

Local Lordship and Joyous Entries in the Burgundian and Habsburg Netherlands

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Ever since the cultural turn and the understanding of ritual and ceremony as forms of communication and symbolic negotiation, medieval and early modern princely coronations, inaugurations, and joyous entries have received incessant scholarly attention. That was much less the case for seigneurial joyous entries that took place in villages and small towns. The Burgundian and Habsburg Netherlands, and the Duchy of Brabant in particular, had a remarkably strong tradition in this respect. Local lords and ladies held entries in their seigneuries, issued liberty charters, and swore to uphold local rights and privileges. These entries gave occasion to high masses and *Te Deums*, banquets with local dignitaries, and festivities for the other inhabitants. This article analyses a set of 88 seigneurial entries, ranging from the early fifteenth until the late eighteenth century. It argues that these solemnities were structural components of the seigneurial landscape, carrying legal, social, and political meaning. They are also gauges for the power relations between the lord or lady, local office holders, and villagers or townspeople at a given moment, and can therefore help us to better understand who stood to gain most from the seigneurial system.

Sinds de *cultural turn* en het besef dat rituelen en ceremoniën een vorm zijn van communicatie en symbolische onderhandeling, staan middeleeuwse en vroegmoderne vorstelijke kroningen, inhuldigingen en blijde intredes hoog op de onderzoeksagenda. Blijde intredes van lokale heren en vrouwen, in dorpen en kleine steden, zijn daarentegen in de schaduw blijven staan. De Bourgondische en later Habsburgse Nederlanden, en het hertogdom Brabant in het bijzonder, kenden nochtans een lange traditie van heerlijke blijde intredes. Heren en vrouwen hielden intredes in hun heerlijkheden, vaardigden

daarbij vrijheidscharters uit en zwoeren de lokale rechten en voorrechten te eerbiedigen. Deze intredes gaven aanleiding tot hoogmissen en *Te Deums*, banketten met lokale hoogwaardigheidsbekleders en festiviteiten voor de overige inwoners. Dit artikel beslaat een analyse van 88 heerlijke blijde intredes van de vroege vijftiende tot de late achttiende eeuw. De analyse laat zien dat deze plechtigheden structurele componenten waren van het heerlijke landschap en dat zij juridische, sociale en politieke betekenis hadden. De intredes zijn ook graadmeters voor de machtsverhoudingen tussen de heer of vrouwe, de lokale notabelen en de dorpelingen of stedelingen op een welbepaald moment. Ze vergroten bijgevolg het inzicht in wie het meest baat had bij het in stand houden van het heerlijke stelsel.

Seigneuries and ritual: an introduction¹

In medieval and early modern Europe, transitions to a new ruler or administrator were enacted in a variety of rituals of investiture. Among them, princely inaugurations and coronations have received the most scholarly attention.² These commonly took place in court cities, provincial capitals, or – if a ruler was invested in several places at once – the main cities and towns of a region. They always consisted of a string of ritual components, the most splendid and visible of which was the joyous entry or parade of the new ruler and his or her entourage throughout the city. It was the common way to welcome new ruling princes and princesses, bishops, high functionaries and garrison commanders. As a result, contemporaries and historians have often used the term ‘joyous entry’ (Dutch: *blijde inkomste*; French: *joyeuse entrée*) as a *pars pro toto* for the entire investiture ritual. Smaller towns and villages are rarely studied in this context, even though

1 My former co-members of the Belspo-project LORD – Joke Verfaillie, Frederik Buylaert, Thijs Lambrecht, Tom De Waele, and Jesse Hollestelle – as well as two anonymous reviewers provided valuable feedback on a first version of this article, for which I am very grateful. I am also much obliged to Ruben Suykerbuyk, Paul Janssens, Thijs Lambrecht, and Paul Behets for several references to village entries. Finally, I wish to thank Valerie Vrancken of the State Archives in Leuven, who searched for the records on the joyous entries in Overijse.

2 Richard A. Jackson, *Vive le roi! A History of the French Coronation from Charles v to Charles x* (University of North Carolina Press 1984);

Roy Strong, *Coronation: From the 8th to the 21st Century* (Harper Collins 2005); Richard S. Wortman, *Scenarios of Power: Myth and Ceremony in Russian Monarchy from Peter the Great to the Abdication of Nicholas II* (Princeton University Press 2006); Matthias Schwengelbeck, *Die Politik des Zeremoniells. Huldigungsfeiern im langen 19. Jahrhundert. Historische Politikforschung 11* (Campus Verlag 2007). For the region here under scrutiny: Hugo Soly, ‘Plechtige intochten in de steden van de Zuidelijke Nederlanden tijdens de overgang van Middeleeuwen naar Nieuwe Tijd: communicatie, propaganda, spektakel’, *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis* 97 (1984) 341-361.

they hosted similar rituals by local lords and ladies that mirrored princely investitures in many respects.³ This article focuses on these solemnities in the Burgundian and Habsburg Netherlands and uses the terms ‘seigneurial joyous entries’ or ‘seigneurial entries’ to denominate them – the term ‘(joyous) entry’ is how the historical sources most often refer to them.⁴ Studying these entries helps us to better understand the power relations within the local communities involved, and identify the beneficiaries of the seigneurial system.

After the cultural turn and its emphasis on symbolic communication as a fully-fledged part of politics, historians no longer consider these rituals to be top-down spectacles directed at passive audiences. On the contrary, they are increasingly seen as focal points of intense negotiations between a wide array of stakeholders.⁵ Several scholars have pinpointed the importance of pre-modern ritual as a means of bridging the uncertain weeks between the death of a ruler and the full acceptance of his or her successor. Rituals legitimised and consolidated the succession from one ruler to another. Moreover, it has become clear that early modern power had to be visible in order to be tangible. Nowadays, many medievalists and early modernists, myself included, thus

3 As is often the case, exceptions confirm the rule. The most elaborate analysis, covering Switzerland and Southern Germany, is André Holenstein’s *Die Huldigung der Untertanen: Rechtskultur und Herrschaftsordnung (800-1800)* (De Gruyter Oldenbourg 1991) 147-216. On Brabant: Mario Damen, ‘The Counts of Nassau and the Performance of Lordship in Late-Medieval Brabant’, in: Claire Weeda, Robert Stein and Louis Sicking (eds.), *Communities, Environment and Regulation in the Premodern World: Essays in Honour of Peter Hoppenbrouwers* (Brepols 2022) 233-261. On Holland: Arjan Nobel, *Besturen op het Hollandse platteland: Cromstrijen 1550-1780* (Walburg Pers 2012) 90-96 and the list in this book’s endnote 58. On Eastern Germany: André Holenstein, ‘Die Symbolik des Rechts in Herrschaftsbeziehungen. Untertanenhuldigungen in Gutsherrschaften’, in: Axel Lubinski (ed.), *Gutsherrschaft als soziales Modell: vergleichende Betrachtungen zur Funktionsweise frühneuzeitlicher Agrargesellschaften* (Oldenbourg 1995) 81-100.

On Bohemia: Pavel Himl, *Die ‘armen Leüte’ und die Macht: die Untertanen der südböhmischen Herrschaft Český Krumlov/Krumau im Spannungsfeld zwischen Gemeinde, Obrigkeit und Kirche (1680-1781)* (Lucius & Lucius 2003) 138-150. On Tirol: Ellinor Forster, ‘Zwischen Landtag und Huldigungsumritt. Politische Handlungsspielräume des Stifts Sonnenburg und des Klarissenkosters Meran in der Frühen Neuzeit’, in: Brigitte Mazohl and Ellinor Forster (eds.), *Frauenklöster im Alpenraum* (Wagner 2012) 169-188. See also the literature mentioned in Table 1 (appendix to this article).

4 Other terms in the sources are ‘innehaling/innehaeling’ or ‘huldiging/huldinge’.

5 See, for example, the detailed analysis of interests and stakeholders in Mario Damen and Kim Overlaet, ‘Weg van de staat. Blijde Intredes in de laatmiddeleeuwse Nederlanden op het snijvlak van sociale, culturele en politieke geschiedenis’, *BMGN – Low Countries Historical Review* 134:2 (2019) 3-44. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.18352/bmgn-1chr.10451>.

consider ritual and ceremony an independent instrument of power, not a mere expression of it.⁶

Taking inspiration from Clifford Geertz's analysis of nineteenth-century Balinese ritual, these scholars apply the term 'theatre state' to the Burgundian and Habsburg manner of ruling the Netherlands, viewing symbolic acts as means of underpinning claims to authority. This has sparked a lively debate about the exact connection between rites and power. Historians agree that ritual was used deliberately to send out messages of hierarchy and submission and of concord and discord, but also that it was hardly possible for the organiser to exclude diverging interpretations of the symbols used and acts performed. Imposing state power by means of ritual was therefore certainly not a matter of course.⁷ Nevertheless, a new generation of scholars is emphasizing the political and juridical relevance of ritual throughout the early modern period and even during the revolutionary era. For example, as long as there were no written constitutions that unequivocally regulated relations between the various subdivisions of the government, respectively between the authorities of a state and its inhabitants, inaugurations and coronations remained important for defining these relationships.⁸

In parallel to the reinterpretation of ritual-symbolic acts, historians have also begun to question the main theories of European state formation. For a long time, rulers in expanding and ever more unified state conglomerates were seen as victors in a life-and-death battle with fellow princes, nobilities, and urban authorities. However, in many states, the ruling prince or princess strengthened his or her position not at the expense of the elites, but by collaborating with them. In order for this collaboration to succeed, the sovereign had to compromise and reward loyal vassals. A common

6 Edward Muir, *Ritual in Early Modern Europe*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge University Press 2005) 273-287; Barbara Stollberg-Rilinger, 'Verfassung und Fest. Überlegungen zur festlichen Inszenierung vormoderner und moderner Verfassungen', in: Hans-Jürgen Becker (ed.), *Interdependenzen zwischen Verfassung und Kultur: Tagung der Vereinigung für Verfassungsgeschichte in Hofgeismar vom 22.3.-24.3.1999* (Duncker & Humblot 2003) 7-37.

7 Clifford Geertz, *Negara: The Theatre State in Nineteenth-Century Bali* (Princeton University Press 1980). Works by medievalists and early modernists that build on Geertz's conceptual framework: Peter Arnade, *Realms of Ritual: Burgundian Ceremony and Civic Life in Late*

Medieval Ghent (Cornell University Press 1996); Élodie Lecuppre-Desjardin, *La ville des cérémonies. Essai sur la communication politique dans les anciens Pays-Bas bourguignons* (Brepols 2004); Anne-Laure Van Bruaene, 'The Habsburg Theatre State: Court, City and the Performance of Identity in the Early Modern Southern Low Countries', in: Robert Stein and Judith Pollmann (eds.), *Networks, Regions and Nations: Shaping Identities in the Low Countries, 1300-1650* (Brill 2010) 131-149. For a critical reassessment of this line of research: Andrew Brown, 'Ritual and State-Building: Ceremonies in Late Medieval Bruges', in: Jacoba van Leeuwen (ed.), *Symbolic Communication in Late Medieval Towns* (Leuven University Press 2006) 1-28.

way of doing so was to give them local ‘seigneuries’ (or ‘manors’; Dutch: *heerlijkheid*; French: *seigneurie*; German: *Grundherrschaft*), thereby granting portions of princely authority to private persons within a given territory. This process of decentralisation challenges the centralisation paradigm that has dominated discussions on state-building for a long time.⁹

In the Low Countries, the size of these seigneuries differed considerably, with some even comprising several towns and villages. Famous examples are the Duchy of Aarschot in Brabant and the Barony of Nevele in Flanders. More often, however, they consisted of a single village or part of a village, and many seigneuries were small plots of land with nothing more than a hamlet or scattered farms. What all these territories had in common, however, is that their lords and ladies exerted a set of economic – and in some instances governmental – powers within their boundaries. Almost every lord and lady could levy taxes, appoint village and parish dignitaries, and compel inhabitants to labour services to a certain degree. A minority could also administer justice and enforce local regulation. In the latter case, lords and ladies enjoyed the so-called ‘high jurisdiction’, which granted them considerable powers over local inhabitants and a strong claim to nobility. Most lords were men and women of flesh and blood, but legal entities such as abbeys, chapters, and cities could also possess seigneuries. In these cases, the abbot, chapter dean, or burgomaster acted *ex officio* as the lord. For example, the abbot and later bishop of Saint Bavo in Ghent was Lord of Evergem, and the burgomaster of Antwerp acted as Lord of Berchem, Deurne-Borgerhout, and Wilrijk.¹⁰

