

Medieval Memoria Research in the Low Countries
Newsletter



May, 2009
Special issue

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We would like to thank the Museum Catharijneconvent in Utrecht, Het Utrechts Archief, RACM in Amersfoort, Museum De Lakenhal, Museum voor Religieuze kunst in Uden and Abdij Berne in Heeswijk for giving us permission to publish images of the works of art and manuscripts in their collections.

Frontpage: Woodcut from St. Augustine's *De civitate Dei* and *De Trinitate*, printed in Basel (Johann Amerbach), reverse side of the title page. The upper scene shows St. Augustine working at his desk, the lower scene shows Kane and Babylon on the right, and Abel and the town of Sion on the left (Museum Catharijneconvent, Utrecht ABM I 122 (1-2)).

Editorial

At the start of the MeMO project

In February of this year we received a grant from the Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research (NWO) for the application of *Medieval Memoria Online* (MeMO). 'We' are a group of researchers from three universities, UU, RUG and VU. Apart from these universities several other (research) institutions will also be participating in the project: DANS, RACM, RKD, SKKN and CBG (please see the appendix). NWO contributed the largest sum for the project, but additional funding has been granted by DANS, RACM, Stichting Professor Van Winter Fonds, OGC (faculty of Humanities UU) and the faculties of Humanities of the RUG and VU. The authors of this special edition of the Newsletter MRR, Truus van Bueren and Rolf de Weijert will be responsible for the project management.

Collaboration as a key factor

Preparing the application for the MeMO project took years of preparation and collaboration with many institutions and organizations. As a matter of fact, collaboration stood at the basis of the MeMO project. An important platform has been *Signum*, a Dutch-Belgian contact group of scholars who focus on the history of the medieval religious institutions (<http://www.contactgroepsignum.eu>). In the early nineties this group initiated an inventory project of memorial registers from the present-day Netherlands. From January 2004 onwards, this project has been continued and extended by the 'Werkgroep Memorieboeken' (Project group Memorial Registers) with researchers from the universities of Amsterdam (VU), Leiden and Utrecht and several other members of *Signum*. The MeMO project is a direct result of this initiative. In 2004, another partnership of *memoria* researchers was launched when the 'Overleg Memoria' (Discussion group Memoria) was formed. This discussion group consists of PhD students and senior researchers from the universities of Amsterdam (VU), Groningen, Leiden, Utrecht and Louvain. Many Dutch *memoria* researchers are also involved in the international project 'Herinnering in geschrift en praktijk' (Remembrance in writing and practice in religious communities in the Low Countries, 1000-1500). The collaboration with the cultural heritage institutions (RACM, CBG, SKKN and RKD, see the Appendix) in the MeMO project is mainly indebted to contacts made during earlier *memoria* research activities.

IT projects relevant for *memoria* research

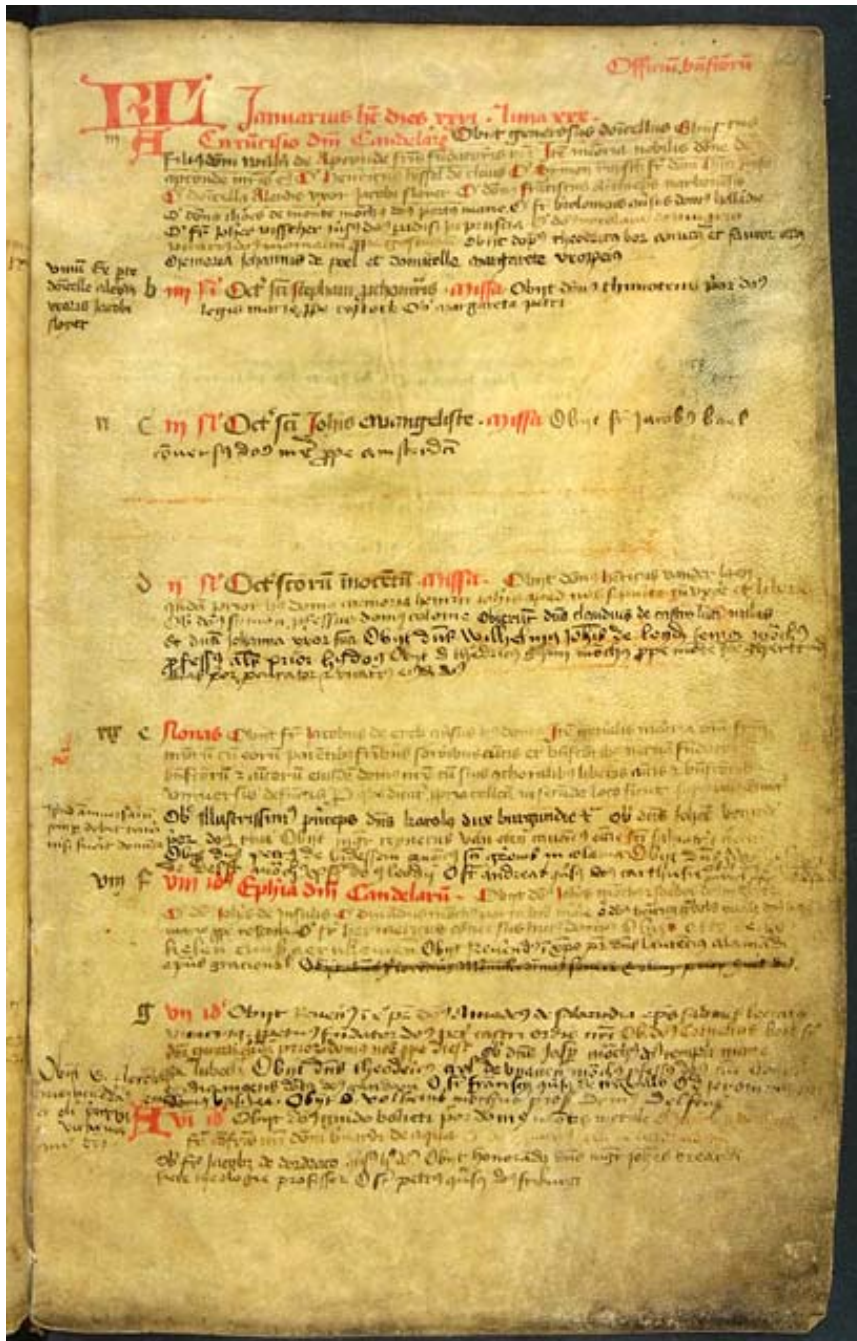
In recent years several IT projects which are relevant for *memoria* research have been established, such as the *Narrative Sources* internet database (universities of Groningen and Ghent) and the *Monasticon Trajectense* and *Convent list* internet databases (both VU). In March 2008 the database *Representations of medieval memoria (Memoria in beeld)* (UU) was presented on the internet. MeMO profits directly from these projects. To explore and stimulate the use of IT among medievalists in general and among *memoria* researchers in particular, a symposium was organized in January 2009 (DANS and UU) with the title: *IT in Medieval Studies: research of commemoration practices in the Netherlands*.

