III THE COURT OF SAVOY IN MECHELEN: MUSICAL MANUSCRIPTS IN THE LIBRARY OF MARGARET OF AUSTRIA

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Music always played an important role in the life of Margaret of Austria (1480–1530), during her childhood, while she was a young duchess at the Court of Savoy and also later in life.[1] Our knowledge of Margaret's engagement with music can be pieced together from various kinds of sources, including manuscripts and archival documents recording payments to musicians and music scribes. This article will demonstrate which musical manuscripts were kept in her library in Mechelen and how they contributed to life at the court of the regent. According to the Savoy court historiographer Jean Lemaire de Belges (c. 1473–1515), Margaret practised both vocal and instrumental music. In his biographical treatise *La Couronne Margaritique* (1504–5), Lemaire praises the versatile talents of the young princess:

1 Picker, *The Chanson Albums*, 21–31; Moens-Haenen, Kapp, and Baeten (eds.), *Muziek aan het Hof van Margaretha van Oostenrijk*.

> Beyond noting her skill in all feminine labours, in needlework and embroidery, she exercises herself laudably in vocal and instrumental music, in painting and poetry, both in French and Castilian.[2]

A little later, Lemaire takes up the theme again in his writing *L'amant verd* (1505) and refers to the fact that Margaret had mastered the playing of stringed instruments. Her famous green parrot comments on this as follows:

> It pleased me well to see you singing and laughing, playing, reading and writing, painting and doing portraits, and tuning clavichords, whose strings you know how to make resound.[3]

Music was also a significant part of culture at the court of her sometime husband, Duke Philibert II of Savoy (1480–1504). In 1503, he maintained a court chapel with at least twelve singers and an organist.[4] After his premature death, Margaret returned to the Netherlands. For the next twenty-five years, she assumed the responsible position of regent and governor-general of the Netherlands. As long as her nephew Charles, still a minor, resided in the Court of Cambrai (or *Keizerhof*) at Mechelen, in Margaret's immediate vicinity, she benefited from the young prince's extensive court chapel.[5] In 1509, Charles's court chapel included a chaplain, fifteen singers, four choirboys, an organist and two priests.[6] In 1525, by contrast, Margaret's court chapel, simply called *chapelle* in the Paris inventory of 1523–24, consisted only of clergymen: one confessor (Antoine de Moncut), three chaplains (Pierre Dalma, Jean Florin, François

2 Lemaire de Belges, *La Couronne Margaritique*, 50: "Car oultre la notice de tous ouurages feminins en esguille & en brodure, elle sexcerce louablement en musique vocale & instrumentaire, en peinture, & en rhetorique, tant en langue Françoise comme Castillane […]." The original manuscript is in Vienna, ÖNB, Cod. 3441; modern ed. in Lemaire de Belges, *Oeuvres*, ed. Stecher, vol. 4, 110–11.

3 Jean Lemaire de Belges, *L'amant vert*, *La premiere epistre*, in Lemaire de Belges, *Les Illustrations de Gaule*, K4^{r}: "Bien me plaisoit te veoir chanter et rire, || Dancer, jouer, tant bien lire et escripre || Paindre et pourtraire/ accorder monocordes || Dont bien tu scéz faire bruire les cordes." Modern ed. in Lemaire de Belges, *Les Épîtres*, ed. Frappier, 9.

4 Picker, *The Chanson Albums*, 24, 26–27.

5 Eichberger, *Leben mit Kunst*, 67 n. 32; De Jonge, "The principal residences in Mechelen", 57–60.

6 Picker, *The Chanson Albums*, 27.

Lapa), a *sommelier de chapelle* (Jean Doméon), a *clerc de chapelle* (Claude Jaillon) and another servant (Anthoine Stan).[7] A viol player named Jehan Loys was admitted to court service in 1517. An organist, Fleurquin Nepotis, appears at the same time.[8] In 1519, the regent employed the famous court organist Henry Bredemers (c. 1472–1522), who had previously served her brother, Philip the Fair.[9] He was entrusted by Margaret to teach the children of Philip and Joana, who were brought up in her care.[10] Bredemers taught Charles, Eleonore, Maria and Isabella how to play various instruments, especially the clavichord. At their express wish, he provided Isabella and Eleonore with such a keyboard instrument when they had to leave their aunt's court (▶ Fig. III.1).[11]

▶ p. 224

The singers Jehan Goessins, "master of the choirboys of my lady's chapel" (*maitre des enffans de la chapelle de Madame*), Guillaume le Chevalier and Jehan de la Waerde were admitted to Margaret's court chapel in 1527.[12] A year later, Remond Fabri is mentioned in the records as "tambourin des filles d'honneur" ("drummer of the ladies in waiting") at Margaret's court.[13] The Mechelen city accounts show that a lectern for singers had been set up in the room known as the *chapelle* in 1529.[14] Margaret regularly received singers from the collegiate church of St Romuald (Rombaut) in Mechelen, the seat of Margaret's residence, as well as choirboys from the churches of St Donatian and St James in Bruges.[15] Occasionally wandering singers and musicians visiting from Italy contributed to the entertainment at court.

