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# Lions or lilies?

## The dynastic identity of Margaret of Burgundy (1374-1441) as represented by material objects

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When Margaret of Burgundy's only child Jacqueline of Bavaria (1401-1436) was only a few months old, her grandfather Philip the Bold, duke of Burgundy, presented the baby with a costly and highly symbolic gift: a small golden ring with a diamond in the shape of a fleur-de-lis.<sup>1</sup> The lily, symbol of the French royal dynasty, not only pointed to Jacqueline's royal descent through her mother, but also to the future her grandfather had in store for her. By promoting marriages of his grandchildren to sons and daughters of his nephew, the French king Charles VI, Philip hoped to strengthen the position of the Burgundian branch of the Valois dynasty in France.<sup>2</sup> Jacqueline married four times, but remained childless, and had to compete with her cousin Philip the Good of Burgundy for power over her hereditary counties of Hainaut, Holland and Zeeland. By strongly supporting her daughter, Margaret of Burgundy demonstrated that her loyalty now lay primarily with the Bavarian dynasty. This raises the question how she perceived and expressed her dynastic identity in different phases of her life: did she identify herself with the lions representing Hainaut, Holland and Zeeland or with the French lilies which symbolised the royal roots of her Burgundian dynasty of origin? This article seeks to answer this question by investigating the representation of her dynastic identity in material objects related to her.

- 1 H. David, *Philippe le Hardi. Duc de Bourgogne et co-régent de France de 1392 à 1404. Le train somptuaire d'un grand Valois* (Dijon, 1947), 156.
- 2 R. Vaughan, *Philip the Bold. The formation of the Burgundian state* (Woodbridge, 2002), 90-92.

Margaret of Burgundy (1374-1441) was the eldest daughter of Philip the Bold and Margaret of Flanders. During her childhood, she was made highly aware of her close relation to the French royal dynasty. Her father, who was a son, brother and uncle of kings, spent a significant part of his time at the royal court in Paris. In 1385, at the age of ten, she married William of Bavaria, while at the same time her elder brother John was joined in matrimony with William's sister Margaret of Bavaria. Through this double marriage, which was celebrated with glittering splendour in Cambrai, a strong political alliance between the two dynasties was formed.<sup>3</sup> By her marriage to the eldest son of the Count of Hainaut, Holland and Zeeland, Margaret became closely connected to the Bavarian dynasty. She personified and strengthened mutual bonds and promoted peace, as was expected of a princely consort.<sup>4</sup>

Throughout her marriage Margaret loyally served the interests of both dynasties, but after her husband's death in 1417 this became increasingly difficult. Count William VI (IV in Hainaut) had designated their only child Jacqueline as his legitimate successor. Although succession by a woman was theoretically possible in Hainaut, Holland and Zeeland, it was usually challenged. In addition, Jacqueline's position was severely weakened by the fact that her first husband, the French *dauphin* John of Touraine, died less than two months before her father, turning her into a fifteen-year-old childless widow. The three marriages that followed were unsuccessful in a diversity of ways, but most importantly from a dynastic point of view: they did not produce any offspring.<sup>5</sup> Jacqueline's position as countess was initially challenged by a member of the Bavarian dynasty, her uncle John of Bavaria, and in a later phase by her nephew Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy, who triumphed in the end, adding Hainaut, Holland and Zeeland to his collection of principalities.<sup>6</sup> As a princely widow, Margaret endeavoured to serve her daughter's interests as the Bavarian heiress in every way that she could, which led to a shift in loyalty when she challenged the interests of her Burgundian dynasty of origin.<sup>7</sup> However, her literary patronage, including a laudatory poem dedicated to her, suggests that she still attached strong value to her descentance from the French royal dynasty.<sup>8</sup>

The term 'dynastic identity' is often used in relation to the premodern era, al-

3 On Burgundian marital politics: C.A.J. Armstrong, 'La politique matrimoniale des ducs de Bourgogne de la maison de Valois', in: *England, France and Burgundy in the fifteenth century* (London, 1983), 237-342.

4 N. Offenstadt, 'Les femmes et la paix à la fin du Moyen Âge: genre, discours, rites', in: *Actes des congrès de la SHMESp, 31e congrès, Angers, 2000. Le règlement des conflits au Moyen Âge* (Paris, 2001), 317-333.

5 On Jacqueline's life, see: A. Janse, *Een pion voor een dame. Jacoba van Beieren (1401-1436)* (Amsterdam, 2009).

6 R. Stein, *De hertog en zijn staten. De eenwording van de Bourgondische Nederlanden, ca. 1380-1480* (Hilversum, 2014), 43-47.

7 M. Brandsma, *Tussen twee dynastieën. Margaretha van Bourgondië, gravin van Henegouwen, Holland en Zeeland* (dissertation, Leiden University, 2020), 63-107. Commercial edition forthcoming.

8 Brandsma, *Tussen twee dynastieën*, 215-218.

though the phenomenon clearly has its roots in the medieval period. The concept departs from the idea that noble dynasties developed a sense of self, for instance through a notion of the family's history. For an individual, belonging to a dynasty was clearly related to sharing the same bloodline, but it implied more than that. Female members of a dynasty whose marriage sealed a political alliance usually maintained close bonds with their family of origin and were expected to pursue its interests as long as the alliance lasted, but might be considered an outsider as soon as the political union fell apart for some reason.<sup>9</sup> Noble individuals expressed their dynastic identity on material objects, which often served political goals. Already in the twelfth century, medieval princely consorts, like three daughters of the English King Henry II, used dynastic display on material objects to communicate their high descent and dynastic identity, thus contributing to the status and identity of their marital family.<sup>10</sup> At the end of the fourteenth century, Count Albert of Bavaria and his wife Margaret of Brieg stressed the legitimacy of the Bavarian dynasty ruling over Hainaut, Holland and Zeeland through the iconography of Margaret's tomb and a series of wooden count's statues in the court chapel in The Hague.<sup>11</sup> Material objects related to their daughter-in-law Margaret of Burgundy can add to our knowledge of how a medieval princely consort perceived and expressed her dynastic identity during the course of her life when power relations changed and shifts of loyalty occurred.

So far, material objects related to Margaret of Burgundy have received little specific attention,<sup>12</sup> which is largely due to the fact that hardly anything remains. From written accounts it is known that heraldic and personal symbols appeared on her clothing and silverware as well as on her painted portraits, which unfortunately have not survived. This article focuses on two types of objects with an iconography which is strongly related to dynastic identity: firstly, her seals that can be found in present day archives in France, Belgium and the Netherlands, and secondly, memorial objects which used to be on display in her funeral chapel in Le Quesnoy before it was destroyed in 1794. Iconographic and heraldic features of these objects expressing Margaret of Burgundy's identity will be discussed in relation to the political situation in different phases of her life.