MMR to keep you posted

The Newsletter MMR is a direct result of the preparation phase of the MeMO project. Last year it was decided to already start the newsletter in anticipation of the decision of NWO. We will use MMR to keep you informed on the progress of the MeMO project. This special issue of MMR is intended to get you acquainted with the project. First up is the summary of the application,

which was also published in the first issue of MMR (September 2008), after that you will find an adaptation of the application that was submitted to NWO. If you are interested in the original (English) application, please contact the project leader Truus van Bueren.

Truus van Bueren
Rolf de Weijert



Memorial register from the Nieuwlicht Charterhouse in Utrecht. This necrology is part of a miscellany containing more than twenty different texts that were all related to commemorative practices. Among them are chronicles, grave lists, gift lists and this necrology, from which this is the first page. (Het Utrechts Archief, Utrecht, Het kartuizerklooster Nieuwlicht, inv.nr. 4, p. 21).

Summary Medieval Memoria Online (MeMO)

New possibilities for *memoria* research through MeMO

The Medieval *Memoria* Online (MeMO) project facilitates a new approach for researching the medieval culture of remembrance (*memoria*). It enables interdisciplinary research in which case studies are combined with comparative analyses of large amounts of source materials, including objects and texts. This objective is achieved through an internet based application (the MeMO application) containing databases with inventories and descriptions of sources that are fundamental to the study of *memoria*. These sources are:

- memorial registers,
- narrative sources regarding *memoria*,
- memorial paintings and sculptures (*Memorialbilder*), and
- sepulchral monuments and gravestones.

In addition to these four types of *memoria* sources, the MeMO application will also provide two databases with basic descriptions of:

- the manuscripts from which the memorial registers and narrative sources are taken and of the
- institutions from which the sources originate.

Photographs of the objects, full-text scans of published editions of the texts, and links to related websites will also be included. Additionally, researchers will be informed on the progress of the project through the MMR newsletter. The data in the MeMO application will cover the present-day Netherlands from the 12th through the late 16th century.

Case studies combined with broad comparative studies

Research on the medieval culture of remembrance considers *memoria* a public affair, involving religious, social, historical and political aspects. It does not solely comprise the care for the souls of (deceased) persons, but also the commemoration of their actions, for instance founding religious institutions and obtaining and safeguarding rights, privileges and financial resources. Through the written word, rituals and objects *memoria*, therefore, played a key role in all social layers of medieval society. It was fundamental to the creation and expression of the identity of communities and individuals. Accordingly, this complex and dynamic phenomenon deserves, requires even, an interdisciplinary approach. To date, research on medieval *memoria* has dealt primarily with one of the aforementioned source types, largely focusing on case studies. This is due to the fact that presently researchers have no overview of the materials and research possibilities at hand. In many cases, research on the sources themselves will remain necessary. However, by providing a research tool with detailed information on these materials, MeMO meets the international scholars' need for interdisciplinary and broad comparative study of *memoria* related materials.

Research questions

MeMO facilitates quantitative and comparative studies within a complex of closely related research questions. The overall question is twofold: first, in which ways was *memoria* an agent in both the creation and expression of identity in communities of the Middle Ages, such as religious orders, parishes, confraternities and families, and second, how did the creation and expression of *memoria* vary between these communities and how did it change through time? Although MeMO is being developed to make a new approach to *memoria* research possible, the materials presented can also be used by researchers outside the field of *memoria*, including the substantial group of researchers looking into genealogy, family history and heraldry.

A user-friendly application

The MeMO application will be user-friendly and platform-independent. Because the conditions are specified step by step, the users gain an overview of the materials relevant to their research. The sustainability of the research infrastructure is strengthened through the use of internationally accepted open standards for data exchange (in XML format), expressing semantics, incorporating already existing digital resources relevant for *memoria* research and the creation of open source software tools to enable the analysis of the *memoria* sources. To further enhance the exchangeability and interoperability of the research infrastructure, a platform-independent international description standard (MeMO DS) will be created and edited by a committee of internationally renowned scholars on the subject. The future re-use and extensibility of the data created during the MeMO project, as well as interoperability with related systems, are important features of the research infrastructure created by this project.



Sepulchral monument in the church of Our Lady in Breda, made for Engelbrecht II of Nassau and Cimburga of Baden (circa 1531-34), with on the lower platform the figures of the deceased, lying on a straw mat, and on the upper platform a complete suit of armour. The monument was erected long after the couple's death (resp. in 1504 and 1501), by Engelbrecht's cousin Hendrik II, who inherited his uncle's estates as Engelbrecht and Cimburga had no children.

Medieval Memoria Online (MeMO): New research possibilities

1. Introduction

Background

Medieval *Memoria* Online (MeMO) focuses on the memorial cultures of the Middle Ages. *Memoria* is a term which has a wide use, but in this case it stands for the generic term used by the international medieval research community for a wide variety of phenomena, relating to commemoration and remembrance.¹ This culture of remembrance played a central role – through the written word, rituals and objects – in all social layers of medieval society. It comprises not only the care for the souls of (deceased) persons, but also the commemoration of their achievements, such as the founding of religious institutions and the obtaining and safeguarding of rights, privileges and financial resources. It concerns the interests of the dead and the living, both in religious and material affairs. *Memoria* is therefore a complex and dynamic phenomenon involving religious, social, historical and political aspects. Research on medieval *memoria* sheds light on the perception of life and death and into the way medieval communities and individuals viewed the past, present and future. Consequently, *memoria* can be considered a powerful tool for creating as well as expressing identity. Its complexity demands an interdisciplinary approach.²

A case in point is the research of the convent of Mariënpoel in Leiden, which was founded by the nobleman Boudewijn van Zwieten in 1428. He was an important official for the County of Holland and established the convent to ensure the nuns' care for his and his family's souls. By founding this particular convent, however, he also created a new home for nuns who had fled the territory of the Bishop of Utrecht, with whom his sovereign, Duke Philip the Good had a serious conflict at the time. Through the memorial painting with the portraits of Boudewijn and his family, their grave monuments, and the chronicle and memorial registers of the convent the inhabitants of the convent were continuously reminded of their 'saviour', and of their obligation to pray for their benefactors' souls.³

Why is MeMO needed?

