464, MS 111, fol. 9r, J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles. © The Getty (Digital image courtesy of the Getty's Open Content Program)

These and other examples highlight the prestige that gilt bronze memorials carried among contemporaries. However, the wider literary, artistic and cultural impact of bronze monuments is an area that requires further interdisciplinary research, and I would be grateful for suggestions by scholars from other disciplines, including new examples and sources. Caution is required when it comes to terminology and interpretation, however: even experts disagree regarding the interpretation of the words 'laminis ereis' in the codicil of 20 May 1427 to the will of Thomas Montagu, 4th earl of Salisbury (d. 1428), regarding the tomb for himself and his two wives at Bisham Priory (Berkshire): 'Que quidem tumba fiat de lapidibus marmoreis planis cum epitaphis et ymaginibus nostris in laminis ereis nostras personas significantibus' (*Let this tomb be made of marble stones with written epitaphs and with our effigies representing our persons in bronze plates*).⁵⁰

sculpture and ducal imagery in the Ravenstein mausoleum', *Simiolus* 42:1-2 (2020), pp. 5–36, fig. 11, with thanks to Ann Adams for alerting me to this article and to the author for providing me with a copy

⁵⁰ *Reg. Chichele*, ii, p. 397, with thanks to Nigel Saul for this information. The Latin word '[a]es' usually refers to bronze and this was clearly an expensive monument, but Nicholas Rogers believes the words to describe a monumental brass (pers. comm.).

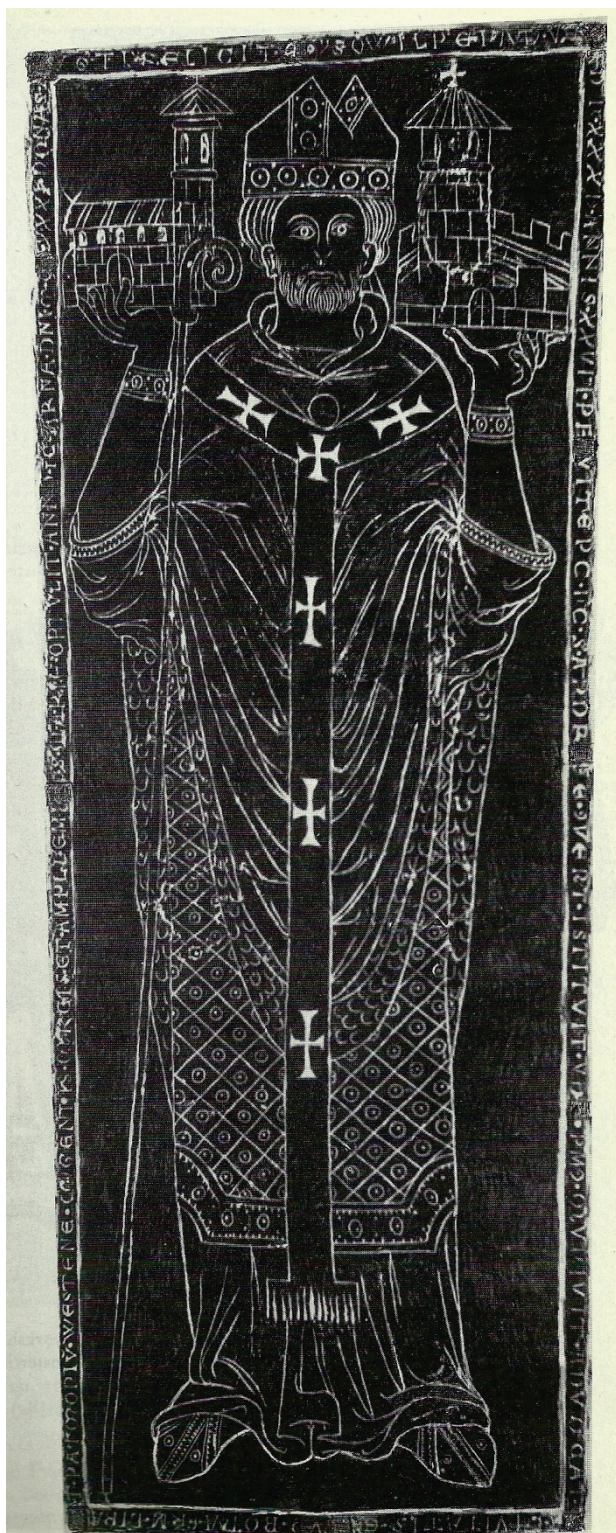


Figure 28. Monumental brass of Bishop Yso von Wölpe (d. 1231), Verden (Lower Saxony, Germany), rubbing illustrated in M. Norris, *Monumental brasses, the craft* (London/Boston, 1978), pl. 7.

4. Were flat medieval brasses actually a cheaper substitute for cast copper-alloy tomb effigies?

It cannot be denied that flat brasses would have been considerably cheaper to produce than cast copper-alloy monuments, but it would be too simplistic to consider just the costs of manufacture and transport to the chosen location. Moreover, a prestigious location for intramural burial often excluded the option of a raised tomb or relief effigy on liturgical grounds, *e.g.* because it might

obscure the altar, so that a floor monument was the only viable alternative. Even so, the typical flat memorial brasses appear to have originated in the thirteenth century with the example at Verden (Lower Saxony) to Bishop Yso von Wölpe (d. 1231) (fig. 28), which thus postdates by 150 years the oldest known cast copper-alloy tomb effigy in high relief, *viz.* that of Rudolf of Rheinfelden in Merseburg, and by some eighty years that of Archbishop Friedrich von Wettin (d. 1152) at Magdeburg Cathedral (Saxony-Anhalt).

Floor slabs had long been used to mark burial inside churches. Early examples could be individualised in various ways, *e.g.* marked with an incised cross or inscription or even inlaid with coloured mosaic and still later a representation of the deceased. The eventual introduction of brass inlays set into stone slabs may perhaps be regarded as an unsurprising development.

Yet could it have been the introduction and spread of cast copper-alloy relief effigies that actually inspired the creation of flat sheet brasses as a less expensive and less intrusive alternative? Flat brasses were definitely cheaper to produce and transport than stone or cast bronze relief monuments, even though they could be huge in size and also enhanced with gilding, silver, enamel and other coloured inlays – dare I say ‘bling’?. Over time monumental brasses did become more widely available in simpler designs, different sizes and price brackets, but the choice of brass over stone continued to offer an eye-catching golden appearance on a stone floor like Shakespeare’s ‘patens of bright gold’.

5. How might gilding and polychromy have been combined on medieval copper-alloy monuments, and who were the craftsmen responsible?

As mentioned earlier, we cannot rely on antiquarian evidence such as the Gaignières drawings for the appearance of lost copper-alloy tombs, nor on the literary evidence of medieval writers such as Diederic van Assenede. However, some extant monuments still show large amounts of colour and other enhancements. Prime examples are the gilt and enamelled copper-alloy plaques commemorating Blanche (d. 1243) and Jean (d. 1248), two infant children of Louis IX of France, formerly situated at the Cistercian abbey church of Royaumont and now at the royal abbey of Saint-Denis, and the Limoges enamel effigy of William de Valence, earl of Pembroke (d. 1296), at Westminster Abbey, London.

Some medieval goldsmiths became famous for their metalwork and enamelling, such as Nicholas of Verdun (1130-1205), although he is not known to have produced any copper-alloy tomb effigies. The use of colour – whether enamel or polychromy – is an area that requires further study, which should also include literary descriptions and depictions of tombs in medieval art (compare fig. 27). There were other costly forms of embellishments, such as the use of silver gilt, pearls and amethysts for the lost effigy of Henry III’s infant daughter Katherine (d. 1257) at Westminster Abbey.⁵¹ More subtle, but no less striking, is the use of decorative *pointillé* work on the effigies of Anne of Bohemia (d. 1394) and Richard II (d. 1400) at Westminster Abbey, and on that of Crown Prince Afonso (d. 1400) at Braga Cathedral (Portugal) (fig. 29).

In some cases we do know the names of the craftsmen responsible for these costly monuments. Records show that Henry III originally commissioned Simon de Welles to create a cast copper-alloy effigy for his daughter before appointing the royal goldsmith William of Gloucester instead to produce a silver-gilt effigy around a wooden core. We also still have the contracts for the joint monument of Richard II and his wife Anne of Bohemia, for which London coppersmiths Nicholas Broker and Godfrey Prest produced the cast copper-alloy effigies, while the stone tomb chest was the work of Henry Yevele and Stephen Lote. Gilding tended to be done by specialists, as we know from other records, such as the gilding of Mary of Burgundy’s effigy by the goldsmith Pieter de Backere or Beckere, whereas the copper-alloy figure itself was cast by Renier van Thienen on the basis of a wooden model by Jan Borman or

⁵¹ S. Badham and S. Oosterwijk, ‘The tomb monument of Katherine, daughter of Henry III and Eleanor of Provence (1253-7)’, *Antiquaries Journal*, 92 (2012), pp. 169–196.

Borreman the Elder (d. 1520) (fig. 20).⁵² The cast copper-alloy effigy of Mary's mother Isabella of Bourbon is also nowadays attributed to Borman.⁵³



Figure 29. Side view of the gilt cast copper-alloy monument to Crown Prince Afonso (d. 1400), Braga Cathedral (Portugal). Photo: Sophie Oosterwijk (2009)

An interesting case is that of Afonso's tomb in Braga as the workmanship and stylistic comparisons with the contemporary monument in London to Richard II and Anne suggest English influence, although that does not rule out Portuguese manufacture: despite claims to the contrary, it seems unlikely to have been commissioned by Afonso's younger sister Isabella, wife of Philip the Good. More information about surviving records relating to tomb monuments and their manufacture, but also about the manufacture of other gilt copper-alloy artefacts such as shrines and reliquaries, could help us obtain greater insights into the production methods and distribution of such work.

6. Materiality: what made patrons choose bronze over stone, or *vice versa*?

That the golden sheen of brass was a sought-after commodity among medieval and renaissance patrons is evident from examples of stone tablets painted to look like monumental brasses. For example, the stone wall memorial of Jan Jansz. van Crimpen (d. 1524) in the church of St John in Gouda (Netherlands) features a long epitaph on a brass plate, and below it a second text added later on a stone plaque that was painted to counterfeit a brass plate (Id 1385), and other such

⁵² A.M. Roberts, 'The chronology and political significance of the tomb of Mary of Burgundy', *The Art Bulletin*, 71:3 (1989), pp. 376–400, at p. 382.

⁵³ F. Scholten, *Isabella's weepers. Ten statues from a Burgundian tomb* (Amsterdam, 2007).

examples can be found in England.⁵⁴ The destroyed tomb of Queen Gertrude of Hungary (d. 1213) was made of a yellowish grey limestone combined with red marble, recent examination has shown it to have been originally covered in gold and enhanced with costly ultramarine and bright red cinnabar to create a suggestion of goldsmiths' work.⁵⁵ Likewise, the lost effigies of Johanna of Brabant (d. 1406), and her great-grandnephew Willem (d. 1410) in Brussels, commissioned by Duke Philip the Good in the late 1450s, were actually made of wood, but polychromed (and possibly gilded) by Rogier van der Weyden to make them look like gilt copper alloy.⁵⁶ These 'fakes' underline the status and attraction of copper alloy for tomb monuments.



Figure 30. *Il Sonno*, 1636, black Dinant marble, model by Alessandro Algardi (d. 1654) executed by Francesco Maria Ricci, as exhibited in the Caravaggio–Bernini exhibition at the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. Photo: Sophie Oosterwijk (2020)

Yet many surviving copper-alloy monuments look very dark today, which is the fate of copper if not gilded or regularly burnished. The Dutch mannerist sculptor Adriaen de Vries (1556–1626) is known to have polished some of his monumental bronzes to give them the appearance of gold, but that clearly wore off as his bronzes now have a typical dark 'bronze' patina.⁵⁷ Without their intended gilding the ancestral statues around Maximilian's tomb in

⁵⁴ For English examples see S. Badham, "'A new feire paynted stone": medieval English incised slabs?', *Church Monuments*, 19 (2004), pp. 20–52, at p. 27 and figs 1–2.

⁵⁵ I. Takács, 'The tomb of Queen Gertrude', *Acta Historiae Artium*, 56 (2015), pp. 5–88, at p. 16.