- 8 Matthias Schwengelbeck, ‘Monarchische Herrschaftsrepräsentationen zwischen Konsens und Konflikt: Zum Wandel des Huldigungs- und Inthronisationszeremoniells im 19. Jahrhundert’, in: Jan Andres, Alexa Geisthövel and Matthias Schwengelbeck (eds.), *Die Sinnlichkeit der Macht. Herrschaft und Repräsentation seit der Frühen Neuzeit* (Campus 2005) 123-162; William D. Godsey, ‘Pageantry in the Revolutionary Age: Inaugural Rites in the Habsburg Monarchy, 1790-1848’, in: Klaas Van Gelder (ed.), *More than Mere Spectacle: Coronations and Inaugurations in the Habsburg Monarchy during the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries* (Berghahn 2021) 260-264.
- 9 A detailed analysis of several coinciding processes of decentralisation in the County of Flanders can be found in Frederik Buylaert and Andy Ramandt, ‘The Transformation of Rural Elites in Late Medieval Flanders: Oligarchy, State Formation and Social Change in the Liberty of Bruges (c. 1350-c. 1525)’, *Continuity and Change* 30:1 (2015) 39-69. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0268416015000119>.
- 10 For definitions of seigneuries and seigniorial rights in the southern Netherlands: Jacques Mertens, ‘Heerlijkheden (9de eeuw-1795)’, in: Walter Prevenier and Beatrijs Augustyn (eds.), *De gewestelijke en lokale overheidsinstellingen in Vlaanderen tot 1795* (Algemeen Rijksarchief 1997) 552-557; Herman Coppens, ‘Heerlijkheden (9de eeuw-1795)’, in: Raymond Van Uytven, Claude Bruneel and Herman Coppens (eds.), *De gewestelijke en lokale overheidsinstellingen in Brabant en Mechelen tot 1795* (Algemeen Rijksarchief 2000) vol. 2, 671-690; Jos Denys, *Inleidende nota over de lijst der heerlijkheden van Oostvlaanderen* (Oostvlaams Verbond van de Kringen voor Geschiedenis 1950).

Given the importance of symbolic acts as instruments of power, it is not surprising that the advent of a new lady or lord was ‘theatricalised’. This article is the first to investigate the seigneurial entries as a long-standing tradition in the Burgundian and Habsburg Netherlands. It analyses their various components, legal functions, and evolution over time. I argue that because of their frequency, joyous entries were structural components of the seigneurial landscape in these regions. They carried legal as well as social and political significance for diverse actors involved. Firstly, the entries offered benefits to the new lords or ladies, both internally and externally. Through the entry, they gained full power and authority over their subjects, henceforth allowing them to claim revenues and labour services. They could also use the event to visualise power, wealth, and status vis-à-vis fellow noblemen and the sovereign. For example, possessing a lordship with high jurisdiction was a common precondition for ennoblement in the Burgundian and Habsburg Netherlands until the seventeenth century.¹¹ Owning a banneret lordship in Brabant – or, in the seventeenth century, possessing a significant portion of lordships and other domains – was a prerequisite for a seat in the Estates of the region.¹²

The second group to take advantage were local leaders, both secular and clerical. By publicly welcoming the new lord or lady, investing them with their full seigneurial powers, and dining with them, they cemented their role as brokers and middlemen between the lord or lady and the villagers or townspeople in front of large crowds of onlookers. Thirdly, entries could also empower a village or town community, although the analysis below argues that their bargaining power was often minimal. Seigneurial entries thus provide us with indications regarding the power relations between these groups. Studying these rites tells us not only how seigneuries were passed on but also how they worked, given that the entries constituted pivotal and often consequential occasions of negotiation between the involved parties. In this sense, this article also contributes to the historical debate about who stood to gain the most from the seigneurial system.¹³

I start this article by explaining how I have searched for the entries, and how representative the sample is. The actual analysis is structured around the main stages of the entries. First comes the preparation of the solemnities,

11 Paul Janssens, *De evolutie van de Belgische adel sinds de late middeleeuwen* (Gemeentekrediet 1998) 130-133.

12 Beatrijs Augustyn, ‘Staten van Brabant (14de eeuw-1795)’, in: Raymond Van Uytven, Claude Bruneel and Herman Coppens (eds.), *De gewestelijke en lokale overheidsinstellingen in Brabant en Mechelen tot 1795* (Algemeen Rijksarchief 2000) vol. 1, 101-103.

13 See for example Marjorie Keniston McIntosh’s analysis of Havering, east of London, where by the early seventeenth century, a few local elite families had taken over legal and administrative power previously shared by many: Marjorie Keniston McIntosh, *A Community Transformed: The Manor and Liberty of Havering, 1500-1620* (Cambridge University Press 1991) 297-363.

along with the actual parade (the joyous entry in the strict sense) in the town or village. The next section focuses on the exchange of mutual oaths, an essential but from the seventeenth century onwards increasingly rare part of the seigneurial entries. Finally, I discuss the closing festivities, focusing on exclusive banquets as well as games, drinking fountains and fireworks for all the inhabitants. The significance of gift exchange is also examined in this part. Taken together, these sections provide important clues to the meaning of seigneurial joyous entries for power relations within local communities. Moreover, this article shows that joyous entries were not at all restricted to sovereign rulers. It was a common ritual that could be used for the investiture of any authority – a reality that has often been overlooked.

Sample

My analysis is based on data from 88 solemn entries in the Burgundian and Habsburg Netherlands, with a geographic emphasis on the southern Low Countries.¹⁴ All data can be found in Table 1 in the appendix to this article.¹⁵ Most of the information was discovered in monographs on specific villages or towns as well as in local historical journals. I searched for examples in Flanders, Brabant, Hainaut, Namur, Luxembourg, Limburg, and, to a lesser degree, in Holland and Zeeland. Systematically analysing further local journals and histories as well as chronicles and seigneurial and parish accounts would undoubtedly reveal more cases. Moreover, I agree that a thorough search for the more northern provinces of Guelders, Utrecht, Overijssel or Frisia is necessary in order to draw conclusions about the meaning and developments of seigneurial entries in those regions.¹⁶ My conclusions will thus mainly apply to the southern parts of the Low Countries, up to northern Brabant. Nevertheless, the data in Table 1 is representative in

14 Literature reveals older examples as well, such as the joyous entry of Aleidis of Perwys in Hoboken on 31 May 1284 and seigneurial entries in Breda from 1290 onwards: P. D. Kuyl, *Hoboken en zijn wonderdadig kruisbeeld alsmede eene beschrijving van het voormalig klooster der PP. Birgittijnen* (Antwerpen: Drukkerij J.-E. Buschmann 1866) 14-15; M. W. van Boven, 'De inhuldigingen van de heren van Breda', in: *De heerlijke stad. Achtste colloquium 'De Brabantse stad'*, Bergen-op-Zoom, 2 en 3 oktober 1987 (Van Gorcum 1988) 21.

15 Table 1 contains the dates and places of the events, the names of the lords and ladies involved,

and references to sources. In the following, I refer to the information in the table by way of short references in the footnotes consisting of the number in the table and the place and year of the entry (for example: 5 – Retie 1446).

16 Currently Arjan Nobel (University of Amsterdam) is preparing a monograph on joyous entries by lords and ladies, and also preachers and office holders, in the Dutch Republic: Arjan Nobel, 'Blijde Inkomsten op het platteland tijdens de Republiek', webinar for the Werkgroep Adelsgeschiedenis, held on 31 March 2022 (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cUtYHjplVpy>).

other respects. Firstly, there is a clear chronological continuity, with 15 cases from the fifteenth century (17.05 per cent), 22 from the sixteenth century (25 per cent), 21 from the seventeenth century (23.86 per cent), and 29 from the eighteenth century (32.95 per cent).¹⁷ Secondly, the social background of the lords and ladies is diverse. They come from high, transregional aristocratic houses such as Arenberg, Nassau, and Croÿ, but there are also lesser nobles such as François Charles de Loë, and recently ennobled burghers such as Wouter van Hecke and François Claesman.¹⁸ The list includes seigneuries belonging to legal entities as well: Evergem, owned by the Abbey of Saint Bavo and later the Diocese of Ghent, and Saint Peter's Seignury in Ghent, administered by the abbey of the same name.

Nevertheless, the high nobility – those families that were part of the princely entourage and, especially from the seventeenth century onwards, obtained higher noble titles such as count(ess), marquis/marquess, prince(ss), or duke/duchess – are clearly dominant in the sample of entries. There may be several reasons for this, the most important being that a large share of all seigneuries were in the hands of a small number of families. Frank Scheelings has calculated that slightly less than 600 seigneuries with high jurisdiction in eighteenth-century Brabant belonged to 245 different lords, of which six possessed more than ten seigneuries, and 43 between three and ten.¹⁹ The same holds true for Luxembourg, where a small group of noble families amassed seignorial rights in many villages.²⁰ Furthermore, the aristocratic houses generally owned larger seigneuries that came with prestigious titles, such as the Duchy of Aarschot and the Principalities of Chimay and Grimbergen. The elevated status of these lords and seigneuries may have led to more elaborate ceremonies, larger retinues and audiences attending the solemnities, as well as more memorial accounts to spread the news of the events. The dominance of the higher nobility is meaningful for another reason as well: owning several seigneuries implied being absent from some of

17 I was unable to determine the exact date – and century – of entry 33 in Middelburg (between 1586 and 1602).

18 The Damarin family (79 – Merelbeke 1740) was part of Bruges' urban elites. I was unable to verify whether they were nobles or commoners.

19 Frank Scheelings, *De heren en het heerlijk regime in Brabant in de achttiende eeuw* (PhD dissertation; Vrije Universiteit Brussel 1990) vol. 1, 83-90. This process of accumulating seigneuries had already begun in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries: Raymond Van Uytven, 'Vorst, adel en steden: een driehoeksverhouding in Brabant van de twaalfde

tot de zestiende eeuw', *Bijdragen tot de Geschiedenis* 59:3-4 (1976) 110-112.

20 Calixte Hudemann-Simon, *La noblesse luxembourgeoise au XVIII^e siècle* (Éditions de la Sorbonne 1985) 321. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4000/books.pSORbonne.67504>. Henk van Nierop concluded that in 1555, twelve lords possessed almost half of Holland's seigneuries, although Maarten Prins recently established that there were far more seigneuries than van Nierop's analysis suggests: Maarten Prins, 'Heren van Holland. Het bezit van Hollandse heerlijkheden onder de adel en patriciaat (1500-1795)', *Virtus* 22 (2015) 37-62.

them for most of the time. As a result, entry celebrations became all the more important for settling matters between the lord or lady, the village or town leaders, and the local communities that otherwise had little opportunity to meet up and discuss.²¹

Another striking feature of the data is the share of towns – that is, small or medium-sized towns with less than 5,000 inhabitants.²² No fewer than 35 joyous entries in the list (39.77 per cent) concerned towns with a lord or lady (see Table 2), even though seigneurial towns only constituted a small fraction of the thousands of seigneuries scattered across the southern parts of the Low Countries. This overrepresentation could result from the fact that urban lords and ladies were more often members of the higher noble ranks and that these towns had a slightly more developed administration and better documentation, but it could also be due to the stronger juridical position of townspeople vis-à-vis their lady or lord. Corroborating the latter assumption would require more research.

Town	Number of Joyous Entries			
	15 th Century	16 th Century	17 th Century	18 th Century
Aarschot		3	3	2
Assenede*				1
Beaumont		1	1	
Breda	3	4		
Chimay			2	1
Deinze				
Diest	3	3	1	
Geel		2		
Kaprijke				1
Middelburg [in Flanders]		(1)	(1)	1
Turnhout			1	1
Total	6	13	8	7
		(possibly 14)	(possibly 9)	

Table 2. Seigneurial joyous entries in towns.

