

## PYKINI'S PARROT: MUSIC AT THE COURT OF BRABANT

Remco SLEIDERINK

One of the little masterpieces of the *ars subtilior* is the virelai *Plasanche or tost*. Musicologists have praised this four-voice song, especially for its refrain, which is a two-voice canon.<sup>1</sup> The text of *Plasanche or tost* is also interesting, though corrupt as it survives. Like other realistic virelais, it contains a short story and onomatopoeic passages.<sup>2</sup>

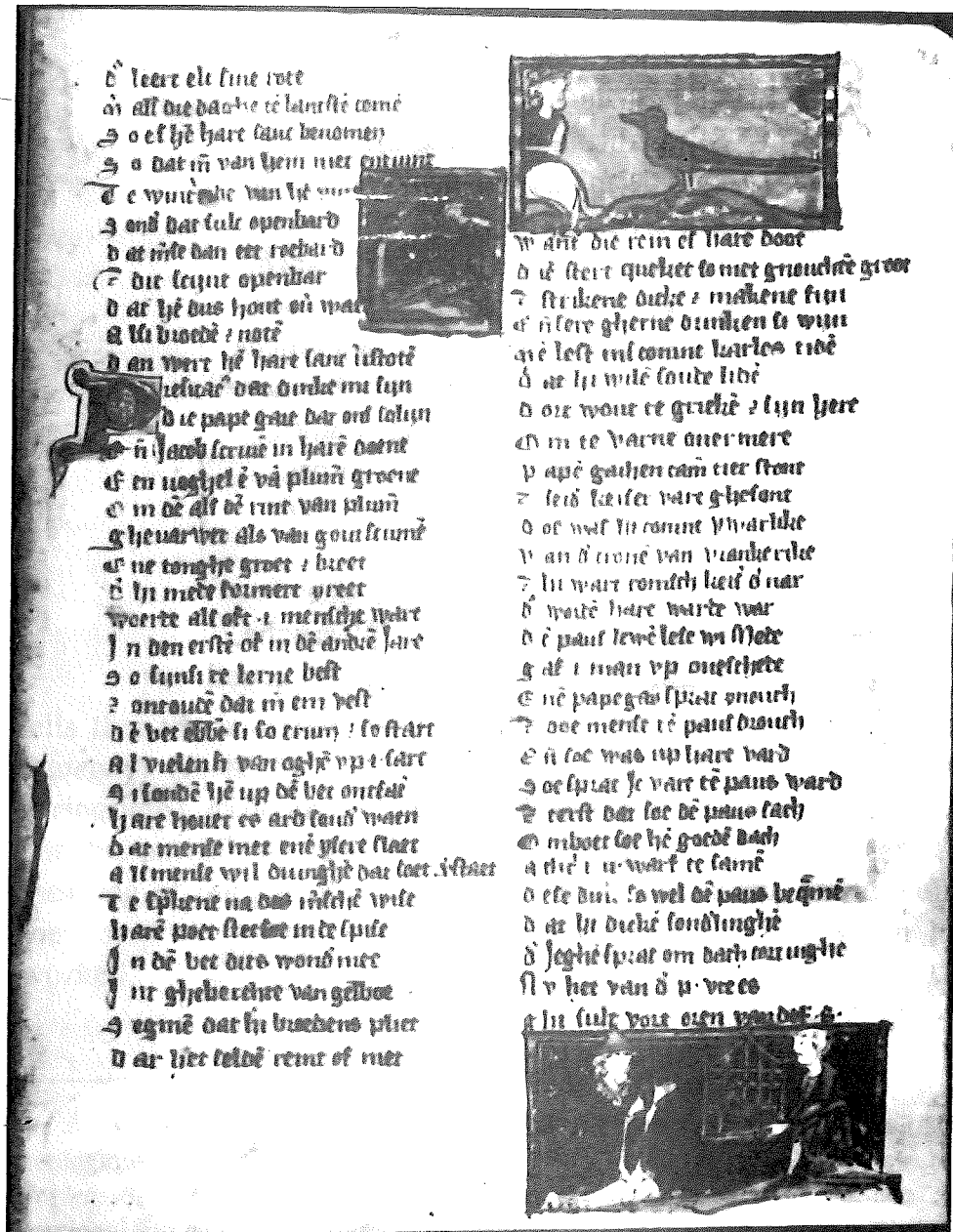
---

<sup>1</sup> See, for example, U. GÜNTHER, "Bemerkungen zum älteren französischen Repertoire des Codex Reina (PR)," *Archiv für Musikwissenschaft* 24 (1967), p. 246.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. F. LECLERCQ, "Questions à propos d'un fragment récemment découvert d'une chanson du XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle. Une autre version de 'Par maintes fois ai owi' de Johannes Vaillant," *Musik und Text in der Mehrstimmigkeit des 14. und 15. Jahrhunderts. Vorträge des Gastsymposiums in der Herzog August Bibliothek Wolfenbüttel 8. bis 12. September 1980*, U. GÜNTHER and L. FINSCHER (eds.), Kassel, 1984, p. 202. On Pykini's song as realistic virelai, see V. NEWES's article in the same volume, "The relationship of text to imitative techniques in 14th century polyphony," p. 127-128. I quote the critical edition of W. APEL and S. ROSENBERG, *French Secular Compositions of the Fourteenth Century*, vol. 1: *Ascribed Compositions* (Corpus Mensurabilis Musicae, 53-I), Rome, 1970, p. LXV-LXVI. I am indebted to my colleague, Janet F. van der Meulen, specialist in medieval French literature, for some clarifications of Pykini's text.

# Plate 1

A medieval parrot. Miniature in Jacob van Maerlant's *Der naturen bloeme* (D-DT MS 70, fol. 74r, 13th c.), which is an adaptation of Thomas de Cantimpré's *De natura rerum*. Among other things, Maerlant tells us how a parrot foretold that Charlemagne, depicted in the miniature with the parrot, would become Emperor.



Plasanche, or tost a eux vous assablés:  
Solas, solas, plasanche, plasanche,  
Deduit, deduit, bel acueil, bel acueil,  
Jonesche, liesche, l'ami, l'ami;  
Oyés crier "oci, oci"  
Le rosignol; joye en arés.

Confort prenés; esbatement,  
Le bon, le gent;  
S'irés dire a ma dame blanche  
Que de m'amor li fays present  
Entierement  
En ce moys de may par plasanche.  
Ce virelay li canterés:  
Solas, [solas, plasanche, plasanche,  
Deduit, deduit, bel acueil, bel acueil,  
Jonesche, liesche, l'ami, l'ami].  
En lieu de moy, je vous en pri,  
Mon cuer, m'amour li presentés.

Or tost a eux [vous assablés:  
Solas, solas, plasanche, plasanche,  
Deduit, deduit, bel acueil, bel acueil,  
Jonesche, liesche, l'ami, l'ami;  
Oyés crier "oci, oci"  
Le rosignol; joye en arés].

Le papegay jolyement  
 Et douchement  
 Escouterés sans desplaysance.  
 D'un ram de may li fay present  
 Aveuc un cent  
 De salus en obeïsanche.  
 Un capelet de verd ferés —  
 Solas, [solas, plasanche, plasanche,  
 Deduit, deduit, bel acueil, bel acueil,  
 Jonesche, liesche, l'ami, l'ami] —  
 Qui soyt d'argent, ferés par mi  
 Et a ma dame l'en donés.

The second stanza is especially relevant here, because it tells that the audience will listen with pleasure to the parrot (*le papegay*) (Plate 1). The parrot was often mentioned to evoke springtime, sometimes with the nightingale as in this virelai,<sup>3</sup> but this parrot may have had another purpose. To understand the meaning of the parrot, however, we must first know more about the composer of the song and the courtly milieu in which he worked.

---

<sup>3</sup> B. RIBÉMONT writes ("Histoires de perroquets. Petit itinéraire zoologique et poétique," *Reinardus. Yearbook of the International Reynard Society* 3, 1990, p. 170): "le perroquet est souvent, associé ou non au rossignol, un habitué des entrées printanières."

## Pykini

The Chantilly manuscript (F-Ch MS 564) attributes the virelai *Plasanche or tost* to a certain Pykini. Thus far two candidates have been proposed as this poet-composer. Richard Hoppin and Suzanne Clercx proposed Gérard de Picquigny, a chaplain and relative of Cardinal Guy de Boulogne. Gérard received a canonicate in Cambrai in 1335 and accumulated several other benefices between 1354 and 1358, mostly in the dioceses of Cambrai and Thérouanne.<sup>3</sup> Ursula Günther argued for Robert de Piquigny, whom she discovered in an index to the royal account books of Navarre. From 1374 until at least 1387, he is mentioned as a chamberlain of King Charles the Bad of Navarre, a patron of Guillaume de Machaut.<sup>4</sup> Hoppin and Clercx did not present any further arguments, nor did Günther.