9 L. Geevers and M. Marini, 'Aristocracy, dynasty and identity in early modern Europe, 1520-1700', in: idem, eds, *Dynastic identity in early modern Europe* (London-New York, 2016), 1-22.

10 J. Jasperse, 'Matilda, Leonor and Joanna. The Plantagenet sisters and the display of dynastic connections through material cultural', *Journal of Medieval History* 43 (2017), 523-547.

11 A. van Egmond, *Materiële representatie opgetekend aan het Haagse hof 1345-1425* (Hilversum, 2020), 58-59.

12 Van Egmond and Jardot mention objects related to her within the broader perspective of material representation of the Bavarian dynasty and seals of the countesses of Flanders and Hainaut, respectively; Van Egmond, *Materiële representatie*; L. Jardot, *Sceller et gouverner. Pratiques et représentations du pouvoir des comtesses de Flandre et de Hainaut (XIIIe-XVe siècle)* (Rennes, 2020).

## Seals

The main function of a seal was to validate documents as legal identifier of the person to whom it belonged, but seals were more than just means of administrative authentication. They were carriers of personal, as well as dynastic identity, and reflected and underlined the owner's power, status and authority, often including a political message.<sup>13</sup> The use of seals, which can be traced back to the fourth century, was initially restricted to kings. In the year 1002, the German Empress Kunegund was the first woman to use her own seal. Her example was followed by English and French queens from 1100 onwards. Gradually the usage of seals became more widespread, including members of non-royal princely families.<sup>14</sup>

Although in view of their function as personal identifier seals had to be unique by definition, general patterns can be discerned in their iconography. Until the mid-thirteenth century, princesses' seals rarely showed their coat of arms. They usually carried an image of the owner, either standing, seated on a throne, or on horseback, carrying attributes of power like a crown or sceptre, symbols like the fleur-de-lis, which was associated with royal power, a hawk, which was associated with hunting (a pastime restricted to the nobility), or religious figures like the Virgin Mary.<sup>15</sup> From the fourteenth century onwards, female members of princely dynasties used heraldic seals displaying their coat of arms, which was a combination of their father's and their husband's arms. This should not be interpreted as a reduction of female identity to that of their male relatives, but rather reflected changes in the political role of princesses during a period when political alliances between dynasties were literally sealed by marriages. As the personification of such alliances, princesses were expected to strengthen the bond between their father's and their husband's dynasty, not only by producing offspring but also by promoting good relations between the dynasties involved. The armorial bearings on their seal underlined their double dynastic identity.<sup>16</sup>

13 Jardot, *Sceller*, 90; B. Bedos-Rezak, 'Women, seals, and power in medieval France, 1150-1350', in: M. Erler and M. Kowaleski, eds, *Women and power in the Middle Ages* (Athens, Georgia, 1988), 61; Van Egmond, *Materiële representatie*, 62-76; M. Bubenicek, 'Et la dicte dame eust esté contesse de Flandres... Conscience de classe, image de soi et stratégie de communication chez Yolande de Flandre, comtesse de Bar et dame de Cassel (1326-1395)', in: E. Bousmar, J. Dumont, A. Marchandisse and B. Schnerb, eds, *Femmes de pouvoir, femmes politiques durant les derniers siècles du Moyen Âge au cours de la première Renaissance* (Brussels, 2012), 317-18.

14 Bedos-Rezak, 'Women, seals, and power', 63-65.

15 Bedos-Rezak, 'Women, seals, and power', 71-76.

16 Jardot, *Sceller*, 224-226.



### Margaret of Burgundy's seals

After her marriage in 1385 at the age of ten Margaret of Burgundy did not immediately acquire her own seal. Receipts relating to the costs of her kitchen were issued under her name, but sealed initially by her master knight (*meesterrijder*).<sup>17</sup> She seems to have started using her own seal around the age of twelve, when according to Hainault customary law she became an adult.<sup>18</sup> A seal for her husband William was produced in the same period, shortly after he had been dubbed a knight.<sup>19</sup> Neither of these seals has been kept, but in all likelihood they mentioned the titles the couple had received upon their marriage: count and countess of Ostrevant, a small county at the western border of Hainault which William held in fief from the French king.

In his catalogue of Belgian princely seals René Laurent mentions 22 surviving seals, which are kept in the archives of Paris, Lille, Mons and Brussels.<sup>20</sup> The actual number is somewhat higher, although there is also a considerable number of documents from which Margaret's seal has disappeared. Laurent distinguishes three different types of seals, differing in size, which were used over a period of 35 years between 1406 and 1440. This includes the period when she was countess of Hainault-Holland (1404-1417), as well as her widowhood from 1417 until the end of her life in 1441 (Table 1). Although seals were often changed after an alteration in the owner's status, Margaret did not alter her seals after her husband's death, which was in line with the fact that she continued to use the same titles, as widows often did.<sup>21</sup>

TABLE 1 MARGARET OF BURGUNDY'S THREE TYPES OF SEALS<sup>22</sup>

Type	Usage	Iconography	Size (mm)
Type 1 (with counterseal)	1406-1434	Coat of arms, tree, <i>marguerites</i>	58
<b>Legend:</b> s' (stalked marguerite) margarete • de • burgodia • ducisse • bavarie • coitisse • hanoie • holl[...] • frizie			
Type 2	1409-1418	Coat of arms, tree	46
<b>Legend:</b> s' + margarete + de + burgodia + ducisse + bavarie + coitisse hanoie + hollie z zellie			
Type 3	1410-1440	Coat of arms, branches and leaves	36
<b>Legend:</b> s * margarete * de * burgondia * ducisse * bavar * com * hain z Hollan			

17 L. Devillers, *Cartulaire des comtes de Hainaut, de l'avenement de Guillaume II à la mort de Jacqueline de Bavière*, volume V (Brussels, 1892), 681.

18 J. Gilissen, 'Le statut de la femme dans l'ancien droit Belge', in: *Recueils de la société Jean Bodin pour l'histoire comparative des institutions, XII, La femme, deuxième partie* (Brussels, 1962), 262-64; Devillers, *Cartulaire*, V, 685; VI, 643.