⁵⁶ L. Campbell, 'The tomb of Joanna, duchess of Brabant', *Renaissance Studies*, 2:2 (1988), pp. 163–172. The accounts only show that Rogier was paid for painting the figures, with no mention of gilding, although the description 'toute enrichiee dor et dasur' (*all enriched with gold and blue*) suggests otherwise.

⁵⁷ F. Scholten (ed.), *Adriaen de Vries 1556-1626: imperial sculptor* (Zwolle, 1998), cat. 33, 37, and p. 208.

Innsbruck also turned into the *Schwarze Mander* we see today, despite the controversial scrubbing that seven of them were subjected to in the 1880s, which briefly returned them to their ‘schönen gelblich-rötlichen Naturfarbe’ (*beautiful yellowish-reddish natural colour*).

Tastes changed over time, as we also see in the abandonment of polychroming finely carved wood sculpture by the likes of the German artist Tilman Riemenschneider (d. 1531), and the dark patina of bronze also clearly came to be appreciated, without it requiring polish or gilding. Paradoxically this can make it difficult at first sight to distinguish between the black Dinant marble sculpted sleeping Cupid of 1636, the model by Alessandro Algardi (d. 1654) – responsible for various cast bronze busts and for the monumental bronze statue to the enthroned Pope Innocent X in the Capitoline Museums – but executed by Francesco Maria Ricci, which was recently exhibited in an exhibition at the Rijksmuseum (*Il Sonno* (fig. 30)), and similar contemporary figures cast in bronze. Yet the same might be said of other black marble sculptures, such as the joint tomb monument with effigies in Tournai stone to Anselmus Adornes (d. 1483) and his wife Margaretha vander Banck (d. 1480) in the Jerusalem Church in Bruges (fig. 31), which in their polished and undamaged state may indeed have suggested dark bronze.

Black marble in all its varieties was an expensive stone, in any case, so no ‘cheap’ alternative to cast bronze. This raises questions about the reasons behind the choice of Tournai stone and other black marbles: could it have been an intentional illusion to suggest darkened bronze with the knowledge that this is what the effect of time will be on copper? Of course, we must remember that Tournai marble and other dark stones had been used for tomb monuments for a long time: the tomb of Henry I of Brabant (d. 1235) in the collegiate church of St Peter in Louvain (Belgium (fig. 32)) postdates Rudolf of Rheinfelden’s copper-alloy monument, but the latter was gilded and thus would have looked very differently. In England dark polishable limestones, such as imported Tournai and Namur marbles, as well as local ‘marbles’ (Purbeck, Frosterley, Egglestone, and later Petworth) were commonly used as slabs for brasses and also for relief effigies until polychromed limestone and sandstone monuments became the norm.⁵⁸ The fact that these marbles could be polished to a high sheen clearly made them attractive to patrons in their own right, without any suggestion that they looked like unpolished bronze. Nonetheless, monumental brasses inlaid into polished dark stone indicates that the contrast was regarded as aesthetically pleasing and that, therefore, these brasses had to be polished regularly to maintain that contrast.

However, could contemporaries, conversely, have regarded the dark patina of non-gilt, unpolished bronze as remarkably like dark marble, *i.e.* a much less expensive material, because they were used to copper-alloy artefacts being polished or gilt to look like gold? This could be an argument in favour of polishing or gilding copper-alloy monuments to make them look not like dark marble, but like gold, as suggested also by the Gaignières drawings. Yet if this were the case, surely Maximilian I would have insisted that the figures cast for his monument during his lifetime – for the whole project would take more than 80 years to complete – were indeed gilded, as he originally intended? Or could the (re)discovery and impact of antique bronzes with their dark patina, such as the so-called *Capitoline Brutus* discovered in the early sixteenth century (fig. 24),⁵⁹ have been a factor in changing renaissance tastes, away from the ‘bling’ of medieval monuments with their gilding, enamel and inlaid gems?

⁵⁸ For a recent study see S. Badham and G. Blacker, *Northern rock: the use of Egglestone Marble for monuments in medieval England*, British Archaeological Reports (BAR) British Series, 480 (Oxford, 2009).

⁵⁹ The bust was drawn c.1532–36 by the Dutch artist Maarten van Heemskerck (1498–1574) whose fascination with antiquity is evident in MeMO Id 745.



Figure 31. Joint tomb monument with effigies in Tournai stone to Anselmus Adornes (d. 1483) and his wife Margaretha vander Banck (d. 1480), Jerusalem Church, Bruges (Belgium). Photo: Marc Rijckaert at https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Brugge_Jeruzalemkerk_R03.jpg



Figure 32. Tomb monument to Henry I, duke of Brabant (d. 1235), Tournai marble, church of St Peter, Louvain (Belgium). Photo: Dominique Provost at <https://museumdichtcollectieopen.art/2020/07/21/praalgraf/> (original source: www.artinflanders.be)

7. Were the materials chosen for the tomb monument designed to interact with their surroundings?

We have already seen that (gilt) copper alloy was a costly and prestigious material that was therefore often chosen for high-status tomb monuments. What has also been apparent in our research is that there were often clusters of such monuments within the same church or family: an obvious case is that of the English royal tombs at Westminster Abbey where gilt copper alloy was chosen by different monarchs across the centuries – from Henry III to Henry VII – to proclaim royal power and dynastic continuity. Many members of the higher clergy across Europe were also evidently inspired by monuments to their predecessors for their own memorials, culminating in the bronze papal monuments of the baroque period in Rome.

Obviously a dark bronze patina would contrast better with white marble, just as gilt copper-alloy effigies such as those of Mary of Burgundy and Charles the Bold in Bruges were placed on polished black marble slabs for the same reason. In this respect, it is interesting that large quantities of polished black Dinant marble were used for the surroundings of the lost copper-alloy monument to Philip of Cleves, Lord of Ravenstein (d. 1528), and his wife Françoise of Luxembourg in the family chapel in the Dominican church in Brussels.⁶⁰ Perhaps the study of the original surroundings of lost copper-alloy monuments can provide us with more information about these memorials themselves and the overall aesthetic effect their patrons envisaged.



Figure 33. Detail of the cast copper-alloy tomb monument of Bishop Évrard de Fouilloy (d. 1222), Amiens Cathedral (France), with dark ‘coating’ applied by Eugène Viollet-le-Duc and stains from bat droppings. Photo: Sophie Oosterwijk (2016)

⁶⁰ Suykerbuyk, ‘The swan song of Philip of Cleves (1456-1528)’, p. 17.

Summing up

This discussion paper raises hypothetical points and questions, especially about reception, that are often difficult to answer. All too many medieval ‘precious-metal’ monuments have been lost and destroyed, flat brasses as well as relief tombs, and only a few of the survivors subjected to scientific analysis. Even scientific examination is not always conclusive because of worn surfaces and later tampering, *e.g.* the ‘enduit noirâtre’ (*blackish coating*) that the architect Eugène Viollet-le-Duc (1814–79) applied to the surviving cast copper-alloy episcopal monuments of Évrard de Fouilloy (d. 1222) (fig. 33) and Geoffroi d’Eu (d. 1236) in Amiens Cathedral to ‘rejuvenate’ them – another example of changing taste.

While further scientific analyses of surviving copper-alloy monuments are gradually being carried out, antiquarian evidence and comparisons from other disciplines may also provide new insights into patronage, manufacture and reception. Copper alloy was used throughout Europe for high-status tombs from the late eleventh century onwards, so a database in which all available data for all known – *i.e.* extant and lost – examples can be stored, in the way that the MeMO team achieved this for Dutch medieval tombs, would make an invaluable interdisciplinary research tool for researchers worldwide. After all, as the 2012 exhibition ‘Bronze’ at the Royal Academy of Arts in London has shown,⁶¹ bronze has been employed for the past six millennia to create prestigious artefacts all over the world, and medieval copper-alloy tomb monuments are an significant part of this history.

SOPHIE OOSTERWIJK

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⁶¹ D. Ekserdjian (ed.), *Bronze* (London, 2012).

The MeMO database: a user's perspective

Trudi Brink

It is more than seven years since the online databases of the Medieval Memoria Online (MeMO) project were officially launched, thereby making available the inventories and descriptions of objects and institutions that played a role in the commemoration of the dead up to 1580 within the modern-day Netherlands. In this final MMR Newsletter I should like to address the usefulness of the MeMO website and its databases from the perspective of my own research.

The focus of my PhD research is on tomb slabs from the period 1530-1640 that were produced in the Dutch province of Friesland and signed by the sculptor. The key question is the function of that signature: after all, one would not normally expect to see any other name on a tomb slab beyond that of the deceased. Yet it is a remarkable fact that 240 surviving Frisian tomb slabs from this period carry the maker's signature, consisting of a monogram, mark, or even the maker's name written in full. I know of no other similar practices on this scale elsewhere. To date I have found sixteen sculptors with two or more signed tomb slabs each to their name, not counting the many attributions without a signature. Furthermore, these are large slabs – the largest measures 405 x 218 cm – and most of them show sculptural decoration of a very high standard.

General observations

It will be clear from the above that my research into signed tomb slabs produced in Friesland is both broad and comparative. The great advantage of the MeMO database with its nearly 3 000 tomb slabs, including descriptions, photographs, and transcriptions of epitaphs, is that it offers ample opportunity for comparisons, which helps me as a researcher to get a grip on the typical characteristics of the tomb slabs that I am researching, both with regard to the decorative motifs used and the content of the inscriptions.⁶²

The MeMO database shows that when it comes to tomb slabs, Friesland is one of the two richest Dutch provinces with a total of 537 alongside Zeeland, which has 579. However, only a small proportion of the Frisian slabs carry the sculptor's signature, viz. some 90 extant known examples. With its choice of search options the database can be a very useful resource to help researchers compile a corpus of examples based on a particular research question.⁶³

Yet the MeMO database has been but a starting point for my research, simply because it comprises only objects that were created in or before the year 1580, whereas tomb slabs in Friesland continued to be signed up to c. 1640. This means that most examples in my research have not been entered into the database. Consequently it has been necessary to examine other inventories and to visit many churches myself in order to obtain a better picture.

The MeMO database of tomb monuments can be consulted in a variety of ways, *e.g.* by name or characteristics of the person(s) commemorated, geography, date, artist, specific information regarding the design (the inclusion of a portrait, inscription, heraldry, decorations), or through a combination of these search options.⁶⁴ This makes the database especially useful for broad comparative research. Yet the interpretation of these findings in terms of the

⁶² This already became clear in 2013 when a research pilot based on the MeMO database revealed remarkable differences between inscriptions on tomb slabs in Friesland and Zeeland. For example, Noortje de Wit demonstrated that exhortations to pray for the souls of the dead decreased in the course of the sixteenth century. See N. de Wit, 'Religie in zestiende eeuwse grafchriften uit Friesland en Zeeland', unpublished BA dissertation (VU Amsterdam, 2013).

⁶³ A critical check of the data found is still required, however. In my own research I have discovered that the MeMO database does not distinguish between slabs that are actually signed and those that are just attributed to a particular sculptor. Moreover, the artist's name needs to be known in order for it to be used as a search item.

⁶⁴ The geographical approach offers various search options, *e.g.* by province, village or town, or the institution that housed or houses the object ('original institution' or 'holding institution').

commemoration of the dead requires additional research that delves more deeply. The database does not provide for this, and the literature it lists is also quite general. Even so, previous MMR Newsletters include lists with good substantive suggestions.

From 2010 up to 2013 I was employed by Utrecht University to help compile the database of tomb monuments.⁶⁵ This has made me well acquainted with the various search methods on offer within the Browse and Search functions. Even without this expertise it should be possible to search the database successfully. Yet many Dutch people involved with their local church and interested in the heritage housed inside are unaware of the MeMO database, and even when they have had a demonstration they sometimes find it difficult to use, also because the descriptions are mostly in English. It is regrettable that in reality the MeMO database is thus mainly confined to use by Dutch and international researchers and not as accessible to the general public as it ideally should be: therefore, its existence should be flagged more widely to increase its use and its relevance to local people.



Figure 34. View on the floor of the church of St Salvius, Dronrijp. Photo: Trudi Brink.