*There is some doubt among scholars as to whether Assenede held the status of a town or not. Several seventeenth- and eighteenth-century archival records have the heading *Stede ende Ambachte* ('town and district'); for this reason, I have decided to include Assenede in this table: Rijksarchief Gent (State Archives Ghent, hereafter RAG), *Ambacht Assenede*, 15, 22 and 23.

21 For a case study showing the importance of reliable collaborators for absentee lords: Damen, 'The Counts of Nassau', 245-247.

22 Only Breda had more than 5,000 inhabitants in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

A conspicuous geographic imbalance is noticeable as well. Although I searched literature and journals pertaining to several regions in the Low Countries (see above), I found no mentions of entries in Namur or Luxembourg, nor in Zeeland under Burgundian or Habsburg rule. The opposite picture emerged for Brabant: no fewer than 61 of the 88 joyous entries found (69.32 per cent) were in Brabant, including all of the fifteenth-century events.²³ This likely has to do with Brabant's distinct tradition of liberty charters. As a matter of fact, the term 'joyous entries' not only refers to the ritual acts, but also to liberty charters that were granted as part of these acts. This illustrates the close relationship between investiture ritual and negotiations about the legal position of those involved. The famous Brabant Joyous Entry charter regulated the relationships between the dukes and towns or Estates since the second half of the thirteenth century. It imposed checks on the ducal regime and remained a cornerstone of Brabant's constitution until 1794.²⁴ Bart Minnen has shown that there was an equally strong tradition of village liberty charters, often promulgated on the occasion of a new lord or lady's entry. He identified 136 such charters for 48 villages. These charters can be viewed as markers of emancipation of village communities vis-à-vis their local rulers. A similar but less pronounced tradition existed in Hainaut, whereas in neighbouring Flanders, village liberties were much more uncommon.²⁵ The exceptional number of seigneurial entries in Brabant can almost certainly be linked to these parallel traditions of joyous entries and liberty charters.

Finally, there is an interesting observation to be made regarding gender. While the majority of invested people were male, women were the main actors in sixteen cases (18.18 per cent). Ladies could perform an entry as heiress to the lordship or as the new spouse to a lord. Nevertheless, on some occasions, a lord became the focal figure even though it was actually his wife who had inherited the seigneurie.²⁶ Elsewhere, the wedding of a lord provided occasion for a new entry allowing the inhabitants to become acquainted with the new lady. Ten years after her husband, for example, Dorothee de Croÿ had her own joyous entry in Beaumont. It was an exact copy of the previous event,

23 The thirteenth- and fourteenth-century cases (see footnote 14) were also in Brabant.

24 Valerie Vrancken, *De Blijde Inkomsten van de Brabantse hertogen: Macht, opstand en privileges in de vijftiende eeuw* (ASP Academic & Scientific Publishers 2018); Klaas Van Gelder, 'The Convention of The Hague and the Constitutional Debates in the Estates of Flanders and Brabant, 1790-1794', *Early Modern Low Countries* 1:1 (2017) 156-176. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.18352/emlc.6>.

25 Bart Minnen, 'Heerlijke wetgeving in Brabant in de late Middeleeuwen. De privileges voor de heerlijkheden Rotselaar, Vorselaar en Retie (1407-1558)', *Handelingen van de Koninklijke Commissie voor de Uitgave der Oude Wetten en Verordeningen van België* 41 (2000) 79-270; Jean-Marie Cauchies and Françoise Thomas, *Chartes-lois en Hainaut (XII^e-XIV^e siècle). Édition et traduction* (Hannonia 2005).

26 For example, 73 – Erps 1722.

except that the town council did not hand her the keys to the gates.²⁷ These entries may not have been legally required, they still helped to consolidate the position of the seigneurial couple and acquaint them with the local elites.

The opening stages of the joyous entries

Due to shared traditions that served as models for investiture rituals throughout large parts of the European continent, there was a standard pattern for joyous entries regardless of the authority involved.²⁸ As a result, several authors have distinguished similar phases in entry ritual in more or less detail despite examining different regions or dignities.²⁹ These phases – namely organisation, welcome, ceremonial entry, mass, exchange of the oaths, and festivities – serve as the framework for the following discussion of seigneurial joyous entries.

Unfortunately, there is only scant information on the preparations for entries. Most seigneuries were fiefs, and according to feudal law, every new fiefholder had to appear before the competent feudal court to complete certain administrative steps (Dutch: *leenverhef*; French: *relief*).³⁰ Among other things, he or she had to draw up a document (Dutch: *leendenombrement*) stating the location of the fief, the feudal rights attached to it, and its institutional organisation. These documents settled the administration of the fief, and in some instances also the seigneurie that corresponded with it.³¹ This could occur long before the entry. Karl Ferdinand von Königsegg appeared before Brabant's feudal court in May 1720, while his entries took place more than

27 41 – Beaumont 1606; cf. 5 – Retie 1446.

28 Wim Blockmans and Esther Donckers identify four different models for late medieval joyous entries: church ritual such as the *adventus* of a bishop, knighthood with the powerful image of the mounted knight in armour, court ritual with acts of homage, and urban rites such as processions: Wim Blockmans and Esther Donckers, 'Self-Representation of Court and City in Flanders and Brabant in the Fifteenth and Early Sixteenth Centuries', in: Wim Blockmans and Antheun Janse (eds.), *Showing Status: Representations of Social Positions in the Late Middle Ages* (Brepols 1999) 83-87.

29 André Holenstein, 'Huldigung und Herrschaftszeremoniell im Zeitalter des Absolutismus und der Aufklärung', in: Klaus

Gerteis (ed.), *Zum Wandel von Zeremoniell und Gesellschaftsritualen in der Zeit der Aufklärung* (Felix Meiner Verlag 1992) 24-29; José Pedro Paiva, 'A Liturgy of Power: Solemn Episcopal Entrances in Early Modern Europe', in: Heinz Schilling and István György Tóth (eds.), *Religion and Cultural Exchange in Europe, 1400-1700* (Cambridge University Press 2006) 138-161.

30 For the 1596 entry in Aarschot, see Bart Minnen, 'De inbezitneming door Karel III van Croÿ, hertog van Aarschot, van de baronie Rotselaar (1596): een Blijde Intrede?', *Haachts oudheid- en geschiedkundig tijdschrift* 14 (1999) 202.

31 Rik Opsommer, 'Omme dat leengoed es thoochste dinc van der weerelt'. *Het leenrecht in Vlaanderen in de 14de en 15de eeuw* (Algemeen Rijksarchief 1995) vol. 2, 684-703.

two years later.³² A considerable part of the practical organisation of entry celebrations presumably occurred orally between (representatives of) the new lord or lady and the leaders of the local community. One of the rare cases for which we have more information is the entry in Breda in 1475, for which a number of petitions from the town and the surrounding villages have been preserved. They indicate much lobbying and negotiation taking place prior to the entry.³³ In 1499, princely officers helped to prepare the entry in Diest, which proves that, in this case, the stakes were high not only for the new lord but also for his overlord, who wished to end a period of turmoil in the strategic border town.³⁴ In 1649, the villages of the Liberty of Turnhout discussed how to split the expenses for the upcoming entry.³⁵

Most accounts begin with the welcoming of the new lord or lady at the boundaries of the seigneurie, usually by a guard of honour that was to escort them. On 2 July 1713, the aldermen and other dignitaries of Assenede, together with the Saint Sebastian's shooters guild, welcomed the new lord Jean François della Faille outside the village.³⁶ In Beaumont, Kalken, Middelburg³⁷, and Merelbeke, artillery salvos and/or church bells sounded.³⁸ The inhabitants of Zwijnaarde lined the street under arms for the new abbot and lord of Saint Peter's Seigneurie in Ghent. When his carriage passed by on its way from the castle of Zwijnaarde to Ghent, they saluted him with a salvo. At the end of the road, the Ghent city council had stationed dragoons and cavalymen to pay tribute to the new abbot, but also to quell any skirmishes that might occur.³⁹ In the case of towns, the aldermen waited at the town gates, as in Beaumont in 1596. The council offered the keys to the gates as a sign of deference, and the lord handed them back, thereby emphasizing that he would be a good lord.⁴⁰

Seigneurial entries could be grandiose affairs.⁴¹ In 1541, Philip II de Croÿ arrived with an impressive retinue for his entry in the Duchy of Aarschot. Among the many nobles and prelates accompanying him were his brother, Charles de Croÿ, Bishop of Tournai, as well as the abbots of the

32 Algemeen Rijksarchief Brussel (National Archives Brussels), *Familiearchief de Boisschot*, 21: charter of 28 May 1720.

33 12 – Breda 1475.

34 Damen, 'The Counts of Nassau', 239-245.

35 48 – Turnhout 1649.

36 63 – Assenede 1713.

37 In this article, 'Middelburg' always refers to the small town in Flanders founded in the fifteenth century, not to Middelburg in Zeeland.

38 38 – Beaumont 1596; 66 – Kalken 1716; 67 – Middelburg 1716; 79 – Merelbeke 1740.

39 56 – Saint Peter's Seigneurie 1681.

40 38 – Beaumont 1596.

41 A critical note is in order here: for several entries in the annex, we merely know that they occurred. It is possible that some of them were simple and resulted in fewer accounts. In all likelihood, however, even simpler entries featured the typical phases mentioned above, as these were necessary to lend the event its full effect and legitimacy.

Park, Averbode, and Saint Gertrude's abbeys and the head of the Benedictine priory of Bierbeek.⁴² The entourage of Philip's grandson in 1596 was even more imposing: Pedro Enríquez de Acevedo, Count of Fuentes and former interim governor-general of the Spanish Netherlands, accompanied him up to the Leuven town gate with a detachment of horsemen. Other attendees were Charles Philip de Croÿ, Marquis of Havré and head of the Council of State, Charles, Princely Count of Arenberg and member of the Council of Finance, Philip de Croÿ, Count of Solre and counsellor of state, Jean Sarrazin, Archbishop of Cambrai, Frederick d'Yve, counsellor of state, Jean Richardot and Christophe d'Assonleville, counsellors of state and privy counsellors, and Philip Prats, secretary of the Privy Council. On their way to Leuven, the first stop, around 300 inhabitants from Aarschot, Bierbeek, Heverlee, and Rotselaar welcomed them, carrying flags and arms and beating drums. Four squadrons of Italian horsemen and Leuven's four shooting companies were also present.⁴³

The 1596 entry in Aarschot was closely linked to the burial of the previous lord: shortly before the entry, the assembled dignitaries attended the funeral of the deceased Philip III de Croÿ in the Celestine monastery in Leuven.⁴⁴ Burial and investiture are two connected rites, together enacting the smooth transition to a new ruler. By participating in the burial of his or her ancestor and through the display of well-chosen coats of arms, the new ruler established links to his or her predecessors, gaining legitimacy in the eyes of the spectators by emphasizing lawful succession and continuity. The Aarschot case shows that this applied to local seigneuries as much as to monarchies. Furthermore, the splendour of the events in Leuven-Aarschot, with the omnipresence of blazons and carefully selected relatives and friends as mourners, testifies to the role local joyous entries and burials could play in terms of dynastic representation of noble houses, much in the same way coronations and inaugurations did for sovereign rulers.⁴⁵ All of this illustrates how high the external stakes were for the successor to one of the largest seigneuries and the oldest duchy in the Low Countries.

42 25 – Aarschot 1541.

43 36 – Aarschot 1596.

44 This was very likely the case in several other seigneuries as well, but I found no further mentions.

45 Cf. Malcolm Vale, 'A Burgundian Funeral Ceremony: Olivier de la Marche and the Obsequies of Adolf of Cleves, Lord of Ravenstein', *The English Historical Review* 111:443 (1996) 920-938.