Singing, dancing and music-making were popular pastimes at court, benefiting the members of the court and noble guests. The social importance of dancing and musical performances is vividly demonstrated in

7 Picker, *The Chanson Albums*, 28; list of employees and their payment, 3 April 1525 (from Brussels, AGR), ed. in Quinsonas, *Materiaux pour servir a l'histoire de Marguerite d'Autriche*, vol. 3, 282–83, document XXXII. The *sommelier* was a low-ranking officer of the chapel who was in charge of the altar cloths and vessels, and the provision of bread and wine for the mass. Many singers were first appointed officially as *sommeliers* before rising to the rank of *chapelain*.

8 Duverger, "Floris Nepotis, orgelist", 1–15; Picker, *The Chanson Albums*, 29–30; Duverger, "Het statuut van de zestiende-eeuwse hofkunstenaar".

9 Martin Picker, "Bredemers, Henry," in *New Grove*.

10 Bassens and Mareel (eds.), *Renaissance Children*; Keyl, "Arnolt Schlick and Instrumental Music", 134.

11 Brauchli, *The Clavichord*, 52–53.

12 Picker, *The Chanson Albums*, 29.

13 Quinsonas, *Materiaux pour servir a l'histoire de Marguerite d'Autriche*, vol. 3, 393.

14 Eichberger, *Leben mit Kunst*, 120 n. 294.

15 Eichberger, *Leben mit Kunst*, 30; Bruchet and Lancien, *L'itinéraire de Marguerite d'Autriche*, 225, 240, 261 (singers from St Romuald); 227 (various musicians); 292 (Italian artists); 293 (singers); Duverger, "Floris Nepotis, orgelist"; Duverger, "Het statuut van de zestiende-eeuwse hofkunstenaar".

Maximilian's autobiographical writings, such as *Weißkunig* and *Freydal* (see also Chapter 2 in this volume).[16]

Given her intensive cultivation of music, it is therefore unsurprising that Margaret of Austria kept several choirbooks and song books (*chansonniers*) in her extensive library. The precious manuscript *Plusieurs basses danses* (KBR, Ms. 9085) held a special position within Margaret's book collection due to its use of black-coloured parchment. The following remarks will describe the structure and furnishings of the library at the Court of Savoy in Mechelen, before discussing the music manuscripts available there in more detail.

THE LIBRARY AS A STUDY AND REPRESENTATION SPACE

Margaret of Austria kept most of her books and manuscripts in the richly furnished library on the first floor of the Mechelen residence. There were three additional places within her living quarters where individual books could be found: the chapel, the private study next to the regent's bedroom and the collection cabinet on the ground floor.[17] In the so-called *cabinet empress le jardin*, Margaret kept the dedication copy of Jean Lemaire de Belges's *La Couronne Margaritique*. This manuscript was of particular significance to the regent as it focussed on her life, her character and her fortunes and misfortunes.[18]

The library of Margaret of Austria was a large room used for the study and storage of the approximately 360 manuscripts, printed books and genealogies in her collection.[19] The Mechelen city accounts record information about the construction and furnishing of this part of the building between 1509 and 1517. It is likely that the library was located on the first floor of the south wing, and could be accessed via the wide staircase on the Voochtstraat (▶ Fig. III.2).[20]

▶ p. 225

The door to the library could be reached via a narrow, gallery-like

16 Maximilian I and Treitzsaurwein, *Der Weiß-Kunig*, 116: "Es wurden auch bey dem Essen, mit manicherlay saidtenspil, und seltzsam New gesang, wunderperlich frewdt, und dazu zierlich pangget gehalten […]." Gstrein, "Tanzmusik-Ensembles", 88–96; Krause (ed.), *Freydal: Zu einem unvollendeten Gedächtniswerk*; Krause (ed.), *Freydal: Medieval Games*.

17 Eichberger, *Leben mit Kunst*, 197–98 for the missals and books of hours kept in the chapel; Eichberger, *Leben mit Kunst*, 184–85 and 384–86 for the items kept in her bedroom, e.g. Petrus Martyr Anglerius's letters from the New World (1521); a report on the entry of Claude de France into Paris (1514); Georges Chastellain's *Le Temple de Boccace*; Giovanni Boccaccio's *Teseida*.

18 Eichberger, *Leben mit Kunst*, 404–5; Eichberger, "Jean Lemaire de Belges".

19 Eichberger, *Leben mit Kunst*, 124–33.

20 De Jonge, "The principal residences in Mechelen", 65.

corridor with a groin vault. The corridor has survived unchanged and still gives an impression of the spatial situation in this part of the court (▶ Fig. III.3).

▶ p. 226

Old floor plans of the former residence, as well as August Van den Eynde's drawings (▶ Figs. III.2, III.4), which were made before the restoration campaign lead by Leonard Blomme (1876–82), allow us to reconstruct the appearance of the residence during Margaret's lifetime.[21] The reconstruction of her former living quarters on the first floor of the west wing support the hypothesis that the library was located in the eastern section of the south wing.[22] The library inventory and the civic records mention four large windows and a fireplace as additional points of reference. Today, there is one additional window axis on the easternmost part of the south side.