The MeMO database can actually inspire students and researchers to find a subject for further study. I had the good fortune, as part of my work for the MeMO project, to encounter

⁶⁵ The ‘Tomb Team’ consisted of myself and Corinne van Dijk, with Dr Sophie Oosterwijk as the coordinator. Maintenance of the database after its launch in early 2013 continued to be carried out by Corinne van Dijk until May 2019.

the signed Frisian tomb slabs and be struck by their beauty. At that time I was in the church of St Salvius in Dronrijp, together with professional photographer Chris Booms, to photograph and record pre-1580 tomb monuments there (fig. 34).⁶⁶ Gazing at the church floor I realised that I wanted to learn more about these exceptional monuments at my feet. Of course, to inspire viewers via a computer screen one needs illustrations, which is why it is crucially important to continue adding as many photographs as possible to the descriptions in the MeMO database.⁶⁷

Choices, decisions and hindsight



Figure 35. Tomb slab of Fokeltje Pieters (d. 1710), Meuse limestone, 203 x 108 cm, church of St Willibrord, Holwerd (Friesland). Photo: Trudi Brink.

Apart from its many strengths, the MeMO database inevitably also has its limitations. At the time of its creation, and because the aim of the project was to inventory the medieval, pre-Reformation *memoria* culture, it was decided to include only those objects of which the original

⁶⁶ The Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands (RCE) had made a budget available for new photography.

⁶⁷ It would have been even better if a zoom function had been available for the illustrations.

inscription – or what survives of it – proves that the object predates 1580. Unfortunately this has sometimes led to questionable or even wrong decisions, an example being the tomb slab of Fokeltje Pieters in the church of St Willibrord in Holwerd (figs. 35-36). Fokeltje was the wife of Freerk Jacobs, whom the inscription identifies as the master baker of Holwerd. Because Fokeltje died in 1710 this slab was not entered into the database. However, I subsequently discovered that the signature and date along the top edge of the slab read ‘B 155[...]. G’, which proves that it must have been made before 1580 by the Leeuwarden sculptor Benedictus Gerbrandts (d. c.1573) and later re-used for Fokeltje’s memorial.



Figure 36. Detail of fig. 35.

We also find tomb slabs that carry neither a signature nor a date, but which were evidently created much earlier than the inscriptions would have us believe. For example, a tomb slab in the church of St Michael in Harlingen features inscriptions that mainly commemorate people who died in the early eighteenth century (figs. 37-38). In the centre it shows a large, winged, female shield bearer underneath a trefoil arch, while the decorative motifs include twisted acanthus leaves and a grotesque little figure in the centre above. The corners show a strange combination of quatrefoil medallions with a head representing one of the Ages of Man, which also occurs on Gerardus Agricola’s tomb slab in the church of St Martin in Franeker: a tomb slab that has indubitably been recycled.⁶⁸ The slab in Harlingen shares many common features with the slabs that Benedictus Gerbrandts and Vincent Lucas (Franeker, d. 1565/78) produced in the mid sixteenth century. (Benedictus Gerbrandts was Vincent Lucas’s paternal uncle.) In other words, this slab should also have been included in the MeMO database.

⁶⁸ T. Brink, ‘First-rate and second-hand: tombstones produced by Vincent Lucas in sixteenth-century Friesland (Netherlands)’, *Church Monuments*, 31 (2016), 85-121.



Figure 37. Reused tomb slab, Belgian blue limestone, 200 x 116 cm, church of St Michael, Harlingen. Photo: Trudi Brink.



Figure 38. Detail of fig. 37.

A tomb slab in the church of St Nicholas in Swichum, shows another problem. The object was created after 1606 for Gerbrant van Aytta, who died in 1573 (Figs. 6-7). An added inscription tells us that Gerbrant's granddaughter Jacqueline (1554–1632) had commissioned this slab 'ter ere en memorie van hare vader [Folckert] respectievelijk grote vader [Gerbrant]' (in honour and memory of her father [Folckert] and grandfather [Gerbrant], respectively). The slab is decorated with high-quality carving: arms of alliance with drapery inside an arched niche, two cherubs above, and angels and the virtues of Fides (Faith) and Spes (Hope) on either side. The name of the sculptor, Sijds Jansen (Leeuwarden, date of death unknown), is prominently placed above. It is a tricky question whether a tomb slab such as this one, erected post-1580 to a person who died pre-1580, would have merited entry into the MeMO database.



Figure 39. Tomb slab of Gerbrant van Aytta (d. 1573), Meuse limestone, 292 x 118 cm, church of Sts Nicholas and Catherine, Swichum. Photo: Trudi Brink.



Figure 40. Detail of fig. 39.

Inevitably some tomb slabs were overlooked when the corpus of tomb monuments was compiled, *e.g.* because the object seemed to have disappeared or never even existed. The MeMO team had decided, after some fierce debate, to exclude all non-extant examples, even those for which antiquarian information or earlier descriptions were available. This was the case with a tomb slab in the church of the Franciscan Friary in Leeuwarden, which was demolished in 1940. Shortly before this demolition, historian H. M. Mensonides recorded a badly worn, but richly decorated tomb slab with a gothic inscription along its edges and the evangelist symbols in the four corners.⁶⁹ Furthermore, the slab featured heraldry, a chalice, and at the top the signature ‘B

⁶⁹ H.M. Mensonides, *Grafschriften tussen Flie en Lauwers, deel 3: Leeuwarden* (Leeuwarden, 1952), 44.

15[...] G'. This slab, which Benedictus Gerbrandts must have produced for a priest, belongs to the corpus of signed Frisian slabs and really ought to have been entered into the MeMO database, at least because it was such a recent loss and such a well-recorded and important example.

Another very special slab by Vincent Lucas has, for the same reason, also not been entered into the database, *viz.* the monument with two 'portraits' in the church of St Martin in Minnertsga (nowadays better known as Meinardskerk) that was intended to commemorate Hessel van Hermana (d. 1561) and Frau van Heemstra (d. after 1561). It proved impossible to ascertain the fate of this slab after the church had been destroyed by fire in 1947, but it is described in the literature and there is even a photograph of it.⁷⁰ Because this tomb slab, like the previous example, no longer exists, it was regrettably excluded from the MeMO database.

New discoveries



Figure 41. Tomb slab of Andries (d. 1554) and Hobbe (d. 1614) van Waltinga, Meuse limestone, 286 x 187 cm, parish church of Herbaijum. Photo: Trudi Brink.

⁷⁰ W. Dolk, 'Zestiende eeuwse zerkhouwers in Friesland', *De Vrije Fries*, 46 (1964), 214.

The church of St Nicholas in Swichum still houses the tomb slab of Hector van Aytta, produced by the Leeuwarden sculptor Dirck Lieuwes (d. *c.* 1611), which was likewise not entered into the MeMO database, probably because church pews cover part of the slab, including Hector's date of death, 29 September 1576, as I discovered much later. For descriptions of objects the MeMO researchers often had to rely on earlier inventories, which in this case may not have mentioned Hector's (pre-1580!) date of death.

Another oversight, despite being on prominent display inside the church of Herbaijum, is a large (286 x 187 cm), well preserved tomb slab that was made in 1558 by Vincent Lucas (fig. 41). It features inscriptions to Andries van Waltinga (d. 1554) and his son Hobbe (d. 1614). For whatever reason, this slab was overlooked when the database was compiled, and as nobody has been employed to maintain the database since May 2019, this example can no longer be added.



Figure 42. Tomb slab of Pieter van Goslinga (d. 1558), Meuse limestone, 86 x 43.5 cm, church of the Almighty God, Driesum (Id 3998). Photo: Trudi Brink.

Yet we also see the reverse of this, *i.e.* when a slab is not actually lost, but newly found. Tomb slabs are (re)discovered on a regular basis, *e.g.* when work is carried out to the church floor. After intramural burial was halted, many Frisian churches installed a wooden floor on top

of the original stone floor, and in many cases we just do not know what lies hidden beneath these wooden floors.⁷¹ It was thus that in 2016 three beautifully carved tomb stones were discovered quite unexpectedly in the church in Driesum, which could be linked stylistically to the sculptor Pieter Dircks (Leeuwarden, d. c.1600). They were entered into the database thanks to the fact that there was still someone employed to maintain the MeMO database (Id 3997, 3998 and 3999, fig. 42).

That will not happen with the tomb slab that was uncovered in St Sixtus's Church in Sexbierum in the summer of 2020. The slab commemorates a priest named Frederik, who died in 1541, and features a chalice with a host that shows a cross along with an inscription in gothic textualis (fig. 43).⁷² Dr Otto Roemeling (1937-2017) identified Frederik as the priest who enjoyed the prebends of the altar of St Catharine in 1535.⁷³ Unfortunately, unless maintenance of the project is resumed, this object will also not be entered into the MeMO database, which is all the more regrettable because its link to the St Catharine prebend makes this example of great interest to researchers.



Figure 43. Tomb slab of priest Frederik, church of St Sixtus, Sexbierum. Photo: Melle Koopmans.

For the same reason new research into objects already entered can also no longer be added, which means the database is no longer up to date. In 2019 Willem Hansma proved that a stone incorporated into the wall of the Doelhofkerk in Oldeboorn must have been a tomb slab commemorating the offspring of Andries Grijp, also known as Gryphy or Andreas Gryphius (fig. 44).⁷⁴ The inscription beneath the depiction of the 'Parvuli Gryphy' had previously confused researchers, which is why the description of this slab in the MeMO database (Id 3415) is partly incorrect.⁷⁵ The carved image shows seven naked children stretching their arms towards an adult male, while the text on the banderole above reads 'Sinite parvulo(s) ad me venire'- Suffer the little children to come unto me (Mat. 19:14). Andries, who was a mayor ('grietman') of Utingeradeel and married to Frouk van Poppinga, was himself also buried in the same church at Oldeboorn.

⁷¹ It is sometimes already known that tomb stones lie hidden underneath parquet floors, e.g. in the St Martin's Church in Sneek.

⁷² <<https://www.walmar.nl/inscripties.asp?nummer=10079>>.

⁷³ <<https://corpusroemeling.nl/data.html>> (search for Sexbierum). See also: Roemeling, O.D.J., *Heiligen en Heren. Studies over het parochiewezzen in het Noorden van Nederland vóór 1600*, Leeuwarden 2013.

⁷⁴ Willem Hansma, 'Parvuli Gryphy', *Alde Fryske Tsjerken*, 20 (June 2019), 19-23.

⁷⁵ E. Makkes van der Deijl-Stam, 'Beeld en voorbeeld. Beeldhouwwerk op Friese zerken in de 16^e en 17^e eeuw', *Keppelstok* 55 (December 1997), 113-114.



Figure 44. Detail of the tomb slab for the children of Andries Grijp, Meuse limestone, 89 x 73 cm, church of St Pancras (Doelhofkerk), Oldeboorn. Photo: Trudi Brink.

Conclusion

The MeMO database is a resource with which researchers can quickly form an overall picture of questions concerning the medieval commemoration of the dead. The database can also be used as a didactic tool in education, for example when students need to become familiar with the Middle Ages and conducting research, but also to inspire and assist local historians and amateurs. In addition the data file offers researchers a great range of comparisons, which helps to establish to what extent objects are conventional or instead exceptional.

The database is admittedly incomplete in its coverage of Frisian tomb slabs, and it is likely to be so for the other Dutch provinces. This underlines the fact that users of the database should be aware of the need to carry out further research to compile a corpus and obtain a (near-)complete picture. The incompleteness is largely due to the fact that the online application is no longer maintained, as a result of which also new photographs cannot be incorporated. Another consequence of this lack of maintenance is that new research will not be included in the MeMO database, which makes the application no longer updated or amended, so that it will gradually become outdated and prone to offering incorrect information.

So the uncomfortable truth is that, after all the hard work of the many people involved and large amounts of grant money from different organisations, the MeMO database will increasingly lose its credibility as a scholarly research tool.⁷⁶ A tragic end to this valuable tool can still be prevented – and that is what I am pleading for – with a continuous, relatively small financial contribution for maintenance. After all, the Dutch MeMO database is the envy of many *memoria* researchers in other countries where no such detailed inventories exist.

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⁷⁶ For an overview of the sponsors and cooperating institutions, see: <<https://memo.sites.uu.nl/0-what-is-memo-2/7-about-the-project/7-1-a-short-history-of-the-memo-project/>>.

