BRUGES, CRADLE OF CAPITALISM, 1280–1390

JAMES M. MURRAY
For Jimmy
And in memory of
Dries Vandeweghe and
Ann James Murray OSF
# Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>List of illustrations, maps, and tables</td>
<td>viii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgments</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of abbreviations</td>
<td>xii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Political background</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Navigating a commercial city</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The measure of humanity</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Money and its discontents</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. La Bourse et la vie</td>
<td>178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Bruges as node and network</td>
<td>216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Wool, cloth, and gold</td>
<td>259</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Women in the market and the market in women</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Towards a Burgundian Bruges</td>
<td>344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Select bibliography</td>
<td>373</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Index</td>
<td>393</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Illustrations, maps, and tables

FIGURES

1. Detail of the map of Bruges by Marcus Gerards (1562) as reengraved by Renaat Bosschaert (1979)  page 2
2. The Great Market (Grote Markt). Detail of the map of Bruges by Marcus Gerards (1562) as reengraved by Renaat Bosschaert (1979)  64
3. The Waterhalle or New Cloth Hall. Detail of the map of Bruges by Marcus Gerards (1562) as reengraved by Renaat Bosschaert (1979)  66
4. The Burg. Detail of the map of Bruges by Marcus Gerards (1562) as reengraved by Renaat Bosschaert (1979)  69
5. The Crane square and the Bourse. Detail of the map of Bruges by Marcus Gerards (1562) as reengraved by Renaat Bosschaert (1979)  74
6. The Bourse and its neighborhood. Detail of the map of Bruges by Marcus Gerards (1562) as reengraved by Renaat Bosschaert (1979)  76
7. Man Weighing Gold by Adriaen Isenbrant (Metropolitan Museum, New York)  120
8. "Byrsa Brugensis," from A. Sanderus, Flandria Illustrata (Library of the University of Ghent)  179
9. The Belfort and "Old" Cloth Hall. Detail of the map of Bruges by Marcus Gerards (1562) as reengraved by Renaat Bosschaert (1979)  260
10. Bathhouse scene (Berlin, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Handschriftenabteilung)  301
11. Digital reconstruction of St. Donatian’s church (Marc Ryckaert)  345
Illustrations, maps, and tables

Maps

1. The waterways of Bruges  
   page 26
2. The Zwin towns  
   30
3. The City Quarters  
   43
4. The Burg  
   46
5. City development to c. 1200  
   49
6. The parishes of Bruges  
   52
7. The city gates  
   60

Tables

1. Zwin merchants and Bruges money changers  
   page 37
2. Population of the Zwin towns  
   88
3. The number of immigrant poorters in Bruges (1331–1409)  
   108
4. Distribution of professions  
   111
5. Professional structure  
   112
6. Hosteller accounts with de Marke, 1366–1370  
   214
7. Cloth purchases by Bruges city government, 1331–1381  
   291
8. Prostitution statistics  
   333
Acknowledgments

This book’s long, winding path to completion began with the chance discovery of a charter in the collection of the Episcopal Archives of Bruges. It concerned the distribution of property that once belonged to the bankrupt money changer Willem Ruweel, whose name I recognized from the work of the great economic historian Raymond de Roover. After a decade and a half, and many, many hours of research and writing, I have completed a work that gives context and background to that rather simple property transfer so long ago.

Of course my own research and writing have a background and context as well, one made possible by the generosity of friends, family, colleagues, and institutions without which I could not have succeeded. Friends who played multiple roles in the making of this book include David Nicholas, John Munro, and Walter Prevenier, who have been my teachers, mentors, and inspiration for many years. Friends and contemporaries of mine at the University of Ghent were also critical to my work, especially Marc Ryckaert, who provided both the maps and much helpful feedback; Marc Boone and Thérèse de Hemptinne; and younger Ghent colleagues such as Guy Dupont and a new friend from the University of Leuven, Mariann Naessens, who provided crucial statistical information. My thanks also go to André Vandewalle and Noël Geirnaert, friends and archivists of the City of Bruges, who made their important archive a fabulous place to work. I owe a special “thank you” to Anke Greve, my collaborator on a biographical dictionary of the fourteenth-century hostellers of Bruges, for her help; and to Sid Hunt, good friend and valued collaborator. For warm hospitality and friendship, I also wish to thank Dirk and Annemie Vandeweghe and Frank and Leen Surmont.

Chief among the institutions I must thank is the Medieval Institute of the University of Notre Dame, which granted me a research fellowship for a most valuable year of research, writing, and stimulating company spent in South Bend, Indiana. To the then director, Patrick Geary, as well as Michael
Acknowledgments

Lapidge, I want to express my gratitude for the valuable gift of time. Second only to the Medieval Institute is the Charles P. Taft Memorial Fund of the University of Cincinnati, which funded research trips and book and microfilm acquisition over many years. Thanks also to the Fulbright Commission, the American Philosophical Society, and the American Council of Learned Societies for fellowship help. Last but not least, my thanks to the University of Minnesota Press for permission to reproduce previously published material.

My son, Jimmy, was born midway through this project, and some of his earliest memories involve attending a Flemish school during one of his father’s research trips. Both he and his mother, Susan, have put up with my absence and inattention with good humor and patience. To Sue’s parents, Ron and Arleen Smith, I owe a very great deal for their support both moral and monetary. And to James and Carolyn Murray, I owe the inestimable debt a child owes to truly great parents.

At work’s end I have come to adopt the dictum of St. Augustine, who wisely credited all the good in his work to others and claimed only the errors as his alone.
Abbreviations

ARA  Algemeen Rijksarchief (General Archives), Brussels
ASEB  Annales de la Société d’Emulation, Bruges
BAB  Bischoppelijk Archief, Bruges
BCRH  Bulletin de la Commission Royale d’Histoire
HMGOG  Handelingen der Maatschappij voor Geschied- en Oudheidkunde te Gent
OCMW  Openbaar Commissie voor Maatschappelijke Welzijn (Archives of the Office of Public Relief), Bruges
RAB  Rijksarchief, Bruges
RBPH  Revue Belge de Philologie et d’Histoire
RR  Rolrekeningen
SAB  Stadsarchief, Bruges
SR  Stadsrekeningen