19 Van Egmond, *Materiële representatie*, 71.

20 R. Laurent, *Les sceaux des princes territoriaux Belges du Xe siècle à 1482*, volume I (Brussels, 1993), 415.

21 See, for instance: Jasperse, 'The Plantagenet sisters', 542.

22 Based on: Laurent, *Les sceaux*, 393-394.



Fig. 1. Margaret of Burgundy's seal, Type 1  
(Source: <http://www.sigilla.org/sceau-type/marguerite-bourgogne-comtesse-hainaut-sceau-27355>)



Fig. 2. Counterseal, Type 1 (Source: <http://www.sigilla.org/sceau-type/marguerite-bourgogne-hainaut-contre-sceau-27385>)



Fig. 3. Seal, Type 2 (coll. State Archives of Belgium, Brussels, Charters Brabant 8054)



Fig. 4. Seal, Type 3 (Source: <http://www.sigilla.org/sigillant/marguerite-bourgogne-27386>)

All three are round, heraldic seals with Margaret's coat of arms as main design on the field. The coat of arms is impaled, with the arms of her husband William VI, Count of Hainault-Holland-Zeeland, on the heraldic right, and those of her father Philip the Bold of Burgundy on the heraldic left. The first and third quarter hold the blue and white Bavarian lozenges and the rampant lions of Hainault-Holland respectively, while the second and fourth quarter show the lilies of the French royal dynasty and Burgundy's blue and white diagonals. Margaret's coat of arms, from a late fifteenth century armorial of the Order of Saint Anthony, of which she was a prominent member, is shown in figure 7.

The symbols surrounding the coat of arms vary on the different seal types. On seal Type 1 the coat of arms is suspended from a tree and flanked by *marguerite* flowers with stalk and leaves on both sides. This seal was used in combination with a counter seal that also shows a *marguerite* flower (fig. 2). On the Type 2 seal the coat of arms is hanging from a tree as well, but at an angle (fig. 3). On the Type 3 seal, which is the smallest of the three, the tree is absent and the coat of arms is surrounded by intertwining branches and leaves (fig. 4).<sup>23</sup>

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The legend written on the border of all three seals consists of the first name and parental dynastic affiliation of the owner, followed by the titles she acquired by her marriage: Margaret of Burgundy, duchess of Bavaria, countess of Hainault, Holland and Zeeland. This corresponds to how she was usually designated, for instance in charters issued by her. The most prestigious title, 'duchess of Bavaria' always came first, preceding the counties of Hainault, Holland and Zeeland, which were always mentioned in that order. On seal type 1, the largely theoretical lordship over Friesland was mentioned in addition,<sup>24</sup> while in seal type 3 both Zeeland and Friesland were left out (table 1).<sup>25</sup> No special significance should probably be read into this: the border of the smaller seals simply did not provide enough space for all titles.

The three types of seals were used in the same period, but on different occasions. The largest and most prestigious seal (type 1) was used for high status agreements between princes. The earliest and most outstanding known example of its usage is for Jacqueline's marriage treaty with John of Touraine, son of the King of France, which was sealed by William and Margaret in 1406.<sup>26</sup> As a widow, Margaret used this seal in 1427-1428, when she officially acknowledged her nephew Duke Philip the Good of Burgundy as governor of Hainault (1427) and of Holland and Zeeland (1428) and in 1434, after the Burgundian take-over, when she entered into an agreement with him

<sup>23</sup> Laurent, *Les sceaux*, 393-394.

<sup>24</sup> On the claim of the counts of Hainault, Holland and Zeeland to Friesland and their largely unsuccessful attempts to gain real power there, see: A. Janse, *Grenzen aan de macht. De Friese oorlog van de graven van Holland omstreeks 1400* (The Hague, 1993).

<sup>25</sup> Laurent, *Les sceaux*, 393-394.

<sup>26</sup> Archives nationales, Paris, Trésor des chartes, J//520.



to settle their financial arguments.<sup>27</sup> The type 3 seal was used primarily for administrative matters and type 2 presumably for matters in between.

Personal, para-heraldic and Christian symbols were usually displayed on seals in addition to heraldry. For instance, an early seal of Margaret's mother, Margaret of Flanders, shows the letter M in central position, surrounded by her arms, while on a later seal the four evangelists appear around her heraldic shield.<sup>28</sup> Philip the Bold's different types of seals show a helmet with a double fleur-de-lis as well as lions and eagles, and the letter P, sometimes in combination with his wife's initial M, besides his heraldry.<sup>29</sup>

Within the Bavarian dynasty, the imperial eagle was displayed on the seals of Emperor Louis the Bavarian and his wife Margaret of Avesnes, who inherited the counties of Hainault, Holland and Zeeland from her brother Count William IV after his unfortunate death in Friesland in 1345. The imperial motif was continued by their sons William V and Albert of Bavaria, but Albert's son William VI chose a lion instead, mirroring the heraldic lions of Hainault and Holland.<sup>30</sup> From around 1400, a Garden (Dutch: *tuin*) was displayed on seals of different members of the Bavarian dynasty, including Margaret's husband William VI and daughter Jacqueline. This circular hedge with a central fence was not related to a formal Order of the Garden, as has been assumed in the past, but an informal sign which was distributed to allies and friends. As Van Egmond has pointed out, it resulted from a joined initiative by Count Albert and his son. Necklaces in the form of a Garden were distributed to allies, relatives and friends. From 1405, when William succeeded his father as Count, the symbol was depicted on coins issued by him, as well as on his seal.<sup>31</sup> Although at first sight, the para-heraldic symbols on Margaret's seals (*marguerites*, a tree and intertwining branches with leaves), do not seem to be clearly linked to either dynasty, several possible associations are discussed below.

### Marguerites

French princesses whose first name was Marguerite often adopted the white-petalled flower with a yellow heart bearing the same name as a personal symbol. In Middle-French the word 'marguerite' could refer to different flowers like marguerites or daisies, but in all likelihood the humble daisy was intended, which in Christian iconography was associated with the Holy Virgin and with mercy.<sup>32</sup> This is in accordance

<sup>27</sup> Brandsma, *Tussen twee dynastieën*, 96-97, 106-07.

<sup>28</sup> <http://www.sigilla.org/sigillant/marguerite-iii-flandre-1240> (visited June 2021).

<sup>29</sup> <http://www.sigilla.org/sigillant/philippe-ii-bourgogne-1239> (visited June 2021).

<sup>30</sup> Jardot, *Sceller*, 240-41.

<sup>31</sup> Van Egmond, *Materiële representatie*, 92-94; V. Flammang and M. van Eeckenrode, 'Le jardin de Hainaut: essai de typologie et clés d'interprétation (XIVe-XVIIIe siècles). Mise en scène d'un comté lors des inaugurations princières en Hainaut', *Bulletin de la Commission royale d'Histoire* 177 (2011), 46.