Publications

List of recent publications

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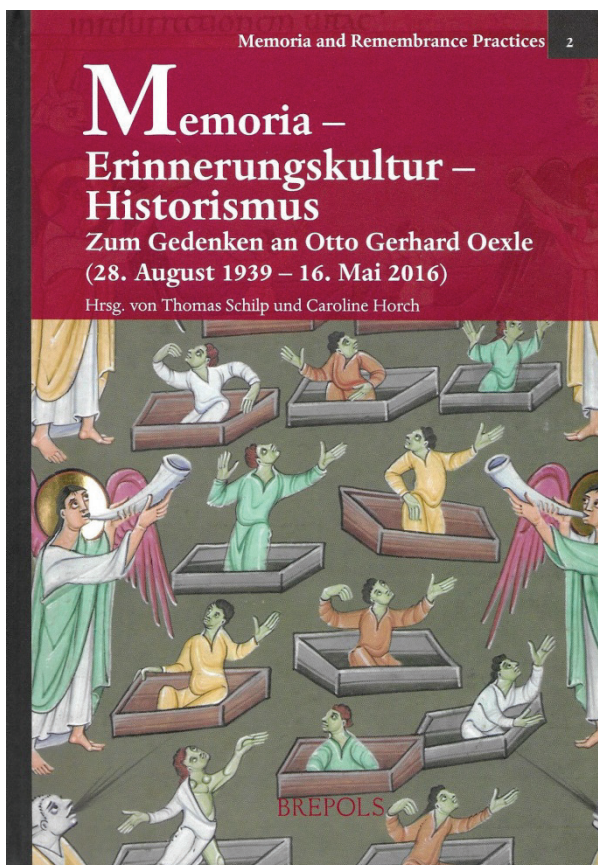
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Thomas Schilp, Caroline Horch (eds.), *Memoria – Erinnerungskultur – Historismus. Zum Gedenken an Otto Gerhard Oexle (28. August 1939 – 16. Mai 2016)* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2019). Hardcover, series: Memoria and Remembrance practices (MEMO 2), 416 p., 65 b/w ill. + 15 colour ill., 178 x 254 mm, ISBN: 978-2-503-58438-6. Languages: German, French, English. Retail price: EUR 84,00 excl. tax.

Visit the [publisher's website](#) for additional information.

Zum Gedenken an Person und Wirken von Otto Gerhard Oexle (28. August 1939 – 16. Mai 2016).

Die Erforschung der Erinnerungskultur der vormodernen Gesellschaften Europas ist untrennbar mit Otto Gerhard Oexle, Direktor des Max-Planck-Instituts für Geschichte in Göttingen von 1987 bis 2004, verknüpft: Er hatte das Totengedenken des Ancien Régime als 'totales soziales Phänomen' und 'Memoria' als Exempel der transdisziplinären Historischen Kulturwissenschaften erkannt und erforscht. Dieser Band vereint Beiträge von Kollegen, Freunden und Schülern, die Themen, Thesen und Anregungen von Otto Gerhard Oexle aufgreifen – erweiternd, vertiefend und fortführend. Der Band führt einen Nachruf mit Beiträgen zusammen: eine 'Schülerbiographie' in Auseinandersetzung mit Otto Gerhard Oexle, zu Stiftung und Memoria in universalhistorischer Perspektive, über Memoria in textilen Schenkungen des Früh- und Hochmittelalters, zu Deutungsschemata der 'mittelalterlichen Gesellschaft' in Weltgerichtsbildern, über Stadtbau und Memoria im Italien des 15. und 16. Jahrhunderts, zu Ernst Robert Curtius und den Mittelalterbildern des 20. Jahrhunderts, zum Historismus, über das Gesetz vom Sinai in literarischen Verarbeitungen, bis hin zur Kultur der Erinnerung an die verfolgten und ermordeten Juden in den Niederlanden unter dem NS-Regime.



Thomas Schilp is Professor for Medieval History at Ruhr-Universität Bochum. The field of his research is focussed on medieval memoria, townhistory in general and the history of religious female communities.

Caroline Horch is Private Lecturer at Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg. In her research, she combines the disciplines of History and Art History.

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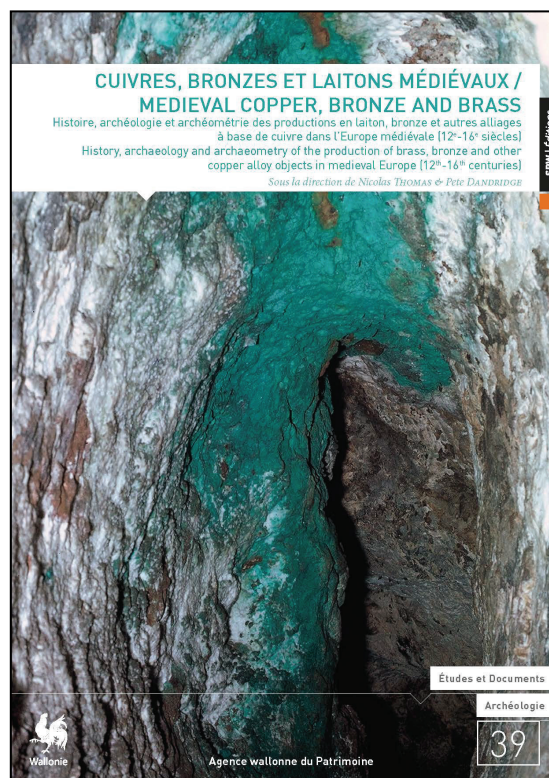
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Farbtafeln

Nicolas Thomas, Pete Dandridge (eds.), *Cuivres, Bronzes et laitons médiévaux. Histoire, archéologie et archéométrie des productions en laiton, bronze et autres alliages à base de cuivre dans l'Europe médiévale (12^e-16^e siècles) / Medieval Copper, Bronze and Brass. History, archaeology and archaeometry of the production of brass, bronze and other copper alloy objects in medieval Europe (12th-16th centuries)* [Actes du colloque de Dinant et Namur, 15-17 mai 2014. Proceedings of the symposium of Dinant and Namur, 15-17 May 2014] (Namur, 2018). Softcover, 416 pages, 300 images, 21 x 29,5 cm, ISBN 978-2-39038-016-0, €40.00.

Visit the [publisher's website](#) for additional information.

This volume contains the proceedings of the International Conference on Medieval Copper Alloys Production, held at Dinant and Namur on 15, 16 and 17 May 2014. The conference was organised by the Service public de Wallonie (Belgium) and the Institut national de recherches archéologiques préventives (France). The proceedings include 34 original contributions presented by archaeologists, historians, conservators, art historians, and other specialists, including metallurgists and chemists. Collectively, they show the great diversity of approaches being taken to elaborate the multiple themes associated with copper and its alloys in the material culture of medieval and post-medieval Europe. In the late Middle Ages, there was a gradual increase in the use of copper and its alloys for making everyday objects, whether for dress accessories, such as belt buckles or small decorative studs, or in kitchens and houses where the metal became a cauldron, ewer, basin, or lavabo. In contrast to these common objects fabricated in serial or mass production, were the exceptional, discrete objects satisfying the needs of the aristocracy and liturgy. Such made-to-order masterpieces might include aquamanilia, candelabra, or lecterns. Additionally, copper alloys were used for more colossal works of art such as columns, doors, baptisteries, fountains, funeral monuments and, of course, bells. Copper was equally sought in artisanal contexts, for artillery, for musical instruments, and for coinage. In exploring such a vast subject from multiple points of view, this volume will be of interest not only to archaeologist, but also to those involved in the history of techniques, art history, economic history, and social history. It is aimed both at an informed public and to those simply curious about the history of the Middle Ages in Europe.



Cet ouvrage contient les actes d'un colloque international consacré aux productions médiévales en alliage à base de cuivre qui s'est tenu à Dinant et à Namur les 15, 16 et 17 mai 2014. Ces journées ont été organisées par le Service public de Wallonie (Belgique) et l'Institut national de recherches archéologiques préventives (France). Les actes rassemblent 34 contributions originales livrées par des spécialistes, archéologues, historiens, historiens de l'art ou encore métallurgistes et chimistes. Ils montrent la grande diversité des approches et des thèmes abordés au moyen de ce matériau très présent dans la culture matérielle. Au Bas Moyen Âge, le cuivre entre progressivement dans la fabrication de nombreux objets du quotidien, que ce soit pour la parure, sous forme de boucles de ceintures ou de petits éléments décoratifs du costume, ou encore dans la cuisine et les maisons quand il devient chaudron, aiguière, bassin ou puisette. À ces

productions en série, souvent de masse, s'opposent des travaux réalisés sur commande pour l'aristocratie ou à des fins liturgiques. Le métal se décline alors sous l'aspect d'aquamaniles, de chandeliers d'autel, de lutrins... Le matériau est utilisé pour des œuvres monumentales comme des colonnes, des portes, des fonts baptismaux, des fontaines, des monuments funéraires ou encore des cloches. On trouve aussi le cuivre dans des contextes artisanaux, dans l'artillerie, les instruments de musique ou encore la monnaie. En explorant un vaste sujet par des angles variés, ce livre intéresse l'archéologie bien sûr, mais aussi l'histoire des techniques, l'histoire de l'art, l'histoire économique ou encore l'histoire sociale. Il s'adresse à un public averti, ou plus simplement curieux de l'histoire du Moyen Âge en Europe.

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Comité scientifique du colloque et évaluateurs des articles / *Scientific committee of the symposium and reviewers of the articles*

C. Brachmann (ed.), *Arrayed in Splendour. Art, fashion, and textiles in medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2019). 264 p., 3 b/w ill. + 111 colour ill., 216 x 280 mm, ISBN: 978-2-503-57965-8. Languages: English. Retail price: EUR 100,00 excl. tax.

Visit the [publisher's website](#) for additional information.

Original contributions of leading scholars in their field give an insight in the current state of research on textile art in the Middle Ages and early modern times.

Precious textiles, fabrics, embroideries, and tapestries played an important role in medieval and early modern cultures of representation. The high esteem in which the textile arts were held was not only due to the enormous material value of gold and silk, which had to be imported from distant regions, but also to the extremely complex and time-consuming production conditions which required a level of technical expertise that was present only in a few highly specialized centers.

In stark contrast to their medieval and early-modern reception, it has been only in recent years that the traditional view of the textile arts in art-historical discourse as an 'applied' art, and therefore a 'low' one, has undergone a fundamental shift. The aim of this volume is to provide insight into the current state of research on the topic. Ranging from the twelfth to the seventeenth centuries, this collection of essays of leading scholars in the field offers an invaluable window into the complexity of the textile arts and their medium, from the overpowering splendour of liturgical and princely garments and the luxurious fabrics used for them in the Middle Ages and early modern period, to the visual world of monumental room decorations in the form of tapestries.

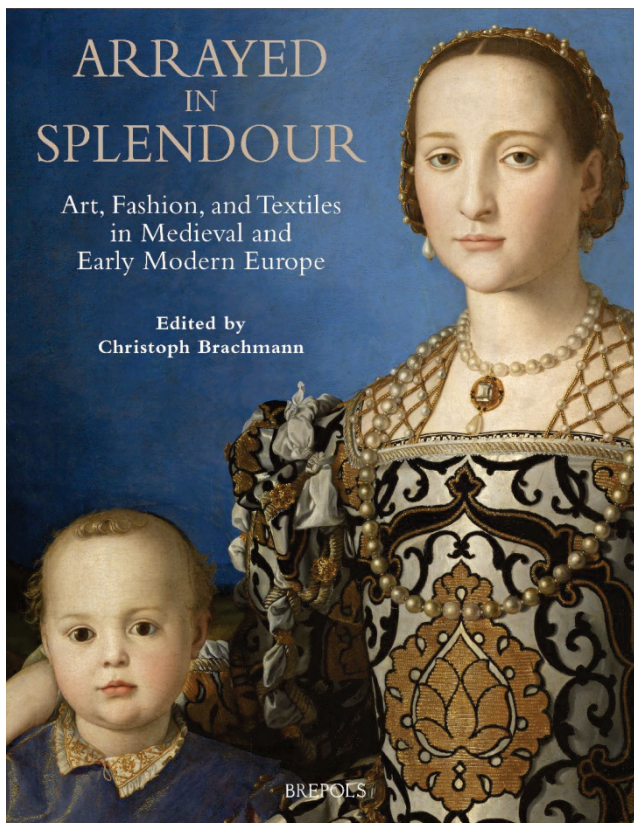


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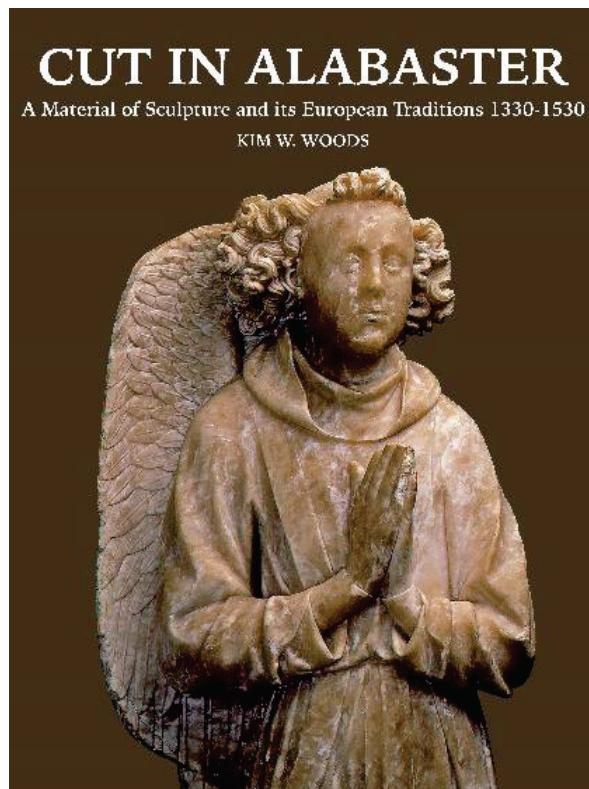
Arrayed in Splendour: An Africanist's Perspective – Victoria L. Rovine

Kim Woods, *Cut in Alabaster: a Material of Sculpture and its European Traditions 1330-1530* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2018). Hardback, 422 p., 5 b/w ill. + 194 colour ill., 220 x 280 mm, 2018, ISBN: 978-1-909400-26-9. Languages: English. Retail price: EUR 150,00 excl. tax.