Yet there is evidence that a better candidate for Pykini exists, namely sir Nicolas de Picquigny, a chaplain who appears frequently in the ducal account books of Brabant between 1364 and 1389.<sup>5</sup> A brief discussion of musical life at the court of

---

<sup>3</sup> R. HOPPIN and S. CLERCX, "Notes biographiques sur quelques musiciens français du XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle," *Les Colloques de Wégimont. II - 1955. L'Ars Nova*, Paris, 1959, p. 79. Also see note 97 below.

<sup>4</sup> U. GÜNTHER, "Zur Biographie einiger Komponisten der Ars subtilior," *Archiv für Musikwissenschaft* 21 (1964), p. 177, n. 41. Günther discounts the nonexistent Robert Riqueni, whose identification with Pykini resulted from the misreading of a document.

<sup>5</sup> The following discussion is based on my study of both the general accounts of Brabant and the so-called accounts of the fiefs, which are mostly unpublished. Some were written in Latin, others in Dutch. (Unless indicated otherwise, all of the documents cited are at the Archives générales du Royaume / Algemeen Rijksarchief in Brussels.) The general accounts studied were: *Chambre des Comptes* (or *Rekenkamer*, hereafter CC) 2350-2358, 2359-2392, 1780, 1781, 1783-1785, 46922, 46924, 46925, 46927-46930, 46932, 51136; *Comptes en rouleaux* 2422, 2424, 2962-2964; *Chartes de Brabant* 5126, 5130, 5139, 5208, 5289, 5341, 5463, 5464, 5559. These are described

Brabant in the second half of the fourteenth century based on the ducal accounts demonstrates clearly why a chaplain at this court could have composed a clever virelai. Here we will concentrate on the court chapel, including Nicolas de Picquigny, on Duke Wenceslas, who was an enthusiastic poet himself, and on the court minstrels. In two articles on "La cour de Jeanne et de Wenceslas et les arts en Brabant pendant la seconde moitié du XIVe siècle,"<sup>6</sup> Alexandre Pinchart introduced the subject of the court and its minstrels, but those he described were mainly visitors from elsewhere;<sup>7</sup> so they will not be considered here.

---

in A. UYTTEBROUCK, "Inventaire des comptes généraux du duché de Brabant antérieurs à l'avènement de Philippe le Bon (1342-1430)," *Acta Historica Bruxellensia* 3 (1974), p. 101-130. The accounts of the fiefs have the shelf numbers CC 17144 and 17145. Excerpts from CC 17144 are published in P. F. X. DE RAM, "Particularités concernant le règne des ducs de Brabant Jeanne et Wenceslas," *Compte-rendu des séances de la Commission royale d'Histoire*, 2nd series, vol. 1 (1850), p. 231-281, and in Comte DE LABORDE, *Les ducs de Bourgogne. Études sur les lettres, les arts et l'industrie pendant le XVe siècle et plus particulièrement dans les Pays-Bas et le duché de Bourgogne*, vol. 2, Paris, 1851, p. 279-292.

<sup>6</sup> The first article was published in *Revue trimestrielle* 2 (1855), vol. 2, p. 5-31 (hereafter PINCHART, "La cour", part 1); the second in *ibid.* 4 (1857), vol. 1, p. 25-67 (hereafter PINCHART, "La cour", part 2); on music, see especially part 1, p. 16-17, and the corresponding notes on p. 27-29, and part 2, p. 27-29, with the notes on p. 53-56. Nigel Wilkins studied these articles in 1983, but was not aware that Pinchart had often quoted from the accounts of Holland and those of Jan van Blois (Jean II de Châtillon), and thus mistook some of those entries as being from the accounts of Brabant. For example, Cuvelier (spelled as Cudelier) does appear in the accounts of Holland, but not in those of Brabant (cf. N. WILKINS, "A pattern of patronage. Machaut, Froissart and the houses of Luxembourg and Bohemia in the fourteenth century," *French Studies. A Quarterly Review* 37, 1983, p. 266, and PINCHART, "La cour", part 2, p. 59). Likewise, the enumerations of instruments in Wilkins and Pinchart are compiled from different accounts.

<sup>7</sup> For an impressive list of minstrels from all over Europe who visited the court of Brabant, see PINCHART, "La cour", part 1, p. 27, n. 50. This enumeration, which is not comprehensive, is reproduced by WILKINS in "A pattern of patronage", p. 265-266.

### The Court of Brabant

In 1356, Duke John III of Brabant (reigned 1312-1355) was succeeded by his eldest daughter, Joanna of Brabant (b. 1322), and her youthful husband, Wenceslas of Bohemia (b. 1337, see Plate 2).

#### Plate 2

Wenceslas of Bohemia, Duke of Luxembourg, at about age seventeen. Sixteenth-century draft after an earlier original in the album of Leboucq (F-AS MS 1136).



Through their accession, Brabant was joined to the duchy of Luxembourg, which had been inherited by Wenceslas from his illustrious father, King John the Blind of Bohemia. Consequently, Joanna and Wenceslas ruled over about 20,000 square kilometers, corresponding roughly to the present territory of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and an adjoining part of Germany, the Dutch province of North Brabant, and the Belgian provinces of Antwerp, Brabant, and Luxembourg. They also possessed some smaller domains scattered throughout the Rhine-Meuse region, namely the Duchy of Limburg and the so-called *Pays d'Outre-Meuse* or *Landen van Overmaas*.<sup>8</sup> At the premature death of Wenceslas in 1383, the Duchy of Luxembourg returned to the House of Luxembourg. For a time Joanna still governed Brabant and Limburg; when she passed away in 1406 at the age of eighty-four, these two duchies came into the hands of her great-nephew, Anthony of Burgundy.

Pinchart gives a splendid picture of the festive life at the court of Brabant:<sup>9</sup>

"Tournois, chasses, fêtes, jeux, festins, spectacles de bateleurs de tous genres, récits et chansons de ménestrels et de poètes, concerts de toutes sortes, tel est le tableau que présente la cour de Brabant, pendant toute la vie de Wenceslas, lorsque le duc et la duchesse se trouvent à Bruxelles en leur hôtel ou palais de Caudenberg."

Grandiose feasts to which nobles from Brabant and the surrounding countries were invited became rare after the death

---

<sup>8</sup> See A. UYTTEBROUCK, *Le gouvernement du duché de Brabant au bas moyen âge (1355-1430)*, vol. 1, Brussels, 1975, chapter 2: "Les territoires", p. 43-111.

<sup>9</sup> PINCHART, "La cour", part 2, p. 25-26. On life at the Brussels court also see A. SMOLAR-MEYNART, "Van de oorsprong tot Karel V," in the wonderful illustrated book, A. SMOLAR-MEYNART et al., *Het Paleis van Brussel. Acht eeuwen kunst en geschiedenis*, Brussels, 1991, p. 15-90.



of Wenceslas, at least according to Pinchart. But conversely, the anonymous writer continuing the chronicle *De Brabantsche yeesten* (1432) describes how Joanna still organised many feasts and tournaments including banquets and dancing, at least when she was not at war.<sup>10</sup>

Elsewhere I have discussed how poets and singers took advantage of the generosity of Joanna and Wenceslas. French-speaking *littérateurs* were welcomed, such as Jean Froissart — as had been assumed — but Dutch- and German-speaking poets are also named in the accounts. They included Augustijnken, Jan Dille, and probably Pieter Vreugdegaer, friar Hans, and Peter Suchenwirt.<sup>11</sup> This courtly multilingualism, which was probably not without precedent, reflects the varied linguistic backgrounds of the subjects of Brabant and Luxembourg. Yet it contrasts with the situation at the court of Flanders, which appears to have been almost exclusively French-speaking despite the many Dutch-speaking subjects.

### Wenceslas, Duke and Poet

The tradition of poet sovereigns at the court of Brabant is known to date back to the thirteenth century at least. Four French songs with music by Duke Henry III (reigned 1248-1261) survive, including a *jeu-parti* created in collaboration with the poet Gilbert de Berneville from Arras. His son and successor John I (reigned 1267-1294) also wrote love poetry, which is now in the Dutch-German language of the Rhine-Meuse area instead of French, even though it reflects his thorough understanding of

---

<sup>10</sup> *De Brabantsche Yeesten of Rymkronyk van Braband*, J. F. WILLEMS (ed.), vol. 2, Brussels, 1843, p. 408-409.