▶ p. 225, ▶ p. 227

The Mechelen city account books from 1512–13 mention that ironwork by Daneel Verhoeven was mounted on three of the windows of the library.[23] Nine reading desks made of dark oak, three others of light wood, and some benches made of oak planks suggest that the intention was to create space for numerous users.[24] During the day, the library was lit by large windows; in the evening, the room could be illuminated by several torches in iron holders. A large fireplace, which plays an important role in the library's inventory, provided the necessary warmth.[25]

The carefully kept inventory of 1523–24 names the individual items and refers to the location of each book within the library.[26] In many of the manuscripts listed here, the individual location is also noted in the book to ensure that it was returned to the correct place after use.[27] In Margaret's copy of Gerard van Vliederhoven's treatise *Cordiale de Quattuor novissimis* (*The heart-book on the four last things*), for example, is the following entry on the endpaper: "the fifth volume of the shelf above

21 The earliest floor plan of the ground level dates from 1796 (see: Mechelen Stadsarchief "Regionale Beeldbank Mechelen", SME 001015498); an uninventoried floorplan drawn up by the architect F. J. Bauwens before 1865 shows the rooms on the first floor before Blomme's reconstructions.

22 Eichberger, *Leben mit Kunst*, 72–82. The floor plans drawn up by Blomme around 1880 are kept in Mechelen, Stadsarchief, B 6378 and B 6379; see also Mechelen, Stadsarchief, Varia 203, "Transcripties van historische documenten betreffende werken aan het paleis van Margareta van Oostenrijk verzameld door architect Leonard Blomme, 2de helft 19de eeuw."

23 Brussels, AGR, Chambre des comptes 41292, fol. 217, N° 3; see Eichberger, *Leben mit Kunst*, 441.

24 Brussels, AGR, Chambre des comptes 41292, fol. 203^{v}, N° 3; see Eichberger, *Leben mit Kunst*, 441.

25 Eichberger, *Leben mit Kunst*, 129–30.

26 Paris, BnF, Cinq cents de Colbert, N° 128, fols. 1^{r}–137^{v}; see Debae, *La bibliothèque de Marguerite d'Autriche*.

27 Debae, *La bibliothèque de Marguerite d'Autriche*, 586, Fig. 1b; Debae mentions four books displayed in the lower section.

the door" ("Du purpitre sur la porte le cinquiesme").[28]

In addition, the Paris inventory lists various furnishings: a table, paintings, sculptures, and numerous exotic items of clothing and jewellery imported from Central America.[29] As a special feature, Margaret had the armour of her late husband, Philibert II of Savoy (1480–1504), displayed in a cabinet on an iron frame, next to a marble bust and a painted portrait of him.[30]

Other sources tell us that visitors such as Erasmus of Rotterdam actively used the library; others, including Albrecht Dürer, simply came to see the rooms.[31] Particularly vivid is the description by the Italian Antonio de Beatis, who accompanied Cardinal Luigi d'Aragona as private secretary on his journey through the Netherlands. He writes:

> In Mechelen you can see the house of Madame Margaret, which is very beautiful and well ordered, but there is no particular view from there; there is a richly decorated and well-stocked library for women. The books are all written in French, with velvet cloth and clasps of gilt silver. Furthermore, there are beautiful paintings and other pictures by various and consistently good hands. And one sees a marble portrait head of the Duke of Savoy, her late husband, represented as a handsome young man, as he is said to have looked, and of her venerable Highness herself when young, worked with great skill and of natural proportions.[32]

However, an analysis of the books kept here shows that this was by no means a typical "women's library". Rather, it served a broad spectrum of potential users: men and women, scholars and courtiers, and distinguished foreign visitors.[33]

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28 Gerard van Vliederhoven, *Cordiale de Quattuor novissimis*, Brussels, KBR, Ms. 9048; Debae, *La bibliothèque de Marguerite d'Autriche*, 13, N° 3 (incorrectly reads "ou purpitre").

29 Eichberger, *Leben mit Kunst*, 131–32.

30 Eichberger, *Leben mit Kunst*, 38; 128 n. 344.

31 Debae, *La bibliothèque de Marguerite d'Autriche*, 240; Leube and Lorenz (eds.), *Das Speyerer Evangeliar*.

32 Pastor, *Die Reise des Kardinals Luigi d'Aragona*, 115: "Lli [*i.e.* in Mechelen] se vedde la casa di madamma Margarita, quale è molto bella et assai in ordine, benchè non di molta vista, dove è una libraria per donne assai ornata et ricca. Li libri sono tucti scripti in francese, copertati di velluto, con ciappecte de argento dorate. Et vi sono de belle tavole et altre picture de diverse et tucte bonne mane. Et di marmore vi sono le teste del duca di Savoya di felice memoria suo marito, che mostra essere stato bellissimo giovene como dicono che era, et de sua signoria illustrissima quando era jovenecta con molto artificio facte et secondo la relatione naturalissime." See also Eichberger, *Leben mit Kunst*, 127–28.