For the political significance of princely burials, see: Juliusz A. Chrościcki, Mark Hengerer and Gérard Sabatier (eds.), *Les funérailles princières en Europe, XVI^e–XVIII^e siècle* (Presses universitaires de Rennes, Centre de recherche du château de Versailles 2012-2015) 3 vols.; Michael Schaich (ed.), *Monarchy and Religion: The Transformation of Royal Culture in Eighteenth-Century Europe* (Oxford University Press 2007).

Once the new lord or lady had arrived, they paraded through the village or town, usually with the parish church as the ultimate destination – the entry proper. A combined procession of militiamen, aldermen, and local officials, sometimes accompanied by the local clergy and some of the more affluent inhabitants, seems to have been common practice.⁴⁶ This visible role of local officials comes as no surprise: as mentioned above, they were important stakeholders in the seigneuries, staffing its key institutions and exerting the legislative, executive, and judiciary powers of the lord or lady. Nevertheless, their position could be delicate, since they had to maintain a balance between the interests of the new ruler and the wishes of the villagers or townspeople. Consequently, entries offered welcome opportunities to visualise their position before the assembled community. At times, the processions could involve even more people: in 1722, in Erps 60 cavalrymen, trumpeters, drummers, 20 hussars, a cornet with a standard, 2 Turks with the coats of arms of Erps and Königsegg and the inscription ‘SPQE’, 2 brigadiers, 2 grenadier detachments, the militias of Erps and Kwerps under arms and with musical instruments, and finally the bailiff, aldermen, and tax administrators accompanied the new count on his way to the church. Cannon and musket salvos resounded, and at the churchyard – flanked by 22 burning pitch barrels – a triumphal arch with inscriptions had been built.⁴⁷

Usually, a high mass and a *Te Deum*⁴⁸ took place upon arrival at the church, although some sources only mention a *Te Deum*.⁴⁹ When Charles de Croÿ arrived at the second town gate of Beaumont in 1596, the priest and the other clergymen and *soeurs grises* awaited him with crucifixes, banners, and holy water.⁵⁰ Albertine of Egmont, who had become Lady of Feluy through her marriage in 1611 and celebrated her joyous entry in 1614, likewise received holy water, as did the representative of the new Duke of Turnhout in 1753.⁵¹ In Erps, the clergy offered the count holy water and a crucifix, which he kissed.⁵² This liturgical phase sacralised the new lord or lady, giving them God’s blessing to rule the seigneurie.

46 For a reference to the wealthier villagers (*geghoeden*) in the procession: 42 – Hoboken 1611.

For the presence of Beguines, Beghards, friars, and priests: 15 – Diest 1499.

47 73 – Erps 1722.

48 39 – Diest 1602; 53 – Aarschot 1674; 63 – Assenede 1713; 64 – Wachtebeke 1713; 66 – Kalken 1716; 73 –

Erps 1722; 74 – Kwerps 1722; 76 – Grimbergen 1729; 82 – Turnhout 1753.

49 25 – Aarschot 1541; 38 – Beaumont 1596; 44 – Feluy 1614; 66 – Middelburg 1716; 79 – Merelbeke 1740; 81 – Kaprijke 1744.

50 38 – Beaumont 1596.

51 44 – Feluy 1614; 82 – Turnhout 1753.

The local church was customarily – but not invariably – the place for the oath-taking and confirmation of local privileges.⁵³ Not all solemnities under scrutiny had the same quality, however. In the Low Countries, princely joyous entries originally consisted of a series of symbolic acts enveloping the legal core of the event: the binding oaths. Today it is commonplace to speak of constitutional ritual or constitutional feasts. Holenstein coined the term ‘constitution *in actu*’ to denote these practices, which has since been adopted by other scholars.⁵⁴ In the seventeenth century, notable shifts arose due to the increasing political weight of the regions (or provinces) that together comprised the Habsburg Netherlands. Archduke Albert and his wife Isabella were the last to hold joyous entries in several cities and towns per region; their successors ceremonially entered only in the capital of each region. Members of the provincial Estates replaced the city magistrates as principal interlocutors and henceforth swore the oath of loyalty and obedience to the prince. Moreover, Albert and Isabella’s successors resided in Madrid and Vienna and no longer visited their Netherlandish provinces. When they sent a governor-general as their replacement, he or she participated in a grandiose entry without sworn oaths upon arrival. The extravagant entry of Cardinal-Infante Ferdinand in Antwerp in 1635, with decorations designed by Peter Paul Rubens, is the best-known example. From this point onwards, the term *inauguration* (Dutch: *huldiging/inhuldiging*; French: *inauguration*) applied to the official investiture of the new sovereign and the exchange of constitutional oaths including an entry procession, while the term *joyous entry* referred to other entries without oaths.⁵⁵

Did seigneurial joyous entries also entail the exchange of binding oaths and can we thus compare them with princely inaugurations? In many cases, the new lord or lady indeed confirmed local privileges. These solemnities resemble princely inaugurations as mentioned in the previous paragraph. In Diest in 1545, the new lady as well as the burgomaster, aldermen, council, and townspeople swore oaths, though in which exact order is unclear.⁵⁶ In Aarschot, there was a two-tiered seigneurial oath-swearing:

52 73 – Erps 1722.

53 In Hoboken (1611), Conrad Schetz took an oath in front of the lime tree near his mansion.

54 Holenstein, *Die Huldigung der Untertanen*, 505-518; Stollberg-Rilinger, ‘Verfassung und Fest’, 10; Muir, *Ritual*, 253; Schwengelbeck, ‘Monarchische Herrschaftsrepräsentationen’, 127-131.

55 Klaas Van Gelder, ‘Inaugurations in the Austrian Netherlands: Flexible Formats at the Interface between Constitution, Political Negotiation, and Representation’, in: Idem (ed.), *More than Mere Spectacle: Coronations and Inaugurations in the Habsburg Monarchy during the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries* (Berghahn 2021) 169-173.

56 26 – Diest 1545.

the new lord first swore an oath in the hands of the chapter dean in the parish church, then pledged to uphold the town's privileges on the market square outside the town hall.⁵⁷ In Heverlee, there was likewise a twofold oath before the assembled villagers and in the church. Moreover, in 1596, the new duke swore oaths in Heverlee and Rotselaar while symbolically holding a verge. In the same year, the inhabitants of Heverlee, Aarschot, and Rotselaar in turn swore obedience to the new lord and acclaimed him: *Vive le duc d'Aerschot!*⁵⁸ Eyewitness accounts from 1674 and 1680 only mention a ducal oath to respect the chapter statutes, though.⁵⁹ While the reciprocal oaths apparently disappeared in Aarschot, they remained in use in Esneux: first, the members of the local courts and the inhabitants swore to be loyal to the lord, then Louis-Conrard d'Argenteau pledged to be a good lord and protect the villagers' privileges.⁶⁰

Minnen discovered 136 village liberties in Brabant from the twelfth to the sixteenth centuries, many of which had been granted by local lords and ladies. At least fourteen of these concern the seignury of Rotselaar, which merged with the Margraviate (later: Duchy) of Aarschot in 1518. The village liberties were the privileges the lord or lady confirmed during their entry, and the content of these liberties would remain unchanged from the sixteenth century onwards. However, according to Minnen, in 1522, the new lady 'granted' (Dutch: *verlenen*) rather than 'confirmed' (Dutch: *bevestigen*) the privileges, thereby stressing seigneurial authority. And after the early sixteenth century – with an exception in 1617 – lords and ladies no longer explicitly referred to Rotselaar's privileges upon their entry as Duke or Duchess of Aarschot.⁶¹ M. W. van Boven made a similar observation for Breda: until the sixteenth century, the lords or ladies of the town issued charters detailing new privileges or explicitly confirming ancient rights, but they stopped doing so after 1584.⁶²

Jan III de Merode used his joyous entry in Geel to grant liberties that had allegedly been rescinded by the previous rulers.⁶³ According to P. D. Kuyl, Jan's successor Hendrik also signed a joyous entry charter for Geel.⁶⁴ For the village of Retie, no less than nine charters have been preserved, all granted and sealed on the occasion of seigneurial investitures.⁶⁵ In summary, the act of issuing written charters specifying the liberties and privileges of

57 25 – Aarschot 1541; 28 – Aarschot 1551.

58 35 – Heverlee 1596; 36 – Aarschot 1596; 37 – Rotselaar 1596.

59 53 – Aarschot 1674; 55 – Aarschot 1680.

60 52 – Esneux 1669.

61 Minnen, 'Heerlijke wetgeving in Brabant'; Idem, 'Heerlijke vrijheden in het hertogdom Brabant. Een onbekende reeks privileges voor de dorpen

van de heerlijkheid Rotselaar (1407-1522)', *Haachts oudheid- en geschiedkundig tijdschrift* 11 (1996) 194-201.

62 Van Boven, 'De inhuldigingen', 21.

63 20 – Geel 1517.

64 31 – Geel 1558.

65 Edward Sneyers, *Bijdrage tot de geschiedenis van Retie* (Uitgavecomité GVR 1972) 44-50.

the inhabitants at the occasion of seigneurial entries was far from unusual. Nonetheless, all of the here studied examples predate the late sixteenth century and almost exclusively concern Brabant. There may have been significant differences in terms of who stood to gain from these charters as well: in Assendelft in Holland, for example, the villagers had to make sizeable payments and inaugurate their lord as a precondition for obtaining new privileges.⁶⁶ More micro-studies on individual village and town charters are needed in order to determine who initiated their issuance and whose interests they best represented – the lord or lady's, the local office-holders', or the townspeople or villagers'.⁶⁷

During princely inaugurations in the Habsburg Netherlands, the prince or princess (or their representatives) always had to take their oath first. It was not until after they had obtained the princely warrant for their rights, privileges, customs, and traditions that the city councils or Estates swore to be obedient and loyal. For unknown reasons, the order was often different in seigneuries, as the above examples show. Moreover, I found only three instances of eighteenth-century oaths. The inhabitants of Merelbeke and Lemberge pledged homage to their new lord in 1740, but did not receive an oath in return.⁶⁸ The account of the investiture in Turnhout in 1753 reveals that the town officials had to swear loyalty to the new duke, but there is no mention of a ducal oath.⁶⁹ This is in line with Holenstein's observations on eighteenth-century eastern and northern Germany: some lawyers contended that oaths no longer established a new legal situation and that the inhabitants were in fact automatically subjects of the new lord or lady; oaths merely reflected this relationship rather than establishing it.⁷⁰ And yet, the tradition of lords and ladies swearing to protect local liberties did not entirely disappear. In 1729, the prince of Grimbergen swore with his hands on the Gospel to uphold the Catholic religion, render justice according to the laws and customs of the seignury, preserve the ancient privileges, and protect his subjects.⁷¹

What was the impact of these oaths? Did they serve as sufficient warrants against seigneurial power abuse? Did villagers and townspeople refer to them when they felt their rights were being violated? The wording of the oaths is general and likely generic, but they usually mentioned local privileges and liberties based on specific charters safely locked away in village coffer (see Figure 1).⁷² A recent article by Tom De Waele suggests

66 18 – Assendelft 1510.

67 Different scenarios in Minnen, 'Heerlijke wetgeving', 109-121.

68 79 – Merelbeke 1740.

69 82 – Turnhout 1753.


70 Holenstein, 'Die Symbolik des Rechts', 88-89.

71 76 – Grimbergen 1729.