<sup>11</sup> See R. SLEIDERINK, "Dichters aan het Brabantse hof (1356-1406)," *De nieuwe taalgids* 86 (1993), p. 1-16.

the latest trends in French poetry.<sup>12</sup>

Wenceslas continued this Brabantine tradition and wrote as many as eleven ballades, sixteen virelais, and fifty-two rondeaux in French. We owe their survival to a protégé of Wenceslas, the famous poet and chronicler Jean Froissart. When Froissart was commissioned by Wenceslas to write a second version of his versified Arthurian romance *Méliador* around 1383, he incorporated in it *toutes les chansons que jadis [...] fist le bon duc de Braibant, Wincelaus*.<sup>13</sup> Unfortunately the only preserved manuscript of *Méliador* contains no music, although there is evidence that melodies were supplied for at least some of the songs.<sup>14</sup>

---

<sup>12</sup> An edition and thorough discussion of the poetry of Henry III is A. HENRY, *L'oeuvre lyrique d'Henri III, duc de Brabant*, Bruges, 1948. The poetry of John I is discussed by Frank WILLAERT, "Over 'Ic sac noit so roden munt' van hertog Jan I van Brabant," *De nieuwe taalgids* 79 (1986), p. 481-492; also see ID., "Entre trouvères et Minnesänger. La poésie de Jean Ier, duc de Brabant," *Courtly Literature. Culture and Context. Selected papers from the 5th Triennial Congress of the International Courtly Literature Society, Dalfsen, The Netherlands, 9-16 August, 1986*, K. BUSBY and E. KOOPER (eds.) (Utrecht Publications in General and Comparative Literature, 25), Amsterdam, 1990, p. 585-594.

<sup>13</sup> The quotation originates from *Le dit dou Florin*. See Jean FROISSART, "Dits" et "Débats", A. FOURRIER (ed.), Geneva, 1979, p. 184. On Wenceslas's poetry, see especially F. WILLAERT, "Het zingende hof. Ontstaan, vertolking en onthaal van hoofse minnelyriek," *Een zoet akkoord. Middeleeuwse lyriek in de Lage Landen*, F. WILLAERT (ed.) (Nederlandse literatuur en cultuur in de middeleeuwen, 7), Amsterdam, 1992, p. 109-122, 348-359. On relations between Wenceslas and Froissart, see SLEIDERINK, "Dichters", p. 3-5. The *Méliador* is edited by A. LONGNON: Jean FROISSART, *Méliador. Roman comprenant les poésies lyriques de Wenceslas de Bohême, duc de Luxembourg et de Brabant*, 3 vols., Paris, 1895; repr. New York, 1965.

<sup>14</sup> For example, Wilkins quotes a passage from the *Méliador* in which Froissart apologizes for omitting the music this time, because he remembers the text of the rondeau sufficiently, but not the music. See WILKINS, "A pattern of patronage", p. 272.

Only Wenceslas's ballade *Fuiés de moi* (*Méliador*, vs. 6222-6242) survives outside of the framework of Froissart's romance. The *Codex Reina* (F-Pn MS n.a. fr. 6771) offers a highly corrupt text in which the entire third stanza is missing, but, fortunately, it does include the music of the three-voice ballade.<sup>15</sup> It is hard to imagine Duke Wenceslas composing a polyphonic setting as sophisticated as this himself, although one can compare King John of Aragon, who was very proud of his ability to set ballades, virelais and rondeaux to polyphony.<sup>16</sup>

The music of *Fuiés de moi* was a great success, whether composed by Wenceslas or a subordinate (such as Nicolas de Picquigny?). For example, we find all of the music in a song book copied around 1400 in a Strasbourg monastery (CS-Pu MS

---

<sup>15</sup> See the editions of N. WILKINS, *A 14th-Century Repertory from the Codex Reina* (Corpus mensurabilis musicae, 36), Rome, 1966, no. 19, p. XIII, 29-30, and APEL and ROSENBERG, *French Secular Compositions of the Fourteenth Century*, vol. 2: *Anonymous Ballades* (Corpus mensurabilis musicae, 53-II), Rome, 1971, no. 147 (p. XVII, XXVII, 50-51). I am grateful to David Fallows for bringing the polyphonic ballade to Wenceslas's texts, *Fuiés de moi*, to my attention. This composition was first associated with the texts by Wenceslas and discussed in M. FOWLER, *Musical Interpolations in 13th and 14th Century French Narratives* (diss. Yale University, 1979), p. 27, 314. Wenceslas's ballade was included in the *Trémoille* manuscript of which only the index survives. This manuscript was copied in 1376 for King Charles V of France, but *Fuiés de moi* must have been one of the additions made after 1376. See M. BENT, "A Note on the Dating of the Tremoille Manuscript," *Beyond the Moon. Festschrift Luther Dittmer*, B. GILLINGHAM and P. MERKLEY (eds.) (Musicological Studies, 53), Ottawa, 1990. I thank Ursula Günther for bringing this article to my attention.

<sup>16</sup> T. SCULLY, "French Songs in Aragon. The Place of Origin of the *Chansonnier* Chantilly, Musée Condé 564," *Courtly Literature. Culture and Context*, p. 511. The evidence is found in a letter of John of Aragon to his younger brother.

XI E 9), but only the opening line of the text.<sup>17</sup> Another manuscript with the same date from the monastery of Melk in Austria (A-M MS 391) contains the melody without any text, copied in a margin.<sup>18</sup> The melody also served for at least two contrafacts. The burned Strasbourg manuscript (F-Sm MS 222), copied at the beginning of the fifteenth century in Alsace or southwest Germany, sets the music to a text beginning *Quam pulchra es*.<sup>19</sup> The song melody also appealed to the German poet Oswald von Wolkenstein; his *Wolauff, gesell!* is likewise a contrafact of *Fuiés de moi*.<sup>20</sup>

---

<sup>17</sup> This manuscript is now in Prague. See K. VON FISCHER and M. LÜTOLF, *Handschriften mit mehrstimmiger Musik des 14., 15. und 16. Jahrhunderts* (Répertoire International des Sources Musicales, B IV-3), Munich, 1972, p. 255-256, 258.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 89-90.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 550-551, 555.

<sup>20</sup> See especially "Oswalds Jagdlied KL 52 im Vergleich mit dem französischen Original," in E. TIMM, *Die Überlieferung der Lieder Oswalds von Wolkenstein* (Germanische Studien, 242), Lübeck, 1972, p. 49-56, and I. PELNAR, *Die mehrstimmigen Lieder Oswalds von Wolkenstein* (Münchner Veröffentlichungen zur Musikgeschichte, 32), Tutzing, 1982, vol. 1, p. 88-96 and for an edition, vol. 2, p. 110-119. Von Wolkenstein travelled throughout Europe and also visited Brabant: see A. JANSE, "Het muziekleven aan het hof van Albrecht van Beieren (1358-1404) in Den Haag," *Tijdschrift van de vereniging voor Nederlandse muziekgeschiedenis* 36 (1986), p. 144. In this article he also mentions Von Wolkenstein's contrafact of *N'ay je cause* by Martinus Fabri. On the latter, a singer at the court of Holland, see A. JANSE, "De hoofse liedcultuur aan het Hollands-Beierse hof omstreeks 1400," *Een zoet akkoord*, p. 123-135, 359-364. Both of Janse's articles are based on study of the account books of the court of Holland.

### Nicolas de Picquigny and the Chapel of the Court of Brabant

Sir Nicolas de Picquigny appears in the accounts of Brabant between 1364 and 1389<sup>21</sup> as *her Nycolen van Pickengny*, *domino Nicholao de Pickengi* or simply as *Pickigni*, depending on the language of the accounts. Here his surname is spelled like the name of the northern French town, Picquigny.

In 1364, when Nicolas de Picquigny is named for the first time in the ducal account books, he is a chaplain in the court chapel.<sup>22</sup> In that capacity, he made many journeys to the neighboring regions of Hainaut, Flanders and Holland, mostly in the retinue of Duchess Joanna. Craig Wright has commented, "It is among the ranks of the chaplains that many of the composers of the period are to be found,"<sup>23</sup> and in three entries dated between 1364 and 1370, Picquigny is designated as singer or *cantor*.<sup>24</sup> In addition to serving as chaplain at the court and

---

<sup>21</sup> See, in addition to the documents cited hereafter: CC 2351, fol. 71r; CC 2354, p. 123; CC 2359, p. 60-61; CC 2360, p. 61, 76-77; CC 2363, p. 152; CC 2364, p. 65, 143; CC 2365, p. 150; CC 2366, p. 67, 69-70, 73, 75, 171; CC 2367, p. 72, 74, 159, 161; CC 2368, p. 169, 172; CC 2371, p. 163, CC 2372, p. 138, 142; CC 2374, p. 90, 93; CC 2375, p. 102, 104; *Chartes de Brabant* 5464; CC 17144, fols. 100r, 138v, 152r; CC 46922, fol. 3r; CC 46925, fols. 15r, 27r, 31r, 47r, 49v; CC 46932, fol. 2r. In 1400 *her Nicolen, cappellaen vander capellen* appears (CC 17145, fol. 7v), probably Picquigny's successor.

<sup>22</sup> Described as chaplain in 1364 (CC 2351, fol. 65v), 1369/70 (CC 2356, fol. 50v) and 1377 (CC 17144, fol. 58r). In these accounts, the title of sir (*heer* or *dominus*) distinguishes chaplains from clerks of the chapel (cf. C. WRIGHT, *Music at the Court of Burgundy, 1364-1419. A Documentary History*, Musicological Studies, 28, Henryville, 1979, p. 80).

