

Royal Historical Commission

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Annual Report 2004

The Commission held its sessions on 14th February, 26th June, 9th October and 4th December. The Committee met on the same dates.

1. Personal

Mrs Christiane Gérard-Raindorf, administrative secretary for the Commission from 1964 to 1980, died on 22nd June.

Following statutory elections held during the meeting of 14th February, the mandates of secretary treasurer and assistant secretary treasurer - our fellow members Claude Bruneel and Reginald De Schryver - were renewed for a period of five years as from the first of May. In addition, our fellow members Ludo Milis and Jean-Marie Duvosquel were elected chairman and vice-chairman respectively in December. Their mandates are for three years and started on the first of January 2005.

2. Objectives

In accordance with the mission it was given when it was founded in 1834, the Commission ensures the publication of previously unpublished texts - kept in Belgium or abroad - relating to our national past, in its *Bulletin* and its series of volumes (collections in-4°, in-8°, collection of acts of Belgian princes, documents relating to the international status of Belgium since 1830, sources concerning the history of Belgium during the Second World War, work tools, etc.). These collections currently include more than 220 titles covering all periods of history.

The Commission's website (www.kbr.be/crh-kcg) offers a detailed and illustrated presentation of the history, objectives and achievements of the Commission in French, Dutch and English. Its current composition and the list of former members can also be found here. The complete catalogue of publications is featured on the website, and it is possible to make a search according to the author's name, words in the title or keywords. Finally, new items are the subject of a presentation accompanied by a summary.

Through its rigorous publication of texts, meeting the most stringent requirements of the discipline, the Commission contributes to the development of historical knowledge, both at a national and international level. All the eras and the different domains of our past are taken into account. However, the role of the Commission is not limited to this undoubtedly significant contribution. Through a well-considered policy it contributes to stimulating and leading the way in historical science. The texts it selects generally serve as models and as a rich source of inspiration for the researchers. These documents often fall under little known or little exploited source categories. At the same time, more classical texts - that have been implemented in a new perspective - push back the horizons while concurring with the most recent trends in international research.

Obviously, the field is vast. As a result, it is necessary to impose rigorous selection criteria. Therefore, according to regulations, the four commissioners responsible for examining the manuscripts each time, always assess whether or not to retain a proposal depending on its conformity with the objectives of the Commission and its added value. This reasoned and scientifically justified choice is made all the more necessary as a result

of budgetary constraints. It is important to stress that even more so this year, uncertainty reigned until December regarding the granting and the amount of the subsidy, which in fact remained the same as in 2003 when it was already reduced by 10 %. Within this context, the Commission decided it should have a policy where caution – a necessary element in such circumstances – did not however excessively delay the work in progress. In a similar way, it was careful not to suppress the projects that confirmed its dynamism. As in the past, and not without difficulty, it sought and was sometimes able to obtain outside financial support to sustain certain initiatives (cf. 5).

3. Publications

Three volumes were published during the last exercise:

- **Bryce and Mary (†) LYON**, *The Wardrobe Book of 1296-1297: A Financial and Logistical Record of Edward I's 1297 Autumn Campaign in Flanders Against Philip IV of France*, Brussels, xv-161 p. The author, professor emeritus of Brown University (USA), and his wife provide a selective edition of the account relating to the military expedition of Edward I of England against the king of France, whose stage was mainly the county of Flanders. In the autumn of 1297, almost 9,000 men of war left Winchelsea on board 273 boats, heading for Sluis. Numerous mentions of the accounts provide information on the king's stay with his court in Bruges and Ghent, and about the purchasing of political support from numerous territorial princes from the Netherlands and the Empire.
- **Jo TOLLEBEEK**, *Writing the Inquisition in Europe and America. The correspondence between Henry Charles Lea and Paul Fredericq (1888-1908)*, Brussels, CXXVI-117 p., colour cover, 8 ill. The author, a professor at the University of Louvain, has published the correspondence between Lea, professor in Philadelphia, and Fredericq, professor at the University of Ghent. Both were experts, one on the Spanish Inquisition, in particular, and the other on the same movement in the Netherlands. Their correspondence to each other especially shows the way in which history was understood and written by historians at the end of the 19th century. They remodelled the past in the light of their beliefs, based in fact on rationalism and liberalism. The two historians, who never met – they exchanged photographs –, shared the same vision of history, the same passion for their subject, the same Protestantism, and the same rejection of Catholicism. Nevertheless, their respective writings allow us to discover interesting cultural differences.
- **Claude BRUNEEL and Claude DE MOREAU DE GERBEHAYE**, *Les gradués de la faculté de médecine de l'ancienne université de Louvain (XVI^e-XVIII^e siècles)*, Brussels, 2004, XLI-327 p. Through the university registers, it is possible to establish the influx of student enrolments. However, they give no indication of what happened to these students afterwards. Owing to the disappearance of the lists of graduates, as is the case for the majority of the faculty of medicine's archives, the researcher was apparently unable to find this information for Louvain. Our fellow members were able to fill in the missing information through the statement for the enrolment fees listed in the university's general accounts. They provide a list of 5,181 bachelors, masters and doctors. It reflects the times when recruitment was at its highest and lowest, the geographical location and the changing popularity of the profession depending on the times. Other sources have also often helped to identify the various "deeds" marking the course of studies. Thanks to this study, it will be easier to develop the history of medicine and its faculty in Louvain. The regional