72 See for example the oaths for Diest in 1499 and 1545; Rijksarchief Leuven (State Archives Leuven, hereafter RAL), *Archief van de heren en van het stadsarchief Diest*, 2893; Stadsarchief Diest (City Archives Diest), *Oud archief*, register 825, p. 22. Further examples in literature: Minnen, 'De inbezitneming', 206 (for Rotselaar);

8 1

Gewerde heere sal behint verstaen volghen der onder geschenten
 te onderhouden alle de rechten pincelgen ende herromen der Stadt
 van Diest die hem by den heeren hertoge ende hertogefinde van
 Brabant ende heeren van Diest te verbrant gegemen ende onder
 honden syn verbrant dat verbrant dat godtlych pincelgen ende
 verbrant syn tot nover genader eteren ende dinsten inder
 verbrant inder vromen Stadt ende onderfaten van Diest die volghen
 die ontvraet sijn af geseten



22 sep^{br} 99

▲
Figure 1. Text presumably proposed for the oath to be sworn by the new lord of Diest in 1499 © State Archives
 Leuven, Archief van de heren en van het stadsarchief Diest, 2893.

that the villagers of Meerbeke in Brabant effectively relied on sworn oaths in a confrontation with their lord, Guillaume de Goux, in 1502. The people of the village sued de Goux after he had fined them for secretly brewing beer. They lost the case and humbly paid the fine in their lord's castle, yet still voiced an additional request: they asked de Goux to be a good lord and 'uphold the rights and customs of the seignery as we [the lord] had sworn'. More specifically, they entreated him to not keep the incarcerated brewers locked away for too long. This shows that – differences in power and authority notwithstanding – subjects could base specific claims on joyous entry oaths, and lords and ladies were willing to accept this line of reasoning.⁷³

Several symbolic gestures underlined the possession of the seignery and the authority that came with it. In 1596, the new lord of Heverlee pardoned a convicted inhabitant who had committed homicide in self-defence. In Rotselaar, two men accused of murder also pleaded for and obtained ducal pardon.⁷⁴ Such acts of amnesty were reminders of the seignerial power over life and death – almost all of the seigneuries in this analysis had 'high jurisdiction', meaning that local courts could judge all criminal cases and pronounce all manner of penalties in the respective lord's name. However, Charles v and Philip II tried to make pardon an exclusively princely affair. According to Marjan Vrolijk, only a few semi-sovereign lords, such as the marquises of Bergen op Zoom in Brabant, still retained the privilege to pardon. Vrolijk does not mention the Croÿ family, but, at a time when the state apparatus was attempting to monopolise pardon, repealing sentences, as observed in Heverlee and Rotselaar, was a strong signal.⁷⁵ In several entries, ceremonial verges of justice were prominently employed, reminding the onlookers of the lord's judicial authority.⁷⁶ In Esneux, the new lord pulled the cord of the big church bell as a sign of having taken possession of the seignery.⁷⁷ A joyous entry performed in 1627 by the lord of Oostham, Beverlo and Kwaadmechelen, located in the Prince-Bishopric of Liège near

Bruno Dumont, *Aux origines des communes. Les communautés villageoises dans les pays de Dalhem et de Limbourg, XVI^e-XVIII^e siècle: genèse, structures, évolution* (Crédit Communal de Belgique 1994) 477-478 (for Esneux). On seignerial oaths in Eastern and Northern Germany: Holenstein, 'Die Symbolik des Rechts', 85-88.

73 Tom De Waele, 'The Acquisition of Seigneuries and the Exertion of Seignerial Power in Late Medieval Flanders: The Case of Wedergrate and the Goux Family', *Medieval Low Countries* 7 (2020) 176-177. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1484/J.MLC.5.122705>.

74 35 – Heverlee 1596; 37 – Rotselaar 1596.

75 Pardoning was a part of many princely joyous entries since the Middle Ages and Charles v and Philip II used it extensively. This is thus one of several illustrations of how local lords copied elements of princely investitures: Marjan Vrolijk, *Recht door gratie. Gratie bij doodslagen en andere delicten in Vlaanderen, Holland en Zeeland (1531-1567)* (Uitgeverij Verloren 2004) 48-55.

76 35 – Heverlee 1596; 37 – Rotselaar 1596; 76 – Grimbergen 1729.

77 52 – Esneux 1669.

Brabant's eastern border, shows to what extent inhabitants could make use of the event. Not only did the lord and village officials exchange oaths, the villagers also exploited the lord's brief appearance to wrest the registration of regulations for the village administration and different social and economic matters, such as the use of common pastures. Moreover, they took the occasion to settle several pending processes.⁷⁸

Given the current state of research, it is unclear whether the absence of reciprocal oaths (or unilateral oaths sworn by the lord or lady) had detrimental consequences for the villagers. Further case studies on decision-making and conflict settlement in seigneuries are necessary to answer this question. Only then would we be able to determine what impact oaths had on the relationship between the lord or lady and their subjects. By extension, this is also the only means of determining what happened when no entry took place.⁷⁹ Entries lacking an exchange of oaths served as political rather than legal acts, making them similar to the aforementioned joyous entry of Cardinal-Infante Ferdinand in Antwerp. The lord or lady, local clergy, and secular leaders honoured each other with gifts and banquets in a ceremonial confirmation of loyalty and authority, with the participants and the assembled villagers or townspeople as its primary audience.⁸⁰

Celebrations

All joyous entries, whatever their exact proceedings and features, provided opportunity for the exchange of gifts and public festivities. This represented the final stage once the church services and oath-swearing had concluded.⁸¹

78 'Extract uit schepenen van Oostham personeel register, den 20 juli 1627', *'t Daghet in den Oosten* 8 (1892) 40-45 and 52-56. This joyous entry is not included in Table 1 as Liège did not belong to the Habsburg Netherlands.

79 Interestingly, the German and Austro-Bohemian families which, in the seventeenth and eighteenth century, held the lordship of the small Flemish town of Roeselare usually took possession of it by means of a delegate who was officially welcomed by the aldermen with wine. At least until 1717, the town council swore an oath of loyalty to the new lord at this occasion, but a genuine joyous entry does never seem to have taken place:

Geert Hoornaert, 'Roeselare onder de keurvorst van Saksen, de prins van Schwarzenberg en de keurvorst van de Palts (1609-1716). Gevolg van de Kleefse Erfopvolgingsstrijd' and 'De heren van Roeselare (17^{de}-18^{de} eeuw) waren keurvorst van het Heilig Roomse Rijk', in: *Nog niet-gepubliceerde heemkundige artikels voor Rollarius (KCOGRO)* (unpublished manuscript 2010, consulted in the Belgian Royal Library Albertina) 21-23 and 33-42.

80 See for example: 72 – Zaventem, Nossegem, Sterrebeek 1722; 73 – Erps 1722; 74 – Kwerps 1722.

81 Mario Damen, 'Princely Entries and Gift Exchange in the Burgundian Low Countries: A Crucial Link in Late Medieval Political Culture', *Journal of*

In 1457, the inhabitants of Diest offered their new lord John of Nassau several precious silver vases. His successor received 2,100 Rhenish guilders from a group of wealthy burghers.⁸² In Aarschot in 1596, the new duke was offered a banquet and a gift of 1,000 guilders. The comparatively poor aldermen of Rotselaar prepared him a more modest celebratory meal. According to Minnen, each village owed the new duke a sum of money on the occasion of his entry.⁸³ A fair amount of pressure may have been common in this regard, with lords and ladies treating their seigneuries as easy cash cows. Alphonse Wauters mentions that upon inheriting Gaasbeek, Arnoul de Hornes requested that his mill be rebuilt as a gift for his joyous entry. After some bargaining, the inhabitants and the chapter contributed 60 and 20 golden florins each.⁸⁴ One of Arnoul's successors, Philip of Egmont, received 8,000 florins, payable within five years. However, it was not until at least ten years later, in 1577, that he received a first instalment.⁸⁵ In addition to 4,000 Carolus guilders, the new lady of Turnhout also received linen and cloth.⁸⁶ Offering a tax to the new lord or lady seems to have been an integral part of seigneurial joyous entries.⁸⁷ Conversely, new local rulers also sometimes attempted to engender goodwill among their subjects through gifts or concessions. In 1679, the assembled local dignitaries thanked the new prince of Chimay for his *grâces*, possibly the promise to repair damaged roads.⁸⁸ The aforementioned charters, issued at the occasion of joyous entries, can also be regarded as concessions or gifts to the inhabitants in some cases.⁸⁹ In exchange for his upholding of their town charters, the inhabitants of Diest went to great lengths in 1499 to collect enough money for a compensatory gift to their new lord, even seeking to borrow money in Antwerp, albeit in vain.⁹⁰

In addition to gifts, banquets were another, almost universal element of investiture rituals across the continent, and seigneurial entries were no exception.⁹¹ These banquets were restricted, of course: only local dignitaries and the lord or lady's retinue were allowed to attend, but the rest of the

Medieval History 33:3 (2007) 233-249. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jmedhist.2007.01.002>.

82 8 – Diest 1457; 9 – Diest 1473.

83 36 – Aarschot 1596; 37 – Rotselaar 1596; Minnen, 'De inbezitneming', 208.

84 14 – Gaasbeek 1490.

85 32 – Gaasbeek 1565-1567.

86 48 – Turnhout 1649.

87 Minnen, 'Heerlijke wetgeving', 116-118. This practice resembles the much-resented *droit d'indire* in French seigneuries: Hilton L. Root,

Peasants and King in Burgundy: Agrarian

Foundations of French Absolutism (University of California Press 1992) 163.

88 54 – Chimay 1679.

89 For different examples: Minnen, 'Heerlijke wetgeving', 110-118.

90 15 – Diest 1499.

91 36 – Aarschot 1596; 37 – Rotselaar 1596; 44 – Feluy 1614; 48 – Turnhout 1649; 64 – Wachtebeke 1713; 66 – Kalken 1716; 67 – Middelburg 1716; 73 – Erps

inhabitants was not forgotten. Since lords and ladies usually had only a small police corps at their disposal, it was essential to secure the goodwill and collaboration of villagers and townspeople in order to claim seigneurial revenues and rights. Pleasing the population during the entry could therefore be highly beneficial for lords or ladies and their local leaders who wanted to preserve peace and tranquillity. To this end, the solemnities were devised as visual and auditory spectacles: the organisers ordered laudatory poems (see Figure 2), engaged musicians, displayed the new ruler's coat of arms in public spaces, and decorated the processional streets with triumphal arches, flowers, flags, and cloth. Burning pitch barrels and bonfires were also common.⁹² In 1716, the new Count of Kruikenburg ordered the distribution of nine barrels of beer to the villagers of Kruikenburg, Wambeke, Lombeek, Ternat, and Sint-Ulrikskapelle on the occasion of his entry. The same happened in Esneux eight years later.⁹³ In Wachtebeke, Jean François della Faille not only paid for barrels of beer but also donated bottles of wine to the members of the shooting guilds.⁹⁴ Von Königsegg offered the villagers of Erps food and drinks.⁹⁵ In Turnhout, shooting competitions were organised and the new lady awarded the prizes.⁹⁶ In short, joyous entries plunged the entire local community into a festive atmosphere. Together with gifts, offering food and drinks and organising festivities of all kinds was a powerful means for the new lord or lady to create emotional bonds with their subjects.

Conclusions

Based on this analysis and the assembled data, several concluding remarks can be made that emphasize the meaning of these entries and prompt further scrutiny. The sample of 88 cases proves that seigneurial joyous entries were a widespread phenomenon in the southern parts of the Low Countries, and that this trend saw no decline in the early modern era. In terms of numbers, the Duchy of Brabant stands out.⁹⁷ However, the nature of the solemnities changed over time. Medieval and sixteenth-century entries included an explicit confirmation of privileges and liberties through oaths and charters. While charters fell into abeyance in the sixteenth and seventeenth century, reciprocal oaths disappeared almost entirely.

1722; 74 – Kwerps 1722; 79 – Merelbeke 1740; 81 – Kaprijke 1744; 87 – Aubel 1783.
 92 44 – Feluy 1614; 48 – Turnhout 1649; 54 – Chimay 1679; 63 – Assenede 1713; 66 – Kalken 1716; 73 – Erps 1722; 87 – Aubel 1783.
 93 65 – Kruikenburg 1716; 75 – Esneux 1724.

94 64 – Wachtebeke 1713.

95 73 – Erps 1722.

96 48 – Turnhout 1649.