<sup>23</sup> WRIGHT, *Music at the Court of Burgundy*, p. 23.

<sup>24</sup> The *cantor* was responsible for the organisation of the singing of the Mass (see B. HAGGH, *Music, Liturgy, and Ceremony in Brussels, 1350-1500*, diss., University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1988, p. 140-142), but this word could also mean 'singer', surely the meaning in the entries about

thanks to Wenceslas and Joanna, Picquigny became a canon of the collegiate church of St. Goedele in Brussels beginning in 1374.<sup>25</sup> He is named in this capacity in documents of the chapter dating through 1382,<sup>26</sup> that is, not long after 1362, when polyphonic music was introduced to be sung in St. Goedele for the celebrations of the Marian confraternity at their expense.<sup>27</sup>

At least three other chaplains joined Nicolas de Picquigny in the court chapel during these years.<sup>28</sup> One, whom we know only as sir William, is mentioned in 1363 and

---

*monseigneur Nichoels cantori* (CC 2351, fol. 90r), *domino Nicholao de Pickengy cantori* (CC 2352, p. 86) and *domino Nicholao de Pinkengy cantori supra curiam* (CC 2356, fol. 45v; CC 2356bis, p. 83, published by G. HUYBENS, "Le personnel des maîtrises liturgiques à Bruxelles du XVe au XVIIIe siècle," *Revue belge de musicologie / Belgische tijdschrift voor muziekwetenschap* 25, 1971, p. 40).

<sup>25</sup> HAGGH, *Music*, p. 644-645, cites P. LEFÈVRE, "Actes capitulaires des chanoines de Sainte-Gudule à Bruxelles durant les XIVe et XVe siècles," *Bijdragen tot de geschiedenis* 23 (1932), p. 373-374, where no letters of collation are mentioned, however; Barbara Haggh showed me the correct entry in the *acta capituli*, Archief van Sint-Goedele (hereafter ASG), 910, fol. 25v, which states that the duke and duchess presented Picquigny for the canonicate now vacant on account of the death of Johannes de Noet.

<sup>26</sup> See ASG 910, fols. 2r-3r, 25v-31r, 182v-184v, and transcriptions of some of these documents in P. LEFÈVRE, "Statuts capitulaires du chapitre de Ste. Gudule à Bruxelles durant le XIVe et le XVe siècle," *Bulletin de la Commission royale d'histoire* 99 (1935), p. 160-167. See also HAGGH, *Music*, p. 171-172 ("Members of the Court as Canons") and p. 644-645.

<sup>27</sup> On their *misse* [...] *met sunderlinghe feesten van musike van discant*, see HAGGH, *Music*, p. 112, 925.

<sup>28</sup> See CC 17144, fol. 21r (1370/1371): *Item de prefato anno, dominis Willhelmo, Petro de Leida & alijs cappellanis de cappella pro immolationibus domino ducis 10 mut.* (emphasis mine).

1370/1371.<sup>29</sup> Another was sir Pieter van Leiden,<sup>30</sup> who had been a chaplain of Count William IV of Holland and Hainaut (reigned 1337-1345), when this count was still married to Joanna of Brabant.<sup>31</sup> After the count died in 1345, Pieter stayed on as chaplain in Joanna's service.<sup>32</sup> In 1357, thanks to a letter of recommendation from Joanna and her new husband Wenceslas, he was elected as a major canon at St. Goedele.<sup>33</sup> Until his death in May 1374, accounts record payments made by him for the maintenance of the court chapel. For example, in 1367/1368 he was paid for the binding of four books used by the chapel, which are unfortunately not specified further.<sup>34</sup>

After 1374, such chapel expenses were usually paid by Nicolas de Picquigny, probably an indication of his duties as *magistrum capelle*, a post which he evidently held in 1382.<sup>35</sup> Picquigny often gave out alms by order of the duchess, possibly

---

<sup>29</sup> CC 2350, p. 133 and the previous note.

<sup>30</sup> CC 2350, p. 134; CC 17144, fols. 4r, 4<sup>5</sup>r, 4<sup>7</sup>r, 14r-v, 21r, 30r.

<sup>31</sup> See *De rekeningen der grafelijkheid van Holland onder het Henegouwsche huis*, H. G. HAMAKER (ed.), (Werken uitgegeven door het historisch genootschap gevestigd te Utrecht, nieuwe reeks, 26), part 3, Utrecht, 1878, p. 164, and *De rekening der grafelijkheid van Zeeland onder het Henegouwsche huis*, ID. (ed.), (Werken uitgegeven door het historisch genootschap gevestigd te Utrecht, nieuwe reeks, 30), part 2, Utrecht, 1880, p. 379. I am grateful to Janet F. van der Meulen for these references.

<sup>32</sup> In 1347 and 1349, Joanna pleaded to Pope Clement VI on his behalf. See U. BERLIÈRE, *Suppliques de Clément VI (1342-1352). Textes et analyses* (Analecta Vaticana Belgica, 1), Bruges, 1906, p. 335, 414.

<sup>33</sup> See HAGGH, *Music*, p. 623, also on the death of Pieter van Leiden.

<sup>34</sup> CC 17144, fol. 4<sup>6</sup>r.

<sup>35</sup> CC 17144, fol. 138v.

another duty associated with this office.<sup>36</sup>

Another chaplain was sir Johannes de Busco (Jan van Den Bosch), who appears in the accounts of Brabant dating from 1375 to 1378.<sup>37</sup> According to Ursula Günther, Bosquet, the composer of two surviving *Gloria*'s, is identical to the Johannes de Bosco who served Popes Clement VII and Benedict XIII as chapel singer from 1391 onwards.<sup>38</sup> There is no evidence that the chaplain at the court of Brabant can be identified with the composer Bosquet or the papal singer De Bosco.

A number of clerks belonged to the chapel in addition to the chaplains. Unlike the latter, the clerks did not have to be ordained priests.<sup>39</sup> Around 1370 there were at least four of them. A certain Petrus is mentioned from 1363 to 1370,<sup>40</sup> Johannes Lottijns (*Joh. Lottini*) from 1368 to 1372,<sup>41</sup> and Jean de Valenciennes from 1368 to 1388.<sup>42</sup> Cornelis van Haverbeke

---

<sup>36</sup> Among other items CC 2358, p. 90-91, 112; CC 2368, p. 67-68; CC 2369, p. 83, 86; CC 17144, fols. 42r, 57v, 69v, 70r, 121r.

<sup>37</sup> CC 17144, fols. 49r, 56v, 57v, 68v; *Comptes en rouleaux* 2963.

<sup>38</sup> Cf. GÜNTHER, "Zur Biographie"; ID., "Bosco", MGG, vol. 15, cols. 973-975; A. TOMASELLO, *Music and Ritual at Papal Avignon 1309-1403* (Studies in Musicology, 75), Ann Arbor, 1983, p. 235-236; and GÜNTHER's contribution to these proceedings.

<sup>39</sup> See WRIGHT, *Music at the Court of Burgundy*, p. 59-60.

<sup>40</sup> CC 2350, p. 131; CC 2353, p. 141-147; CC 2355, p. 153; CC 2356, fols. 64v, 69v. This Petrus is another than Pieter Braeu, a secretary and clerk of the accounts of the fiefs who is also mentioned sometimes (correctly?) as clerk of the chapel (CC 17144, fols. 47r, 48r, 6r). Cf. UYTTEBROUCK, *Le gouvernement du duché de Brabant*, p. 188.

<sup>41</sup> CC 2355, p. 143; CC 2358, p. 136.

<sup>42</sup> In CC 17144 he is mentioned often (on fol. 234r for the last time).



is mentioned in the accounts as clerk of the chapel for almost forty years, from 1364 onwards.<sup>43</sup> In 1379, the duke and duchess bestowed the chaplaincy of the castle of Trois Fontaines on him, with the accompanying regular income.<sup>44</sup> On this occasion, Cornelis sang his first mass.<sup>45</sup> In 1402, we read that Cornelis *mijnre vrouwen capelle mitten gesellen te singen plach* ("used to sing with the companions [in] my lady's chapel").<sup>46</sup> Henneken van Mechelen was probably also a clerk of the chapel. His name is mentioned many times in the accounts from 1366 until 1384, and we know he was a singer from the accounts of the Holland-Hainaut nobleman, Jan van Blois.<sup>47</sup> He may also be the *Johannes de Machlinea* who read (or sung?) a poem about the *Ave Maria* in 1381, after which he offered the duchess

---

<sup>43</sup> CC 2351, fol. 64; CC 2352, p. 123; CC 2353, p. 141-147; CC 2355, p. 153; CC 2356, fols. 64v, 69v, and also countless times in CC 17144.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. D. VAN DERVEEGHDE, *Inventaire des archives de Saint-Jacques sur Coudenberch*, part 1, *Inventaire analytique des Chartes (1190-1756)* (*Inventaire analytique des archives ecclésiastiques du Brabant, 1st series, 2*), Brussels, 1962, p. 79, no. 351. See also CC 2372, p. 138.