33 Eichberger, "'Una libraria per donne assai ornate et ricca'".

THE DISTRIBUTION OF MANUSCRIPTS AND INCUNABULA IN THE LIBRARY ROOM

The inventory of 1523–24 shows that most of the books were placed on shelves along the walls. The door, the fireplace and the four windows facing the Voochtstraat serve as landmarks. Both Marguerite Debae and Ghislaine de Boom assume that the books lay flat on the shelves, as was customary in libraries of the time.[34] The following remarks will describe in more detail the choirbooks, chansonniers and ballade collections in the possession of the Regent.[35]

A shelf mounted high on the wall (*pourpritre en haut)* extended from the door to the fireplace. This first section lists a chansonnier, bound in velvet, which can be identified as Brussels, KBR, Ms. 228: "Item: another song book, covered in velvet, with gilt clasps" ("Item, ung aultre grant livre de chant, couvert de velours tanner, a cloz dorez") (▶ Fig. III.5).[36]

▶ p. 228

Another music manuscript on this shelf was a choirbook, bound in leather, containing seven polyphonic masses (*Liber Missarum*), which Emperor Maximilian gave to Margaret as a gift: [fol. 21^{v}] "Item ung grant couvert de cuyr qui se dit Livre de champt." This can probably be identified as Brussels, KBR, Ms. 6428. In comparison to other books of its type, this is an unusually large book (72.5 × 49 cm).[37]

A second section concerning the upper shelf extended from the fireplace to the wall surfaces between the individual windows.[38] In the inventory of this shelf section, four manuscripts appear in a sequence, all of which are described as small. The first can be identified with the so-called *Album Poetique de Marguerite d'Autriche* (KBR, Ms. 10572).[39] It had a binding of black velvet reinforced with red camlet. Like the *basse*

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34 de Boom, *Marguerite d'Autriche-Savoie*, 165.

35 The ballade perhaps developed from earlier Occitan forms, including dance songs, but by the fourteenth century it had become the most important of the French *formes fixes*; it remained popular until the early sixteenth century. See Preminger and Brogan (eds.), *The New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*, 120.

36 Brussels, KBR, Ms. 228 (The Album of Margaret of Austria); see Debae, *La bibliothèque de Marguerite d'Autriche*, N° 2, 11–12. The description of this book as large ("grant") refers to the page dimensions (36.5 × 25 cm); Meconi, "Margaret of Austria, Visual Representation, and Brussels, Royal Library, Ms. 228"; see also IDEM: https://www.idemdatabase.org/items/show/79.

37 See Debae, *La bibliothèque de Marguerite d'Autriche*, 61–62, N° 39.

38 Inventory dated 1523–24, cited after Debae, *La bibliothèque de Marguerite d'Autriche*, 11–12, N° 2 [fol. 18]: "Le premiere pourpitre encommence sus la pourte"; [fol. 23]: "pourpitre en haut suyvent le precedant entre les fenestres et la chemynee." Greimas and Keane, *Dictionnaire du Moyen Français*, 513, define *pourpitre* as a bookcase in a library ("rayonnage d'une bibliothèque").

39 Debae, *La bibliothèque de Marguerite d'Autriche*, 94–96, N° 66, Brussels, KBR, Ms. 10572 (Poetry album of Margaret of Austria); see Inventory dated 1523–24, [fol. 23^{v}]: "Item, ung aultre petit, couverts de velours noir, doublé ung peult de camelot rouge, qui ce nomme Plusieurs Balades." *Camlet* (*zambelloto* or *zambellotto* in Italian) is a cloth made from camel hair.

danse manuscript, this manuscript has an unusual (oblong) format, and measures 14.4 × 20.9 cm. The three other manuscripts containing ballades have been lost over time. This loss prevents us from ascertaining whether these were pure poetry collections or songbooks with notation.[40]

Another set of shelves was located in the lower part of the wall (*pourpitre d'ambas*). Again, these consisting of four sections each, beginning near the door and near the fireplace respectively.[41] Here the wooden shelves were supported by fourteen iron frames, covered in tin. These were supplied to the court by the Mechelen blacksmith Daneel Verhoeven during the accounting year 1516–17.[42] There were no music books to be found in this section of the library.

The third group of books was kept below the wooden shelves described above. The descriptions are again divided into six shelf sections.[43] This section contained books of medium (*moien*) or large (*grant*, *groz*) size, some of which were leather-bound. One of these is described as "another large book, with the title *Several ballades*" ("Item, ung aultre groz, qui ce nomme Plusieurs Balades"). This entry is to be identified with an anthology of nine poems. They had originally been bound into a separate manuscript, but in the second half of the seventh century they were united with another manuscript from Margarete's library into one single volume (KBR, Ms. 10961–70).[44]

A LATTICEWORK CABINET FOR RARITIES OF SPECIAL SIGNIFICANCE

The last place of storage described in the inventory is a bookcase with a latticework of iron, which contained a total of twenty-eight books: "Here follow the books in the iron latticework [cabinet], beginning near the door" ("S'ensuyent les livres qui sont dedans la traille de fert

40 Debae, *La bibliothèque de Marguerite d'Autriche*, 96, N° 67: inventory dated 1523–24, [fol. 24] "Item, un petit livre, couvers de satin rouge de Bruges, qui ce nomme Plusieurs balades"; idem, 96, N° 68: [fol. 24] "Item ung aultre petit couvers de velours tanner, qui ce nomme Plusieurs balades"; idem, 96, N° 69: [fol. 24] "Item, ung aultre petit, couvert de camelot bleu, qui ce nomme Plusieurs balades." All three of these manuscripts were lost in the eighteenth century.