Case studies, like the one just mentioned, are valuable, because they can give an in-depth knowledge of the commemorative practices in all kinds of communities. However, scholars researching medieval *memoria* (such as church historians, art historians, literary historians and historians of mentalities) mostly restrict themselves to case studies and small scaled comparative studies of one type of source, while apart from these projects broad scaled interdisciplinary investigations of several source types are necessary. This problem is internationally acknowledged and was discussed at the international conference in Utrecht (2001) and in sessions of the IMC (International Medieval Congress) in Leeds (2006).⁴

The essential inventories for broad comparative research are, however, lacking. This compelled scholars, such as Cohn (1996 and 2000), Van Bueren (1999) and Brine (2006), to make their own inventories.⁵ This is extremely time consuming: the source materials are widely disseminated

¹ See for the wide use, the different meanings of the term *memoria* and an overview of *memoria* research, Erl 2005.

² See Schleif 1990; Geuenich and Oexle (eds.) 1994; Althoff 1994; Ludwig 1994; Geary 1994; Oexle 1995; Assmann 1995; Schilp 1999; Kansteiner 2002; Van Bueren 2005; Bijsterveld 2007.

³ Van Bueren 2008.

⁴ See also f.i. Gardner 1992, 32 ff.; Dekeyzer 2006; and Van Bueren 2007.

⁵ Cohn 1996 and Cohn 2000, Van Bueren 1999 and Brine 2006.

throughout numerous institutions and collections and, moreover, they are poorly inventoried, whereby much remains unknown and unavailable to scholars.

The research infrastructure developed by the MeMO project offers a solution for these drawbacks and makes possible a new approach to research on medieval *memoria*. It facilitates research in which case studies can be combined with a broad comparative investigation of substantial amounts of material, including objects and texts.



Memorial painting (1552) with Madonna and child and four generations of the Van Zwieten family, made for the convent of Marienpoel near Leiden. Johanna van Zwieten (second from the left) had the family's old painting of circa 1454 replaced. She had two generations of the family added, her parents and her brother and herself, and had her grandfather's second wife replaced by his first wife, who was her own grandmother (Museum De Lakenhal, Leiden, inv nr 250).

2. What does MeMO contain?

An application with four main databases

MeMO offers an Internet-based database application with inventories and descriptions of four types of sources that are fundamental to the study of the commemoration of the dead. For practical reasons the geographical scope and time frame will be the present-day Netherlands from the 12th until the late 16th century. The sources contain both texts and objects:

1. *Memorial registers*; liturgical and/or administrative texts concerning the commemoration of the dead. These sources, drawn up by members of religious institutions, were often also used for legal and political reasons. The estimated number of still existing registers is 625. For the MeMO project, the memorial registers have been divided into: 1. *registers of graves* (containing both registers of grave locations and registers of owners of graves); 2. *registers of memorial services* with information on which memorial services should be held for whom and when; 3. *registers of gifts and foundations*; 4. *registers of pittances and doles*, with information in whose name, to whom, and when doles and supplements to meals should be given and what these alms should consist of; 5. *registers of names* not belonging to the aforementioned groups. This division is based on the contents of the registers, contrary to Huyghebaert's division which is based on the supposed use of memorial registers.⁶

⁶ Huyghebaert 1972. Huyghebaert himself already mentioned some drawbacks of his division. For additional information on the approach of the Werkgroep Memorieboeken, see Van Bueren 2007.

2. *Narrative sources; literary texts* with a function in the medieval culture of remembrance (estimated number is about 200). The selected material contains 1. chronicles reporting on the founding of religious institutions, important gifts and memorial practices, and 2. source material (both chronicles and otherwise) with biographical descriptions of clergymen, religious men and women and lay persons. The inclusion of hagiographical stories will be investigated during the course of the project.

3. *Gravestones and sepulchral monuments*; the estimated number of still existing gravestones and grave monuments is 2500, ranging from simple gravestones to elaborate sepulchral monuments. In general, monuments or fragments of monuments will be included in the database if they meet at least one of the following requirements: a.) it is possible to identify the person or persons for whom the monument was erected, because the name(s) and/or coat(s) of arms are on the monument; b.) the monument contains a text, but the name has disappeared, and c.) the monument contains decorations. Although the focus in *memoria* research is basically historical, aspects of sepulchral monuments like decoration and composition, which are usually studied by art historians for other purposes, afford us valuable information on customs and changes in customs regarding these monuments, as well as in the significance of these monuments for the deceased, their next of kin and other visitors of the burial places. Photographs of gravestones and sepulchral monuments will be included in the database.

4. *Memorial images or Memorialbilder*; (glass) paintings and sculptures containing a religious image, with the portraits of the persons (either dead or still alive) who were to be commemorated, often with their patron saints, and with accompanying epitaphs with the names and dates of death, and - where applicable - the coats of arms of the commemorated persons (number: a little more than 500). Photographs of these objects will also be included in the database.

Extra facilities

Two additional databases containing supporting information will also be included. These are databases with:

5. *Descriptions of the manuscripts*. This is mainly instigated by the existence of miscellanies, here meant in a broad sense as manuscripts which contain more than one text. Descriptions of the contents of miscellanies can be important, because the combinations of the included texts can give information on the use and function of the manuscript in memorial practices, and therefore of the individual memorial registers and narrative sources included. Because we like to keep the system as balanced as possible, we decided to put the physical descriptions of all manuscripts in one database.