<sup>45</sup> See CC 2364, p. 67, where he is named *Colijn vander capellen* (PINCHART, "La cour", part 1, p. 21). It is strange that Cornelis van Haverbeke is still referred to afterwards as clerk of the chapel rather than chaplain, even though he had sung his first mass.

<sup>46</sup> CC 17145, fol. 39r.

<sup>47</sup> SLEIDERINK, "Dichters", p. 9; add the following entry to note 42: 3 November 1383: *Item noch 3 in novembri 5 ellen esels Henneken van Mechle del 23 g. valent 9 s. 7 d.* (CC 2369, p. 150). In April 1372, Philip the Bold gave ten franks to *Jehan de Maalines, chanteur, pour ce que il avoit joué de son mestier devant Mgr.*, see B. PROST, *Inventaires mobiliers et extraits des comptes des ducs de Bourgogne de la maison de Valois (1363-1477)*, vol. 1, *Philippe le Hardi, 1363-1377*, Paris, 1902-1904, p. 288-289. It is not clear whether Henneken van Mechelen is the same as *Malo Hennekino de capella* (CC 17144, fol. 16r) and *Johannes de cappella Malo* (CC 17144, fol. 10r). Cf. also *Hennekino de capella clerico* (CC 17144, fol. 47r).

the rotulus containing it.<sup>48</sup> In 1402, several years after the departure or death of Nicolas de Picquigny, four *jonghen clercken, singhers op die capelle* (young clerks, singers at the chapel) are mentioned,<sup>49</sup> whose names were Thyskene, Johannes, Weynken and Yngelken den Roose.<sup>50</sup> In 1404 these *pueri de capella domine ducisse Brabantie* sung in the collegiate church of St. Goedele during the octave of that saint's feast at the request of the chapter.<sup>51</sup>

The chaplains and clerks of the chapel were not the only persons at the court with spiritual duties. The Dominican friar Paulus was the confessor of Duke Wenceslas, but the accounts do not reveal very much about him.<sup>52</sup> Furthermore there were two Carmelites living at the court, friar Godfried van Tienen and friar Hendrik van Diest.<sup>53</sup> From 1378/1379 onwards they were

---

<sup>48</sup> See SLEIDERINK, "Dichters", p. 9. The entry reads, *uno rotulo quem Johannes de Machlinea dictaverat super Ave Maria*.

<sup>49</sup> CC 2391, p. 84.

<sup>50</sup> Cf. CC 1783, fols. 100r, 140r. The sexton *Lippen* is also mentioned sometimes as clerk of the chapel. These five are cited as *de 5 clercken in mijnre vrouwen capelle* (the five clerks in my lady's chapel) (CC 17145, fol. 64r). On these singers, also see A. UYTTEBROUCK, "La cour de Brabant sous les ducs de la branche cadette de Bourgogne-Valois (1406-1430)," *Actes des journées internationales Claus Sluter (Septembre 1990)*, Dijon, 1992, p. 331.

<sup>51</sup> 4 June 1404: *Pueris de capella domine ducisse Brabantie qui cantaverunt in octava beate Gudule per mandatum dominorum ... 21 L. 12 s.* (HUYBENS, "Le personnel", p. 40).

<sup>52</sup> CC 17144, fols. 138v, 167, 212v. On fol. 138v, there is an indication that friar Paulus had a companion. In general, the accounts inform far less about Wenceslas's expenses than about Joanna's.

<sup>53</sup> In 1387 or 1388, another Carmelite, friar Jan van Diest, replaced Godfried. Godfried is *not* identical with the thirteenth-century Godefridus de Thenis who wrote the didactic Latin poem *Omne punctum*. Cf. J.

joined by two Franciscans, friar Jan van Halle and friar Hendrik van Tienen.<sup>54</sup> The latter was the tenor of the court chapel;<sup>55</sup> he was replaced by Johannes Plattelet, another tenor, who appears in the accounts shortly before the death of duchess Joanna in 1406.<sup>56</sup>

### The Ducal Minstrels of Brabant

The importance of music at the court of Brabant is not only evident from its rather large court chapel, but also from the number and skill of the minstrels who served the duke and duchess.<sup>57</sup> The most prominent minstrel in Brabant, and possibly even in Europe, was the shawm-player *Coninc Middach*

---

STOHLMANN, "Gottfried von Tienen (Tirlemont)," *Die deutsche Literatur des Mittelalters. Verfasserlexikon*, K. RUH (ed.), vol. 3, Berlin, 1981, cols. 169-172.

<sup>54</sup> In 1385/1386, friar Hendrik van Retie (frater Henricus de Reth), another Franciscan, replaced Jan van Halle.

<sup>55</sup> This information is found in the last entry concerning Hendrik van Tienen dated 28 November 1404: *Item 28 in novembri bi bevele mijnre vrouwen brueder Heinric van Thienen, minderbrueder die tenoriste in die capelle plach te wesen, om gode, 1 croen valet 6 s. 8 d.* (CC 17145, fol. 77r). Hendrik van Tienen is mentioned countless times in CC 17144, like the other friars. See DE RAM, "Particularités", p. 273-275, who published two of these items.

<sup>56</sup> 1406: *Item Johannes tenoriste op die capelle die hi sculdich was Peteren voirscreven, afgedaen van gracen om dat hi vele arbeidt in die capelle doet, van sinen clederen te maken 10 s. [...]* (CC 17145, fol. 105v). Johannes Plattelet became canon of St. Goedele on 19 February 1407 (see HUYBENS, "Le personnel", p. 40). Also see UYTTEBROUCK, "La cour", p. 331.

<sup>57</sup> It is very difficult to distinguish between the minstrels of Wenceslas and those of Joanna and I will not attempt to do so. It is striking that after Wenceslas died on 7/8 December in 1383, most of the minstrels stayed in court service. For the ducal minstrels of Brabant in the period 1406-1430, see UYTTEBROUCK, "La cour", p. 332-334.

("King Afternoon"). He appears in the accounts of the court of Brabant for more than forty years, from 1363 until his death in the spring of 1403.<sup>58</sup> Documents of the Augustinian priory of St. Jacob op de Coudenberg show that Coninc Middach and his wife, Elisabeth Robbijns, possessed land and houses on the Coudenberg, so we may assume that they were rather wealthy.<sup>59</sup> The same documents show that Coninc Middach had the same first name as his patron (Wenceslas, Wilselav, Willislaf), suggesting that this "Brabantine" minstrel could have been of Bohemian origin.

Documents from throughout Europe reveal the *wanderlust* of Coninc Middach. Of course he visited neighboring principalities like Flanders and Holland,<sup>60</sup> but in 1368 he even visited the English court of Edward III with three other minstrels and two valets. On their way back they were given a safe-

---

<sup>58</sup> CC 2361, p. 65; CC 2363, p. 82; CC 2374, p. 77; CC 2388, p. 64; CC 2389, p. 63; CC 2390, p. 62, p. 101; CC 2391, p. 80; CC 17145, fol. 42r and probably also CC 2353, p. 209, and CC 2357, p. 104. Usually Coninc Middach is indicated as a wind player. Only documents from Aragon specify that he played the shawm. See Maria del Carmen GÓMEZ MUNTANÉ, *La música en la casa real catalano-aragonesa durante los años 1336-1432*, vol. 1, *Historia y Documentos*, Barcelona, 1979, p. 35. The *amman* of Brussels paid the annuity to Coninc Middach (or his wife), see *Comptes en rouleaux* 2604.

<sup>59</sup> VAN DERVEEGHDE, *Inventaire des archives de Saint-Jacques sur Coudenberch*, part 1, p. 68 (no. 303), p. 73 (no. 325) and p. 77 (no. 342).

<sup>60</sup> For Flanders (1374) see the Flemish court account book CC 2702, fol. 19r; for Holland see C. LINGBEEK-SCHALEKAMP, *Overheid en muziek in Holland tot 1672*, Rotterdam, 1984, p. 158, 161, 163; for the court of Jan van Blois see W. J. A. JONCKBLOET, *Geschiedenis der middennederlandsche dichtkunst*, vol. 3, part 2, Amsterdam, 1855, p. 624, 632. The minstrels from Brabant seem hardly ever to have visited the nearby duchy of Guelders, cf. G. NIJSTEN, *Het hof van Gelre. Cultuur ten tijde van de hertogen uit het Gulikse en Egmondse huis (1371-1473)*, 2nd rev. ed., Kampen, 1993, ch. II.1, "Muzikanten en muziek", p. 123.

conduct for the crossing from Dover to Calais.<sup>62</sup> In 1379 and 1389, Coninc Middach travelled south. He was warmly welcomed at the court of the music lover John I of Aragon, son of King Peter of Aragon and his successor after 1387.<sup>63</sup> John of Aragon was so impressed by Coninc Middach that he provided him with an extremely laudatory letter of recommendation when the latter departed for Madrid in the summer of 1379 in order to play for a coronation. In this letter John of Aragon asked the new king of Castille to nominate the Brabantine minstrel as *Rey dels ministrers* of Castille, in the same way as he had nominated Middach as king of the minstrels in his own duchy of Gironne.<sup>64</sup> The same letter reveals that Coninc Middach was already the most distinguished minstrel in the German Empire and in France at this time, since he had been named king of the minstrels in both regions thanks to Emperor Charles IV, king of Bohemia and half-brother of Wenceslas, and the French king Charles V.