41 Inventory dated 1523–24, fol. 25: "Le premier pourpitre d'ambas commenceant empress la porte"; 29v: "Le IIIIe pourpritre commenceant empress la chemynee."

42 Eichberger, *Leben mit Kunst*, 126.

43 Inventory dated 1523–24, fol. 34: "[...] les livres estants dessoubz les pourpitres commenceant empres la porte"; fol. 38v: "Le pourpitres d'ambas commenceant empres le chemynee."

44 Brussels, KBR, Ms. 10961–70; see Debae, *La bibliothèque de Marguerite d'Autriche*, 221–23, N° 132, and 335–38, N° 198.

commenceant empres la porte," fol. 43^{v}).[45] According to the city accounts, nine wooden boards with mouldings and nine iron grilles (*tralien*) were delivered to the court in the accounting year 1512–13.[46] At the same time Daneel Verhoeven made two iron chains and two double locks with bolts for Margaret's library.[47] Clearly, the intention was to keep the manuscripts and incunabula stored here separate from the rest of the library collection, and to restrict access to them. These precautions were taken very early on, shortly after the new residence was occupied, and even before the first library inventory was compiled.[48] That such precautions were justified is shown by an incident that must have occurred during a visit by Emperor Charles and his entourage. As the Vienna inventory of the library records, two valuable objects went missing during his stay in the library: a Central American silver bracelet (*brasselet d'argent*) and a gold bell belonging to an Aztec greave.[49]

In this latticework cabinet, which could be locked securely, were two manuscripts of particular interest: the *basse danse* manuscript (KBR, Ms. 9085)[50] and the so-called Savoyard Chansonnier, also called the *Petit Album de Marguerite d'Autriche* (KBR, Ms. 11239).[51] On the front endpaper of the *basse danse* manuscript is written the note "the second volume in the latticework cabinet" ("du trailly de fer le ij^{e}").[52] This entry also tells us that the manuscript came into Margaret's possession after she became a Spanish princess through her marriage to Juan of Castile (1478–97) (fol. 43^{v}: *Se livre est a la princesse despaigne*; further, see Chapter 2 in

45 Debae, *La bibliothèque de Marguerite d'Autriche*, 455; it is not entirely clear how one is to imagine this latticework cabinet.

46 Brussels, AGR, Chambre des comptes 41292 (city accounts for Mechelen for 1512–13), 218^{r}, N° 9: "Item Betaelt danele verhoeuen smed van ix tralien dienende inde || liberarie van my vrouwen van sauoye cost elc stuck vj s^{en} iij d^{en} — ij libra xvj s^{en} iij d^{en}."

47 Brussels, AGR, Chambre des comptes 41292 (city accounts for Mechelen for 1512–13), 219^{r}, N° 12: "Item Betaelt danele verhoeuen smed van xvj gheerden twe bouten || ende twe yseren ketenen dienende int hof van my vrouwen inde || liberarie aldaer costen — xiiij sen vj den brabants"; 219^{v}, N° 4: "Item Betaelt daneel verhoeuen smed van twe dobbel slooten || met twe grendels dienende inde liberarie van my || vrouwen van sauoeyen costen — v sen ix den."

48 Eichberger, "Margaret of Austria's Treasures".

49 Vienna, HHStA, Habsburgisch-Lothringisches Familienarchiv, Familienurkunde 1176 (1524), marginal note on 147: "Il es derobe une clochette derrierement, quant l'empereur fut dans la librayrie"; Familienurkunde 1176, 48: "Item deux brasseletz d'argent L'autre a este prins et derobe, quant l'empereur fut en la librayrie derrierement. Comme afferme le garde", cited after Checa Cremades (ed.), *Los inventarios de Carlos V*, vol. 3, 2510.

50 Debae, *La bibliothèque de Marguerite d'Autriche*, 457–60, N° 330; Inventory dated 1523–24, [fol. 43^{v}] "Item, ung aultre petit, couvers de satin cramoisy, qui se nomme Plusieurs basses dances."

51 Picker, "A new look at the 'little' Chansonnier of Margaret of Austria"; Debae, *La bibliothèque de Marguerite d'Autriche*, 480–82, N° 348, *Album de Rondeaux et Motets*: inventory dated 1523–24, fol. 44^{v}: "Item, ung aultre petit, qui ce nomme Livre de champs."

52 Lemaire, "Les Basses Danses", 14.

the present volume). Debae assumes that this is a copy after a Burgundian manuscript from the middle of the fifteenth century, made around 1495.[53]

The *Petit Album* was made at the request of Philibert II. Martin Picker suggested that it was a wedding gift for the young duchess, and assumes that it was copied around 1501.[54] The manuscript contains six compositions by Pierre de la Rue (c. 1460–1518), Margaret's favourite composer, including his setting of the poem *Tous les regretz qui les cueurs tormentez*, written by Octavien de Saint-Gelais (1468–1502).[55] In the inventory, the location of this manuscript is given as "the ninteenth volume in the latticework cabinet" ("du trailly de fer le XIXe", fol. 1^{v}).