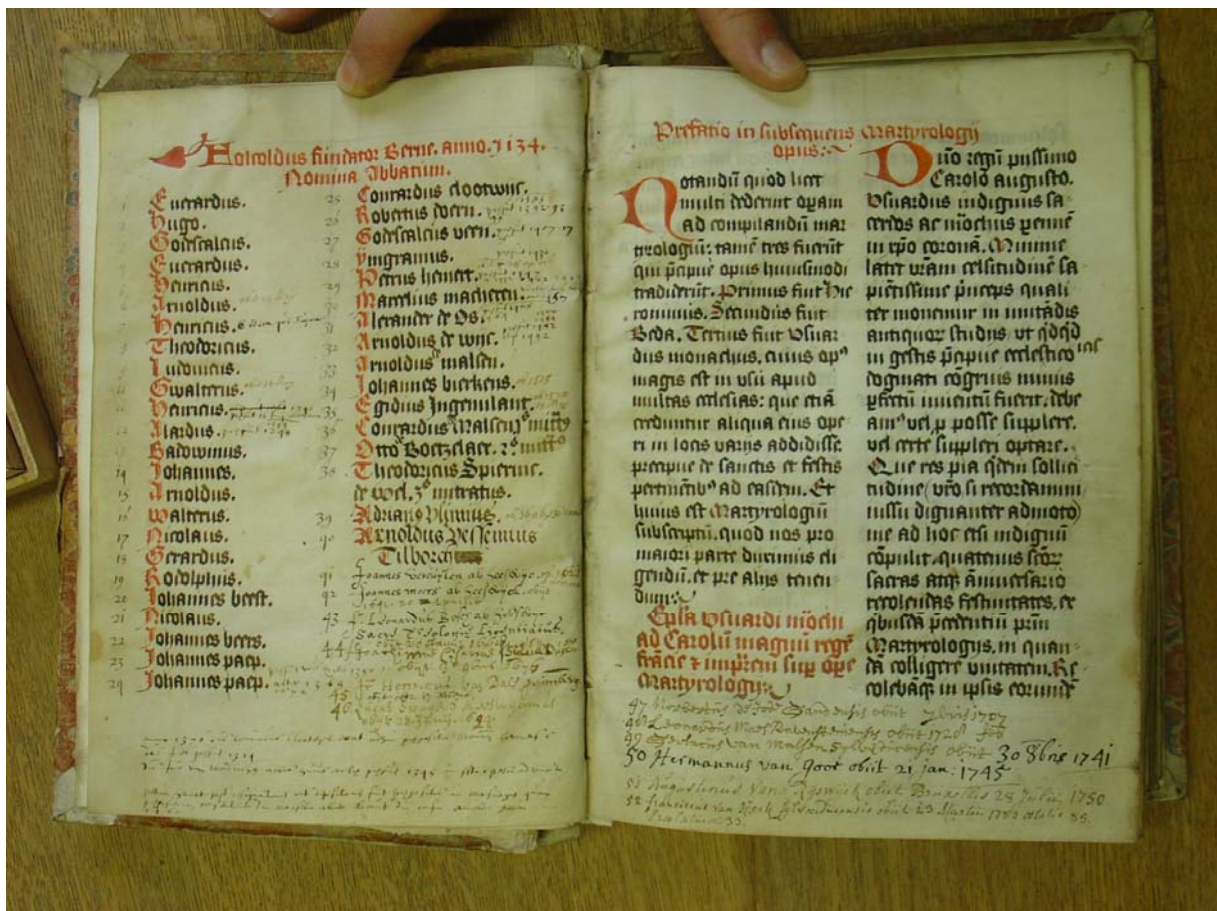
6. *Basic information of the institutions* (convents, parish churches, collegiate churches, hospitals and confraternities) from which the included texts and objects originate.

Only (still) extant texts and objects (including fragments) will be inventoried and described. In addition, photographs of the objects - allowing scholars to study them in detail - and full-text scans of already published editions of the texts will be included. MeMO will also provide links to archives, libraries and other institutions that have supplementary sources, such as cartularies, charters and works of art, which could prove important to *memoria* research. Finally, a list of

manuscripts (mainly post-medieval) with descriptions and drawings of memorial objects will be compiled and included in MeMO.

Not included

For practical reasons databases of the following materials will not be included at this point: a) testaments, b) furnishings of churches and liturgical objects with a commemorative function, and c) (post-)medieval drawings and descriptions of lost *Memorialbilder* and sepulchral monuments. Systematic inventories of these sources are not available which makes it impossible to estimate the amount of work involved. At a later stage these and other materials can be included in the MeMO application.



The chapter book of the Premonstratensian abbey of Berne (1574), with on fol. 2v-3r a list of abbots. After the completion of the original list in 1574 the list is continued, well into the 18th century. The list is followed by the martyrologium of Ussard and a necrology (in two columns next to each other), the rule of St. Augustine in seven chapters, and several texts of the liturgy of Maundy Thursday (Abdij van Berne, Heeswijk).

Use and continuation of already existing databases

MeMO will build on the inventories of the four types of sources that have been drawn up in recent years. These inventories uncovered a substantial number of unknown objects and manuscripts. The

database *Representations of medieval memoria (Memoria in beeld)*, developed by Truus van Bueren, Andrea van Leerdam, Fenna Visser and DANS which is available on the Internet since March 2008, will be integrated in MeMO, but will for the time being also be available on the internet with a Dutch interface (<http://www.let.uu.nl/memorie/index.php>). The inventories that in recent years have been drawn up by the RACM will be used for the database of gravestones and sepulchral monuments. For the memorial registers the activities carried out in the early nineties by members of *Signum* and from 2004 on continued by the Werkgroep Memorieboeken will be used. The MeMO narrative sources database will be directly linked with the Belgian-Dutch internet database of *Narrative Sources* (<http://www.narrative-sources.be>). Finally, two inventories developed at the VU University will be the basis for the MeMO Institutions database: the *Monasticon Trajectense* (<http://www.let.vu.nl/project/monasticon/>) and *Kloosterlijst. Beknopt repertorium van de zeventiende eeuwse kloosters binnen de grenzen van het huidige Nederland* (Convent List: concise repertory of 700 medieval Dutch convents; <http://www2.let.vu.nl/oz/kloosterlijst/>).

3. What are the possibilities of MeMO and for whom is it intended?

Underlying research questions of the MeMO project

By uniting the above-mentioned four types of sources in one integrated application, MeMO provides a valuable research tool. MeMO facilitates quantitative and comparative studies belonging to a complex of closely related research questions. These are, firstly, questions concerning *memoria* as a means of creating identity for social groups and their members: how does *memoria* contribute to the shaping of the self-image of communities in the Middle Ages? Secondly, questions can be asked regarding *memoria* as expressing the identity of social groups and individuals, that is, *memoria* as a means of self-representation. How do various medieval communities such as religious orders, parishes, confraternities, families, etc. manifest themselves through *memoria*? Which aspects of *memoria* are shared by all communities, and what can be considered specific for individual communities and their members? What is the influence of aspects such as gender and social standing on expressing and shaping identity? Thirdly, which changes in *memoria* practices can be detected through time and in different geographical areas? Finding the answers to these questions requires interdisciplinary comparative research with large amounts of different kinds of material, and this is precisely what MeMO offers: a complete overview and elaborate descriptions of both objects and texts considered essential to the study of medieval *memoria*. This innovative approach to *memoria* research also puts case studies into their proper context; it will be possible to ascertain the ways in which cases are representative of certain aspects of memorial culture.⁷

Research projects made possible with MeMO: two examples

To give a better insight into the possibilities of the MeMO application some examples may be in order. One concerns *written and painted or sculpted succession series*. Separate succession lists of officials, such as abbots, abbesses, etc. are regularly found in memorial registers. Painted and sculptured succession series with portraits of successive abbots, bishops, popes or other ruling sovereigns have also survived. In 1984 Oexle discussed the phenomenon of these medieval succession series and posed questions concerning the relation between the written lists and the portrait series and their diverse functions.⁸ An extensive investigation of the function of these succession lists and series in *memoria* practices is required. Possible research questions are: What does the combination of succession lists and other (*memoria* related) texts in a miscellany tell us about the way these lists were used for the commemoration of the dead and other aspects of

⁷ See Künzel 1994, 16-18, for the exemplary approach.