Another ducal minstrel of Brabant was master Wijnant. Undoubtedly he was a good craftsman because he already had the title of Master in 1362 when he is mentioned for the first

---

<sup>62</sup> See note 68.

<sup>63</sup> GÓMEZ MUNTANÉ, *La música*, vol. 1, p. 37, 72, 143-144. On John of Aragon, see SCULLY, "French Songs in Aragon", p. 509-521.

<sup>64</sup> This letter is published by GÓMEZ MUNTANÉ, *La música*, vol. 1, p. 144 (no. 51). Here the title of *roi* must have been honorary, probably unlike the title *Roi des menestralx de Brabant* which Middach also held according to the English safe-conduct. On this practical interpretation of the title, *roi*, see N. WILKINS, *Music in the age of Chaucer* (Chaucer Studies, 1), Cambridge, 1979, p. 137-141; WRIGHT, *Music at the Court of Burgundy*, p. 11, n. 2; and U. PETERS, *Literatur in der Stadt. Studien zu den sozialen Voraussetzungen und kulturellen Organisationsformen städtischer Literatur im 13. und 14. Jahrhundert*, Tübingen, 1983, p. 212-213.

time in an account.<sup>64</sup> It is very surprising that he travelled as extensively as did Coninc Middach, since master Wijnant was blind.<sup>65</sup> His travels to Aachen, Flanders, Holland and Hainaut were modest;<sup>66</sup> but in 1368, he, like Coninc Middach, belonged to the company of musicians visiting King Edward III of England.<sup>67</sup> Then in 1384 this blind minstrel crossed the

---

<sup>64</sup> JONCKBLOET, *Geschiedenis*, vol. 3, p. 620, 626. Brabantine items are: CC 2365, p. 110; CC 2371, p. 116-117; CC 2374, p. 77; CC 2375, p. 80. In the accounts a valet of master Wijnant is also mentioned: CC 2351, fol. 71r; CC 2369, p. 150; CC 2373, p. 104. From the accounts of Jan van Blois it is evident that he had two valets in 1364 (*Ibid.*, p. 633). He may have had a valet because he was blind, although Wright indicates that in Burgundy every minstrel had a personal valet (WRIGHT, *Music at the Court of Burgundy*, p. 25).

<sup>65</sup> Like so many details, this can only be deduced from foreign documents. In the accounts of Brabant it was not necessary to state that master Wijnant was blind simply because everybody at the court knew that. To determine his blindness, I needed data from no less than three courts. In the English safe-conduct, we read about *Guynaud la Voegle*. That this was master Wijnant could be deduced from the successive appearance in 1384 of *Vinant ... ministril de la duquesa de Brabante* (GÓMEZ MUNTANÉ, *La música*, vol. 1, p. 69) and *un juglar ciego del duc de Brabán* (R. MENENDEZ PIDAL, *Poesia juglaresca y orígenes de las literaturas románicas*, 6th ed., Madrid, 1957, p. 28), in the royal account books of Aragon and Navarre, respectively.

<sup>66</sup> CC 2351, fol. 67v (PINCHART, "La cour", part 2, p. 54); CC 2702, fol. 19r; JONCKBLOET, *Geschiedenis*, vol. 3, p. 620, 626, LINGBEEK-SCHALEKAMP, *Overheid en muziek in Holland*, p. 161.

<sup>67</sup> The company travelled with six horses and consisted of Myttok 'Roi des menestralx de Brabant', Guynaud la Voegle, Swankyn and Rolether, minstrels, [and] their valets, Chynkes and Wauter. See A. WATHEY, "The peace of 1360-1369 and Anglo-French musical relations," *Early Music History* 9 (1989), p. 134. The minstrel, Roeleder, is in an account of Jan van Blois named as *Winants knecht* ("Wijnant's valet"), see JONCKBLOET, *Geschiedenis*, vol. 3, p. 640. It is difficult to decide who Swankyn was. He could be the wind player Swanout, who visited the French king in 1372 in the company of Claesken, a ducal minstrel of Brabant (CC 2358, p. 67). Swanout's wife is mentioned in some entries, among other things because she received cloth, which could indicate that Swanout was indeed in Brabantine

Pyrenees and visited the courts of King Charles the Bad of Navarre and of King Peter IV of Aragon.<sup>68</sup> One of his travelling companions at that time was the Brabantine minstrel Lemmeken.<sup>69</sup> Master Wijnant died on 29 September 1399.<sup>70</sup>

In the accounts master Wijnant is usually mentioned as a wind player (*piper*), but he probably sang as well since a "Wijnant the singer" (*Wigant den sangher*) visited the court of Holland in 1372, and a *Wigant* and his companions sang in the city of Mechlin five years later.<sup>71</sup> Perhaps wind players sang more often than one would have thought in the second half of the fourteenth century. Indeed, Frank Willaert has shown how similar the repertory of wind players was to that of singers of

---

service (see CC 2366, p. 128, 140; CC 2367, p. 124). However, Swankyn may only be a slip of the pen for the name Claesken, since Claesken, with Middach, master Wijnant and six horses, visited the court of Jan of Blois during the spring of 1368, just before their voyage to England (Den Haag, Algemeen Rijksarchief, *Archief van de graven van Blois* 44, fol. 18v). We will return to Claesken briefly later on.

<sup>68</sup> See note 66 and N. WILKINS, "The post-Machaut generation of poet-musicians," *Nottingham Mediaeval Studies* 12 (1968), p. 48.

<sup>69</sup> That is Lambert den Rode. This minstrel was promoted to the rank of marshall later. See CC 2375, p. 80 (together with master Wijnant); CC 2382, p. 38; CC 2389, p. 72 and UYTTEBROUCK, *Le gouvernement du duché de Brabant*, vol. 1, p. 223.

<sup>70</sup> CC 2388, p. 64 (PINCHART, "La cour", part 2, p. 54).

<sup>71</sup> LINGBEEK-SCHALEKAMP, *Overheid en muziek in Holland*, p. 158, 161. The spelling *Wigant* admits the possibility that the wind player and singer were the same person, because on p. 161 of the same volume Lingbeek-Schalekamp cites an entry about "Wigant, Middach and other wind players of the duke of Brabant."

love songs.<sup>72</sup>

There is evidence for ensemble playing among the Brabantine minstrels, but it lacks detail and can be difficult to interpret. When Coninc Middach travelled to the court of John of Aragon in the spring of 1379, he left his regular companion at home, the result being that the crown prince of Aragon had to make every effort to find a suitable bagpiper to play with Coninc Middach.<sup>73</sup> The accounts do not tell us who Coninc Middach's bagpiper was. Maybe it was master Wijnant since the two famous wind players are named together several times in the accounts.<sup>74</sup> Another possibility is Claesken (Claes Lutze), a wind player who served at the court of Brabant between 1368 and 1404 and was finally promoted to the rank of herald.<sup>75</sup>

---

<sup>72</sup> See especially F. WILLAERT, "Hovedans. Fourteenth-century dancing songs in the Rhine and Meuse area," forthcoming in *Medieval Dutch Literature in its European Context*, E. S. KOOPER (ed.), Cambridge, 1994, and ID., "'Wel an, wel an, met hertzen gay!' Minneliederen en hofdansen in de veertiende eeuw," *Literatuur* 9 (1992), p. 10.

<sup>73</sup> GÓMEZ MUNTANÉ, *La música*, vol. 1, p. 37.

<sup>74</sup> CC 2702, fol. 19r; LINGBEEK-SCHALEKAMP, *Overheid en muziek in Holland*, p. 161. Maybe master Wijnant joined Coninc Middach at his visit in 1389 to the court of John of Aragon. In that year Coninc Middach is named in the Spanish account in the company of *Lambres*, undoubtedly Lemmeken, who was mentioned above, and a certain *Umgan*, perhaps a misreading or -writing of *Wijnant* or *Wigant* (cf. GÓMEZ MUNTANÉ, *La música*, vol. 1, p. 72).