<sup>32</sup> J.J.M. Timmers, *Christelijke symboliek en iconografie* (Bussum, 1974), 216; P.J. van Winter, 'De Hollandse Tuin', *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 8 (1957), 50.

with the form of the leaves on Margaret's seal, which is rounded like a daisy's. Margaret of Burgundy's mother, Margaret of Flanders, famously used *marguerites* in combination with her husband's first initial, the letter P, as wall decoration for her room in one of her favourite residences, the castle of Germolles in the duchy of Burgundy.<sup>33</sup> As a courtly gesture, Philip would appear in public with the floral symbol referring to his wife's name, for instance during festivities in May 1389, when he wore a *marguerite* on his helmet, stressing their marital bond.<sup>34</sup> A few months later, during Queen Isabel of Bavaria's official entry and coronation in Paris one of his costly outfits was decorated with bunches of *marguerites* in combination with his own initial P.<sup>35</sup>

Margaret and William may have been inspired by this example. One of the garments made for Margaret for her wedding was a tunic decorated with a pattern of her initial letter M and *marguerites*. Her wedding dress was sprinkled with pearls, which may have been an allusion to her name as well, since this the word *marguerite* in Middle-French could indicate a pearl, but it is uncertain whether this symbolism was intended.<sup>36</sup> One of William of Bavaria's many tournament outfits, made in 1392, displayed *marguerites* in combination with oak leaves.<sup>37</sup>

The *marguerite* was perceived as Margaret's personal symbol by the outside world as well. This is evident from a gift which Hainault's most prominent town Mons presented to her when William was inaugurated as count of Hainault in 1405: a golden goblet decorated with *marguerites*.<sup>38</sup> Marguerite kept using the floral symbol as an adornment when she was a widow, for instance in 1422 when she owned an overdress made of white cloth of gold decorated with bunches of *marguerites*.<sup>39</sup> A list of garments from 1426 possibly refers to the same piece of clothing, which appears amongst many other costly items: an outer garment (*houppelande*) from white cloth of gold decorated with *marguerites*, with open sleeves and lined with fur.<sup>40</sup> In choosing the *marguerite* as personal symbol she followed in her mother's footsteps, although Margaret of Flanders did not adopt it on their seal.

33 L. Hablot, 'Les princesses et la devise. L'utilisation politique des devises et des ordres de chevalerie par les femmes de pouvoir à la fin de Moyen Age', in: A. Noyt-Dubois and E. Santinelli-Foltz, eds, *Femmes de pouvoir et pouvoir des femmes dans l'Occident médiéval et moderne* (Valenciennes, 2009), 163-183; Jarlot, Sceller, 339; David, *Le train somptuaire*, 96.

34 Vaughan, *Philip the Bold*, 43.

35 E. Petit, *Itinéraires de Philippe le Hardi et de Jean sans Peur, ducs de Bourgogne (1363-1419)* (Paris, 1888), 530. See, also: David, *Le train somptuaire*, 74, 102.

36 H. David, 'Jeunesse de Jean, second duc Valois de Bourgogne', in: D. Roggen, L. Blondel, and P. de Keyser, eds, *Miscellanea prof. Dr. D. Roggen* (Antwerp, 1957), 71; Petit, *Itinéraires*, 518.

37 *Extraits des Comptes de la recette générale de l'ancien comté de Hainaut*, volume I (Mons, 1871), 195.

38 '1 godet de fin or à couvercle esmaillet et ouvret à fachons de margherittes'; Devillers, *Cartulaire*, III, 256.

39 '...une hupplande de blancq drap d'or à houppiaux de marguerittes...'; Archives Départementales du Nord, Lille (ADN), B 7980, fol. 61v.

40 'une blancque hupplande d'or à margrite à mances ouvertes, fourée de meny vair'; J. Finot, *Inventaire sommaire des Archives départementales antérieures à 1790*, Tome 7, Série B (art. 3229 à 3389): archives civiles: Chambre des comptes de Lille (Lille, 1892), 201.

## Tree

The tree on Margaret's seal has been associated with the Order of the Golden Tree, which was founded by her father Philip the Bold in 1403 with the oak as its symbol. It has been assumed that Philip gave his daughter a Golden Tree necklace,<sup>41</sup> but in her book on Philip's gift-giving associated with this Order, Carol Chattaway has pointed out that this is a misinterpretation of sources. There were no women amongst the recipients, although Philip did show his usual *largesse* by giving other New Year's gifts to several members of his family, including his wife and daughters.<sup>42</sup>

This does not rule out the possibility that the tree on Margaret's seal is associated with her father's Order, but there is an alternative explanation which has not been brought forward yet. Margaret spent most of her life, from her marriage in 1385 until her death in 1441, in the castle of Le Quesnoy, the main comital residence of Hainaut. It was where her daughter Jacqueline was born and where she herself would be buried according to her personal wishes. Due to its location near to the Mormal forest, the name of the town is derived from the Latin word for a place surrounded by oak trees: *quercitum*. The main charge on the town's arms are three oak trees, a large one flanked by two smaller ones.<sup>43</sup> It's quite likely that the tree on Margaret's seal referred to the name and arms of her residential town, although in addition there may have been an association with her father's Order of the Tree.<sup>44</sup> It was not unusual for para-heraldic symbols to embrace more than one symbolic meaning.<sup>45</sup>

## Branches

All para-heraldic symbols on Margaret's seals (the tree, *marguerites* and leafed branches) were of a vegetal nature. This is not self-evident, since seals often showed animals, like lions or eagles, or biblical figures, like the angels upholding the arms of Margaret of Bavaria, Margaret's sister-in-law, on one of her personal seals. Angels were a recurrent theme within the Valois Burgundian dynasty.<sup>46</sup>

Lucie Jardot mentions vegetal symbols as a characteristic of the branch of the Bavarian dynasty to which Margaret belonged by her marriage. On his grand equestrian seal, the image of her father-in-law Albert of Bavaria on horseback was surrounded by a vine, with flowering branches on the counterseal. Flowering branches were also present on the seals of William VI and Jacqueline. According to Jardot, each of Jac-

<sup>41</sup> Jardot, *Sceller*, 292, nt. 9.

<sup>42</sup> C.M. Chattaway, *The Order of the Golden Tree. The gift-giving objectives of duke Philip the Bold of Burgundy* (Turnhout, 2006), 66.

<sup>43</sup> A.P. Giloteaux, *Histoire du Quesnoy* (Paris, 1997), 11-12.

<sup>44</sup> Jardot, *Sceller*, 282.

<sup>45</sup> See for instance: Flammang and Van Eeckenrode, 'Le jardin de Hainaut', 48.