⁸ Oexle 1984, 407-412. See also Van Bueren and Oexle 2005.

memoria, for instance historical and socio-political aspects (creation and expression of identity)? What were the circumstances surrounding the making of written succession lists and portrait series? Did the use of already existing lists and series change over time? To what extent did sepulchral monuments of officials and the way they were arranged play a role similar to that of succession lists and succession series? In answering these questions, MeMO's four databases constitute an indispensable starting point for systematic research.

Another example concentrates on one type of source. It would be interesting to research the still existing memorial registers of all monasteries belonging to a specific religious order. Were these memorial registers set up according to the same structure? How were these memorial registers used? Did the General Chapter of the order regulate this? To what extent were the structure, contents and use of memorial registers indebted to the historical circumstances of the individual convents? Other questions might concern the contents of miscellanies that contain memorial registers; which other texts were included in these manuscripts and why; are these the same texts for every monastery of a specific order? Also, questions on the persons mentioned in the necrologies can be asked; did the necrologies contain only names of persons from within the order, or also from outside, and what was the status of these persons?

The research in these two examples is possible with the MeMO application, although it shows that it would be preferable for such an application to cover a larger geographical area. The researcher still has to examine the original sources, but with an application like MeMO it is possible to find the right sources within a few clicks.⁹

Intended users of MeMO

MeMO will not be restricted to a select group of scholars. The application will be an Internet-based application and thus freely accessible to all researchers from both the Netherlands and abroad. As a consequence the language of the application interface will be English. A thesaurus (English, German, Dutch and, if helpful, Latin) will significantly minimize the confusion of languages and problems of definition. In addition, this will guarantee the accessibility of the application to future generations of researchers.

The MeMO application will be a valuable tool for all researchers of Dutch *memoria* practices (including MA students using MeMO for papers and tutorials). Although in many cases these *memoria* researchers still have to research the sources themselves, MeMO helps them gain a better overview of the material that is relevant for their specific research questions.

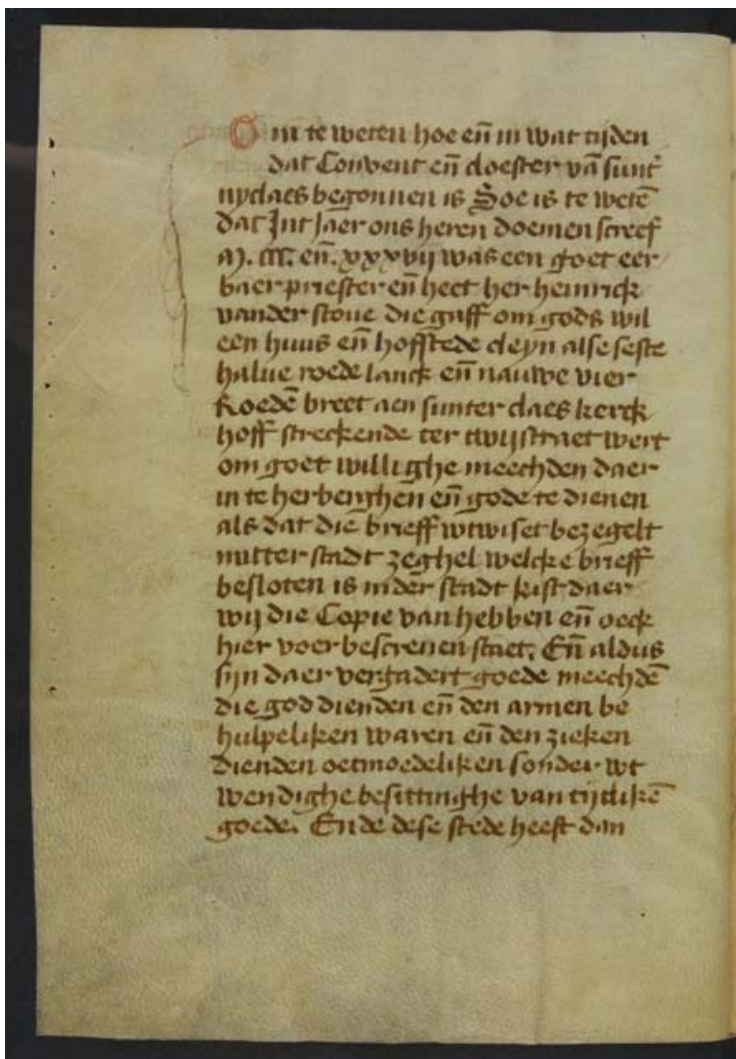
A second large group that can directly benefit from the MeMO application consists of, for example, art historians who are not primarily working on *memoria*, local historians and researchers of genealogy, family history and heraldry.

Also people working for museums and other cultural heritage institutions and history teachers can profit directly from the MeMO project, either through the application itself as well as through publications, websites, lectures, exhibitions, etc. for which MeMO was used. The project thus provides an important contribution to the disclosure of source material and the dissemination of new knowledge on medieval *memoria*, from which different groups can benefit.

⁹ This example is published in Van Bueren 2007, 30-32 (for the order of the Premonstratensians).

Possibilities for expansion

Because of its innovative and user friendly infrastructure and its use of open source software, similar inventories of other geographical areas and inventories of different types of source material can easily be added and integrated. An international initiative for collaboration is already taking place. Douglas Brine (Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts, National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.), who inventoried all, still existing *Memorialbilder* (circa 260) from the Southern Netherlands, which were placed above graves, will apply the format of the *Representations of medieval memoria (Memoria in beeld)* database to the forthcoming publication of his inventory on the internet. Hopefully more researchers will want to research possibilities of adding new databases to the MeMO application. Possible future adaptations may benefit *memoria* researchers who want to develop a similar application for geographical areas other than the Netherlands, and researchers of other research fields in the Humanities who are interested in applying the open source software and infrastructure of MeMO in other projects. In the course of the MeMO project, plans for a consortium of international research groups working on a European-wide MeMO project will be further developed.¹⁰



The chronicle of the convent of St. Nicolas in Utrecht. This chronicle describes the history of the convent that was originally started in 1337 as a house for pious women and in 1399 joined the Third Order of Saint-Francis. The chronicle was kept until 1477 and is part of a miscellany that also contains several memorial registers, such as a gift list, a necrology and two lists of deceased sisters of the convent. The Utrecht University library keeps another version of this chronicle (Het Utrechts Archief, Bewaarde Archieven I, inv. nr. 986, fol. 5v.).

¹⁰ As the MeMO information system (MeMO IS, see elsewhere in this article) will also offer a framework for linking heterogeneous datasets of any kind it can potentially be used in a wide variety of fields e.g. history in general (including history of literature and religion) and the social sciences. The framework itself will not offer a turnkey solution; it aims to be a solid framework that can be used by other developers to build their data aggregation system on. This approach allows for maximum flexibility in the implementation of new systems without having to develop the same base-functionality for every new data aggregation project.