Visit the [publisher's website](#) for additional information.

Cut in Alabaster is the first comprehensive study of alabaster sculpture in Western Europe during the late Middle Ages and Renaissance.

While marble is associated with Renaissance Italy, alabaster was the material commonly used elsewhere in Europe and has its own properties, traditions and meanings. It enjoyed particular popularity as a sculptural material during the two centuries 1330-1530, when alabaster sculpture was produced both for indigenous consumption and for export. Focussing especially on England, the Burgundian Netherlands and Spain, three territories closely linked through trade routes, diplomacy and cultural exchange, this book explores and compares the material practice and visual culture of alabaster sculpture in late medieval Europe. *Cut in Alabaster* charts sculpture from quarry to contexts of use, exploring practitioners, markets and functions as well as issues of consumption, display and material meanings. It provides detailed examination of tombs, altarpieces and both elite and popular sculpture, ranging from high status bespoke commissions to small, low-cost carvings produced commercially for a more popular clientele.



Chapter 1 is entitled Alabaster as a material of sculpture and explores the properties of the material that forms the focus of the book. It looks at the similarities and differences between alabaster and marble, their use and status in the period 1330-1530, considering their relative cost and advantages and disadvantages. The distribution of alabaster quarries and practical issues surrounding quarrying are also discussed together with tools, techniques and typical polychromy schemes.

Chapter 2 is entitled Makers, Markets and Methods, and introduces a range of European alabaster sculptors including elite court sculptors and more commercially-oriented alabaster specialists. The distribution of imported works in alabaster in the Baltic, the Iberian peninsular and Italy is used to show that the demand for alabaster sculpture was not restricted to the domestic market. The extent to which carving methods were adapted to meet the demands of rapid production and long-distance trade is also considered.

Chapter 3 is entitled Case studies in makers and markets: The Master of Rimini and Gil de Siloe, which compares and contrasts the two very different models of alabaster sculpture introduced in chapter 2. The so-called Master of Rimini was an alabaster specialist who participated in a luxury

export trade in alabaster sculpture while Gil de Siloe received a one-off elite commission for the Castilian royal tombs at Miraflores.

Chapter 4 is entitled 'The status and significance of alabaster'. Here a range of possible material meanings are considered in relation to court culture, religious practice and identity, whether social, gender or national. The status of alabaster in comparison with bone, ivory and the early Netherlandish painting of Jan van Eyck is also discussed.

Chapter 5 is entitled 'Three projects in alabaster', and explores the material meanings introduced in chapter 4 in three different contexts. The first is the tomb of Edward II at Gloucester, the earliest known to have been made in alabaster in England, and the identification of alabaster with the court of Edward III. The second project is the alabaster tomb of Charles the Noble of Navarre and his selection of alabaster as an equivalent to the marble tombs distinctive of the French monarchy. The third is Margaret of Austria's adoption of alabaster at her foundation at Brou, self-consciously drawing on Burgundian material traditions.

Chapter 6 considers the genre of alabaster tombs. The period 1330-1530 marks the heyday of the European alabaster tomb, and alabaster was clearly an elite material associated with royal, noble or ecclesiastical status. The themes of continuity and convention, identity and allegiance, and imitation or rivalry are explored. All played a part in the trickle down adoption of alabaster from the ruling elite to an ever-widening range of social classes in this era of the alabaster tomb.

While Chapter 6 focused on tomb types, Chapter 7 presents three case studies of bespoke tombs, where patrons demanded unexpected and unusual designs. The first, the tomb of René of Anjou, is known only through documents. The second, the semi-recumbent 'Doncel' in Sigüenza Cathedral, has entered popular imagination for its originality but relates nevertheless to a group of bespoke Iberian tombs. The third, the tomb of Engelbrecht of Nassau, brings the bespoke alabaster tomb into the Renaissance.

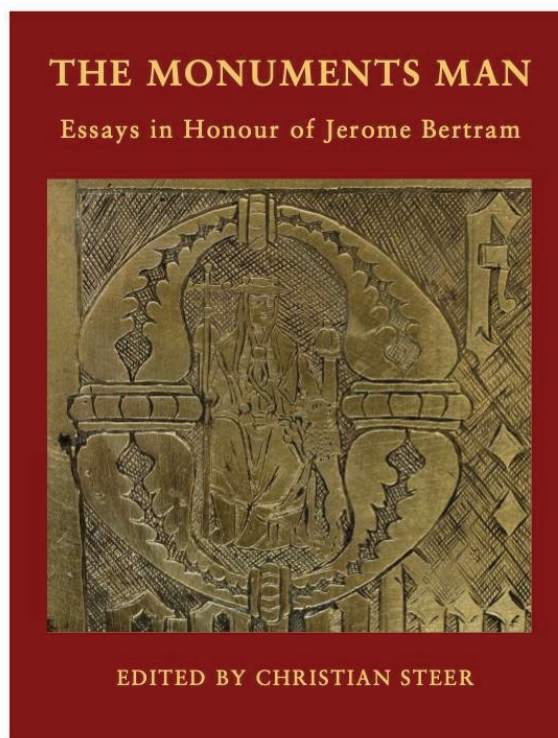
Chapter 8 explores the second genre particularly associated with alabaster: altarpieces. The evolution of differing conventions of alabaster altarpieces in north-western Europe and the Iberian peninsula are charted, compared and contrasted. Although the designs used in either wood or stone altarpieces were sometimes translated fairly literally into alabaster, alabaster was also used for bespoke works of art where both design and iconography were purpose-made.

The final chapter, chapter 9 is entitled 'Genres of alabaster in public and in private'. Paradoxically, alabaster could serve both a luxury and a popular market, and this chapter considers both. At one extreme there are repetitive, popularising works produced according to relatively fixed conventions such as St John's heads. At the other extreme are a series of luxury alabasters displaying all the hallmarks of high status commissions: bespoke designs with unexpected and thoughtful iconography and lavishly-detailed facture. Many are also relatively small and suitable for private scrutiny, but alabaster monumental alabaster statues and grand narratives suitable for public places are also discussed.

Kim Woods is a senior lecturer in Art History at the Open University, and a specialist in northern European late Gothic sculpture. She combines an object-based approach with an interest in materials and cultural exchange. Her single-authored book, *Imported Images* (Donington, 2007), focussed on wood sculpture. Since then she has been working on alabaster. Her Open University distance learning materials include the *Renaissance Art Reconsidered* volumes (Yale, 2007) and *Medieval to Renaissance* (Tate publishing, 2012).

Christian Steer (ed.), *The Monuments Man: Essays in Honour of Jerome Bertram* (Donington, Shaun Tyas, 2020). Retail price: £49.50

This Festschrift honours the late Jerome Bertram of the Oxford Oratory and former Vice-President of the Monumental Brass Society, who admired, researched, lectured and wrote about monumental brasses and incised slabs for over fifty years. The essays in this volume represent the latest research from scholars who shed new light on all types of monument –cross-slabs, effigies, incised slabs and brasses, canopied tombs –as individual case studies and regional studies. They also consider the production process, workshops, antiquarian studies and the evidence for lost monuments not only in England and Wales but across mainland Europe. They range chronologically from as early as Christ’s tomb in ancient Jerusalem through the Roman, medieval and early modern periods and conclude with a study of a brass in nineteenth-century Oxford.



For the order form, see:

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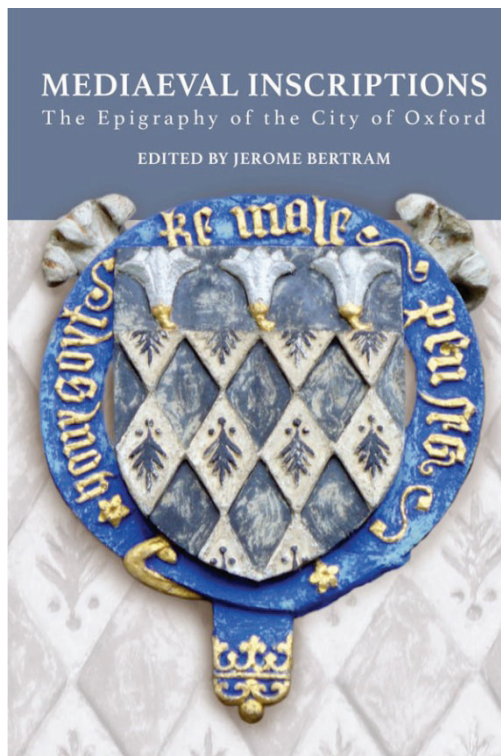
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Jerome Bertram (ed.), *Mediaeval Inscriptions. The Epigraphy of the City of Oxford* (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2020). ISBN 9780 9 0250 976 4. 240pp, 19 colour, 10 b/w illus. 23.4 x 15.6cm, HB Oxfordshire Record Society. £35.00/\$60.00.

Visit the [publisher's website](#) for additional information.

Inscriptions made in the mediaeval city and university of Oxford have come down to us in many forms and types of material - stone, glass, wood, metal, paint, ceramics - even textiles. There are a variety of handwriting styles, and inscriptions were written in Latin, French, or English. Some can be seen in their original context, such as the church or chapel as the donor intended; others have been moved to new locations, often in order to protect and conserve them; others survive only in the notes and drawings of long-deceased antiquaries. Now, for the first time, the richness and variety of mediaeval Oxford's epigraphy are revealed in this comprehensive catalogue of inscriptions from the twelfth century to the mid-sixteenth. Each entry includes the type of artefact, the dimensions where known, the materials and type of lettering, a description, the text of the inscription (with a translation of non-English text), a commentary and references to previous notices. There is a full scholarly introduction, a selection of illustrations, and a series of indices to facilitate use of the catalogue.



This is the first part of a two-volume work, the second of which covers the epigraphy of the mediaeval county of Oxfordshire.

The late Jerome Bertram was the leading authority of his generation on monumental brasses, indents and incised slabs; he was especially interested in epigraphy and had an impressive publication record on the topic. He died in 2019.

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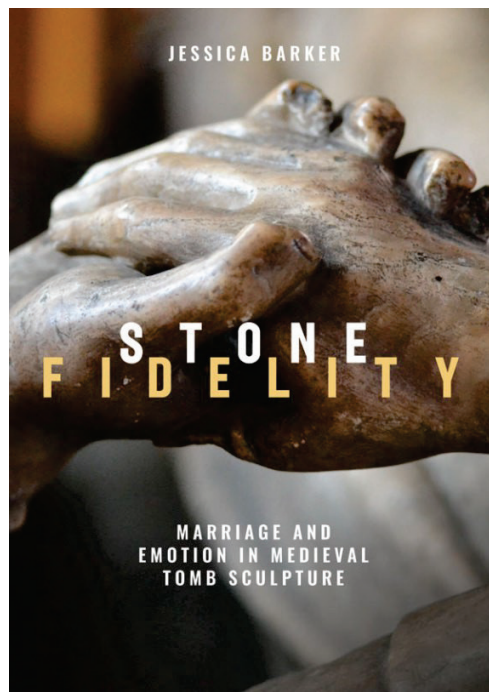
Jessica Barker, *Stone Fidelity. Marriage and Emotion in Medieval Tomb Sculpture* (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2020). 33 colour, 63 black and white, 2 line illustrations, 354 pages, 24x17 cm. £50.00 (hardback)/ £19.99 (eBook).