<sup>75</sup> CC 2357, p. 77; CC 2360, p. 197; CC 2365, p. 58; CC 2370, p. 72; CC 2380, p. 71; CC 2381, p. 40, 42; CC 2384, p. 31, p. 57; CC 2385, p. 25; CC 2389, p. 63, 75; CC 2391, p. 86; CC 17145, fol. 24v. In the autumn of 1368 Claesken, "the duke of Brabant's wind player", entered temporarily in the service of Jan van Blois for participation in a Prussian crusade, see C. J. DE LANGE VAN WIJNGAERDEN, *Geschiedenis der heeren en beschrijving der stad van der Goude*, vol. 1, Amsterdam, 1813, p. 541. In February 1384 Claes Lutze inherited money from the deceased Duke Wenceslas: *Item gegeven drie piperen omme gode dat hen min here maecte Lauwelin, Jaquelin ende Claes Lutze, 9 in februari '83 [o.s.], 100 gulden* (CC 2369, p. 87). On 3



Once Claesken is explicitly named as Coninc Middach's companion, but is then called a drummer (*bonghenaer*) and not a wind player.<sup>77</sup>

Two Brabantine minstrels who appear together often in the accounts are Hansen and Henderlijn.<sup>78</sup> In the spring of 1365 they went to a minstrel school in England together.<sup>79</sup> In May 1369 both minstrels visited the French king.<sup>80</sup> They also travelled often to their country of origin (probably Germany), on which occasion the duke and duchess gave them cloth to bring to their wives.<sup>81</sup>

Every year around the feast of Epiphany a peculiar ritual

---

August 1404 Claesken left Brabant for Denmark: *Item 3 augusti bi bevele sheren van Bergen, Cleesken den heeraut mijnre vrouwen pipere plach te sijn treckende te Deenmarcken wart, 3 cronen vrancr.* (CC 1783, fol. 25v).

<sup>77</sup> LINGBEEK-SCHALEKAMP, *Overheid en muziek in Holland*, p. 163.

<sup>78</sup> CC 2351, fol. 61r; CC 2352, p. 94, 233; CC 2358, p. 65, 67, 183, 185; CC 2373, p. 99, 120; CC 46925, fol. 49v; CC 46929, fol. 20r. Hansen may be *Hanselinus de Kenghenbach*, a minstrel of Duchess Joanna who is named in a document from the priory of St. Jacob op de Coudenberg (*Archives ecclésiastiques de Brabant* 6459, fol. 52r).

<sup>79</sup> CC 2351, fol. 61r. Also in the previous year, Henderlijn had gone *ad scolae*: CC 2350, p. 137 (PINCHART, "La cour", part 2, p. 54). On minstrel schools, see W. SALMEN, *Der Spielman im Mittelalter*, Innsbruck, 1983, p. 110-113; M. GÓMEZ, "Minstrel schools in the late Middle Ages," *Early Music* 18 (1990), p. 213-216, and WATHEY, "The peace", p. 136, esp. note 10, where further bibliography is given. The two minstrel schools held in England in 1385 and 1390 that are mentioned by Wathey were preceded at least by this one held in the spring of 1365.

<sup>80</sup> CC 17144, fol. 14v (DE RAM, "Particularités", p. 236).

<sup>81</sup> CC 2359, p. 63; CC 2360, p. 80, 82; CC 2363, p. 80; CC 2367, p. 113; CC 2370, p. 72, 105; CC 17144, fol. 122v (this last entry is published in DE RAM, "Particularités", p. 265).

took place at the court in which Hansen and Henderlijn played a leading part. The entries in the accounts describe how the minstrels received the crown and the cloak of the duchess on Epiphany, possibly so that they could dress up as kings. Afterwards the duchess bought back her crown and cloak with money that Hansen and Henderlijn had to divide among their companions.<sup>81</sup> Possibly this ritual has to be considered in the light of the devotion to the Three Kings which was very intense at the court of Brabant.<sup>82</sup>

Around 1380 different minstrels appear in the accounts. In 1379/1380 the duchess engaged three new minstrels, Nicolas, Peter and Wintuwet.<sup>83</sup> In the spring of 1381 three other minstrels, all wind players, were allowed to depart for good to go to the court of Holland.<sup>84</sup>

At the court of Brabant the wind players, of whom about ten can be counted, were joined by a fiddler and probably a trumpeter. In the accounts *den pape* ("pastor") *van Rossem* is

---

<sup>81</sup> CC 2350, p. 135; CC 2360, p. 79 (and CC 51136); CC 2362, p. 66; CC 2363, p. 77; CC 2366, p. 71.

<sup>82</sup> See H. HOFMANN, "Die Schlacht bei Worringen (1288 Juni 5.) und der Patronat der Heiligen Drei Könige," *Die Heiligen Drei Könige. Zur Heiligenverehrung im kirchlichen, gesellschaftlichen und politischen Leben des Mittelalters* (Rheinisches Archiv, 94), Bonn, 1975, p. 307-312; cf. p. 153-160, "Dreikönigsspiele", in the same volume.

<sup>83</sup> CC 2365, p. 104, 110; CC 17144, fols. 107r-108r, 126r (partly published by DE RAM, "Particularités", p. 262, 265). Possibly this Peter is the same as the wind player Peter Petermans about whom is said in 1403 that he had been in the service of the duchess (CC 2391, p. 144). See also CC 2382, p. 33, about a minstrel, Peter, who had lived with Joanna. Wintuwet is possibly the same person as the wind player, Vint den Vont (CC 2369, p. 87).

<sup>84</sup> The account books of Holland make clear that the three wind players who made this switch-over were Drocker, Hans Sprincop and Claes Hodengroet, see JANSE, "Het muziekleven", p. 138.

mentioned several times between 1381 and 1386, but he is only called "my lord's fiddler" (*mins heren vedelere*) in one entry.<sup>85</sup> Like master Wijnant, *den pape van Rossem* had a valet at his disposal.<sup>86</sup> A *Trompet* appears in the account books between 1376 and 1404,<sup>87</sup> but we know nothing about him and cannot even be certain that he was a trumpeter. These cases illustrate a known problem with account books: they do not give information about what was known or self-evident at the time.

### Pykini's Virelai in the Manuscripts

One might consider the identification of Pykini as the Brabantine court chaplain Nicolas de Picquigny improbable because *Plasanche or tost* is transmitted mainly in the southern manuscripts, *Chantilly* and *Reina*, but it is important to remember that it also survives in two fragmentary sources from the north, now in Mons and Cambrai.<sup>88</sup> Furthermore,

---

<sup>85</sup> CC 2366, p. 123. Other entries in which *den pape van Rossem* is mentioned: CC 2366, p. 69, 73, 128; CC 2367, p. 123; CC 2368, p. 131; CC 2370, p. 66; CC 2371, p. 124; CC 46932, fol. 2r.

<sup>86</sup> CC 2367, p. 118, and CC 2369, p. 87.

<sup>87</sup> CC 2364, p. 68; CC 2368, p. 126; CC 2370, p. 71, 110; CC 2371, p. 116; CC 2372, p. 78; CC 2375, p. 72; CC 2392, fol. 74v; CC 46927, fol. 25r; CC 46932, fols. 7r, 19r.

<sup>88</sup> An edition based on *Chantilly* is *French secular music. Manuscript Chantilly, Musée Condé 564*, G. GREENE and T. SCULLY (eds.) (Polyphonic Music of the Fourteenth Century, 19), pt. 2, Monaco, 1982, no. 90, p. 137-139, 192-193. An edition based on the *Codex Reina* is in *A 14th-Century Repertory from the Codex Reina*, WILKINS (ed.), no. 40, p. XVII, 55-57. The text of the Mons fragment (B-MLeclercq) and its musical variants in relation to *Chantilly* and the *Codex Reina* is given by LECLERCQ, "Questions à propos d'un fragment récemment découvert," *Musik und Text*, p. 205-206, n. 13. M. HASSELMANN has edited Pykini's song, which is largely illegible in the Cambrai fragment, in *The French Chanson of the Mid-Fourteenth Century* (diss., University of California, Berkeley, 1970), in vol. 2, p. 38-41; see also vol. 1, p. 147-150.

musicians of the *ars nova* and the *ars subtilior* travelled throughout Europe and their compositions often went along.<sup>90</sup> *Fuiés de moi* is an example of the amazing mobility of polyphonic songs.

*Chantilly* was probably compiled and written between 1392 and 1396 at the court of John of Aragon, as Terence Scully has argued recently.<sup>91</sup> That there were musical relations between Aragon and Brabant is evident from the exchange of minstrels. The wind players of the king of Aragon visited the court of Brabant in 1386,<sup>92</sup> and the journeys to Aragon of Coninc Middach, Lemmeken and master Wijnant have already been mentioned above. Whether these minstrels were acquainted with polyphony cannot be deduced from the accounts, but that would help to explain the great admiration of John of Aragon for Coninc Middach.

---

<sup>90</sup> See, for example, A. JANSE, "Muziek en mecenaat in Europa omstreeks 1400," *Spiegel historiael* 23 (1988), p. 288-292, 299, who takes the court of Holland as a point of departure.

<sup>91</sup> SCULLY, "French Songs in Aragon", p. 509-521. Unfortunately, Scully has not taken notice of U. GÜNTHER, "Unusual Phenomena in the Transmission of Late 14th-Century Polyphonic Music," *Musica Disciplina* 38 (1984), p. 87-118, in which Günther upholds the hypothesis that *Chantilly* is an Italian copy of a lost Parisian source which could have been brought to Italy by a member of the family who possessed the manuscript in 1461. Günther does not agree with Scully that this manuscript is "clearly the product of a scribe whose maternal language was Catalan" (p. 517) (private communication, 25 September 1993).