4. How can MeMO offer an innovative and user-friendly application?

For realizing both a user-friendly and unambiguously documented application, the MeMO research infrastructure will contain two main components: the MeMO Descriptions Standard (MeMO DS) and the MeMO Information Structure (MeMO IS).

MeMO DS

To optimize the use of the MeMO information system and communication among *memoria* scholars, a description standard called MeMO DS will be developed for the description of the source material. This standard formalizes the features of the four *memoria* source types. MeMO DS fixes the semantics and syntax of the objects described in the databases of the MeMO information system and can be considered as a domain specific ontology for the study of *memoria* sources. By definition, ontologies have rules, logic, and labels that are communicable across people and computers. This enhances the durability of the research data since the structure and semantics of the research data is unambiguously documented. Element refinements or qualifiers make the meaning of an element narrower or more specific e.g. by the thesaurus which will be developed.¹¹ The creation, use and maintenance of MeMO DS is based on the implementation procedure developed for the international Dublin Core Metadata Initiative (DCMI; <http://www.dublincore.org>). MeMO DS will include relevant descriptors of existing metadata standards such as EAD (Encoded Archival Description) and TEI (Text Encoding Initiative). An international editorial board consisting of experts from the different fields of *memoria* research will supervise the development of MeMO DS (see Appendix).

MeMO IS

MeMO IS provides access to the aggregated research data of the four types of *memoria* sources. The databases of MeMO IS with the descriptions of the *memoria* sources will be constructed using a general descriptive model based on MeMO DS, so that each one of these databases follows specific rules with regard to naming and predefined values. The databases will be stored in a repository. Digital images of analogue historical sources (objects and texts) will be linked to the corresponding *memoria* sources described in the databases. The specifications of the digital images will follow international standards. MeMO IS will enable the entering of new research data and data available in existing databases created within the framework of related projects, such as the *Narrative Sources* database, the *Monasticon Trajectense*² and *Convent list* databases, and the *Representations of medieval memoria (Memoria in beeld)* database. This last mentioned database is already created with the Java program dbEdit which will also be used for the MeMO application.

A user-friendly wizard

The end user of the MeMO application will be able to analyze the research data (surveys and images) with a user-friendly 'wizard-style' interface that will give real-time feedback on the query results. Through the selection and filtering process the user can narrow the scope of the analysis to specific sources, tables, fields and values, and perform various analytical operations on the resulting datasets. To make this possible, the individual databases need to be integrated with each other. To this end an Integration Subsystem will be developed in Java linking the databases to form one *virtual database*.

¹¹ The - simple - thesaurus of *memoria* definitions (English, German, Dutch and, if helpful, Latin) can build on a thesaurus made for the already mentioned proceedings of the Utrecht conferences of 2000 and 2001 (Van Bueren and Leerdam 2005). Bram van den Hoven van Genderen was the main contributor to this thesaurus.

The Wizard will consist of four main steps:

Step 1: Selecting databases:

Here the user can specify the databases to be included in the analysis. By default all of the databases are included in the analysis.

Step 2: Specifying conditions:

In the next step the user can specify: 1) which fields to include in the result set, 2) which existing relationships between individual tables should be available, 3) which filters to include on the result set related to specific field values, 4) specify queries on the resulting data. Steps 1 and 2 can be repeated to build a number of individual result sets, which can be combined in step 3:

Step 3: Specifying result sets:

The user can specify whether the results should be: 1) cross-referenced, 2) compared (the new result set containing the differences between the two), 3) or joined. Each of these operations results in one specific result set on which the analysis will be performed.

Step 4: Analysis result sets and representation result sets

In this final step the user can perform the actual analysis by: 1) using built-in simple analysis tools (to calculate sums, or make columns), 2) downloading the result set in a spreadsheet or tabular format, so that the researcher can use the most appropriate analysis application.

The re-use of existing material, the description standard (MeMO DS) and the open source character of the MeMO application will guarantee the exchangeability and durability of the application's infrastructure.



The grave stone of Marcus van Wees, a wealthy nobleman from Guelders, who became a canon at the Utrecht Cathedral in 1507; he died in 1548. He had already bought a place for his grave in 1540. The Latin text surrounding the stone reads in translation: "Grave of the honourable and excellent lord Marcus van Wees, canon of the Utrecht Dom church, provost of the churches of Elst and Culemborg, who died in the year 1548, on 9 December".

5. What can be expected from the MeMO project?

The MeMO project starts in May 2009 and runs until October 2012, when the MeMO application will be presented at a congress. During the course of the project researchers and other interested parties will be kept up to date on the progress of the project through articles and presentations. In July 2010 MeMO DS and the Thesaurus will be completed. Additionally, symposia will be organized. In the first year there will be two symposia; one on interdisciplinary research within *memoria* research and one on the theoretical background of *Memorialbilder*.

Innovations in *memoria* research and in the use of IT in the humanities

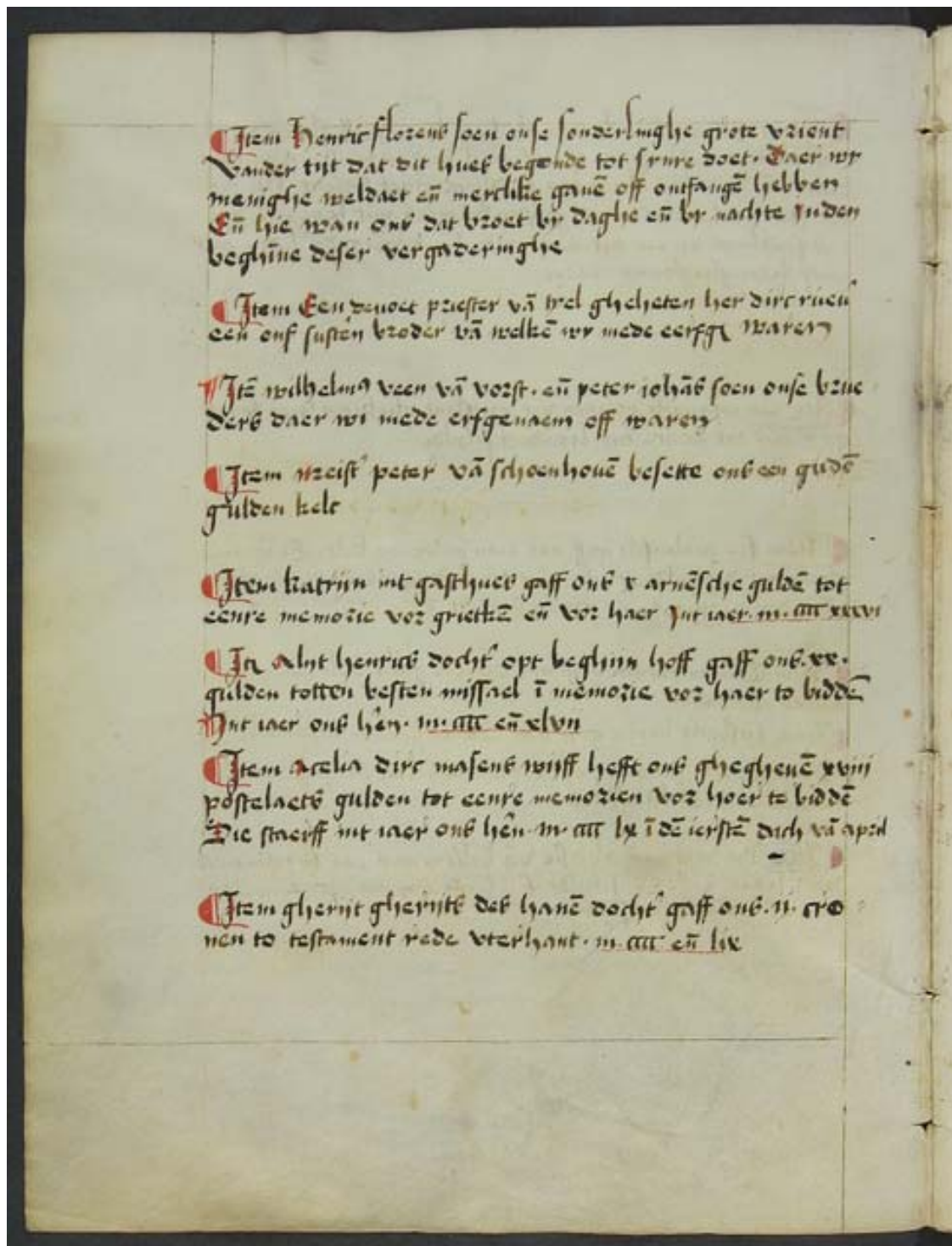
As was already mentioned, we aim for the MeMO application