97 This chronology contrasts starkly with other territories in the Low Countries. Arjan Nobel has pointed out the increased incidence of joyous

How can we assess this development? We might simply conclude that seigneurial power grew over time. In this scenario, lords and ladies no longer needed to grant liberties or swear oaths, and villagers lost important warrants for their rights and customs as a result. However, the gradual disappearance of oaths and charters may also reflect a weakening of the position of the lords and ladies, which is the more plausible scenario in the Habsburg Netherlands. To start with, the seigneurial system seems to have been rather benign in these regions. Until the late eighteenth century, it never faced structural discontent. Moreover, a recent survey of medieval and early modern police regulations in Flemish seigneuries has revealed that these documents seldom focus on the lord and lady's privileges, but mainly reflect the desire for social and economic stability. They underpin the interests of the community as a whole and the propertied inhabitants in particular – the example of Oostham, Beverlo, and Kwaadmechelen in Liège illustrates how these regulations could work in tandem with joyous entries.⁹⁸ So, perhaps there were fewer oaths and liberty charters because villagers did not need them. Furthermore, in eighteenth-century Brabant, villagers increasingly and successfully turned to the central authorities and princely law courts to fight abuses of power by their lords and ladies.⁹⁹

Many of the examples in the analysis concern absent lords or ladies who seldom visited their seigneuries. Absentee lordship required the delegation of power to local officials – a group that clearly benefited from the entries, which bestowed prestige and authority upon them. Generally speaking, there seems to have been a *modus vivendi* between lords or ladies and local office holders, conflicts notwithstanding. Joyous entries expressed this partnership that we also see in the preambles of many of the aforementioned police regulations. The continuity of the organisation of seigneurial entries may thus also be a testimony to the need felt by lords and ladies to ensure the goodwill of local communities in order to effectively manage the seignury. It is telling in this respect that a considerable number of the studied events – at least 17 out of 88 or 19.32 per cent (and 7 out of 15 for Flanders) – concerned lords or ladies and families that were new to

entries in late sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Holland, acts which had been uncommon before then: Nobel, *Besturen*, 92.

98 Klaas Van Gelder, 'Politie' in *de heerlijkheid. Gids en repertorium van heerlijke politiereglementen in het graafschap Vlaanderen, 13^e-18^e eeuw* (Algemeen Rijksarchief 2023, forthcoming).

99 Scheelings, *De heren en het heerlijk regime*, 490-512; Klaas Van Gelder, 'Machtsmisbruik, collectieve actie en heerlijk gezag in het Land van Westerlo: het politieke proces tegen Jean Philippe Eugène de Merode in 1724', *Pro Memorie* 23:1 (2021) 32-56. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5117/PM2021.1.003.GELD>.

the respective seignery.¹⁰⁰ These newcomers may have felt a ritualised possession-taking ceremony to be particularly beneficial for cementing authority and defining their rights and duties – or, as in the case of Karl Ferdinand von Königsegg in Erps and Kwerps, to broadcast the ownership of a seignery required to obtain a seat in Brabant's Estates. All of this goes to show just how powerful these seigneurial entries were throughout the early modern era, and to what degree they were useful for defining the relations between the new lord or lady, the local leaders, and the village or town communities, respectively for sending messages to peers and the ruling prince or princess.

100 7 – Rotselaar 1452; 8 – Retie 1454; 15 – Diest 1499; 17 – Retie 1509; 47 – Deinze 1633; 48 – Turnhout 1649; 60 – Male 1710, 61 – Maldegem 1711; 62 – Pittem 1711; 72 – Zaventem, Nossegem and

Sterrebeek 1722; 73 – Erps 1722; 74 – Kwerps 1722; 79 – Merelbeke 1740; 81 – Kaprijke 1744; 82 – Turnhout 1753; 83 – Schilde 1768-1770; 84 – Ardoois 1775.

Appendix Table 1: List of Seignorial Joyous Entries in the Burgundian and Habsburg Netherlands.

Nr.	Date	Place	Region	Lord or Lady Performing the Entry	Remarks
1.	Aug. 1404	Breda ¹	Brabant	Engelbrecht I of Nassau, Lord of Breda	The actual heiress was Engelbrecht's wife, Johanna van Polanen
2.	16 Aug. 1433	Retie ²	Brabant	John IV of Rotselaar, Lord of Retie	
3.	1436	Diest ³	Brabant	Johanna, Lady of Diest, and her spouse Jan van Heinsbergen	
4.	1 May 1444	Retie ⁴	Brabant	John IV of Rotselaar, Lord of Retie	Confirmation of the joyous entry charter previously given by the same (see no. 2)
5.	1 Nov. 1446	Retie ⁵	Brabant	John IV of Rotselaar, Lord of Retie, and his second spouse Isabella (Elizabeth) van Ho(o)rne	
6.	1446	Breda ⁶	Brabant	John IV of Nassau, Lord of Breda	

¹ Mario Damen, 'The Counts of Nassau and the Performance of Lordship in Late-Medieval Brabant', in: Claire Weeda, Robert Stein and Louis Sicking (eds.), *Communities, Environment and Regulation in the Premodern World: Essays in Honour of Peter Hoppenbrouwers* (Brepols 2022) 233-261.

² Edward Sneyers, *Bijdrage tot de geschiedenis van Retie* (Uitgavecomité cvr 1972) 44-48.

³ Bart Minnen, 'Heerlijke wetgeving in Brabant in de late Middeleeuwen. De privileges voor de heerlijkheden Rotselaar, Vorselaar en Retie (1407-1558)', *Handelingen van de Koninklijke Commissie voor de uitgave der Oude Wetten en Verordeningen van België* 41 (2000) 116-117; Milet Adriaens and Hans Cools, 'Tot profijt van de stad. Informele politieke participatie en geschenken in de heerlijkheid Diest (1499-1568)', *Tijdschrift voor sociale en economische geschiedenis* 13:3 (2016) 91-92. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.18352/tseg.868>.

⁴ Sneyers, *Bijdrage*, 48.

⁵ Idem.

⁶ Damen, 'The Counts of Nassau'.

Appendix Table 1 continued

Nr.	Date	Place	Region	Lord or Lady Performing the Entry	Remarks
7.	1 Aug. 1452	Land of Rotselaar ⁷	Brabant	Count Simon of Salm and Johanna of Rotselaar, Lord and Lady of Rotselaar	
8.	Before or on 14 March 1454	Retie ⁸	Brabant	Count Simon of Salm and Johanna of Rotselaar, Lord and Lady of Retie	
9.	28 June 1457	Retie ⁹	Brabant	Count Jacob of Salm, Lord of Retie	
10.	1 Sep. 1457	Diest ¹⁰	Brabant	John II of Nassau-Saarbrücken, Lord of Diest	
11.	3 June 1473	Diest ¹¹	Brabant	William IV, Duke of Jülich-Berg	William represented his absent spouse and Lady of Diest, Elizabeth of Nassau
12.	1475	Breda ¹²	Brabant	Engelbert II of Nassau-Dillenburg, Lord of Breda and Diest	
13.	1487	Land of Rotselaar ¹³	Brabant	Jacob of Salm, Lord of Rotselaar	
14.	1490 (probably)	Land of Gaasbeek ¹⁴	Brabant	Arnold of Hornes, Lord of Gaasbeek	

⁷ Mimmen, 'Heerlijke wetgeving', 99.

⁸ Idem.

⁹ Sneyers, *Bijdrage*, 48-49.

¹⁰ Damen, 'The Counts of Nassau'; Edward Van Even, *Geschiedenis der stad Diest* (Havermans 1847) 152.

¹¹ Van Even, *Geschiedenis der stad Diest*, 155; Michel Van der Eycken, *Geschiedenis van Diest* (Stadsbestuur Diest 1980) 125.

¹² Van Boven, 'De inhuldigingen', 23.

¹³ Minnen, 'Heerlijke wetgeving', 117-18.

¹⁴ Alphonse Wauters, *Histoire des environs de Bruxelles ou description historique des localités qui formaient autrefois l'ammannie de cette ville* (Vanderauwera 1855) vol. 1, 51.

Appendix Table 1 continued

Nr.	Date	Place	Region	Lord or Lady Performing the Entry	Remarks
15.	22 Sep. 1499	Diest ¹⁵	Brabant	Engelbert II of Nassau-Dillenburg, Lord of Breda and Diest	
16.	1504	Breda ¹⁶	Brabant	Henry III of Nassau-Dillenburg-Dietz, Lord of Breda	
17.	24 Jan. 1509	Retie ¹⁷	Brabant	Michel de Croÿ and Elizabeth of Rotselaar, Lord and Lady of Retie	
18.	1510	Assendelft ¹⁸	Holland	Gerrit van Assendelft, Lord of Assendelft	
19.	1515	Zuierenkerke ¹⁹	Flanders	Wouter van (den) Hecke, Lord of Cleyhem and Zuierenkerke	
20.	1517	Geel ²⁰	Brabant	John III de Merode, Baron of Pietersheim	

¹⁵ Rijksarchief Leuven (State Archives Leuven, hereafter RAL), *Archief van de heren en van het stadsarchief Diest*, 2890, 2891, 2892, and 2893: documents in preparation of the joyous entry. For a detailed description of the inauguration, see Damen, 'The Counts of Nassau'.

¹⁶ M. W. van Boven, 'De inhuldigingen van de heren van Breda', in: *De heerlijke stad. Achtste colloquium 'De Brabantse stad'*, Bergen op Zoom, 2 en 3 oktober 1987 (Van Gorcum 1988) 24.

¹⁷ Sneyers, *Bijdrage*, 50. Sneyers mentions another joyous entry by John (Jan) IV of Rotselaar in 1468, but according to Paul De Win, this was not an entry: Paul De Win, "'Baenroets'" Jan IV van Rotseelaar (1385-1451), en zijn familie', *Eigen Schoon en de Brabander* 97:4 (2014) 646.

¹⁸ Arjan Nobel, 'Heerlijkheden in Holland. Een historiografische en historische verkenning', in: Frans Willem Lantink and Jaap Temminck (eds.), *Heerlijkheden in Holland (Uitgeverij Verloren 2017)* 35.

¹⁹ L. Gilliodts-Van Severen, *Coutumes des pays et comté de Flandre. Coutume du Bourg de Bruges* (Gobbaerts 1883) vol. 1, 496. For the identification of Wouter van Hecke: Frederik Buylaert, 'Sociale hiërarchisering en informatiebeheer tussen vorst en kasselrij: de productie van 'adelslijsten' in het graafschap Vlaanderen (14^e-16^e eeuw)', *Handelingen van de Koninklijke Commissie voor Geschiedenis* 178 (2012) 7-8.

²⁰ P. D. Kuyjl, *Gheel vermaerd door den eerdienst der heilige Dimphna. Geschied- en oudheidskundige beschrijving der kerken gestichten en kapellen dier oude vryheid* (Antwerpen: J.E.-Buschmann 1863) 162.

Appendix Table 1 continued

Nr.	Date	Place	Region	Lord or Lady Performing the Entry	Remarks
21.	1530	Diest ²¹	Brabant	Mencia de Mendoza, Marchioness, Lady of Diest	Entry as the new spouse of Henry III of Nassau, Lord of Diest
22.	26 Sep. 1532	Retie ²²	Brabant	Cornelis (Cornelle) de Glymes-Berghes, Lord of Retie	
23.	Between 1538 and 1544	Breda ²³	Brabant	René of Chalon	
24.	1540	Diest ²⁴	Brabant	René of Chalon and Anne of Lorraine	
25.	3 August 1541	Aarschot ²⁵	Brabant	Philip II de Croÿ, 1 st Duke of Aarschot	
26.	25 July 1545	Diest ²⁶	Brabant	Anne of Lorraine, Dowager Princess of Orange, Dowager Lady of Diest	Widow of René of Chalon (see no. 23), held a new joyous entry after her husband's death
27.	13 July 1550	Bergen op Zoom ²⁷	Brabant	John IV of Glymes, Marquis of Bergen op Zoom, and Maria de Lannoy	

²¹ Adriaens and Cools, 'Tot profijt van de stad', 94.

²² Sneyers, *Bijdrage*, 50.

²³ Van Boven, 'De inhuldiging', 24.

²⁴ Van Even, *Geschiedenis*, 164; Adriaens and Cools, 'Tot profijt van de stad', 90.