<sup>46</sup> Jardot, *Sceller*, 258, 347.

queline's four consecutive husbands adopted this motif on their personal seals, underlining the intended dynastic continuity coupled to their aspirations to become ruler of the counties of which Jacqueline was the Bavarian heir,<sup>47</sup> although for husband number four, Frank van Borssele, this was no longer a realistic option after the Burgundian take-over. By adopting similar branches on her type 3 seal, Margaret of Burgundy may have emphasized the dynastic bond between her husband, her daughter and herself. However, it should be noted that the use of botanical motifs in general, and branches in particular, was not restricted to the Bavarian dynasty. Margaret's brothers John and Anton adopted lianas of hop and raspberry bushes respectively as personal emblem.<sup>48</sup>

### Garden

Finally, it is significant to mention that the Garden (Dutch: *Tuin*), which took up a prominent position on the seals of both William and Jacqueline, was not present on Margaret's. Different symbolic meanings have been attributed to the Garden, which in Christian iconography was associated with the Virgin Mary and in a more general sense symbolised unity, safety and protection.<sup>49</sup> At a political level a connection of this symbol with the Hook party has been suggested by Van Tol. During the chronic strife between Hooks and Cods (*Hoeken en Kabeljauwen*) in late medieval Holland and Zeeland, William was strongly connected with this party.<sup>50</sup> However, more recently Véronique Flammang and Marie van Eeckenrode as well as Van Egmond have convincingly argued that it is more likely that the Garden was intended to symbolise the opposite of party strife: unity of the counties Hainault, Holland and Zeeland.<sup>51</sup>

According to the comital accounts, Margaret was the first to receive a golden Garden necklace 'to wear around her neck' in 1387.<sup>52</sup> It is likely that the occasion for this costly gift was the consummation of her marriage, a ceremony which must have taken place around this time. Margaret turned thirteen in the month in which she received the Garden necklace, which was a customary age. A golden necklace was a proper gift for such an occasion.<sup>53</sup> This suggests that originally the Garden may have symbolised marital unity, which later evolved into unity in a political sense. It is striking that the Garden does not appear on Margaret's seal or on any other material object linked to

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<sup>47</sup> Jardot, *Sceller*, 253-354

<sup>48</sup> David, *Le train somptuaire*, 78-79; Jardot, *Sceller*, 282.

<sup>49</sup> Van Winter, 'De Hollandse tuin', 49-50.

<sup>50</sup> D. van Tol, 'De Orde van de Hollandsche Tuin. De oudste ridderorde van Holland (1387-1418)', *De Nederlandsche Leeuw* 114 (1997), 6-34.

<sup>51</sup> Van Egmond, *Materiële representatie*, 90-96. Flammang and Van Eeckenrode, 'Le jardin de Hainaut', 48.

<sup>52</sup> 'Item des donredaghe na Bavonis tot Berghen in Henegouwen betaelt Jacomart Piercheen den goudsmit van enen gulden tuyn die mijn vrouwe van Oestervant om horen hals draghen soude van goude'; Nationaal Archief, The Hague, Archief Graven van Holland, 1242, f. 87v. Dated Thursday 3 October 1387.

<sup>53</sup> Brandsma, *Tussen twee dynastieën*, 40-41.

her, apart from the original golden necklace (which has not been kept). A likely explanation is that, in contrast to her husband and daughter, as consort Margaret had no hereditary right to rule and thus no need to express a uniting role within the three counties.

Overall, it can be concluded that the iconography on Margaret of Burgundy's seals is a unique mixture of personal and dynastic symbols, which combined the formal heraldry of Burgundy and Bavaria with (sometimes poly-interpretable) symbols more loosely related to both dynasties. This is in accordance with Margaret's uniting role between the two dynasties during her marriage.

### Funeral chapel

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In the final years of her life, a funeral chapel was built in Le Quesnoy according to Margaret of Burgundy's personal wishes and orders, as an extension to the parish church. As a princely widow she was relatively independent and received an impressive income from her dower which enabled her to finance this.<sup>54</sup> In choosing to be buried in her residential town she did not follow any dynastic tradition. During her lifetime members of the Bavarian dynasty had been buried either in Valenciennes, like her husband William, or in The Hague, like daughter Jacqueline. In all likelihood, she could have chosen to be buried near one of them. A tomb in Dijon, near to the splendid memorials of her close relatives from the Burgundian dynasty may also have been an option. By choosing her residential town, where she had spent 55 years of her life, Margaret had the opportunity to build and decorate it completely according to her own wishes.

The medieval practise to commemorate individuals, by prayers as well as through material objects, stemmed from a combination of religious and profane motivations. From a Christian perspective, prayers for the deceased would allow their souls to pass from purgatory to heaven. In the late Middle Ages it was common practice to bestow funds on religious institutions in order to celebrate commemorative masses for individuals, usually on their dying day. In addition, by telling a dynastic story memorial foundations, chapels and works of art often served political goals. Memorial objects near tombs in churches, including portraits and depictions of heraldic shields, often served to underline the bond between the deceased and their relatives. Such objects might combine personal, political and religious objectives.<sup>55</sup> Keeping alive the memory of their lineage was a task which often fell to princely widows like Margaret of Burgundy, who outlived both her husband and daughter.<sup>56</sup>

<sup>54</sup> On her financial means, see: Brandsma, *Tussen twee dynastieën*, chapters 7-8.

<sup>55</sup> T. van Bueren, 'Zorg voor het hier en het hiernamaals. De functie van memorietafels in het (aarts-)bisdom Utrecht in de middeleeuwen', *De Nederlandsche Leeuw* 115 (1998), 154, 187-188.

<sup>56</sup> Jardot, *Sceller*, 260-262.



The newly built chapel was dedicated to Saint Margaret and St Loy (*Eligius* in Latin). Margaret's reverence for her name saint does not need an explanation, but her choice for St Loy is less obvious. The popular patron saint of blacksmiths, as well as gold and silversmiths, was worshipped within both the Bavarian and the Burgundian dynasty.<sup>57</sup> Her personal reverence for him may have been related to the successful siege of Gorinchem on St Loy's day (1 December) in 1417, which she witnessed personally. After William VI had conquered this town during his war with the Lord of Arkel, which lasted for more than a decade (1401-1412), he had donated it to his wife as part of her dower,<sup>58</sup> but Jacqueline's opponents had taken possession of it upon his death. The surprisingly rapid recapture of the town by her daughter's troops, an event which has been highlighted in Dutch historiography, may have caused Margaret to perceive this saint as her helper.

After her death, a wooden coffin was initially placed in the chapel as a representation of her underground burial place.<sup>59</sup> A wooden monument of unknown design was added by order of her almoner and chaplain shortly after the funeral.<sup>60</sup> This must have been replaced later by the modest marble tomb mentioned by nineteenth-century archivist and historian Léopold Devillers, who unfortunately did not mention his source.<sup>61</sup> The parish church of Le Quesnoy was completely destroyed in 1794. Since there are no material remains (except perhaps buried underground), the iconography of the chapel itself or the objects which used to be in it have not been described in (art) historic literature. However, some information on objects that used to be in the chapel is mentioned in accounts relating to the building activities, as well as in a sixteenth-century manuscript kept in the French National Library. Memorial objects described and depicted in these sources are relevant to how she perceived and expressed her dynastic identity at the end of her life, when the political strife had ended, her immediate Bavarian relatives had died and the Burgundian dynasty had taken control of Hainault, Holland and Zeeland.

