

# CITY AND UNIVERSITY

since 1817

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## GALLERY TEXTS

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# CITY AND since 1817 UNIVERSITY

October 9<sup>th</sup> 1817 saw the ceremonious opening of the university in Ghent. Since that day back in 1817 the university has become firmly embedded in the city and is now an unmissable part of the streetscape. Students live here, hurry by bicycle from one building to another and also take advantage of the university city's vibrant nightlife. Campuses are expanding and a fourth tower has appeared on the skyline, the Book Tower. The exhibition looks back at the interaction between city and university over the last 200 years. It also looks to the future. 'City and University. Since 1817' is a STAM exhibition about the university, the city and above all about their coexistence — yesterday, today and tomorrow.

## 1] A UNIVERSITY FOR GHENT

*In 1817 Ghent acquired a university. At the time Ghent – like the rest of what is today Belgium – was part of the United Kingdom of the Netherlands.*

In 1815, at the beginning of the newly created United Kingdom of the Netherlands, education in the south was in a sorry state, having been badly neglected. King William I planned to bring education, including higher education, up to scratch. It was not long before a bitter struggle broke out between Ghent, Leuven, Bruges, Tournai and Brussels, all of which recognized the importance of having a university. Ghent also lobbied in The Hague. The city already had a medical school, a botanical garden and a library in Baudelo Abbey as well as a burgeoning industry. And hadn't a 'Calvinist university' been founded in Ghent back in 1576, with the consent of the House of Orange-Nassau? On September 25<sup>th</sup> 1816 William took the plunge and founded universities in Ghent, Leuven and Liège. Ghent's inauguration ceremony was held in the presence of crown prince William in the Town Hall on October 9<sup>th</sup> 1817.

The Belgian Revolution in August 1830 was the start of a chaotic period. Two of the four faculties were scrapped and Orangist Ghent feared for its university. The uncertainty came to an end in September 1835: Ghent would retain its university, with four faculties.

### 1.01] The early days of the university

On November 3<sup>rd</sup> 1817 classes began at the Arts and Philosophy, Law, Science and Medicine faculties with 190 students, 16 professors and 13 members of staff. Lectures were delivered in Latin, but Dutch and French were also used. Most of the professors, who were mainly Catholics, came from the (Northern) Netherlands, Germany and France. For medicine they were also recruited locally. Jozef Kluyskens (1771–1843), who had trained at the Medical School in Ghent, became professor without a chair or *professor extraordinarius* and later rector. The city council had to provide buildings for the lectures: the Pakhuis (warehouse) on the Korenmarkt (Medicine), the former Jesuit College in Voldersstraat (Arts and Philosophy), Baudelo Chapel (Law) and buildings on Kortedagsteeg (Sciences and Anatomy). Clinical

studies as part of the Medical Science course took place in the Bijloke Civil Hospital and botany lessons were given in the botanical garden on the Baudelo site where the city library was also located. At the beginning of 1818 the city gifted the library and the botanical garden to the university.

- 1.03] File relating to the establishment of the universities in the Southern Netherlands, 1816.

National Archives of the Netherlands

- 1.04] Letters from the burgomaster of Leuven, the burgomaster and council of Ghent and representatives of the States of West Flanders about the respective advantages of Leuven, Ghent and Bruges as university cities, 1814–16.

National Archives of the Netherlands

- 1.05] Book of portrait drawings of six former pupils of the college of the Augustinians in Ghent who were school captain (*primus*). That achievement merited immortalization in a portrait, 1804–1805.

Ghent University Library

- 1.06] *Flandria Illustrata*, 1641–1644  
► Illustration of the Collegium Societatis Iesu Gandavensis, the Jesuit monastery in Voldersstraat, where the Arts lectures took place in the early days of the university.

Ghent University Library

- 1.07] A degree in medicine from the university of Padua, awarded to Jan Damman (or Daman) in 1642.  
► It was 1817 before Ghent citizens could follow a university course in their own city. So in the seventeenth century Jan Damman went off to Padua in Italy to study.

Ghent University Library

- 1.08] Panoramic views of Ghent, c. 19.  
► In the course of the nineteenth century Ghent became a large industrial city. More and more smoking factory chimneys featured in illustrations of that time.

Ghent University Library

- 1.09] Marcellis Bridge, view from the Muinkkaai, A. Heins, c. 19.

Ghent Archives (City of Ghent and OCMW Ghent)

- 1.10] View of the botanical garden with the hothouses on the Ottogracht, c. 19.