These two manuscripts already show a pattern that also applies to many of the other objects in this latticework cabinet. For the most part, these are manuscripts that Margaret received as gifts, or that came into her possession as a result of her marriages to Juan of Castile and Philibert II. The books and manuscripts kept here are thus directly related to Margaret's complex biography. In 1483, she left the Burgundian Netherlands for the French court in Amboise. Ten years later, she came back to Mechelen for five years. As the future bride of Juan of Castile she moved to the Spanish court in 1497. Only two years later, Margaret had to return to the Burgundian Netherlands where she stayed again at the court of Margaret of York. Her marriage with Philibert II brought about a relocation to the court of Savoy in 1501. After the premature death of her second husband, she returned to Mechelen in 1507 and spent the rest of her life in the Low Countries.[56]

The manuscripts that are discussed in the following section reflect Margaret of Austria's personal itinerary. The twenty-first manuscript in the group kept in the latticework cabinet was *Le Malheur de France*, an anonymous text of only twenty-one pages, written between 1493 and 1495, that is, shortly after Charles VIII of France repudiated his

53 Debae, *La bibliothèque de Marguerite d'Autriche*, 481.

54 Picker, "A new look at the 'little' Chansonnier of Margaret of Austria", 30.

55 Marvin, "'Regret' chansons for Marguerite d'Autriche"; the author analyses the circumstances in which Saint-Gelais composed his *regrets*.

56 Nine objects that can no longer be identified with a specific book in a public library will not be discussed in this context, as no information is available to specify their provenance. This applies to the following entries: *La Passion de Notre Seigneur* (Debae, *La bibliothèque de Marguerite d'Autriche*, N° 331); Avicenna, *De re medica* (Debae, N° 332); *Le calendrier des bergers* (Debae, N° 343); *l'Abuzé en court* (Debae, N° 344); *Un petit traité* (Debae, N° 345); *Plusieurs bons et menuz ouvraiges* (Debae, N° 346); *Livre du Roi Rambaux de Frise* (Debae, N° 347); *Du duc Philippe* (Debae, N° 351); a small book of hours (Debae, N° 355).

prospective marriage to Margaret and had it annulled because he expected more advantages from a marriage to Anne of Brittany.[57] It is a politically motivated, anti-French tract that must have been written in reaction to the disgrace that Maximilian I and his daughter had suffered. The manuscript contains two miniatures: on fol. 2 is a depiction of Maximilian I with his two children Philip and Margaret; and on fol. 5 an allegorical scene with King Charles VIII and *Raison*.

Item № 9 is connected with Margaret's Spanish marriage. This incunabulum, containing a Spanish version of the popular *De Imitatione Christi* of Thomas a Kempis, and Jean Gerson's *De meditatione cordis*, is a small book of 120 leaves, printed by Friedrich Biel in Burgos in 1495. Margaret presumably brought the volume with her from Spain. As Antonio de Beatis testifies, Margaret of Austria spoke Spanish very well, and so it can be assumed that these texts meant something to her personally.

The first manuscript listed in the index of the latticework cabinet contains Gospel texts in Italian.[58] Margaret had inherited this manuscript from Bona Sforza (1449–1503), the aunt of Philibert II, and brought it with her from Savoy to the Netherlands. A similar picture emerges for book № 24: Gian Mario Filelfo's *Consolatoria dedicata alla duchessa di Milano Bona di Savoie per la morte del duca Galeazzo Maria Sforza* (*Consolation dedicated to Bona of Savoy, Duchess of Milan, on the death of Galeazzo Maria Sforza*), written in response to the Milanese Duke's assassination on 26 December 1476.[59] It was a gift from Bona Sforza to Philibert and Margaret, and passed into the possession of the widowed duchess in 1504.[60] Item № 11, Heronchel's *Regime pour garder santé*, can likewise be traced back to Savoy.[61] Item № 22 also comes from the library of Philibert II and is entitled *L'enseignement de vrai noblesse*.[62] Whether the two texts by Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini (later Pope Pius II, 1405–64) also came from this source cannot be proven with certainty. Two Latin texts written by Piccolomini, *De duobus amantibus* and *De curalium miseriis*, were copied around 1470.[63]

57 Brussels, KBR, Ms. 11182; Debae, *La bibliothèque de Marguerite d'Autriche*, 482–84, N° 349.
58 Brussels, KBR, Ms. 10757; Debae, *La bibliothèque de Marguerite d'Autriche*, 455–57, N° 329.
59 Filelfo, *Consolatoria*, ed. Schoysman-Zambrini.
60 Brussels, KBR, Ms. 11217; Debae, *La bibliothèque de Marguerite d'Autriche*, 485–87, N° 352.
61 Brussels, KBR, Ms. 11198; Debae, *La bibliothèque de Marguerite d'Autriche*, 473–75, N° 339.
62 Brussels, KBR, Ms. 11049; Debae, *La bibliothèque de Marguerite d'Autriche*, 484–85, N° 350.
63 Brussels, KBR, Ms. 10856–57; Debae, *La bibliothèque de Marguerite d'Autriche*, 467–70, N° 336.