studies, family history, anthroponomy and genealogy will also benefit from this piece of work.

- **Vol. 169**, 2003, fasc. 1-4 of the *Bulletin* was published at the beginning of this year. The cover was modernised and the typographical justification of the pages was modified in order to make savings. Besides the administrative part (sessions held in 2002 and report on 2001), it contains five articles making a total of 290 pages.
 - **Steven VANDERPUTTEN**, *Un nouveau fragment de la Continuatio Aquicinctina de la chronique de Sigebert de Gembloux*, p. 5-16. The author discovered an unknown fragment of this series – probably written in Anchin - in Douai's local library, covering the end of 1182 until the beginning of 1184. For the authors, who are well-acquainted with the political situation in the county of Flanders, it reveals a vision of the events that is interesting both in terms of historiography and history.
 - **Philippe GEORGE**, *Le trésor de reliques du Neufmoustier près de Huy (XII^e-XVIII^e siècles). Une part de Terre Sainte en pays mosan*, p 17-35. An expert in this domain, Philippe George has published a catalogue offering an exceptional account of the “multi-relics” preserved in the abbey, which, according to tradition, was founded by Pierre l'Ermite upon his return from a crusade.
 - **Bryce and Mary LYON**, *An account of the provisions received by Robert de Segre, clerk of Edward I of England, in Flanders and Brabant in the autumn of 1297*, p. 37-50. This source is an element of primary value in revealing the numerous aspects of mediaeval life in our regions. The publication is limited to the parts of the account that deal with the English military campaign against the king of France, Philippe IV. It was mainly in Flanders that the operations took place. Numerous entries for expenses relate to the stay of the king of England and his court in Bruges and Ghent, the purchase of political support, donations to ecclesiastical institutions, salaries of workers hired for the army, etc.
 - **Véronique FLAMMANG**, *Compte de tutelle de Loyse de Layé, veuve du chancelier Hugonet – 1479*, p. 51-162. Rare for the time and rich in information, this document originates from the quite rapid second marriage of the interested party, a mother of six young children, to a equerry of her dead husband, Jean Oderne, who, furthermore, transferred to the camp of the king of France, Louis XI. The text enlightens us both on the mechanisms of political clientelism and ducal protection as well as material culture.
 - **Sébastien DUBOIS**, *Essais sur l'éducation nationale et la réforme de l'enseignement secondaire dans les provinces belgiques à la fin du règne de Joseph II (1788)*, p.163-290. The dissolution of the ‘Compagnie de Jésus’ provided the sovereign with the opportunity to intervene more directly in the organisation of teaching. Organs of the central government finally imposed a unique programme. In 1788, several memoirs appeared written by teachers or civil servants responsible for managing education. The four essays referred to here chiefly review the progress made, but their authors also look at the improvements made to the education system. They describe with strength, details and examples, what the situation was like, sometimes in a highly detailed, lucid and even caustic way. Though interesting from many points of view, the projects of the reformers however went unheeded. The rustlings of the Belgian Revolution caught the attention of the authorities, in Brussels like in Vienna.