### Royal blood

The French National Library holds a sixteenth-century manuscript with descriptions and drawings of epitaphs and coats of arms in churches in Flanders and Hainault.<sup>62</sup> It was acquired around the year 2000 and has been attributed to Jacques le Boucq (†1573), an artist from Valenciennes who became Emperor Charles V's king of arms and is known for his heraldic drawings in armorials as well as for his princely por-

<sup>57</sup> Brandsma, *Tussen twee dynastieën*, 207-208.

<sup>58</sup> Janse, *Een pion voor een dame*, 134-13; Brandsma, *Tussen twee dynastieën*, 121.

<sup>59</sup> ADN, B 9096, f. 29.

<sup>60</sup> ADN, B 9096, f. 35v.

<sup>61</sup> L. Devillers, 'Marguerite de Bourgogne', in: *Biographie Nationale*, volume XIII (Brussels, 1894-1895), 611.

<sup>62</sup> Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris, Nouvelles acquisitions françaises (BNF, Naf), 25665.

traits in the well-known *Recueil d'Arras*.<sup>63</sup> Margaret of Burgundy's funeral chapel appears under the heading 'Quesnoy'. Dating from roughly one century after her death this may be the oldest available description. Although it is possible that alterations had been made in the intermediate period there is no reason to assume this, since after Margaret's death, Le Quesnoy was less important as a residence.

The description starts as follows: 'On the left lies lady Margaret of Burgundy, wife of William, Duke in Bavaria, Count of Hainault, Holland and Zeeland and Lord of Friesland [...].'<sup>64</sup> The text subsequently mentions the religious foundation which Margaret set up a few months before she died, allocating a yearly sum from the nearby lordship of Gommegnies to the chapel for the salary of priests performing holy mass there. This is in agreement with what we know from other sources.<sup>65</sup> What follows is information about the exact sum and when, where, and by whom it had to be paid, including specific details on the type of coin to be used for payment. It seems likely that this information was copied from a foundation plate. Such plates, which in Hainault can be traced back to the thirteenth century, usually contained text only. Clearly visible near the tomb they constantly reminded those concerned of the financial commitment made by the donor and the duties the local clergy were obliged to perform, thus serving as a public contract, while at the same time reminding passers-by of the piety and generosity of the donor.<sup>66</sup>

The next page of the manuscript is headed by the following text: 'In the same chapel are painted on a wooden panel the eight quarters of lady Margaret, as follows'.<sup>67</sup> Painted wooden boards with the armours of the deceased and their ancestry must have been quite common in late medieval churches. Most of them have been destroyed during wars and revolutions,<sup>68</sup> but written evidence of their previous existence remains, for instance concerning the fifteenth-century tomb of the Lords of Arkel in the Dutch town of Gorinchem, which is described in the *Chronicon Hollandie*, a chronicle about the history of Holland and Utrecht written around 1471. The chronicle informs us that a beautiful wooden board with the 'achtendeel' (heraldic eighths) hung above the tomb, displaying the arms of the eight great-grandparents. Although according to Antheun Janse the ancestors mentioned in the chron-

63 A. Châtelet, and J. Paviot, *Visages d'antan. Le Recueil d'Arras* (Lathuile, 2007), 18-21.

64 'Au costé senestre gist, madame Marguerite de Bourgogne, femme de Guillaume, duc en Bavière, conte de Haynault, Holland et de Zeeland, seigneur de Frise...'; BNF, Naf 25665, f. 97v.

65 Devillers, 'Marguerite de Bourgogne', 611; idem, *Cartulaire*, V, XLIII-XLIV.

66 Van Bueren, 'Zorg voor het hier en het hiernamaals', 179; J.O.L.M. van Nieuwstadt-van Hooff, 'De nagedachtenis opgeluisterd en zekergesteld. Een onderzoek naar opdrachtgevers, iconografie en functie van laatmiddeleeuwse epitafen in Henegouwen en Artesië', *SIGNUM* 8 (1996), 103-105.

67 'En la mesme chapelle sont paincts en ung tableau de bois les VIII quartiers de madame Marguerite, come sensuit'; BNF, Naf 25665, f. 98.

68 R.E.O. Ekkart, 'Epitafen in Hollandse kerken', *Bulletin van de Stichting Oude Hollandse Kerken* 10 (1980), 3; A. Graafluis, 'Over het ontstaan van het gebruik om wapenborden in de kerken op te hangen', *Oud Utrecht* 33 (1960), 69-74.

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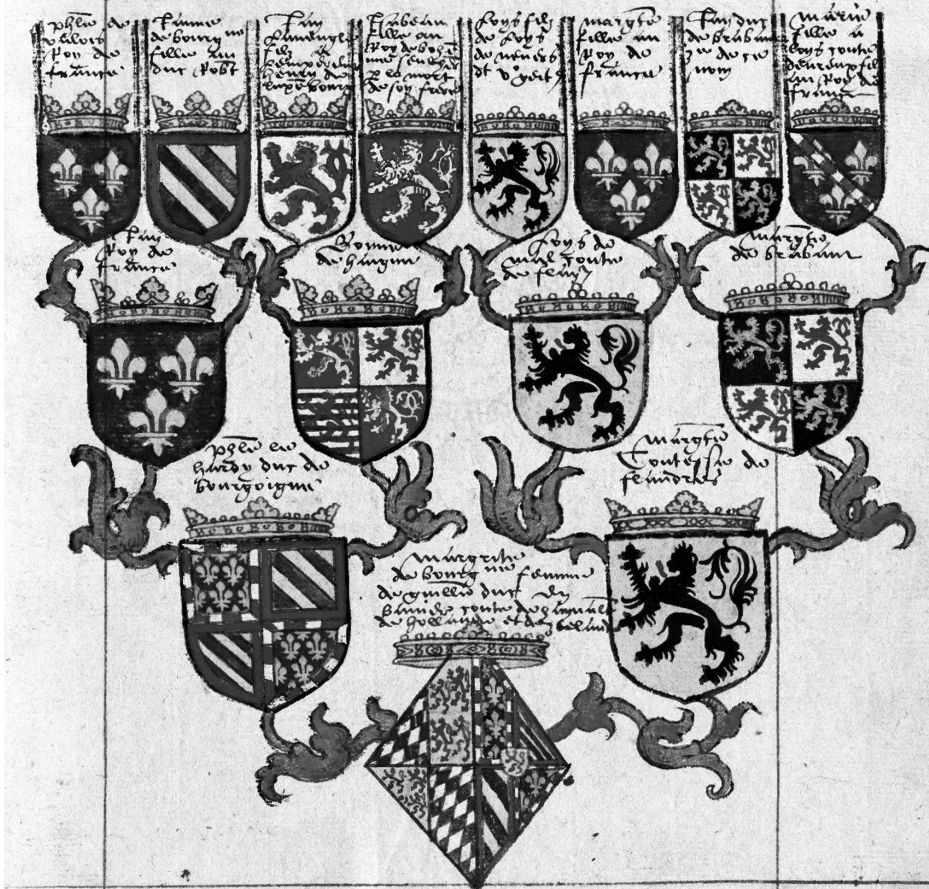