²⁵ Jef Ceulemans, *Aarschot 800 jaar. Geschiedenis van Aarschot in woord en beeld* (Wagdi 2012) vol. 1, 279-281; Lodewijk Liekens, *Geschiedenis van het oude Graafschap van de Stad en de Parochie den Lande en Hertogdomme van Aarschot* (Die Swaene 1994) 589 and 655-656; Rumoldus Jacobus Wetz, *Beschryvinghe der stad Aarschot*, ed. Willy Schroeven (Hertogelijke Aarschotse Kring voor Heemkunde 1996) 227. In contrast to other literature, Hans Cools dates this entry to 1540: Hans Cools, 'Les Orange-Nassau comme princes bourguignons. L'accession de René de Chalon à la principauté d'Orange et aux territoires franc-comtois', *Annales de Bourgogne* 89:3 (2017) 156.

²⁶ Stadsarchief Diest (City Archives Diest), *Oud archief*, register 825, p. 22: oaths sworn by the Dowager Lady of Diest and by the mayor, aldermen, council, and *gemeyn* (the community of townspeople).

²⁷ Nic Grosfeld, 'Force est trop. Markies Jan IV van Bergen. Een terugblik op een hoogadelijk en bewogen leven', in: Bart van Eekelen and Joey Spijkers (eds.), *Jan IV van Bergen 1528-1567. Leven en nalatenschap van een (on)fortuinlijk markies* (Verloren 2020) 78-80.

Appendix Table 1 continued

Nr.	Date	Place	Region	Lord or Lady Performing the Entry	Remarks
28.	29 Nov. 1551	Aarschot ²⁸	Brabant	Philip III of Croÿ, 2 nd Duke of Aarschot	
29.	1551	Breda ²⁹	Brabant	Anna of Egmont (Anna van Buren), Lady of Breda	Entry as the spouse of William of Orange (the Silent), Lord of Breda
30.	1552	Breda ³⁰	Brabant	William of Orange (the Silent), Prince of Orange, Lord of Breda	
31.	3 Oct. 1558	Gee ³¹	Brabant	Henry de Merode, Baron of Pietersheim	
32.	Between 1565 and 1567	Land of Gaasbeek ³²	Brabant	Philip of Egmont, Baron of Gaasbeek	
33.	Between 1586 and 1602	Middelburg ³³	Flanders	Margareth d'Ognies, Viscountess of Ieper and Ledreghem, Lady of Middelburg	In 1586, Margareth inherited Middelburg from her mother, Margareth de Hames; she died in 1602
34.	15 Dec. 1589	Anderlecht (Gaasbeek) ³⁴	Brabant	Philip of Egmont, Baron of Gaasbeek	The new Lord of Gaasbeek, which included Anderlecht, solemnly confirmed the rights and privileges of the chapter of Anderlecht's Saint Peter's Church through a ritual including a joyous entry

²⁸ Ceulemans, *Aarschot 800 jaar*, 284-285; Liekens, *Geschiedenis*, 596 and 659; Wetz, *Beschryvinghe*, 227.

²⁹ Adriaens and Cools, 'Tot profijt van de stad', 97; Marie-Ange Delen, *Het hof van Willem van Oranje* (Wereldbibliotheek 2002) 198.

³⁰ Van Boven, 'De inhuldigingen', 24.

³¹ Kuyf, *Gheel*, 170-171.

³² Wauters, *Histoire des environs de Bruxelles*, 157.

³³ Frans de Potter and Jan Broeckaert, *Geschiedenis van de gemeenten der provincie Oost-Vlaanderen. Tweede deel — Arrondissement Eekloo* (Annoot-Braeckman 1870-72) vol. 3, 54.

³⁴ G. Vanden Berghe, 'La seigneurie d'Aa', *Le folklore brabançon* 10:55-56 (1930) 30-31.

Appendix Table 1 continued

Nr.	Date	Place	Region	Lord or Lady Performing the Entry	Remarks
35.	5 March 1596	Heverlee ³⁵	Brabant	Charles III de Croÿ, 4 th Duke of Aarschot, Count of Beaumont, Baron of Heverlee and Rotselaar	
36.	25 March 1596	Aarschot ³⁶	Brabant	Charles III de Croÿ, 4 th Duke of Aarschot, Count of Beaumont, Baron of Heverlee and Rotselaar	
37.	26 March 1596	Rotselaar ³⁷	Brabant	Charles III de Croÿ, 4 th Duke of Aarschot, Count of Beaumont, Baron of Heverlee and Rotselaar	
38.	3 July 1596	Beaumont ³⁸	Hainaut	Charles III de Croÿ, 4 th Duke of Aarschot, Count of Beaumont, Baron of Heverlee and Rotselaar	
39.	28 May 1602	Diest ³⁹	Brabant	Philip William, Prince of Orange	
40.	29 May 1602	Zichem ⁴⁰	Brabant	Philip William, Prince of Orange	

³⁵ Bart Minnen, 'De inbezitting door Karel III van Croÿ, hertog van Aarschot, van de baronie Rotselaar (1596): een Blijde Intrede?', *Haachts oudheid- en geschiedkundig tijdschrift* 14 (1999) 203-204.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 204-205; Ceulemans, *Aarschot 800 jaar*, 299; Wetz, *Beschryvinghe*, 229-230.

³⁷ Minnen, 'De inbezitting', 205-208.

³⁸ Ernest Mathieu, 'Description de la ville et comté de Beaumont', *Annales du Cercle archéologique de Mons* 16 (1880) 16-18.

³⁹ Van Even, *Geschiedenis*, 184-187; Van der Eycken, *Geschiedenis*, 145-146.

⁴⁰ Van Even, *Geschiedenis*, 187-188.

Appendix Table 1 continued

Nr.	Date	Place	Region	Lord or Lady Performing the Entry	Remarks
41.	15 Jan. 1606	Beaumont ⁴¹	Hainaut	Dorothee de Croÿ, cousin and second spouse to Charles III de Croÿ	Joyous entry of the new countess shortly after her wedding with Charles III de Croÿ (see no. 38)
42.	20 July 1611	Hoboken ⁴²	Brabant	Conrad Schetz (of Grobbendonk), Baron of Hoboken	
43.	7 Nov. 1612	Erp ⁴³	Brabant	Walraven III van Erp	
44.	22 Sep. 1614	Feluy ⁴⁴	Hainaut	René II de Renesse and Albertine of Egmont	
45.	10 July 1617	Rotselaar ⁴⁵	Brabant	Anne de Croÿ, Duchess of Aarschot	
46.	9 or 19 Nov. 1617	Aarschot ⁴⁶	Brabant	Anne de Croÿ, Duchess of Aarschot	The sources mention two different dates
47.	30 Sep. 1633	Deinze ⁴⁷	Flanders	Floris de Merode, Marquis of Deinze	

⁴¹ Mathieu, 'Description', 19.

⁴² P. D. Kuyt, *Hoboken en zijn wonderdadig kruisbeeld alsmede eene beschrijving van het voormalig klooster der PP. Birgittijnen* (Antwerpen: J.E.-Buschmann, 1866) 229-230.

⁴³ Lia van Zalinge-Spooren, *Cemeint en gemeenschap. Jaargeboden in Peelland, ca. 1300-1795* (Verloren 2018) 86.

⁴⁴ Alain Graux, *Le château de Feluy* (n.p., 2006), 14; *Cornelle Stroobant, Histoire de la commune de Feluy* (Brussels: Dehou, 1858) 112-113. According to Stroobant, it was actually a joyous entry by the lord's new spouse.

⁴⁵ Minnen, 'Heerlijke vrijheden', 201.

⁴⁶ Wetz, *Beschryvinghe*, 230.

⁴⁷ Paul Huys, 'Het conflict tussen de markies van Deinze en de heer van Hove in Astone (1636-1684)', *Bijdragen tot de geschiedenis der stad Deinze en van het land aan Leie en Schelde* 55 (1988) 293.

Appendix Table 1 continued

Nr.	Date	Place	Region	Lord or Lady Performing the Entry	Remarks
48.	8 Sep. 1649	Turnhout ⁴⁸	Brabant	Amalia of Solms, widow of Frederick Henry of Nassau	
49.	1660	Evergem ⁴⁹	Flanders	Carolus van den Bosch, Bishop of Ghent, Count of Evergem	
50.	4 Feb. 1664	Retie ⁵⁰	Brabant	Johan Steven Spinola, Lord of Retie	
51.	May 1667	Pittem ⁵¹	Flanders	Don Juan Domingo de Haro y Guzman, spouse of Agnes Françoise de Zúñiga Fonseca, Marchioness of Tarrazona, Lady of Pittem	It is unclear whether the Lady of Pittem herself attended
52.	13 May 1669	Esneux ⁵²	Limburg	Louis-Conrard d'Argenteau	
53.	1674	Aarschot ⁵³	Brabant	Charles Eugene of Arenberg, 8 th Duke of Aarschot	

⁴⁸ H. de Kok, 'Politieke geschiedenis van Turnhout tot 1794', in: H. de Kok and E. van Autenboer (eds.), *Turnhout: groei van een stad* (Culturele Raad Turnhout 1983) 92; P. J. Heuvelmans, 'De luisterryke intrede van de vorstin van Oranje, Amalia van Solms, als Vrouwe van Turnhout', in: *Geschied- en zedekundige voorlezingen over de Kempen gedaan op het Genootschap De Dageraad te Turnhout* (Turnhout: Brepols en Dierckx Zoon, 1852) 108-147. As part of the peace treaty of Munster, Philip IV of Spain enfeoffed Amalia of Solms with the land and town of Turnhout, but the fief remained under Spanish Habsburg sovereignty.

⁴⁹ Rijksarchief Gent (State Archives Ghent, hereafter RAG), *Bisdom Gent*, series B, 235, fol. 142v: entry in account book; Achiel De Vos, *Geschiedenis van Evergem* (s.n. 1994) 169.

⁵⁰ Sneyers, *Bijdrage*, 45.

⁵¹ Valère Aricckx, *Geschiedenis van Pittem* (Veys 1951) 66-67.

⁵² Bruno Dumont, *Aux origines des communes. Les communautés villageoises dans les pays de Dalhem et de Limbourg, xv^e-xviii^e siècle: genèse, structures, évolution* (Crédit communal 1994) 477-478.

⁵³ Liekens, *Geschiedenis*, 627.

Appendix Table 1 continued

Nr.	Date	Place	Region	Lord or Lady Performing the Entry	Remarks
54.	14 Oct. 1679	Chimay ⁵⁴	Hainaut	Ernest of Croÿ-Chimay-Arenberg, Prince of Chimay	
55.	20 Sep. 1680	Aarschoot ⁵⁵	Brabant	Charles Eugene of Arenberg, 8 th Duke of Aarschoot	Second joyous entry in Aarschoot by Charles Eugene of Arenberg; The reason why Charles Eugene held two entries is unclear
56.	4 May 1681	Saint Peter's Seigneuiry in Ghent ⁵⁶	Flanders	Robertus Willoqueau, Abbot of Saint Peter's Abbey	
57.	1682	Retie ⁵⁷	Brabant	John Baptist Spinola	
58.	20 June 1683	Hombeek ⁵⁸	Brabant	Jan Michiel Locquet, son of the Viscount of Hombeek	Unique case in which the son of the lord, for unknown reasons, urges for the entry while the actual lord was still alive

⁵⁴ Dardenne, *Histoire de la ville et de la terre de Chimay*, 115.

⁵⁵ Liekens, *Geschiedenis*, 627-628.

⁵⁶ RAG, *Sint-Pietersabdij*, 1^e reeks, 508: fol. 195-198v (short account of the entry and inauguration, written by lawyer Cornelis vander Meeren), and 17: fol. 40-98v (handwritten treatise on the privileges, liberties, jurisdiction, and prerogatives of Saint Peter's Abbey, written by Cornelis vander Meere(n) on the occasion of the entry and inauguration of the new abbot). A regulation from 1592 on how vassals owning fiefs depending on Saint Peter's Seigneuiry had to proceed upon the arrival of a new abbot shows that abbots were accustomed to solemnly entering Saint Peter's Seigneuiry after their consecration as early as the sixteenth century: D. Berten, *Coutumes des pays et comté de Flandre. Quartier de Gand, tome x: coutumes de la seigneurie de Saint-Pierre-lez-Gand* (Goemaere 1905) 229-230.

