Colard Mansion

and the Brugean printing industry in the second half of the fifteenth century

(working title)

Exhibition spring 2018



Openbare Bibliotheek Brugge – Ludo Vandamme Groeningemuseum – Evelien de Wilde

Introduction

- Outstanding collection of incunabula by Colard Mansion in Public Library of Bruges
- One of the first book printers (1476-1484) to include engraved illustrations in incunabula
- Interdisciplinary approach

Selection objects

- Focus: Colard Mansion's incunabula and manuscripts in relation to contemporary engravings in interdisciplinary context
- Selection: primarily incunabula, manuscripts,
 engravings
 additionally woodcuts, paintings, drawings,
 archival documents, engraved metal objects,
 woodcarvings and other works of art
- Area of focus: primarily Bruges and the Southern
 Netherlands
 additionally other regions, in order to flesh out the story line

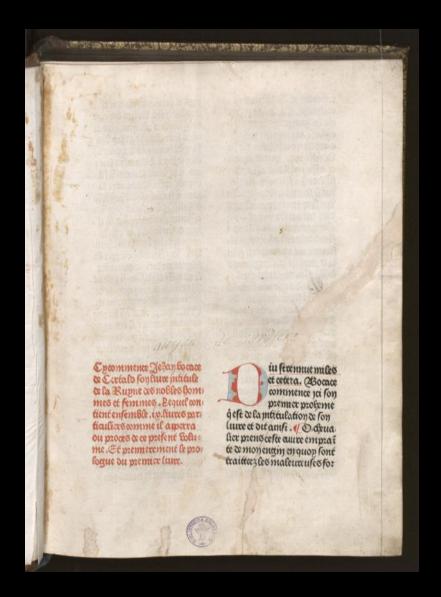




Groeningemuseum Brugge

Rijksmuseum Amsterdam



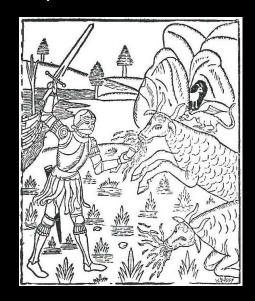




Museum of Fine Arts Boston



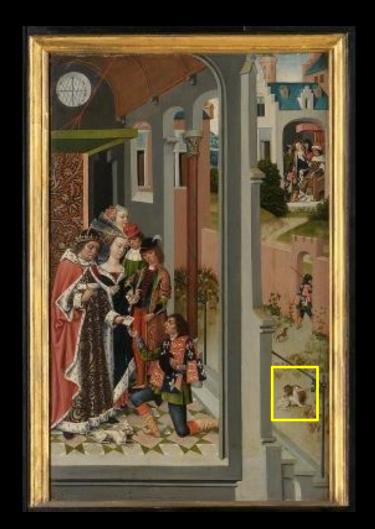
Bibliothèque Nationale de Paris



Public Library Brugge



Albertina Vienna



Groeningemuseum Brugge

Content exhibition

- 1. Introduction
- 2. Bruges as a center of book production in an international context
- 3. Production process of incunabula, manuscripts and engravings
- 4. Content and style of incunabula, manuscripts and engravings
- The distribution and use of incunabula, manuscripts and engravings
- 6. Epilogue

Scholarly output

- Exhibition catalogue with scholarly essays
- Exhibtion committee:
- Renaud Adam
- Till-Holger Borchert
- Nathalie Coilly
- Cristina Dondi
- Evelien de Wilde
- Hubert Dewitte
- Noël Geirnaert
- Evelien Hauwaerts
- Lotte Hellinga

- Eberhard König
- Huigen Leeflang
- Christof Metzger
- Johan Oosterman
- Dominique Vanwijnsberghe
- Anne van Oosterwijk
- Ludo Vandamme
- Hanno Wijsman

1. The story of an individual versus networks and historical context

- Tempting to build up a "biographical" exhibition: life and work of the enigmatic Colard Mansion
- Mansion is the incarnation | personification of the international book production and trade in late medieval Bruges
 - From manuscripts to printed books
 - From miniatures to woodcuts and engravings
 - An intellectual or a business man: adaptor, translator and author of texts and paratexts





sozoison priant pour nous tous ensemble. Et nous mesmes auons aozer et prier nostre sei thair quil nous winst participation ou saince seruce qui est fait. E quil nous winst en tele maniere yar ar sa sop : à nous puissons estre tollogez en sa parmanable compaignie. Amen

Azimum opus impressum per Colardum mansion. Brugis Lauxtur omnipotens



2. Mansion and the book business in late medieval Bruges

- An entrepreneur in a complex and international network (loose and fixe associations | subcontracting)
- Networks of manuscripts, prints and incunables: parallel or integrated (e.g. Master of Dresden Prayer Book)
- Blurred associations:
 - William Caxton
 - Master of the Flavius Josephus (incunable printer)
 - Engraver's workshops
- The Guild as a mere confraternity
- Metal workers in the city





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3. How modern was Mansion (tradition versus innovation)?

 The sphere of "Burgundian" culture: French language, "aristocratic" texts, Burgundian bastarda [The counterpart of Dirk Martens, or, later, Aldus Manutius]

OR

 The sphere of early humanism: Latin, a second fount (of Italian inspiration?), unexpected texts, experimenting with engravings tre personnes sut compile par ressund venc maistre asain chartier en son viuant woch taire du rop. Charles se septies me w & r

La treffaulte et trefexellente A la tresionnouvee magni Circonspection as ders. E puple francois. Alain chart w du rop et de mon tres redoubte seigneur gent foingtain imitateur des orateurs fal bumiliacion soubs sa iustice. Cognoissan recors de sa misericorde soubs la pointure me les baultes dignites des seignouries s la diuine et infinie puissance de dieu qui l fant en prosperite et en glorieuse renomm et tenir fermement que ainsique leurs cor

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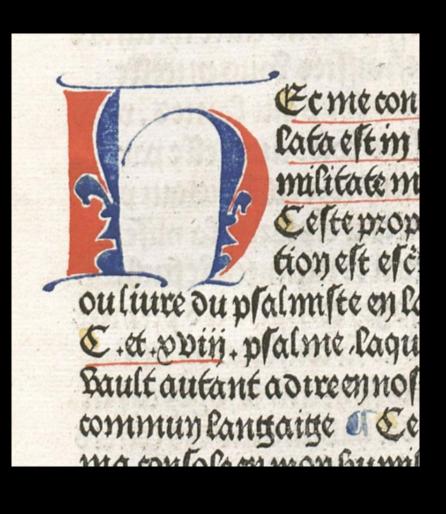


4. The invisible reading public

"Mansion was a producer of luxury books (manuscripts and incunables) for aristocratic clients" (Paul Saenger)

- Building stones for a more balanced interpretation:
 - Provenance investigation
 - Texts and the intended public
 - A variety of copy finishing
 - Library catalogues









5. Epilogue

- A deep political and economic crisis in Bruges (civil war, 1482-1492) and the dispersal of the expertise of luxury industry and book production:
 - Transition from Bruges to Antwerp?
 - Transition following a more complex model?
- And finally ...: an ideal opportinity to put into the spotlights Joseph-Basile Van Praet (1754-1837), as "enigmatic" as Colard Mansion ...



Questions, what about the answers?

- Any input will be gratefully received
- And, come and see yourself, in the spring of 2018 in Bruges' Groeninge Museum
- Thank you very much!