- to enable research in which broad comparative research will be combined with case studies,
- which will engender qualitatively better research and reduce costs, and
- will make the Dutch national heritage available to a wider audience.

Apart from that, the MeMO project will hopefully lead to innovation within the use of IT in the humanities on three levels:

- Firstly, the MeMO application can serve as a major catalyst for more IT-based solutions in Medieval Studies. It demonstrates what can be achieved with data as soon as it is digitally available. Not only will the data be instantly available to anyone interested, the threshold to use the system will be as low as possible, bringing applied medieval research to a level, which can be understood by anyone.
- Secondly, it can also serve as a showcase for the sheer complexity of IT-related problems in humanities research, attracting new research or giving rise to new specializations in this field.
- Thirdly, the MeMO project not only aims for the development of a new research tool, but also allocates resources for starting up or joining Open Source communities, which can safeguard the sustainability of the project results. As such, it plays a pioneering role in humanities research that can even be expanded into other fields, like social sciences.

Truus van Bueren
Rolf de Weijert



Item Henric florens soen onse sonderlinghe grote vrient
Vander tyt dat dit huet begende tot sime doet. Daer wi
menighe weldaet en mercklike ganē off onfangē hebben
En hie wan onse dit broet by daghe en by nachte inden
beghine deser vergaderinghe

Item Een deuot praester vā mel ghelaten her dir ruen
een onf susen broder vā welke wi mede eerfge waren

Ite wilhelms veen vā vorst. en peter iohān soen onse vrie
ders daer wi mede erfgenaem off waren

Item zeist peter vā schoenhouē besette onse een gude
gulden kele

Item liatrin int gasthuet gaff onse v arnesche gulde tot
eene memoie vor grietē en vor haer int iaer. m. cccc. lxxvii

In alst henric docht opt begynn hof gaff onse. xx.
gulden totten besten missael ī memoie vor haer to bidde
Int iaer onse hēn. m. cccc. en elven

Item arlia dir masene wiff hefte onse ghegheue xviii
postlaets gulden tot eene memoie vor hoer to bidde
Die staeff int iaer onse hēn. m. cccc. lx ī de ierste dich vā april

Item gherijt gherijte dat hane docht gaff onse. ii. cro
nen to testament rede vterhant. m. cccc. en lix

This memorial register is a gift list of the convent of St. Cecily in Utrecht. It contains gifts from the late fourteenth century up until the early seventeenth century. The convent of St. Cecily belonged to the Third Order of Saint-Francis (Het Utrechts Archief, Bewaarde Archieven I, inv. nr. 890, fol. 2v.).

Appendix. MeMO organization structure and participants

In general the MeMO project comprises three main activities:

1. developing the thesaurus and MeMO DS
2. developing the databases and the MeMO application
3. data research, data entry and digitizing images (data research and data entry consists of research, analysis and describing the inventoried sources).

The project is supervised by the Project Leader and Assistant Project Leader in collaboration with the Steering Group. The Steering Group consists of the coordinators of the three main activities of the MeMO project. The coordinators supervise the progress of the development of the software and the data entry of the data researchers who research, analyze and describe the source material and the digitization process. The Steering Group and project leaders will be assisted by an Advisory Panel, consisting of the contact persons from the cultural heritage institutions and some experts on IT and *memoria* research. Members of this panel will be asked to advise on specific matters on an irregular basis. An International Editorial Board will be created for MeMO DS, composed of experts in the field of *memoria* research and related areas (see below). This editorial board will advise and eventually decide on the elements to be comprised by MeMO DS.

Participating institutes

- Utrecht University (OGC, Utrecht Centre for Medieval Studies - UCMS - and Igitur Utrecht University Library)
- University of Groningen (RUG)
- VU University (VU), Amsterdam
- National Service for Archaeology, Cultural Landscape and Built Heritage (RACM), Amersfoort/Zeist
- Data Archiving and Networked Services (DANS), The Hague

Other institutions associated with the MeMO project

- Royal Historical Commission of Belgium, Brussels. Agreement concerning the re-use of the *Narrative Sources* database content (<http://www.narrative-sources.be/>).
- Central Bureau for Genealogy (CBG), The Hague. Contact person: Dr Bert Lever, director.
- Foundation for Ecclesiastical Art and Artefacts Netherlands (SKKN), Utrecht. Contact person: Drs Mart van de Sterre.
- Netherlands Institute for Art History (RKD), The Hague. Contact person: Prof Rudi E. O. Ekkart.

Project leader

Dr Truus van Bueren (UU). Assistant Project leader: Drs Rolf de Weijert (UU).

Steering Group

Dr Truus van Bueren (UU), Drs Rolf de Weijert (UU), Dr Renée Nip (RUG), Prof Dick de Boer (RUG), Prof Koen Goudriaan (VU), Drs Peter Don (RACM), (DANS), ir. Rutger Kramer (DANS), drs. Saskia Franken (Igitur, UU).