Ghent University Library

- 1.11] Jean Baptiste de Noter, *Plantentuin Gent* (Botanical Garden Ghent), published in 1815 and 1816.  
Ghent University Library
- 1.12] Jean Baptiste de Noter, plan drawn up in 1818 for the library, the botanical garden and the Royal College on the Ottogracht.  
Ghent University Library
- 1.13] Reading Room in the chapel on the Ottogracht, 1898.  
Ghent University Library
- 1.14] Watercolour by Auguste Joseph Van den Eynde depicting Baudelo Chapel as a reading room, 1853.  
Ghent University Library
- 1.15] The Ottogracht in 1865, seven years before it was filled in.  
Ghent University Library
- 1.16] Catalogue Room in the library, end c. 19 – beginning c. 20.  
Ghent University Library
- 1.17] Manuscripts Reading Room in the library on the Ottogracht, 1933.  
Ghent University Library
- 1.18] Library on the Ottogracht in 1933.  
Ghent University Library
- 1.19] Manuscripts Reading Room in the library on the Ottogracht, 1931.  
Ghent University Library
- 1.20] Chair from the university library on the Ottogracht.  
Ghent University Library
- 1.21] Programme of the university inauguration ceremony on October 9<sup>th</sup> 1817.  
Ghent University Library
- 1.22] Mattheus Ignatius van Bree, the solemn inauguration of the university of Ghent by the Prince of Orange in the Throne Room in the Town Hall, 1817–1830. The painting above the throne depicts William I and was brought from Antwerp to Ghent specially for the occasion.  
Rijksmuseum Amsterdam
- 1.23] Portrait of Daniël van Duyse (1852–1924), professor at the Faculty of Medicine in Ghent, dressed in a toga. Photograph by Albert Lahmer, 1907.  
Ghent University Library
- 1.24] Appendix to the Royal Decree of January 8<sup>th</sup> 1838 stipulating the attire of office for professors.  
Ghent University Library
- 1.25] Design sketch by Lieven De Bast for the university sceptre, 1816. This sceptre is carried in public ceremonies.  
National Archives of the Netherlands

1.26] Toga, beret and ermine, c. 20.

Ghent University Archives

1.27] Stamp showing a representation of Minerva, Roman goddess of wisdom. Minerva was depicted on the university emblem at the time of its foundation.

Ghent University Archives

1.28] Letter from the intendant of the *Département de l'Escaut* to burgo-master of Ghent de Lens (1765–1830), discussing the establishment of the university, 1814.

Ghent Archives (City of Ghent and OCMW Ghent)

1.29] Blazon of William I and his signature in the *Gulden Boek* (Golden Book) to mark his Joyful Entry into Ghent on September 6<sup>th</sup> 1815.

Ghent University Library

1.30] Letter of application from Joannes de Scheemaecker. He was given the job of porter at the new university.

Ghent Archives (City of Ghent and OCMW Ghent)

1.31] Palm. The inscription on the stem tells us that it was awarded by the City of Ghent as a tribute to Jules Octave Devigne (1844–1908). He was first in Philology at Ghent university in the 1865–66 academic year.

STAM

1.32] Portrait of librarian Karel Van Hulthem (1764–1832) by Karel Picqué, 1833.

KASK Ghent

## 1.02] **The university's palace**

On November 16<sup>th</sup> 1816 the city council decided to build an Aula Academica, a truly prestigious project for Ghent and the university. The commission went to the young architect Louis Roelandt (1786–1864), later city architect and professor. He chose a classical style for the Aula, which was built on the site of the demolished Jesuit Church in Voldersstraat. The imposing façade was inspired by the Pantheon in Rome. The lecture rooms were at the back. Building work began in 1819 and continued until 1826. The Aula Academica was inaugurated on October 3<sup>rd</sup> 1826. The city had paid for the building, so rather than being reserved exclusively for academic ceremonies, the Aula played a full part in Ghent's cultural life. For example, in 1834 the Floralties (floral show) was held in the *peristylum*.

- 1.33] Portrait of Louis Joseph Roelandt (1786–1864), city architect, professor of architecture and designer of the Aula. Photograph by Charles D’Hoy, 1860.  
Ghent University Library
- 1.34] Félix (Jan Ferdinand) Heyndrickx, allegorical representation of the laying of the first stone of the Aula. 1826  
Ghent University
- 1.35] Call for tenders for the building of the Aula.  
Ghent University Library
- 1.36] The golden trowel used to lay the first stone of the Aula on August 4<sup>th</sup> 1819.  
Royal and Nobility Archives, The Hague
- 1.37] Commemorative medals to mark the laying of the first stone of the Aula in 1819. A total of 17 gold, 90 silver and 100 bronze medals were struck for the occasion.  
STAM
- 1.38] Lodewijk Jan De Taeye, preliminary sketch for murals in the Aula, c. 19.  
Ghent University Library
- 1.39] Ange De Baets, Rotunda of the Aula.  
Ghent University
- 1.40] Sketch by Pierre François De Noter of an exhibition of paintings in the Aula, around 1839.  
Groeninge Museum Bruges
- 1.41] Sectional view of the Aula by architect Louis Roelandt, 1919.  
Ghent University Library
- 1.42] Façade of the Aula in Voldersstraat, c. 19 – c. 20.  
Ghent University Library
- 1.43] *Péristyle de l’Université*, drawing by Pierre Degobert (1808–1844), published in 1839.  
Ghent University Library