Fig. 5. Sixteenth-century drawing of a heraldic board in Margaret of Burgundy's funeral chapel (*coll. Bibliothèque National de France, Paris, Naf 25665, fol. 98*)

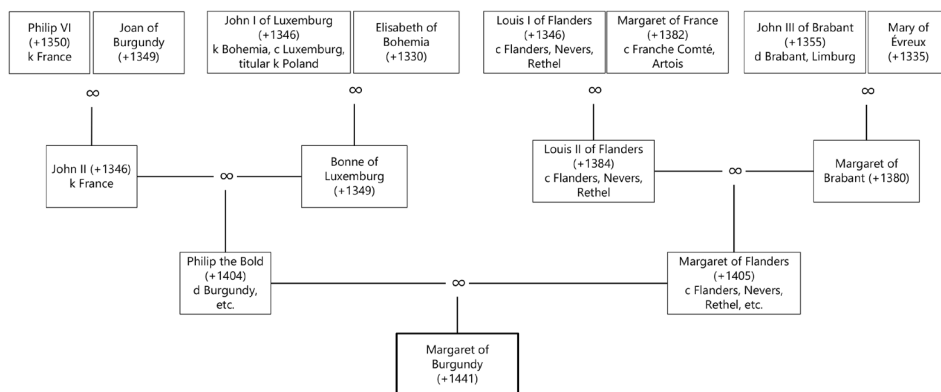


Fig. 6. Margaret of Burgundy's ancestry (k = king; d = duke; c = count(ess))

icle are wrong, it confirms the presence of such boards in the late medieval period.<sup>69</sup> There is no written evidence that Margaret ordered a heraldic panel for her chapel, but in view of her personal involvement during the whole building process it is very likely that she planned it herself.

The wooden panel displaying the coats of arms of Margaret of Burgundy and her parents, grandparents and great-grandparents is depicted in the manuscript in full colour. The names and armorial bearings of her ancestors are represented correctly (fig. 5 and 6). Crowns appearing on top of the shields seem to indicate the difference in status and hierarchy between kings on the one hand and princes on the other, with kings and their spouses in the paternal line wearing larger crowns than the maternal ancestors, who were dukes and counts. Notably, judged by their crowns, her parents appear to be king and queen, which may be either a mistake or an intentional upgrading. The crown on Margaret's own shield appears as an intermediate between a royal and a princely crown. The lozenge form of her shield with the impaled arms of her husband and father represents her as a widow.<sup>70</sup> The French fleur-de-lys was present on the coat of arms of three of her eight great-grandparents and passed on in a straight line from King Philip VI and King John II of France, through her father, to Margaret herself. The second most prominent coat of arms is the black lion of Flanders, passed down to Margaret's mother via her grandfather and great-grandfather, Counts Louis II and Louis I of Flanders respectively. Since Margaret was not the heir-

<sup>69</sup> A. Janse, *Ridderschap in Holland. Portret van een adellijke elite in de late middeleeuwen* (Hilversum, 2001) 269. See also: A. van Steensel, *Edelen in Zeeland. Macht, rijkdom en status in een laatmiddeleeuwse samenleving* (Hilversum, 2010), 360-363.

<sup>70</sup> S. Slater, *The history and meaning of heraldry. An illustrated reference to classic symbols and their relevance* (London, 2004), 111.

ess of Flanders, it did not appear on her own armorial bearings normally, but in this case the lion of Flanders was added to the armorial left of her coat of arms as a heart shield, emphasizing this prestigious dynastic connection via the maternal line. However, the armorial board clearly demonstrated that the most prestigious motif, the French lily, was predominant amongst Margaret's ancestors.

### A royal marriage

According to accounts of the *chatelain* of Le Quesnoy, Margaret ordered a number of windows for her chapel from Holland, which were delivered in 1440.<sup>71</sup> Administrative sources like accounts and receipts can act as a good source of information about the presence of material objects when the objects themselves no longer exist. Although the information about objects which have been commissioned or bought is usually reliable, it is seldomly complete and iconographic information is limited.<sup>72</sup> Memorial windows were often used to emphasize noble descent,<sup>73</sup> but the chatelain's accounts do not reveal what was depicted on these. However, a receipt dating from 1441 mentions a payment to a mason who had been working on a pillar in the chapel supporting a window of which the following short description is given: 'the memorial window for my lord the dauphin and madame Jacqueline of Bavaria, his wife'.<sup>74</sup> This must refer to one of the windows which Margaret ordered from Holland. Apparently, she chose to memorialize Jacqueline with her first husband John of Touraine, who had been crown prince (*dauphin*) of France. The couple were married at a very young age in 1406 and had lived at Margaret's court until 1415, when Jacqueline turned fourteen and the marriage was effectuated in The Hague.<sup>75</sup> If John would not have died unexpectedly two years later, Jacqueline might have become queen of France. But he did, and three husbands came after him. Since the accounts mention four or five windows for the chapel it is likely that Margaret herself, her husband or other members of either dynasty were represented as well, but it seems improbable that any of Jacqueline's other husbands would have been amongst them.

It is quite understandable that Margaret did not choose to immortalize her daughter with either her second or her third husband, Duke John IV of Brabant and Humphrey of Gloucester, respectively. Although she had initially promoted these marriages, hoping they would help to strengthen her daughter's position as heiress to her father's counties, both turned out be failures. But Margaret might well have commem-

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<sup>71</sup> ADN, B 9094, f. 51r-v; B 9095, f. 36v.

<sup>72</sup> Van Egmond, *Materiële representatie*, 28, 159-160.

<sup>73</sup> Janse, *Ridderschap*, 253; Van Steensel, *Edelen in Zeeland*, 369-370.

<sup>74</sup> 'le verière de le ramenbranche monseigneur le dolphin et madame Jacques de Bavière, s'espeuse'; C.C.A. Dehaisnes, ed., *Inventaire sommaire des archives départementales antérieures à 1790. Nord*, volume IV (Lille, 1881), 149.