Visit the [publisher's website](#) for additional information.

Pioneering investigation of the popular “double tomb” effigies in the Middle Ages.

Medieval tombs often depict husband and wife lying side-by-side, and hand in hand, immortalised in elegantly carved stone: what Philip Larkin's poem *An Arundel Tomb* later described as their “stone fidelity”.

This first full account of the “double tomb” places its rich tradition into dialogue with powerful discourses of gender, marriage, politics and emotion during the Middle Ages. As well as offering new interpretations of some of the most famous medieval tombs, such as those found in Westminster Abbey and Canterbury Cathedral, it draws attention to a host of lesser-known memorials from throughout Europe, providing an innovative vantage point from which to reconsider the material culture of medieval marriage. Setting these twin effigies alongside wedding rings and dresses as the agents of matrimonial ritual and embodied symbolism, the author presents the “double tomb” as far more than mere romantic sentiment. Rather, it reveals the careful artifice beneath their seductive emotional surfaces: the artistic, religious, political and legal agendas underlying the medieval rhetoric of married love.



Dr JESSICA BARKER is a Lecturer in Medieval Art at the Courtauld Institute of Art, London.

Published with the generous financial assistance of the Henry Moore Foundation.

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Bart Ramakers (ed.), *Memento Mori. Sterben und Begraben in einem ruralen Grenzgebiet. Sterven en begraven in een rurale grensregio*. *Historia Agriculturae* 48 (Groningen en Wageningen: Nederlands Agronomisch Historisch Instituut, 2018). ISBN-13 (15) 9789403414270.

Visit the [publisher's website](#) for additional information.

Het Duits-Nederlandse kustgebied was in het verleden – en is nog steeds – een overwegend agrarisch gebied met daarbinnen enkele meer of minder grote stedelijke centra.

Vrijwel alle bijdragen in deze bundel die gaan over de funeraire cultuur in dit gebied, hebben betrekking op rurale verschijningsvormen daarvan.

De bijdragen in deze bundel belichten de cultuur rond sterven en begraven vanuit uiteenlopend perspectief: historisch (cultuurhistorisch, sociaalhistorisch, kunsthistorisch, kerkhistorisch, literatuurhistorisch), maar ook theologisch. De aandacht gaat daarbij in de eerste plaats uit naar de funeraire cultuur in Groningen en Ostfriesland.

Der deutsch-niederländische Küstenraum war in der Vergangenheit - und ist es immer noch - ein überwiegend landwirtschaftliches Gebiet mit einigen mehr oder weniger großen städtischen Zentren.

Nahezu alle Beiträge in diesem Band über die Bestattungskultur in dieser Region beziehen sich auf ihr ländliches Erscheinungsbild.

Die Beiträge dieser Publikation beleuchten die Kultur des Sterbens und Begrabens aus verschiedenen Perspektiven: historisch (kulturhistorisch, sozialhistorisch, kunsthistorisch, kirchenhistorisch, literaturhistorisch), aber auch theologisch. Der Fokus liegt dabei an erster Stelle auf der Bestattungskultur in Groningen und Ostfriesland.

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Visit the [publisher's website](#) for additional information.

Memoria, the liturgic commemoration of the dead, figures in this study as a unifying perspective on the economic, social, and cultural aspects of village life in the late medieval northern Low Countries.

Against the background of Erik Thoen's model of social agrosystems, a set of 56 rural parishes of which local memoria registers have been preserved is analysed.

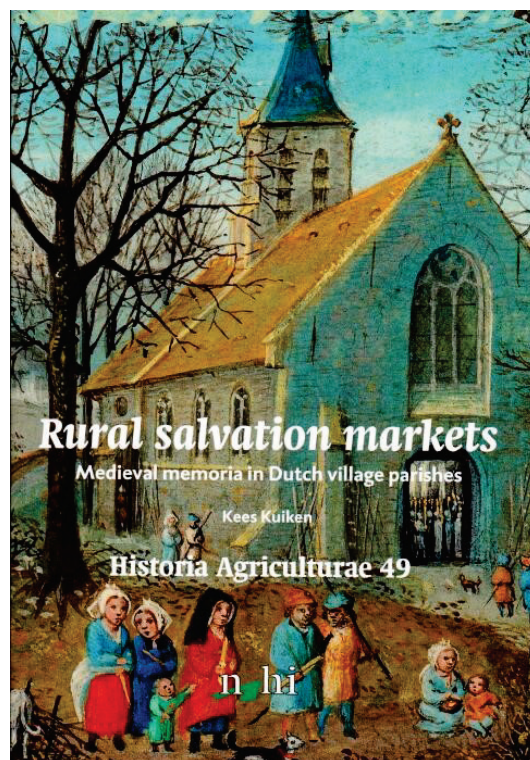
This study shows, among other aspects, how rural salvation markets developed; how kinship, social stratifications, and translocal networks were reflected in these registers; and how liturgy and loyalties shaped medieval villages as imagined communities in which care for the salvation of deceased villagers played a major role.

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Barbara J. Harris, *English Aristocratic Women and the Fabric of Piety, 1450-1550* (Amsterdam University Press: Amsterdam, 2018). 266pp; 11 b/w illus; ISBN 9789462985988; hbk; €85.

Visit the [publisher's website](#) for additional information.

The role played by women in the evolution of religious art and architecture has been largely neglected. This study of upper-class women in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries corrects that oversight, uncovering the active role they undertook in choosing designs, materials, and locations for monuments, commissioning repairs and additions to many parish churches, chantry chapels, and almshouses characteristic of the English countryside. Their preferred art, Barbara J. Harris shows, reveals their responses to the religious revolution and signifies their preferred identities.

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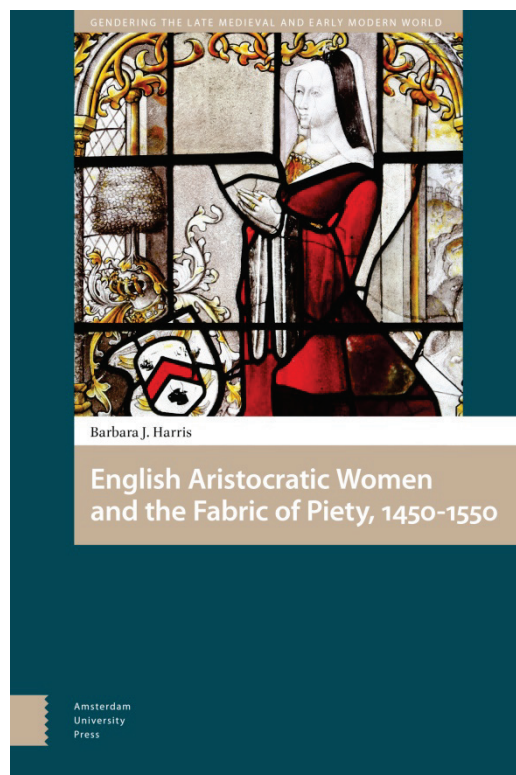
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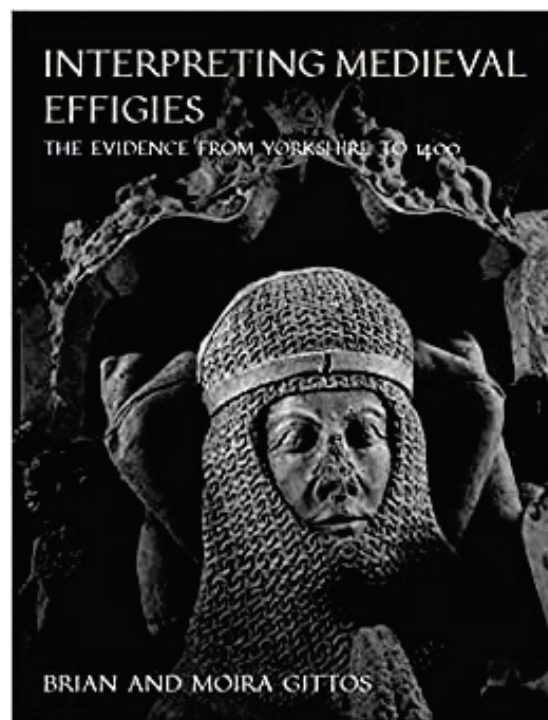


Brian and Moira Gittos, *Interpreting Medieval Effigies: The Evidence from Yorkshire to 1400* (Oxbow Books, Oxford, 2019). Hardcover : 256 pages. ISBN-10 : 1789251281.

Visit the [publisher's website](#) for additional information.

This innovative study examines and analyses the wealth of evidence provided by the monumental effigies of Yorkshire, from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, including some of very high sculptural merit. More than 200 examples survive from the historic county in varying states of preservation. Together, they present a picture of the people able to afford them, at a time when the county was frequently at the forefront of national politics and administration, during the Scottish wars.

Many monuments display remarkable realism, depicting people as they themselves wished to be remembered, and are accompanied by a great volume of contemporary sculptural and architectural detail. Stylistic analysis of the effigies themselves has been employed, better to understand how they relate to one another and give a firmer basis for their dating and production patterns. They are considered in relation to the history and material culture of the area at the time they were produced. A more soundly based appreciation of the sculptor's intentions and the aspirations of patrons is sought through close attention to the full extent of the visible evidence afforded by the monuments and their surroundings.



The corpus is of sufficient size to permit meaningful analysis to shed light on aspects such as personal aspiration, social networks, patterns of supply and production, piety and wealth. It demonstrates the value of funerary monuments to the wider understanding of medieval society.

The text will be accompanied by a comprehensive catalogue, making available a substantial body of research for the first time. The study considers the relationship between the monuments and related sculpture, architecture, painting, glass etc, together with contemporary documentary evidence, where it is available. This material and the underlying methodology are now available to illuminate monuments of the medieval period across the whole country. Its methods and messages extend understanding of all monuments, broadening its potential audience from the purely local to everyone concerned with medieval sculpture and church archaeology.

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List of Yorkshire's effigies to 1400

Book Review

John S. Lee and Christian Steer, eds., *Commemoration in Medieval Cambridge* (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, in association with Cambridge University Library, 2018) 193 pages, twenty-one black and white plates and eleven colour plates. Hardback ISBN 978 1 78327 334 8 £60.

The editors are to be congratulated in producing a book which, probably for the first time, looks at all aspects of commemoration in the round with their focus on commemoration in medieval Cambridge. The eight essays in this volume illustrate the breadth and depth of current research. The foundation of several colleges in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries and the motivation of the original founders for so doing are discussed by several contributors. Colleges were first and foremost perpetual chantries which preserved the memory of the founders and fellows through the ritual of daily prayers, whilst at the same time provided teaching for the living who, it was hoped, would go on to a career in the church, or royal service, with the possibility of reaching high office. These colleges were a more stable and secure community than the parish.

Christian Steer's introduction discusses the ways in which Cambridge men chose to be remembered, although not all of them chose burial in their colleges. By way of example he discusses the career of Walter Crome, Fellow of Gonville Hall and London rector, which demonstrates the multiplicity of commemoration as practiced by college men in the later Middle Ages. He was buried under a tomb monument in his London parish church, but was also a benefactor to the library of his college as well as a major donor to the University Library. In so doing Crome was remembered both in his parish church as well as in his college. The introduction paves the way for John Lee's essay explores the whole range of religious institutions that developed in Cambridge which enabled the city's burgesses and college men to make considered choices in determining how their commemoration strategies could be implemented, either to the city's parish churches, the six houses of mendicant friars or the two hospitals. Lee discusses the early foundation of a number of the colleges within the city and the relationship between 'town and gown' which was more complex than most earlier works have suggested as conflict and strife, but Lee shows that 'co-operation was far more influential than conflict and underpinned several aspects of commemoration in this university town.'