<sup>92</sup> CC 2372, p. 119. Interesting are also the visits of the minstrels of Count Gaston Fébus of Foix (CC 2352, p. 107) and those of the king of Navarre (CC 2356, fol. 46r).

The *Codex Reina* was copied circa 1400-1410 in or around Padua or Venice.<sup>92</sup> Unfortunately nothing is known about the origins of its now lost model (or models). However, the content of the *Codex Reina* proves beyond the shadow of a doubt that songs from Brabant or from the Dutch-speaking area could appear in manuscript together with a French repertory because it contains Wenceslas' song *Fuiés de moi*, the medieval Dutch ballade *Een wyflic beildt ghestadt van sinne* and the trilingual virelai *En ties, en latin en romans* whose text even mentions coins from Brabant, three *gros de Brabant*.<sup>93</sup>

The fragments from Mons and Cambrai originated nearer to Brabant. Ulrich Mölk has tentatively placed the Mons fragment in northern Champagne;<sup>94</sup> the Cambrai fragment was probably copied in Cambrai.<sup>95</sup>

#### And the Parrot...

A last indication that Pykini can be identified with Nicolas de Picquigny appears in the text of the virelai. The second stanza of *Plasanche or tost* opens with the verses: *Le papegay jolyement / Et douchement / Escouterés sans desplaysance*. Both Ursula Günther and Nigel Wilkins think that

---

<sup>92</sup> GÜNTHER, "Unusual Phenomena", p. 88, refers to additional bibliography.

<sup>93</sup> These last two songs are edited in *A 14th-Century Repertory from the Codex Reina*, WILKINS (ed.), p. 8-9, 45-46.

<sup>94</sup> LECLERCQ, "Questions à propos d'un fragment récemment découvert," *Musik und Text*, p. 207-208, n. 17.

<sup>95</sup> D. FALLOWS, "L'origine du Ms. 1328 de Cambrai," *Revue de musicologie* 62 (1976), p. 277.

this is a punning reference to a pope, *le pape gay*.<sup>96</sup> But if one takes the court of Brabant as the context for the composition of this song, another interpretation of this *papegay* should be considered.

In an account of the year 1382/1383 we find a list of the expenses for the manufacture of the interior furnishings of a bedchamber. The embroiderer Scuelken embroidered no less than 55 parrots on various furnishings, each with a tabard having the coats of arms of Brabant and Luxembourg.<sup>97</sup> An illustration with a poem about Duke John III of Brabant helps us to imagine these birds with tabards (Plate 3).

---

<sup>96</sup> GÜNTHER, "Zur Biographie", p. 177-178, and WILKINS, "The post-Machaut generation", p. 58. Wilkins has Pope Clement VII (1378-1394) in mind and uses this to support the identification of Pykini with Gérard de Picquigny, since Clement VII was bishop of the two dioceses, Cambrai and Thérouanne, where Gérard accumulated several benefices. But his reasoning implies that Gérard, who was already a canon in 1335, composed the song at a very advanced age (after 1378!), which seems unlikely.

<sup>97</sup> *Item ghingen op die selve camere 55 papegaye mit mantelen van wapenen van Luxemburg ende van Brabant, coste elc papegay 2 mott. valent 110 mott.* (CC 2368, p. 112). The same entry mentions *eenre camere metten brieven van papegayen*, in which *brief* should be understood to mean "picture". This meaning is not given in E. VERWIJS and J. VERDAM, *Middelnederlandsch Woordenboek*, vol. 1, 's-Gravenhage, 1885, cols. 1437-1439, but cf. J. W. MULLER and A. KLUYVER, *Woordenboek der Nederlandsche Taal*, vol. 3, 1st piece, 's-Gravenhage, 1902, col. 1325, about *brief* meaning "print" or "painted parchment or paper".

## Plate 3

A boar wearing the tabard of Duke John III of Brabant. Miniature appearing with the poem *Van den ever* ("about the boar") in the *Wapenboek Gelre* (B-Br MSS 15652-15656, fol. 2r). Under the miniature we read the verses: *Ic ben die hertoghe van Brabant / Bi den Ever ben ic genant* ("I am the duke of Brabant / After the boar I'm named"). Wenceslas's predecessor identified himself with the boar because of its power, courage and determination to fight to the finish.<sup>98</sup>



<sup>98</sup> On Duke John III and the poem *Van den ever*, see P. AVONDS, "Heer Everzwijn. Oorlogspoëzie in Brabant in de 14de eeuw," *Bijdragen tot de geschiedenis* 63 (1980), p. 17-27. A fifteenth-century heraldic treatise reads: *Et porter en ses armes ung senglier signifie combattant subtil et fort qui la mort desire plus tost que garder sa vie par villainement fouir [...]* (L. HOUWEN and P. ELEY (eds.), "A Fifteenth-Century French Heraldic Bestiary," *Zeitschrift für Romanische Philologie* 108, 1992, p. 468).

At first glance, it is surprising that Wenceslas did not chose an impressive animal like the boar as a symbol of himself,<sup>99</sup> but instead a very talkative bird. A recently published fifteenth-century heraldic treatise discusses the symbolic meaning of the *papegault* or parrot. We read that the first one with the parrot in his coat of arms:<sup>100</sup>

*estoit homme plaisant et volentiers se vestoit de belles couleurs, et les piez et le visage avoit de belle coulleur et facon et bien plaisans [...]. Et estoit homme tres doux et le regardoit on volentiers pour sa contenance et pour son estrange maniere d'aler et volentiers en toutes places estoit avec grans seigneurs ou grans dames pour son beau parler et maniere de luy que estrangers regardoient volentiers.*

The courteous Duke Wenceslas with his "pleasant appearance" and "charming manners"<sup>101</sup> had rightly chosen this bird as his symbol (see also figs. 2 and 4). Moreover, the heraldic treatise relates that the first one with the parrot in his coat of arms *estoit propre a savoir bien parler pluseurs langages et volentiers le faisoit*. This bird was a very appropriate symbol for the duke and poet who welcomed poets to his court from so many

---

<sup>99</sup> Wenceslas probably used the parrot as a "badge". Cf. R. DENNYS, *The Heraldic Imagination*, New York, 1976, p. 41, who considers it plausible that "the traditional family badge being used on the liveries of the family retainers and troops in war" was complemented by "more bizarre and fanciful creatures" used as badges, especially during tournaments and jousts. In my opinion, the parrot functioned as such a secondary badge.

<sup>100</sup> HOUWEN and ELEY (eds.), "A Fifteenth-Century French Heraldic Bestiary", p. 484-485. In the quotations I have normalized the spelling of *u* and *v* and omitted the italics.

<sup>101</sup> See WILLEMS (ed.), *De Brabantsche Yeesten*, vol. 2, p. 257: *Ic en can ghedincken, in geenre wijs, / Hem te vollen geven prijs. / Sijn suet ghelaet, sijn scoen maniere, / Stedich in wesen, hoefsch, goedertiere, / Milde, oetmoedich, ende niet fel.*



different linguistic regions, and who was himself undoubtedly fluent in French, German and Dutch and maybe even in Czech and Latin. In sum, if Pykini's song was indeed created in Brabant, then the public would have had few doubts about the real identity of the parrot.

#### Plate 4

A seventeenth-century drawing of Wenceslas of Bohemia, after an older original, in the *Memoriaux* of Antoine de Succa (B-Br MS II 1862, part 1, fol. 102r).



## Conclusions

I have shown here that a very lively musical culture existed at the court of Duke Wenceslas and Duchess Joanna. The duke himself composed songs of which at least one was set to polyphony. The minstrels of Brabant were famous throughout Europe. This musical activity at the court of Brabant makes it more likely that Nicolas de Picquigny indeed composed *Plasanche or tost* and that the parrot in the virelai should be understood as a reference to his patron, Duke Wenceslas of Brabant.<sup>102</sup>

---

<sup>102</sup> I am indebted to Frank Willaert (Universiteit Antwerpen UFSIA) for his inspiration and assistance and to Barbara Haggh for her careful editing of the English version of this article and for her contagious enthusiasm.

**ARCHIVES ET BIBLIOTHÈQUES DE BELGIQUE  
ARCHIEF- EN BIBLIOTHEEKWEZEN IN BELGIË**

Extranummer - Numéro spécial

46

**MUSICOLOGY AND ARCHIVAL RESEARCH  
MUSICOLOGIE ET RECHERCHES EN ARCHIVES  
MUSICOLOGIE EN ARCHIEFONDERZOEK**

ed./éd./red.

**Barbara HAGGH  
Frank DAELEMANS  
André VANRIE**

**Colloquium Proceedings  
Actes du colloque  
Acten van het colloquium  
Brussels-Bruxelles-Brussel  
22-23.4.1993**

**Brussels-Bruxelles-Brussel  
1994**