Advisory Panel

Dr Bert Lever (CBG), Drs Mart van de Sterre (SKKN), Prof Rudi E. O. Ekkart (RKD), Prof Jos Bazelmans (RACM), Dr Bram van den Hoven van Genderen (UU), Dr José de Kruif (UU), Dr. Leen Breure (UU), René van Horik (DANS).

Coordinator MeMO DS

Drs Rolf de Weijert (UU). Advisor: René van Horik (DANS)

International Editorial Board MeMO DS

An international editorial board will be established to supervise MeMO DS. The following scholars have been asked, and have accepted the invitation to participate in the editorial board of MeMO DS. They are all well-known scholars of *memoria* or adjacent fields of research and are well connected with other scholars and specialists that might be consulted: Prof Arnoud-Jan Bijsterveld (Tilburg University), Dr Birgitte Bøggild Johannsen (National Museum of Denmark), Prof Sam Cohn (University of Glasgow), Dr Jeroen Deploige (Ghent University), Prof Julian Gardner (University of Warwick), Prof Dieter Geuenich (University of Duisburg-Essen), Dr Guus Lange (RACM), Prof Uwe Ludwig (University of Duisburg-Essen), Dr Els Rose (Utrecht University), Prof Thomas Schilp (University of Duisburg-Essen), Prof Corine Schleif (Arizona State University, Tempe), Jeroen Stumpel (Utrecht University), Prof Paul Trio (University of Louvain), Dr Harry Tummers (Radboud University).

The members of the Steering group will also participate in the international board.

Coordinator software development

ir. Rutger Kramer (DANS)

Programmers MeMO databases and application

Three to four programmers have to be recruited.

Coordinators data research, data entry and digitizing images

Coordinators will be appointed from each of the four participating institutions. They will guide and supervise the research, analysis and description of the material. The division of the work among the four participating institutions is done according to the expertise of the MeMO-coordinators working at these institutions.

- Memorial registers: Prof Koen Goudriaan (VU) and Drs Rolf de Weijert (UU)
- Narrative sources: Dr Renée Nip (RUG)
- Sepulchral monuments and grave stones: Dr Kees Schuddeboom, Dr Truus van Bueren (both UU) and Drs Peter Don (RACM)
- Memorial paintings and sculptures: Dr Truus van Bueren (UU)
- Digitizing photos and editions: Drs Saskia Franken (Igitur UU).

Data researchers for research and describing sources

Researchers will be contracted to research, analyze and describe the inventoried material, according to the following division.

Digitizing personnel (digitizing editions, photos and editing)

Employees from UU, RUG, VU and photographers from RACM.



Memorial painting of Joris Sampson and Engelken Coolen and their children from 's Hertogenbosch. Three daughters had already died when this triptych was made; they are wearing the long light-coloured dresses often used to depict deceased children in the region of the present day Netherlands. The little red cross the only son is holding in his hands may have been added after his death (Museum voor Religieuze kunst, Uden, inv nr 1754).

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Upcoming symposia and congresses

Fifth Symposium on Memoria Research

(organized by the University of Duisburg-Essen and Utrecht University)

The *Fifth Symposium on Memoria Research* will take place on September 25th in Dortmund, Germany. We currently do not have any specific information regarding the symposium's program. If you are interested in participating in this symposium, please check the MMR home page around half July, for additional information.

A request for your aid in the development of a bibliography on medieval *memoria* – by Viera Bonenkampová

Since the early 1990s the study of commemoration has become an important field of research in the Netherlands. With increasing regularity articles and books, dealing with the concept of medieval commemoration are published, exhibitions are staged, conferences and symposia in the Netherlands and abroad are organized, and lectures are published. As a result the number of publications on medieval *memoria* has become so voluminous, that a specialized bibliography is needed. The organizers of the Dutch-German symposium, which is organized twice a year in Germany and the Netherlands by *memoria* researchers from the University of Duisburg-Essen and Utrecht University, decided to draw up a bibliography on medieval *memoria* and related subjects. This bibliography is to contain publications by the members of these Dutch-German symposia. The bibliography will be published in the newsletter Medieval Memoria Research in the Low Countries (MMR), and will be updated regularly. Because the group of Dutch and Belgian participants and the number of their publications is not that large, we wish to also include publications by non-participants in this bibliography.

It would be a great help if you could send a list of your publications and, if possible, also any other all relevant titles of publications on medieval *memoria* and related subjects, to Viera Bonenkampová, PhD student at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam: v.bonenkampova@let.vu.nl.

Reminder request for information by Douwe Faber

In the previous issue of MMR, which was published in February of this year, a request for information was issued by Douwe Faber, a member of the ‘Overleg Memoria’ (Discussion group Memoria). The following is intended as a reminder, as any available information is still welcome and may be e-mailed to the following e-mail address: do.faber@planet.nl

Quoting the last paragraph of Douwe Faber’s request:

“I am currently under the impression that this strong involvement of lay authorities in *memoria* in Leyden, especially in St. Peters parish, should be considered as exceptional. So far I have not been able to find a similar situation (found in sources like these, originating from non-ecclesiastical authorities) outside of Leyden. The Leyden situation may well have to be described and explained as differing from the standard. More information is, however, still needed to either confirm or disprove this. Perhaps we will have to make do with arguments *e silentio*. I very sincerely hope, therefore, to be advised about situations more or less akin to Leyden, or at least in some way deviating from what could be considered the standard situation.”

For further information, please consult the full article in issue 2 of MMR:
http://mmr.let.uu.nl/pdf/MMR_002.pdf (page 18)

New MMR e-mail address

A few months ago our MMR e-mail address was changed, due to a mail-box migration at the university of Utrecht, which hosts our mail-system. Our new e-mail address is:

C.P.A.Dikken@uu.nl

E-mails sent to the old e-mail address will be automatically forwarded to the new one, but for the sake of swift transition, we request that you send your e-mails directly to our new address whenever possible. **Please note that due to issues during the mail-box migration, our e-mail system was temporarily unreachable during the second half of February.** Any e-mails sent to us during this period may not have been delivered, and might need to be mailed again.

We apologize for the inconvenience.

Colophon

Webmaster and editor-in-chief
Editorial staff

Charlotte Dikken
Truus van Bueren, Charlotte Dikken, Bram van den Hoven
van Genderen and Andrea van Leerdam

This newsletter is part of the project *The functions of art, ritual and text in medieval memoria*, OGC, Utrecht University.

Contributions to this newsletter, names and e-mail addresses of researchers wishing to be included on the mailing list, etc. can be sent to Charlotte Dikken, using the following e-mail address:

C.P.A.Dikken@uu.nl

The next issue of *Medieval Memoria Research in the Low Countries* will appear in October 2009.
<http://mmr.let.uu.nl/>