Book № 7, commissioned by Margaret of Austria, contained the Lives of Saints Margaret, Winifrieda and Catherine, written by Destrées.[64] The allegorical *La consolation de Paix* (*Consolation of Peace*) contains the coat of arms of the Duchess of Savoy on fol. 1^{v}; it was therefore written for Margaret between 1502 and 1503.[65]

The historiographer Jean Lemaire de Belges served the Regent until 1512; he was also administrator of the monastery of Saint Nicolas-de-Tolentin, whose church served as the Savoy mausoleum.[66] One of his books was kept in the latticework cabinet. The text *Le Traicté de la difference de Scismes et des Concilles de l'Eglise et de la preeminence et utilité des concilles de la saincte Eglise gallicane* (*Treatise on the difference of schisms and the councils of the Church, and the preeminence and utility of the French church*) is the twenty-fifth volume listed in this location. It was printed at Lyon in 1511.[67]

The fifth book in the latticework cabinet is a medieval breviary from the possession of Mary of Burgundy (1457–82), Margaret's mother, who died young. Philip the Fair presented the book to Margaret in the year of her marriage to Philibert II.[68] Another book, Philippe Bouton*'s Le miroir des dames* (*Mirror of Ladies*), was written for Mary of Burgundy between 1477 and 1482, and later found its way into Margaret's library.[69]

After her final return to the Netherlands, Margaret settled at Mechelen, where her widowed grand-stepmother, Margaret of York (1456–1503), had also taken up residence.[70] After 1509, Margaret of Austria commissioned a biography of the nun Colette of Corbie (1381–1447). Colette was much revered at the Burgundian court and lived at the Poor Clares' convent at Ghent towards the end of her life. The opening miniature of the *Vie de Sainte Colette* (*Life of St Colette*) identifies Margaret as the owner of the manuscript through her motto and coat of arms.[71]

The final book kept in the latticework cabinet was the richly illustrated *Généalogie abregée de Charles Quint,* which Jean Franco, the secretary

64 Paris, BNF, Ms. français 14977; Debae, *La bibliothèque de Marguerite d'Autriche*, 465–67, N° 335.
65 Brussels, KBR, Ms. 10558; Debae, *La bibliothèque de Marguerite d'Autriche*, 475–77, N° 341.
66 Hörsch, *Architektur unter Margarethe von Österreich*.
67 Lemaire de Belges, *Traicté de la difference des Scismes*, ed. Britnell, 58-59.
68 Brussels, KBR, Ms. 10971; Debae, *La bibliothèque de Marguerite d'Autriche*, 462–65, N° 334.
69 Debae, *La bibliothèque de Marguerite d'Autriche*, 477–78, N° 342.
70 Eichberger, *Leben mit Kunst*; Eichberger (ed.), *Women of Distinction*.
71 Arras, BM, Ms. 461; Debae, *La bibliothèque de Marguerite d'Autriche*, 472–73, N° 338; see also Pearson, "Imaging and Imagining Colette of Corbie".

of the Privy Council (*sécretaite signant au Conseil privé*), signed at Mechelen on 31 October 1527.[72] The manuscript is dedicated to Margaret, who is addressed with the following titles: "To the most high and most illustrious princess and lady, lady Margaret, Archduchess of Austria, Duchess and Countess of Burgundy, dowager of Savoy, Governor and Regent for the Emperor in these regions" ("A tres haulte et tres illustre princesse et dame, madame Marguerite, archiduchesse d'Autriche, ducesse et contesse de Bourgoingne, douairiere de Savoie, Gouvernante et regente pour l'empereur es pays de pardeça"). Her crowned coat of arms with motto, St Andrew's cross and daisies (*marguerites*), appears on fol. 1^{v}. This manuscript was only added to the list a few years after the inventory was completed, and is therefore the last entry in the Paris inventory. This manuscript lists the Habsburg dynasty, beginning with Noah and ending with Emperor Charles V (1500–58), King Ferdinand I (1503–64), Queen Eleanor of Austria (1498–1558), Queen Isabella of Denmark (1501–26), Mary of Hungary (1505–58) and Catherine of Austria (1507–78).

The books described so far were almost all characterised by a direct connection with Margaret's personal career. They reflect her stays at various European courts and refer to her two husbands, Juan of Castile and Philibert II of Savoy. The books from the Duchy of Savoy are the most numerous. Also prominently represented are Margaret's closest relatives: her mother, Mary of Burgundy; her father, Maximilian I; and her brother, Philip the Fair. Two books, however, do not fit into this basic pattern; they will be discussed last.

"DES CHOSES SECRETES"

The twelfth book in the latticework cabinet is one of those that cannot yet be identified with an extant manuscript. The entry on fol. 44 reads: "Item, another small book, called *Le Secret Traitié de l'art d'amour* [*The Secret Treatise of the Art of Love*]".[73] Marguerite Debae provides no further information on this text, but mentions that the Regent gave the book as a gift to her court official and close confidant, Antoine I de Lalaing, Count

72 Paris, BnF, Ms. français 5616; Debae, *La bibliothèque de Marguerite d'Autriche*, 490–92, N° 356.

73 Debae, *La bibliothèque de Marguerite d'Autriche*, 475, N° 340; Publius Ovidius Naso, L'Art d'amours, *traduction et commentaire de l'*Ars amatoria, ed. Roy.