<sup>75</sup> Janse, *Een pion voor een dame*, 81-82.



orated her daughter with husband number four, Frank van Borssele. Although this final marriage could not help Jacqueline to retrieve her counties anymore and did not produce any offspring either, at least it provided financial security. We do not know whether Jacqueline and Frank were a happy couple in the modern sense, but the fact that she had expressed the wish to be buried in Sint-Maartensdijk, which was his main residence, suggests that she found some peace in her final years. Although the selective memorization of the highest ranking husband of a deceased female family member was not unique in itself,<sup>76</sup> it comes across as somewhat of an offence to Frank, who was still alive, that Jacqueline's first marriage was commemorated and overtly held in higher esteem by his mother-in-law. The explanation for this remarkable choice lies in two intertwined motifs: status and dynasty. Margaret attached great value to both her own status and that of her daughter. As *dauphin* of France Jacqueline's first husband had the highest status, while number four as a member of the high nobility of Zeeland had the lowest rank. Other evidence also suggests that Margaret did not value her daughter's fourth husband very highly, including the fact that due to her influence, Jacqueline was not buried in Sint-Maartensdijk but in the comital chapel in The Hague.<sup>77</sup>

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Not only had the marital union between the houses of Bavaria and Valois been the highest achievable goal in terms of status, it had also been instrumental to Burgundian political aims. By choosing to depict Jacqueline with her first husband in her funeral chapel, Margaret kept the memory of the Bavarian dynasty alive and memorised Burgundian ambitions, while at the same time further emphasizing her own royal roots. It is more than likely that the window would have displayed John of Touraine's fleur-de-lis coat of arms, which would have mirrored those dominating her own armorial board.

What is known about Margaret's literary patronage during her widowhood confirms that she attached great importance to her royal roots. An anonymous laudatory poem dating from after 1419 which is dedicated to her,<sup>78</sup> starts with a eulogy of French kings from the past, like Charlemagne, Clovis, Louis the Saint, and Dagobert, thereby glorifying her royal descent. Her purchase at the end of her life (in 1439) of a volume of *Le miroir historial*, a historiographic work dealing with the history of France and its kings, also points to a specific interest in the royal dynasty.<sup>79</sup>

Margaret must have foreseen that Le Quesnoy would no longer be a main residence after her decease and that her funeral chapel would be visited mainly by local and regional citizens, nobility and clergy. Members of the Burgundian dynasty like Duke Philip the Good and his wife Isabel of Portugal, who attended her funeral, on-

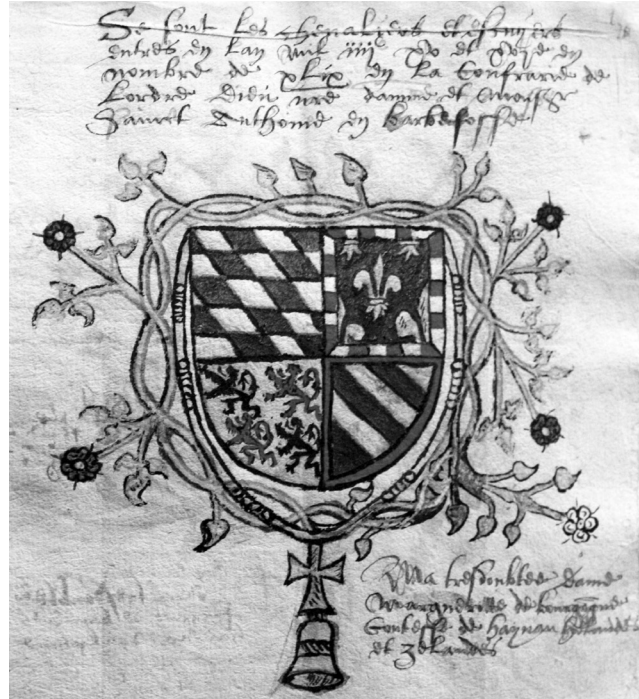
<sup>76</sup> See, for instance: Van Steensel, *Edelen in Zeeland*, 361.

<sup>77</sup> Brandsma, *Tussen twee dynastieën*, 105-106; Janse, *Een pion voor een dame*, 331.

<sup>78</sup> Royal Library of Belgium, Brussels, Ms. II, 1043, f. 30-39v.

<sup>79</sup> Brandsma, *Tussen twee dynastieën*, 215-217.

Fig. 7. Margaret of Burgundy's coat of arms in an armorial of the Order of Saint Anthony, of which she was a member. The tau-cross and bell are symbols of the order. The armorial dates from the second half of the fifteenth century (coll. Bibliothèque universitaire, Mons, Fonds Puissant, Ms. 11, fol. 20)



ly incidentally visited their newly acquired residence after her death. However, after the Burgundian takeover in 1433 and Jacqueline passing away in 1430, there were no longer any political motives for displaying a dynastic message to a specific audience. When eternal memory was all that still counted, both lilies and lions were on display, but Margaret seems to have identified herself most strongly with the lilies of the French royal dynasty.

## Conclusion

Material objects related to Margaret of Burgundy reflect different constituents of her dynastic identity dominating in different phases of her life. Before her marriage, her Burgundian upbringing imbued her with a strong sense of being closely related to the French royal dynasty. On her seals, which date from the period when she was countess-consort of Hainault, Holland and Zeeland, her coat of arms united her husband's lions of Holland and Zeeland with her father's royal lilies, thus stressing her intermediary dynastic position, as was customary in the late medieval period. Para-heraldic symbols on her seals can also be related to both dynasties. To what extent she personally influenced the iconography is unknown, but it seems significant that she continued to use the same seals during her widowhood, stressing continuity in order to strengthen her authority in the period of upheaval after her husband's death.

In her funeral chapel both Bavarian and Burgundian components of her identity were represented on memorial objects, but based on what we know the French royal lilies took centre stage. Lilies dominated on the memorial board showing the coats of arms of her forefathers and mothers and also emerged on a memorial window. By choosing to depict her daughter Jacqueline together with her first husband John of Touraine as *dauphin* of France, Margaret showed her preference in retrospect to this royal match. This suggests that at the end of her life, she attached the highest value to her royal ancestry, which is in line with what is known about her literary patronage. When political issues were no longer relevant, her dynastic awareness returned to her primary identity.

**Margreet Brandsma**

## Lions or lilies?

The dynastic identity of Margaret of Burgundy (1374-1441) as represented by material objects

As a result of her marriage to William of Bavaria, eldest son of the count of Hainault, Holland and Zeeland, Margaret of Burgundy (1374-1441) personified the political alliance between the Burgundian and Bavarian dynasties. During her marriage she was highly loyal to both, but the struggle for power which ensued after her husband's death caused a shift in her dynastic loyalty. By supporting her only daughter Jacqueline of Bavaria's right of succession she acted against the interests of the Burgundian dynasty, which in the end seized power over the three counties. This article discusses how material objects originating from different periods of her life reflected changes in how she perceived and expressed her dynastic identity, focussing on her seals and on memorial objects in her funeral chapel.

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