- **Vol. 170**, 2004, fasc. 1-4 of the *Bulletin* was published in December. Besides the administrative part (sessions held in 2003 and report on 2002), it contains three articles making a total of 375 pages.
 - **Rob WECKX**, *De Nederlandstalige schepenakten van Diest van 1306 tot 1325, berustend in het Stadsarchief te Diest*, p. 5-168, is a continuation of the editing work by the same author, published in the 2002 *Bulletin*, for the years 1265 to 1306. The series of 175 acts reflects the various facets of the activity of a small town council in Brabant. It is also a precious source of material for the study of Middle Dutch.
 - **Julie VERSELE**, *Rapport de Gerónimo de Roda sur le fonctionnement du Conseil des Troubles aux Pays-Bas, suivi de suggestions pour sa réforme (s.d.-1571 ?)*, p. 169-191, determines the likely author of two anonymous reports written in Spanish. It is clearly a member of the Council itself. The documents, addressed to Philip II, shed a significant light on the composition of the assembly. They also allow us to discover problems inherent to the functioning of this assembly as well as suggestions on how to resolve them.
 - **Toon QUAGHEBEUR**, *Pastorsbenoemingen na een vergelijkend examen in het aartsbisdom Mechelen tijdens de zeventiende en de achttiende eeuw. Parochie- en deelnemerslijsten*, p. 193-319. The first mention of candidates competing in an exam for a parish dates back to 1586. However, owing to the large gaps noted in the archiepiscopal archives, the present publication can only dwell on the tests organised from the 17th century onwards. It ends in 1786, the year when Joseph II imposed the reorganisation of this recruitment system. A first table contains an alphabetical list of the parishes, by deanery, indicating the name of the patron and the number of parish priests nominated between 1586 and 1786. Other tables provide information on knowledge, the candidates' results and the fate reserved for their aspirations. This list offers a mine of information not only for ecclesiastical history but also for regional and local studies.

4. Proofs awaiting publication

The high-level scientific requirements of the Commission, the authors' voluntary work and the policy concerning caution already mentioned above, explains why certain works have been postponed. These are:

- Godfried CROENEN, *De oorkonden van de familie Berthout (1212-1425)*, LXXXII-485 pages.
- Véronique LAMBERT, *De Oorkonden van het Sint-Donatianskapittel te Brugge, 9^{de} eeuw-1300*.
- Willem Pieter BLOCKMANS, *Handelingen van de Leden en van de Staten van Vlaanderen. Excerpten uit de rekeningen van steden en kasselrijen en van de vorstelijke administratie. Regering van Filips de Goede (1419-1467). Deel III. Overzichtstabel en Indices*.

5. Activities in progress and international relations

Currently at different stages of progress, the following pieces of research are amongst the Commission's priorities:

- Mrs Alla NAMAZOVA, *Guide des documents relatifs à l'histoire de la Belgique conservés dans les archives des institutions publiques de Russie*. Elaborated by the head of the modern section at the Institut d'Histoire Universelle de l'Académie des Sciences de Russie, this piece of work extends far beyond the repatriated archives. It is currently being revised with the precious help of Mrs Françoise Thomas, scientific collaborator at Belgium's Royal Academy.
- Mrs Nicole HAESSENNE-PEREMANS and Mrs Nicole CAULIER-MATHY (University of Liege) are currently adding the finishing touches to the editing of the *Journal* (1830 and 1855-1880) of Baron Michel-Edmond de Selys-Longchamps, senator, naturalist and member of the Academy. This publication will benefit from a subsidy from the Commission Communale d'Histoire de l'Ancien Pays de Liège.
- Mr Alain MARCHANDISSE, an FNRS qualified researcher at the University of Liege, is in the process of finalising the editing of the cartulary from the Abbaye d'Aulne.
- Mr Alfred MINKE, professor at the Catholic University of Louvain, and head of the state archives section in Eupen, is in the process of finishing the editing of the *Annales gallo-limbourgeoises, 1794-1814*, a manuscript written by a noteworthy villager. It is particularly interesting as regards the history of attitudes in our regions.
- Mr Georges DECLERCQ, in charge of classes at the VUB and ULB, has begun revising the manual of E. I. Strubbe and L. Voet, *De chronologie van de Middeleeuwen en de Moderne tijden in de Nederlanden*, in the form of addenda and corrigenda.
- Despite his advanced age, Mr Maurits VAN DURME, the author of the series of volumes *Les Archives de Simancas et l'histoire de la Belgique (IX^e-XIX^e siècle)*, is regularly continuing to put the finishing touches to the second volume (letters N-Z) of the alphabetical index of names relating to the four published volumes. Through regular contact, our fellow member Gustaaf Janssens is supervising the state of completion of this table. He is also the scientific guarantor for other works begun by Mr Van Durme, some of them well advanced. The *Inventaire détaillé des copies Gachard et Morel-Fatio prises sur les documents de Simancas et conservées aux Archives générales du Royaume à Bruxelles* is nearly ready to go to print once the index has been completed.
- Despite many voluntary collaborations, certain long-term activities have to be carried out by paid researchers.
 - Thus, Mrs Godelieve de Mey, under the direction of our fellow member Thérèse de Hemptinne, is working on finalising the third volume of the *Actes de Thierry d'Alsace, Comte de Flandre (1168-1177)*.
 - Mrs Katrien Vandewoude hopes to finish the index of the accounts of the town of Bruges this year, thanks to a subsidy, amongst other things, for this work, and a subsidy from the Province of West Flanders.
 - At the same time, Mr Stijn Meersseman is finalising the index for the *Recueil de documents de l'industrie drapière en Flandre*.
 - Mr Philippe Demontry, a scientific collaborator for the Commission, is continuing the *Thesaurus diplomaticus* (usually called Nouveau Wauters) under the Commission's supervision. This digitised list of charters relating to the former Southern Netherlands, and stored in numerous places in Belgium and abroad, completes and entirely renews the contents of Wauters' list elaborated in the 19th and 20th centuries. The first version, decreed in 1200, was made available to the public in 1999. The