Turning from the two overviews to specific topics considered in this volume, three essays discuss the foundations and subsequent development of individual colleges (Claire Gobbi Daunton and Elizabeth New on Trinity Hall, Peter Murray Jones on King's and Susan Powell on St. John's) whilst Richard Barber's essay discusses the Guild of Corpus Christi and its London connections. Michael Robson's survey of the Grey Minor provides another layer to commemoration in a religious and educational institution. Two essays on monumental brasses by Sir John Baker and Nicholas Rogers; the former is a study of the comparison of academic and legal costume, whilst Rogers' is concerned with the loss and survival of monumental brasses in Cambridge.

Trinity Hall founded in 1350 as 'The College of Scholars of the Holy Trinity of Norwich' by William Bateman, bishop of Norwich 1344-55, focuses on the role of patrons and benefactors in the Middle Ages. Successive masters built up the endowment of the college through direct benefaction or through their persuasive friendships and connections with others. A number of masters are discussed and includes a case study of Walter Hewke, master from 1510 until his death probably in 1518. This essay is full of interest throughout and extends our understanding of what motivated successive Masters to embellish their college, whilst at the same time enabling men like Hewke to have his own chantry in the college's chapel.

Peter Murray Jones considers commemoration at a royal college. King's College was conceived as a perpetual chantry for Henry VI, members of the royal family and his successors,

and reflect the king's personal wishes of its role and also the considerable scale and diversity of the endowments that he and his successors made to his college. Testamentary bequests and benefactions were recorded in the college's Ledger Book 1 begun in 1451 and is the primary legal register of the college. Discussion follows regarding the college's earliest surviving inventory of the college's possession, c. 1453-57, and is again a source of considerable use to historians, giving names and status of a considerable number of people from various locations in England. Jones concludes his essay with a discussion on the various brasses, burials and chantries for college men that took place in King's College and the continuation of their commemorations despite the subsequent changes of political regime, reformations and restorations of liturgy and religion that took place from the mid sixteenth century onwards.

Susan Powell's study on Lady Margaret Beaufort, 1443-1509, is wide ranging in its scope. Powell considers Lady Margaret's household accounts which survive from 1498-1509, and the extent of her household who chose to be buried and commemorated in Cambridge. It was during her last years that Lady Margaret became closely involved with Cambridge, and Powell discusses her funding for readerships in divinity at both Oxford and Cambridge, which in 1503 were firmly established with John Fisher who was the man closest to her, after her son. Fisher held a number of positions in the university, taking his doctorate in theology in 1501, becoming vice-chancellor in 1502 and bishop of Rochester and chancellor of the university in 1504; which he then held for life. Fisher was the first reader in divinity at Cambridge in 1502. In spite of his execution a (now lost) monument was arranged by Fisher in St. John's, an illustration of which is included in the essay. The final part of Powell's essay discusses Cambridge commemorations associated with Lady Margaret and her circle, as well as detailed biographies of those closest to her.

Michael Robson's essay discusses the role of the Friars Minor and their care of the living and the dead in Cambridge. He focuses on the development of the friars' church over time, and the number of benefactors that contributed to its construction from the monarchs themselves, the local aristocracy, and secular clergy as well as Cambridge inhabitants. This is followed by the role of the friars, intercessory prayer and benefaction based on testamentary evidence from bishops' registers and finally considers the considerable number of burials recorded in the friary's churches or cemeteries.

The volume contains two chapters which consider different aspects of monumental brasses in medieval Cambridge (and beyond). Sir John Baker's delightful and well-crafted vignette deals with the comparison of academic and legal costumes as depicted on memorial brasses. His essay is thoroughly illustrated and he leads the reader through a veritable minefield of what costume was appropriate to the rank of the wearer with consummate ease. The final essay is by Nicholas Rogers in which he discusses the reasons for the presence or absence of monumental brasses in Cambridge, in comparison to the many more monumental brasses that survive in the University of Oxford. Although Rogers does not explicitly say so, the main reason for the comparative dearth in Cambridge no doubt was due to the closer proximity to the iconoclastic activities of William Dowsing who wreaked so much havoc during the Puritan era, whilst Oxford seems to have escaped because of its greater distance from Dowsing's East Anglian activities, where much pre-reformation memorials have ceased to exist or have been badly mutilated. This is the least convincing of all the essays in this collection.

This volume is a significant contribution to the study of commemoration in all its various guises and your reviewer has no hesitation in recommending this to all who study commemoration in the Middle Ages.

ROBERT A WOOD

Journal features

Transactions of the Monumental Brass Society

Website: <https://www.mbs-brasses.co.uk/>

The Monumental Brass Society was founded in 1887 by a group of Cambridge undergraduates keen to preserve and record monumental brasses. Initially it was known as the Cambridge University Association of Brass Collectors. Later it was renamed the Monumental Brass Society.

Early research into brasses focussed chiefly on English brasses of the medieval and early modern periods. Today, however, the field is much wider. Chronologically it extends to brasses of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and geographically to those of Continental Europe and beyond. Incised slabs are also the subject of growing interest. Areas of current research include the artistic context of brasses, workshop organisation and the self-image of the commemorated.

Membership will particularly benefit those with an interest in genealogy, ecclesiology and the study of costume, armour and heraldry, as well as those interested in church monuments.

The Society provides advice and assistance to churches on the care and preservation of their brasses and incised slabs. Grants are available to assist funding the conservation of brasses.

The Society continues to influence brass-rubbing activities by advising clergy and Parochial Church Councils. The rubbing of certain original brasses is discouraged and the use of facsimiles recommended instead.

Previous and upcoming issues

Volume 20 of the *Transactions of the Monumental Brass Society* for 2019 contains the following articles:

- Nigel Saul, 'Insignia and Status: Banners on Brass in England in the Later Middle Ages'
- Matthew Hefferan, 'The Brass of Thomas Stapel (d. 1372), Sergeant-at-Arms to Edward III: A Monument to a Career in Household Service'
- Nicholas Rogers, 'Bishop Hallum's Brass in Konstanz Minster'
- Julian Luxford, 'Ex Terra Vis: The Cadaver Brass of Richard and Cecily Howard at Aylesham, Norfolk'

Copies are available from the Hon. Editor, Dr David Lepine, e-mail: davidnl1455@gmail.com.

Volume 21 for 2020 will be a special memorial issue in honour of Fr. Jerome Bertram, who passed away last year. A long-serving parish priest of the Oratory, Oxford and a vice-president of the Monumental Brass Society, Fr. Jerome's final years were a remarkable Indian summer of scholarship and productivity. This issue will contain reviews of his surveys of Oxfordshire and

Sussex brasses (both published in 2019), and also two important articles by him. One examines the Tournai trade and his final work, a study of the brass of John Waltham, bishop of Salisbury (d. 1395), in the Confessor's Chapel, Westminster Abbey.

The table of contents for this volume is as follows:

- Obituary of Jerome Bertram (1950–2019)

Articles

- Jerome Bertram, 'The Tournai Trade: Flemish Brasses and Slabs for British Clergy'
- Robert Kinsey, 'The Brass of Sir John de Creke and Lady Alyne at Westley Waterless, Cambridgeshire'
- Jerome Bertram, 'The Brass of Bishop John Waltham (d. 1395)'
- Nicholas Orme, 'Schoolmasters and Pupils on Brasses before the Reformation'
- Matthew Sillence, 'Antiquarian Records of Brasses in Norfolk 1840–99: A Quantitative Approach'

Book Reviews

- Jerome Bertram, *East Sussex Brasses and West Sussex Brasses*, by Christian Steer
- Jerome Bertram, *Oxford Brasses and Oxfordshire Brasses*, by David Lepine
- *The Monuments Man: Essays in Honour of Jerome Bertram*, ed. Christian Steer, by Stephen Freeth
- *Commemoration in Medieval Cambridge*, ed. J.S. Lee and Christian Steer, by Paul Binski
- David Harry, *Constructing a Civic Community in Medieval London*, by Luke Giraudet

To honour Fr. Jerome, this issue will be available to non-members of the M.B.S. at a special price of £15.00 including postage and packing (for UK purchases). To order, or to check the postage for orders from mainland Europe, contact Christian Steer, e-mail: christianosteer@yahoo.co.uk.

Journal of the Church Monuments Society

Website: <https://churchmonumentsociety.org/>

The Church Monuments Society is for everyone who is interested in the art of commemoration – early incised stones, medieval effigies, ledgerstones, brasses, modern gravestones. The Society was founded in 1979 to encourage the appreciation, study and conservation of church monuments both in the UK and abroad.

We organise a range of study days and excursions and a biennial symposium in which we can explore in more detail these fascinating relics of the past. We publish an internationally-recognised peer-reviewed journal, *Church Monuments*, and a more informal newsletter. We are active on social media, with a popular Twitter and Facebook account. The website shares news about events, discoveries and new resources.

Tomb carvings are not just about death. They also tell us about the living, their sense of identity, their beliefs and hopes. They are of huge artistic importance. Almost all the surviving medieval British sculpture is in churches, and most of it is in the form of monuments. More recent memorials are a treasure trove of vernacular art – Cornish slate angels, skulls and crossbones, the glorious painted wall monuments of the Welsh marches with their cherubs and swags of fruit and flowers. We encourage understanding of all these monuments, and we work with churches and local communities to help to conserve them and make them more accessible.

The editors would be very pleased to receive submissions for articles to *Church Monuments*, the peer reviewed journal of the Church Monuments Society. Articles need to be in English but we welcome contributions on monuments in other countries, and will be happy to consider broad interpretations of ‘monuments’ e.g. in the past we have featured *tabulae* (epigraphs written on vellum or paper and fixed to boards near certain tombs) and church porches. Potential contributors can look at abstracts from past journals –

<https://churchmonumentsociety.org/the-journal> – and the editors will be pleased to advise on the likely suitability of a subject.

Contact details are:

Ann Adams: cmsed.aja@gmail.com

Jonathan Trigg: jrtrigg@liverpool.ac.uk

Previous issues

Volume 33 of *Church Monuments* for the year 2018 contains the following articles:

- Matthew J. Champion, ‘Memory made solid: Informal church monuments and graffiti’
- Ann Adams, ‘The tomb of Jacques de Lalaing: Reputation, identity, and family status’
- Elizabeth Norton, ‘Two Elizabethan cadaver tombs in the West Midlands’
- Julian Litten, ‘A Florentine monument at West Dereham, Norfolk and its patron’

- Oliver D. Harris, 'A crusading 'captain in khaki': Sir Thomas Brock's monument to Charles Grant Seely at Gatcombe (Isle of Wight)'

For the abstracts, see: <https://churchmonumentsociety.org/the-journal/5313>

Volume 34 of *Church Monuments* for the year 2019 contains the following articles:

- Sally Badham, 'Divided in Death: The iconography of English medieval heart and entrails monuments'
- Nicola Lowe, 'New findings at the parish church of St Mary, Witney (Oxfordshire): The fourteenth-century north transept and monument'
- Nigel Saul, 'The sculptor of the monument of a serjeant-at-law at Flamstead (Hertfordshire): A further sequel'
- T.P. Connor, 'The Puritan as Whig: The monument to Denzil Holles in St Peter's church, Dorchester (Dorset)'
- James Stevens Curl, 'St Michael's Kirkyard, Dumfries'

For the abstracts, see: <https://churchmonumentsociety.org/the-journal/volume-xxxiv>

The Church Monuments Essay Prize

The Council of the Church Monuments Society offers a biennial prize of £500 called the Church Monuments Essay Prize, to be awarded with a certificate for the best essay submitted in the relevant year along with publication of the winning essay in the peer-reviewed international annual CMS journal *Church Monuments*.

The competition is open only to those who have not previously published an article in *Church Monuments*. The subject of the essay must be an aspect of church monuments of any period in Britain or abroad. The length (including notes) shall not exceed 10,000 words and a maximum of 10 illustrations, preferably in colour. The prize will only be awarded if the essay is considered by the judges to be of sufficiently high standard to merit publication in *Church Monuments*.

The closing date for new entries is 31 December 2020. For a copy of the rules and for the guidelines to contributors please see the Society's website www.churchmonumentsociety.org, or contact the Hon. Journal Editors for more details and/or advice on the suitability of a particular topic.