of Hoogstraten (1480–1540), on 26 May 1525.[74] In my opinion, this could be a French edition of the ancient didactic poem by Ovid, called *Ars amatoria* or *Ars amandi*. This famous treatise by the Roman poet was translated into French as early as the thirteenth century.[75] If this attribution is correct, the act of donation raises further questions: Why did Margaret give the court official Antoine de Lalaing a manuscript dealing with practical advice in matters of love? As the evaluation of the inventories has shown, the Count of Hoogstraten was a nobleman in Margaret of Austria's service who enjoyed particular goodwill.[76] He received countless gifts from her possessions over the years, including vessels of gilded silver, a salt cellar, playing cards, paintings, and many books, including a text by the Franciscan Jacques de Marchepallu, *Traité du diamant et de la marguerite* (*A Treatise on the diamond and the Daisy*).[77] Furthermore, Hoogstraten received a painting of St Margaret on canvas.[78] There is no doubt that the regent used these gifts to curry favour with the court official, who was her chief household manager (*premier maître d'hotel*), chief financial officer (*chef des finances*) and a close advisor for years.[79]

In this context, another manuscript that Marguerite kept under lock and key in her library is also significant. It is a richly illustrated parchment manuscript with the title *Devise de Madame* (*Motto of my lady*) or *Complainte de Marguerite d'Autriche* (*Complaint of Margaret of Austria*).[80] This allegorical text clearly bears autobiographical features, and was attributed to Marguerite herself by Josef Strelka (▶ Fig. III.6).[81]

▶ p. 230

This work is a lament by the regent over the early death of her second husband, Philibert II of Savoy, and a melancholic rejection of the temptations of earthly love in favour of higher values and duties. In a less coded form, some of the margins refer to the close emotional relationship between Margaret and her contemporary Antoine de Lalaing, Count of Hoogstraten, through the cipher A-L-C-H. The precise nature of this long-lasting friendship or love has been discussed repeatedly, but is

74 Triest, *Macht, Vrouwen en Politiek*, 122–24.
75 Kühne and Stengel (eds.), *Maître Elie's Überarbeitung*.
76 Eichberger, "The Culture of Gifts", especially 292–95.
77 Debae, *La bibliothèque de Marguerite d'Autriche*, 110, N° 77.
78 Eichberger, *Leben mit Kunst*, 35 n. 46; 263 n. 281.
79 Eichberger, *Leben mit Kunst*, 84.
80 Vienna, ÖNB, Cod. 2584, after 1507; scan from the ÖNB: https://digital.onb.ac.at/RepViewer/viewer.faces?doc=DTL_6638988&order=1&view=SINGLE; Debae, *La bibliothèque de Marguerite d'Autriche*, 487–89, N° 354; Müller, "La poétique de Marguerite d'Autriche".
81 Strelka (ed.), *Gedichte Margarethe's von Österreich*, 333, n. 264.

not germane to this study.[82] We shall therefore limit ourselves to noting that Margaret took pains to deny ordinary library users access to this manuscript, in order to protect her private life.

WHERE WAS THERE SINGING AND DANCING AT THE COURT OF SAVOY IN MECHELEN?

Reciting ballads, singing, making music and dancing together were among the popular courtly pursuits in the evening or on festive occasions. Margaret's extensive possession of manuscripts from this genre indicates that this must also have been the case at the court in Mechelen. But in which premises did such events take place? Although the Court of Savoy in Mechelen did not possess a larger hall during Margaret's lifetime, the almost square room on the first floor of the newly built corner house is a possible location (▶ Fig. III.7).[83]

▶ p. 232

This part of the building was completed around 1512 and could be reached via the wide staircase in the south wing of the residence. In the inventory of 1523–24, this room is described as *chapelle*, which indicates that it could be used as a court chapel for common services. Only the small apse on the Voochtstraat indicates visually that there was an altar in this part of the residence, which had a sacred function. In addition, Margaret had a place in her bedroom for her private devotions. She could reach the oratory at the choir of St. Peter's church unnoticed via a wooden bridge.[84] Almost all rooms within the residence, however, were multifunctional and flexible, so I think it is conceivable that dancing could also be held on the first floor of the new house.

An alternative location for dancing and other festivities was the neighbouring Court of Cambrai on the other side of Keizerstraat. As Krista De Jonge has shown, Margaret of York had settled here during her time as a widow and made some structural changes during her lifetime.[85] Most importantly, she ensured that her residence had a spacious hall, over 45 m long, in the Burgundian style. This residence was later occupied by Margaret's nephew, Archduke Charles. It is no longer possible to reconstruct with certainty how and where the great festivities

82 Triest, *Macht, Vrouwen en Politiek*, 117, 122–24; Eichberger, "The Culture of Gifts"; Müller, "La poétique de Marguerite d'Autriche".
83 Eichberger, *Leben mit Kunst*, 77–79, 118–23.
84 Eichberger, *Leben mit Kunst*, 116–18.
85 De Jonge, "The principal residences in Mechelen", 57–60.

were celebrated at the court in Mechelen. The information on Margaret of Austria's library, on the other hand, is so precise and informative that we can still get a very good picture of the appearance, location and furnishings of this important part of the building, where the precious *basse danse* manuscript had its home.

TRANSLATED BY GRANTLEY MCDONALD