Commission was thus able to boast a first prestigious achievement in terms of electronic publishing. This was particularly well received in international scientific circles. The current objective is to extend the chronological framework to 1250. Today, the documentary part includes 18,458 analyses, with 3,502 titles in the bibliography accompanying the notices. This undertaking is the result of a partnership between the secretary of the National Committee for Latin Mediaeval Dictionaries, Mr Paul Tombeur, professor emeritus at the Catholic University of Louvain, and director of the *Centre Traditio Litterarum Occidentalium*, and our fellow member Walter Prevenier, professor emeritus at the University of Ghent. A geographic extension is envisaged through a collaboration with the University of Nancy in France.

- A contract is currently being established with AMSAB (Social History Institute in Ghent) to distribute the reports of the Committee and General Council of the Belgian Labour Party (1894-1940) on CD-ROM. We should soon receive a response from this partner.
- The talks begun between the Commission and Mr Philippe Raxhon (University of Liege), spokesman for historical experts belonging to the “Commission Parlementaire Lumumba”, continued. Mr Raxhon considers that the preparation of the texts retained by the Royal Historical Commission and the experts could be finished during 2005. Publication would of course be carried out with respect for the rights of all the parties and according to the conditions fixed by the president of the Chamber of Representatives.
- Finally, within the framework of the discussions on the commemorative events for the 175th anniversary of its creation, the Commission is already envisaging harmonising and continuing the *Bulletin*'s old tables, drawn up at different times according to variable criteria. They were abandoned in 1985 owing to a lack of means (index according to author's name, articles, subjects, published works). A version including everything since volume I will be published electronically. It will optimise content searches and thus enhance the value of the immense heritage contained in the 170 volumes available to researchers.

The **international influence** of the Commission is confirmed in different ways.

First of all, through its publications which can be found in the main national and university libraries in Europe and America. Its series include the works of foreign authors interested in our past, such as Bryce Lyon mentioned above. As we have seen, the Commission also favours the publication of correspondence between renowned Belgian historians and their foreign colleagues.

Furthermore, its active participation in various committees and commissions also contributes to the international recognition of the quality of historical research in Belgium. On a European level, the Commission is involved in the vast undertaking of the *Monumenta Palaeographica Medii Aevi*, sponsored by the International Academic Union. In agreement with Belgium's two Royal Academies, it is responsible for publishing several texts in the *Series Belgica*. The Commission appointed our fellow member Gustaaf Janssens to examine the possibilities of working with the *Instituto neerlandés* in Madrid. The purpose would be to compile a guide of the archives kept in various Spanish institutions, relating to the history of the former Netherlands.

As in the past, our new chairman, Ludo Milis, is participating in the progress of the works of the *Repertorium Fontium Historiae Medii Aevi* (Nouveau Pothast).

Our fellow member, Herman Van Goethem, and the administrative secretary, Mr Jean-Luc De Paepe, are representing the Commission on the National Committee of Historical Sciences, affiliated to the International Committee of Historical Sciences.

Our fellow member, Claude Bruneel, is representing the Commission in the Director's Office of the Belgian Historical Institution in Rome.

Another sign of this international recognition is the introduction of an annual prize of encouragement - thanks to the generosity of the American historian Bryce Lyon - to reward the youngest researcher, aged thirty years old or more, and whose work has featured in the Commission's collections during the previous year. This prize will be awarded for the first time in 2005. The rules are available on the Commission's website. The Commission has decided to name this prize after its patron and his late wife.