For details and for submission of articles (deadline 31 December 2020) please email the Editors:

Jonathan Trigg
jrtrigg@liverpool.ac.uk

Ann Adams
cmsed.aja@gmail.com

For more information, see: <https://churchmonumentsociety.org/get-involved/competitions/essay-competition>

The winner of the previous essay competition was an article that covers a lot of topics that are also covered by MeMO: Ann Adams, 'The tomb of Jacques de Lalaing: Reputation, identity, and family status', in: *Church Monuments* 33 (2018).

Summary:

In 1453, Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy, greatly mourned the death of Jacques de Lalaing, one of the most renowned knights of the fifteenth century. Jacques' death has resonated to the present day primarily because of a chivalric biography. All that remains of his tomb, formerly in the church of Sainte-Aldegonde, Lalaing (Nord, France), are the head and shoulders of the effigy in the Musée des Beaux-Arts, Valenciennes (Nord, France). A drawing in the Chifflet collection at Besançon (Doubs, France) documents its appearance in the late sixteenth/early seventeenth century. Comparison with other fifteenth-century tombs appears to suggest that this may not represent the original appearance, but first impressions are challenged by the inclusion of evidence from Jacques' life and the tombs of close family members. These tombs also demonstrate the growing importance of membership of the Order of the Golden Fleece as an indicator of social status and family cohesion.

Update on the Brepols series *Memoria and Remembrance practices*

In 2016 the MeMO project organised the publication of the first volume in the series *Memoria and Remembrance practices*, edited by Truus van Bueren. The series aims to bring together peer-reviewed studies in medieval and early modern memoria and commemoration practices. The series will cover a broad range of memoria-related themes using an interdisciplinary approach. The intended audience are scholars in the various fields as well as students and other interested parties. The volumes may be monographs or may contain reworked papers that were presented at symposiums.

The volumes may be written in English, German and French. Each contribution will be accompanied by an abstract in a different language, if the text is in English, for instance, the abstract will be in German or French. Introductory articles of anthologies, (*i.e.*, volumes with articles by several authors) and overall summaries and overall conclusions of these volumes are preferably in English.

The second volume was published last year, edited by the late Thomas Schilp and announced in [this newsletter](#). As of this year the position of general editor is filled by dr. Arnoud-Jan Bijsterveld.

Two new titles are currently being worked on:

- For 2021: Tillmann Lohse, *Pious Foundations in Latin Christendom, c. 500–1500*.
- For 2022: Gustavs Strenga, *Remembering the Dead: Collective Memoria in Late Medieval Livonia*.

For more information, see the [publisher's website](#).

Call for chapters – New publication: *Tomb Monuments in Medieval Europe*

Editors Paul Cockerham and Christian Steer

Studies on tomb monuments continue to attract international interest. The output from conferences, monographs, edited essays and the promotion of the topic by specialised research groups and societies, have created a healthy environment for the consideration of these remarkable works of art.

The last year – 2020 – has been challenging for all of us with many conferences cancelled or held online, some proceedings remaining unpublished, and research opportunities paused because of lockdowns across the globe. It is the purpose of this new volume to counterbalance this hiatus and to bring together a new collection of essays on tomb monuments from the conferences that never were.

This new volume *Tomb Monuments in Medieval Europe* will encourage a pan-European approach (focusing on Catholic Christendom), recognising that trade, war, diplomacy, and marriage spanned individual countries and left their mark on material culture, influencing patrons, craftsmen, methods and materials. It will consider all forms of tomb monument – incised slabs, monumental brasses, sculptured effigies, tomb chests, and so on – alongside the funerary inscriptions which accompany them.

The editors of this new volume invite proposals from established authors, early career scholars and Ph.D. students. Proposals might include themes such as the following:

- Commission and design
- Gender
- Regional studies
- The location of tomb monuments
- Dynastic strategies
- Change
- Influences on chosen texts (inscriptions)
- Antiquarianism and the written record
- The transmission of ideas
- The role of the liturgy
- Audience

Please send your proposal to Dr Paul Cockerham (pcockerham25@gmail.com) and Dr Christian Steer (christianosteer@yahoo.co.uk) by **31 January 2021** with the following information:

1. Your name
2. Institution (where applicable)
3. Proposed title
4. Abstract (no more than 300 words)

Proposals will be reviewed by the editors and confirmation sent in Spring 2021 with the style-sheet; in allowing for the current complexities of archival research during the pandemic the deadline for submission of completed essays is **30 September 2022**. Essays will not be accepted after this date.

This peer-reviewed volume will be published in English by Shaun Tyas Publications (Donington, U.K.) and printed in colour. Essays are to be between 5,500 and 8,500 words (including footnotes). Authors will receive a complimentary copy of the volume upon publication.

Paul Cockerham

Christian Steer

November 2020

Other news

New website: Janskerk Haarlem 700 jaar - Geliefd en fel bevochten

In the previous issue of this newsletter we announced that in 2018 the Noord-Hollands Archief in Haarlem celebrated the 700-year anniversary of the Janskerk, which currently houses the publiekscentrum of the archive. The church used to be part of the convent of the Order of Saint John. To celebrate the rich history of the convent and the order, the Archive commissioned a website to be built by Truus van Bueren, Leen Breure and Charlotte Dikken. This website was presented on 6 November 2018, and is now available to all visitors at: <http://janskerk-haarlem700.nl/>.

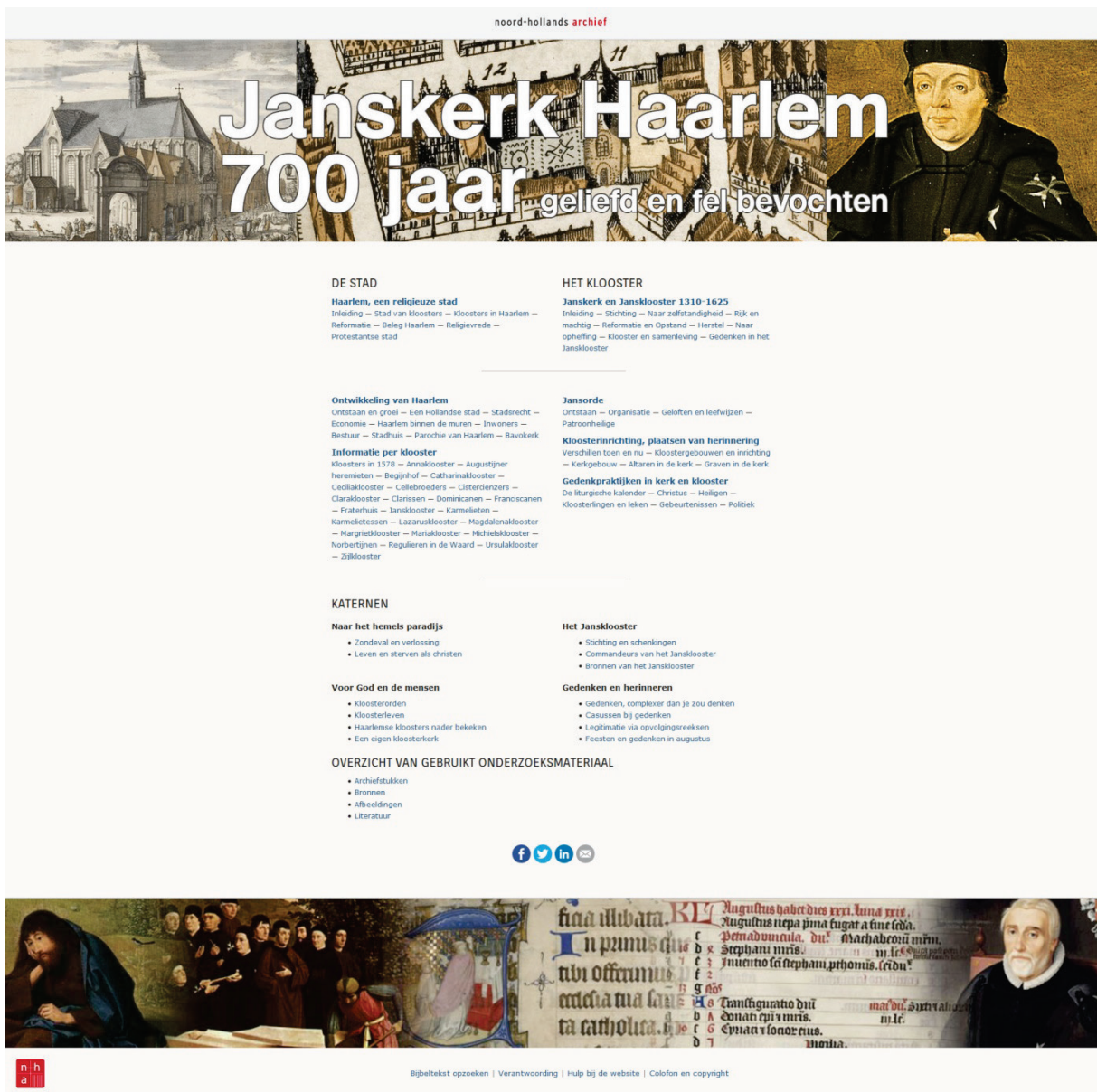


Figure 45. Janskerk Haarlem 700 jaar: <http://janskerk-haarlem700.nl/>.

The website features extensive, thoroughly researched information about the history of the Janskerk, the convent, and the Order of Saint John. In addition it has information about the

history of religious life in medieval Haarlem. The central theme of the website is ‘gedenken, vieren en dankbaar zijn’ (commemorating, celebrating, and being grateful). Commemoration played a part in many aspects of medieval life.

For the announcement by the Noord-Hollands Archief, see also their official website: <https://noord-hollandsarchief.nl/700-jaar-janskerk>.

Membership to Order of Orange-Nassau awarded to two memoria researchers

In the past two years two memoria researchers were awarded the Order of Orange-Nassau for their work in the research field of medieval commemoration, as well as for several other activities.



Figure 46. Truus van Bueren and the mayor of Utrecht, Jan van Zanen. Photo: Lex Raat

In April 2019 Truus van Bueren was appointed the rank of Officer in the Order of Orange-Nassau, because she initiated the MeMO project and oversaw the completion of its first phase until 2013. [This video](#) shows her explaining the history and goals of the MeMO project in her own words. She was also recognised for her many other academic projects and publications, for the research groups she organised with Dutch and international colleagues, and for her efforts to bring the research field as a whole to the attention of a broader public.

In April 2020 Bini Biemans-van der Wal was appointed the rank of Member in the Order of Orange-Nassau. She received this award for her work as researcher and volunteer of the Nicolaïkerk in Utrecht. She has spent many years researching the history and artefacts of this church, as she explains in [this video](#).



Figure 47. Bini Biemans in the Nicolaikerk in Utrecht. Photo:
<https://www.kerkenkijken.nl/actueel/nieuws/koninklijke-onderscheiding>

For more information, see:

- <https://www.uu.nl/nieuws/truus-van-bueren-benoemd-tot-officier-in-de-orde-van-oranje-nassau>
 - <https://utrecht.nieuws.nl/stadsnieuws/71450/lintjesregen-in-utrecht-36-onderscheidingen/>
 - <https://www.utrecht.nl/bestuur-en-organisatie/college-van-b-en-w/burgemeester-en-wethouders/oud-burgemeester-jan-van-zanen/toespraken-burgemeester/algemene-gelegenheid-2020-lintjesregen/>
 - <https://www.kerkenkijken.nl/actueel/nieuws/koninklijke-onderscheiding>
-

MyHeritage digitized every cemetery in Israel

In March 2019 it was announced that MyHeritage, a company known for its online family tree maker and its DNA testing service, digitized every cemetery in Israel. The project is part of a larger effort to digitize every cemetery in the world using the [BillionGraves mobile application](#).

The aim of the project is to help users of the application to quickly find the final resting places of their ancestors. The tomb stones provide vital information about the deceased, such as their names, dates of birth and death, names of parents, and place of origin. If successful, the project could prove to be a valuable tool for *memoria* researchers as well.

For additional information, see: <https://blog.myheritage.com/2014/03/myheritage-employees-digitize-an-entire-cemetery-to-kickstart-global-initiative/>

Colophon

Webmaster and editor-in-chief
Editorial staff

Charlotte Dikken
Charlotte Dikken, Corinne van Dijk, Rolf de Weijert,
Sophie Oosterwijk

This newsletter is part of the project *The functions of art, ritual and text in medieval memoria*, Utrecht University. Reaction to this newsletter can be sent to Charlotte Dikken, using the following e-mail address:

chardikken@gmail.com

The newsletter's website can be visited at: <https://mmr.sites.uu.nl/>