⁵⁷ Sneyers, *Bijdrage*, 50-53.

⁵⁸ F. De Ridder, *Geschiedenis der Gemeente Hombeek* (H. Dierickx-Beke Zonen 1931) 79-83.

Appendix Table 1 continued

Nr.	Date	Place	Region	Lord or Lady Performing the Entry	Remarks
59.	11 March 1698	Chimay ⁵⁹	Hainaut	Charles Louis Antoine de Hénin-Liétard de Bousou, Prince of Chimay	Joyous entry ten years after inheriting the principedom
60.	8 Apr. 1710	Male ⁶⁰	Flanders	François Claesman, Baron of Male	
61.	May 1711	Maldegem ⁶¹	Flanders	Prince Philip Emanuel of Croÿ-Solre, Baron of Maldegem	
62.	13 May 1711	Pittem ⁶²	Flanders	Prince Philip Emanuel of Croÿ-Solre, Lord of Pittem	
63.	2 July 1713	Ambacht Assenede ⁶³	Flanders	Jean-François della Faille d'Assenede	The Ambacht is a rural district comprising Assenede and several surrounding villages
64.	25 July 1713	Wachtebeke ⁶⁴	Flanders	Jean-François della Faille d'Assenede	
65.	1716 ⁶⁵	Kruikenburg, Wambeek, Lombeek, Ternat and Sint-Ulrikskapelle ⁶⁶	Brabant	Philip Theodore de Fourneau, Count of Kruikenburg and Baron of Sint-Ulrikskapelle, and his spouse	

⁵⁹ Marie Cornaz, *Les princes de Chimay et la musique. Une famille de mélomanes au cœur de l'histoire, xv^e–xx^e siècle* (La Renaissance du Livre 2002) 30.

⁶⁰ Gilliodts-Van Severen, *Coutumes du Bourg de Bruges*, 496.

⁶¹ Paul Van de Woestyne, 'Feodaal Maldegem', in: Hugo Notteboom, Ronny Debbaut and Paul Van de Woestyne, *Geschiedenis van Maldegem. Deel 1: van de prehistorie tot de Franse Revolutie* (Gemeentebestuur Maldegem 2020) 74-75.

⁶² Arickx, *Geschiedenis van Pittem*, 67.

⁶³ RAG, *Ambacht Assenede*, 47, fol. 269v-271v; Hugo Notteboom, 'Instelleringhe vanden here Jonker Jean-François Delle Faille binnen den Ambachte van Assenede,' *De Twee Ambachten: Heemkundig Tijdschrift Gemeente Assenede* 24:2 (2016) 66-69.

⁶⁴ Idem.

⁶⁵ The entry must have occurred before 30 June, the date of the payment of nine barrels of beer for the event.

⁶⁶ Algemeen Rijksarchief Brussel (National Archives Brussels), *Familiearchief de Fourneau de Cruquembourg*, 361: accounts of 1716 and 1717; Frank Scheelings, *De heren en het heerlijk regime in Brabant in de achttiende eeuw* (PhD dissertation; Vrije Universiteit Brussel 1990) vol. 1, 419.

Appendix Table 1 continued

Nr.	Date	Place	Region	Lord or Lady Performing the Entry	Remarks
66.	8 Nov. 1716	Kalken ⁶⁷	Flanders	Louis de Gand-Vilain, Prince of Iseghem and Masmemen, Count of Middelburg, Lord of Kalken	Joyous entry many years after inheriting the lordship (1687) and being declared “of age” (1699)
67.	18 Nov. 1716	Middelburg ⁶⁸	Flanders	Louis de Gand-Vilain, Prince of Iseghem and Masmemen, Count of Middelburg, Lord of Kalken	Joyous entry many years after inheriting the lordship (1687) and being declared “of age” (1699)
68.	1718	Overijse ⁶⁹	Brabant	Maximilien Emmanuel, Prince of Hornes	
69.	1719 [after 26 Oct.]	Overijse ⁷⁰	Brabant	Maximilien Emmanuel, Prince of Hornes	Second joyous entry in Overijse by Maximilien Emmanuel, Prince of Hornes; The reason why he held two entries is unclear
70.	1721	Aarschoot ⁷¹	Brabant	Leopold Philip of Arenberg, 10 th Duke of Aarschoot	
71.	1722 [after 23 Apr.]	Overijse ⁷²	Brabant	“Young princess of Hornes”, presumably Marie-Thérèse of Hornes, eldest daughter of Maximilien Emmanuel (see nrs. 68 and 69)	

⁶⁷ Cyniel Dauwe, *Calcken door de eeuwen heen. Historische bijdragen getrokken uit de archieven der gemeente* (Van de Velde 1908) col. 194-204.

⁶⁸ Karel Verschelde, *Geschiedenis van Middelburg in Vlaenderen* (Gaillard & Co 1867) 133-136.

⁶⁹ Scheelings, *De heren*, vol. 1, 212-213; RAL, *Schepengriffies arrondissement Brussel* (hereafter *SG arr. Bru*), 10042: resolutions of 29 November 1718.

⁷⁰ Scheelings, *De heren*, vol. 1, 212-213; RAL, *SG arr. Bru*, 10042: resolution of 26 October 1719.

⁷¹ Liekens, *Geschiedenis*, 712.

⁷² Scheelings, *De heren*, vol. 1, 212-213; RAL, *SG arr. Bru*, 10042: resolution of 23 April 1722.

Appendix Table 1 continued

Nr.	Date	Place	Region	Lord or Lady Performing the Entry	Remarks
72.	29 Sep. 1722	Zaventem, Nossegem, and Sterrebeek ⁷³	Brabant	Countess Helena van Boisschot and her spouse Count Karl Ferdinand von Königsegg-Rothenfels (later Königsegg-Erps)	
73.	30 Sep. 1722	Erps ⁷⁴	Brabant	Countess Helena van Boisschot and her spouse Count Karl Ferdinand von Königsegg-Rothenfels (later Königsegg-Erps)	
74.	1 Oct. 1722	Kwerps ⁷⁵	Brabant	Countess Helena van Boisschot and her spouse Count Karl Ferdinand von Königsegg-Rothenfels (later Königsegg-Erps)	
75.	30 Sep. 1724	Esneux ⁷⁶	Limburg	Count Jean-Louis d'Argenteau	
76.	29 Sep. 1729	Grimbergen ⁷⁷	Brabant	Louis Joseph d'Albert, Prince of Grimbergen, and Honorine of Berghes, Princess of Grimbergen	
77.	21 July 1737	Chimay ⁷⁸	Hainaut	Alexandre Gabriel de Hénin-Liétard de Bousou, Prince of Chimay	

⁷³ Archief van de Stad Brussel (Archives of the City of Brussels), Historisch Archief, 2772: handwritten report of the entry, signed by J. B. van Gelder, alderman and lawyer.

⁷⁴ Idem.

⁷⁵ Idem.

⁷⁶ Dumont, *Aux origines des communes*, 478.

⁷⁷ Jules Carly, *Relation de l'entrée de Son Excellence Monseigneur le Prince de Grimberghe à Grimberghe, le 29 septembre 1729* (Brussels: Vromant, 1889).

⁷⁸ Dardenne, *Histoire*, 35.

Appendix Table 1 continued

Nr.	Date	Place	Region	Lord or Lady Performing the Entry	Remarks
78.	1738 [after 9 Jan.]	Overijse ⁷⁹	Brabant	Princess of Hornes, presumably Marie-Thérèse of Hornes, eldest daughter of Maximilien Emmanuel	
79.	10 Oct. 1740	Merelbeke ⁸⁰	Flanders	Willem-Antoon Damarin, Lord of Hoflande	
80.	1742 [after 8 Aug.]	Overijse ⁸¹	Brabant	Marie-Thérèse, Princess of Hornes, and her spouse Prince Philip Joseph of Salm-Kyrburg	Joyous entry on the occasion of the marriage of the lady
81.	4 Nov. 1744	Kaprijke ⁸²	Flanders	François Jozef de Schietere de Lopphem, Lord of Kaprijke	
82.	7 June 1753	Turnhout ⁸³	Brabant	Manuel Tellez de Menezes e Castro, Duke of Sylva-Tarouca, Duke of Turnhout	Joyous entry performed by Patrice François de Nény, delegate of the absent duke

⁷⁹ Scheelings, *De heren*, vol. 1, 212-213; RAL, 5G arr. Bru, 10042: resolution of 9 January 1738.

⁸⁰ Frans de Potter and Jan Broeckaert, *Geschiedenis van de gemeenten der provincie Oost-Vlaanderen. Eerste reeks – Arrondissement Gent* (Ghent: Anoot-Braeckman 1864-70) vol. 5, 16-17.

⁸¹ Scheelings, *De heren*, vol. 1, 212-213; RAL, 5G arr. Bru, 10042: resolution of 8 August 1742.

⁸² Roger Buyck, *Kaprijke. Van middeleeuwse stad tot hedendaags agrarisch dorp (1240-2000)* (Graficom 2002) 37-38.

⁸³ M. Van Genechten, 'Documents historiques sur la création du duché de Turnhout et la prise de possession de cette principauté, par le délégué du duc de Sylva-Tarouca', *Mémoires de l'Académie belge d'Histoire et de Philologie* 1 (1853) 30-39.

Appendix Table 1 continued

Nr.	Date	Place	Region	Lord or Lady Performing the Entry	Remarks
83.	Between 1768 and 1770	Schilde ⁸⁴	Brabant	Philip Louis van de Werve, Baron of Schilde, and his spouse, Marie Alexandrine de Fraula	
84.	26 Jun. 1775	Ardooie ⁸⁵	Flanders	Viscount Theodore de Jonghe, Lord of Ardooie	
85.	11 May 1778	Aarschot ⁸⁶	Brabant	Charles Marie Raymond of Arenberg, 11 th Duke of Aarschot	
86.	27 Aug. 1780	Argenteau ⁸⁷	Limburg	Count Jean Louis Eugène d'Argenteau	
87.	1 Oct. 1783	Aubel ⁸⁸	Limburg	Baron François Charles de Loë	Inauguration almost forty years after inheriting Aubel
88.	Sep. 1793	Grimbergen ⁸⁹	Brabant	Marie-Josèphe d'Ongnies de Mastaing, Princess of Grimbergen	

⁸⁴ Yves Schmitz and Alfons Bousse, *Les van de Werve. 800 ans d'histoire* (Van de Werve 1988) vol. 2, 216-217; Schmitz and Bousse mention a joyous entry at the occasion of the inheritance of Schilde by the van de Werve family, as well as a celebration upon the return of the newly married lord and lady after their honeymoon, but they do not give exact dates. I tried in vain to find more information in the archives. The resolution register of the aldermen of Schilde does not contain entries for 1767-1770, the village accounts for these years have not survived, and the local church accounts from 1768-1770 and the 'bewijsstukken' (proofs of payment) do not comprise any payment that can clearly be related to a joyous entry: Rijksarchief Antwerpen (State Archives Antwerp), *Oud Cementaarchief Schilde, 5 and Sint-Wijbrechkerk te Schilde*, 9, 10 and 11.

⁸⁵ P. Allossery, 'Ardooie, meest onder kerkelijk oogpunt', *Handelingen van het Genootschap voor Geschiedenis te Brugge* 82:3-4 (1939) 215.

⁸⁶ Liekens, *Geschiedenis*, 726-728.

⁸⁷ Eugène Poswick, *Histoire de la seigneurie libre et impériale d'Argenteau et de la maison de ce nom, aujourd'hui Mercy-Argenteau* (Brussels: Imprimerie P. Lins, 1905) 72.

⁸⁸ Dumont, *Aux origines des communes*, 478-479.

⁸⁹ *Souvenirs du comte de Merode-Westerloo, sénateur du royaume, ancien envoyé extraordinaire près S.M.I.R.A.* (Paris/Brussels: Creuse, 1864) vol. 1, 56-57.

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