## 2] STUDENTS: FROM AN ELITE TO THE MASSES

*The university community consists of professors, administrative and technical staff and students. Students account for the largest group.*

Students: they were those young squires of leisure, the “*men-heeren studenten, de cives academici*” as they were titled when the university was founded. Until the Second World War the vast majority of the student population came from well-to-do backgrounds. Initially only men were allowed to study. Typically students were transients and so for them Ghent was just the setting for their brief student days. They lived here without being fully integrated into the city. They spent their time studying for a degree, but nobody told them how to do that. Their freedom was legendary. Much changed after the Second World War. The introduction of grants in 1954 made higher education more democratic. The students became more diverse socially, women were accepted and student numbers increased exponentially: the 190 students in 1817 were 1,782 by 1940, 11,486 by 1970 and 21,387 by 2000. The “young squires of leisure” became a large and colourful mass.

## 2.01] Student organizations

The oldest still active student organization was founded in 1852: the Taalminnend Studenten-genootschap 't Zal Wel Gaan (the Flemish ‘It’ll be OK’ Language-loving Student Society). Its members are liberal and free-thinking students.

There are student organizations of every description. Catholic students, socialist students, Bruges students, law students, Flemish-nationalist students, homosexual students ... there is a club or society to match the ideals of all of them. They are identifiable by their cap, ribbon or flag or in some other way. The objective of these student organizations is twofold. On the one hand, they offer their members a varied programme of typical student activities, and, on the other hand, they give them an opportunity to get involved in the social questions which concern them. The student organizations belong to a specific *koepel* and the local clubs to a *konvent*. Ghent’s overarching student body, the Gentsch Studentencorps, was founded in 1933, followed in 1935 by the Senioren Konvent. Next came the FaculteitenKonvent in 1941, which represented student organizations linked to a specific faculty.



- 2.06] The executive committee of the Société Générale des étudiants Libéraux in 1894–95.  
Liberal Archive, Ghent
- 2.07] The Société Générale des étudiants Catholiques de Gand, a Catholic society often called ‘Gé Catholique’, poses with the association flag in 1909.  
Ghent University Archives
- 2.08] The executive committee of the liberal Taalminnend Studentengenootschap ‘t Zal Wel Gaan in 1893–94.  
Ghent University Archives
- 2.09] The Société Académique d’Histoire, a history students’ society during the 1910–11 academic year.  
Ghent University Archives
- 2.10] The Bruges student society La Brugeoise around 1900.  
Ghent University Archives
- 2.11] The Flemish Catholic students of De Rodenbachsvrienden (The Rodenbach Friends) in 1935.  
Ghent University Archives
- 2.12] Cap, flag and ribbon: the attributes of a student association, s.d.  
Ghent University Archives
- 2.13] The ‘Gé Catholique’ association flag dating from 1880.  
Private collection
- 2.14] 1930s flag of the Liberaal Vlaams Studentenverbond (Liberal Flemish Student Association).  
Liberal Archive, Ghent
- 2.15] Red and white student cap.  
Ghent University Archives
- 2.16] Cap with characteristics of a liberal student society.  
Ghent University Archives
- 2.17] Wase Club (Waasland Club) cap from the 1940s.  
Ghent University Archives
- 2.18] Students of various persuasions — recognizable by their different caps — fraternizing.  
Ghent University Archives
- 2.19] Liberal students’ badge at the Fédération Nationale des étudiants libéraux Belges general conference, December 10<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> 1948.  
Ghent University Archives
- 2.20] Liberal student almanac dating from 1909.  
Ghent University Library
- 2.21] This *clubcodex* and song book was a commercium book used by the Ghent Seniorenkonvent. It dates from 1959 and belonged to student Joseph Smis.  
Private collection

## 2.02] **Living in the city**

“Studentenkamer,  
dierbre woon,  
Trots ’t vaal behangsel  
aan uw’ muren,  
Was geen paleis als gij  
zoo schoon.”

This rhyme written by a student in 1874 is a homage to his beloved student room. The wallpaper lining its walls may be dingy, but for him there is no palace more beautiful. This is where he studies and receives his friends; it is his oasis of tranquility in his busy student life. With the exception of the commuting students, every student dreamt of a room like that. It was usually provided by a landlady, who cooked and washed and kept an eye on her lodger. High-rise halls of residence sprang up in the 1960s and 70s: Home Astrid, Home Boudewijn, Home Vermeulen and Home Heymans. They were the university’s response to the democratization of higher education. Home Bertha De Vriese followed in 2001 and in 2010–11 a new complex on the Kantienberg. These halls of residence provide a form of communal living at a democratic price. They are extremely popular.

2.22] Poster for a ball  
in the Boudewijn hall  
of residence around 1970.  
Ghent University Library

2.23] The meeting area in  
Home Fabiola in the 1960s.  
Ghent University Archives

2.24] Furnished room in  
Home Fabiola.  
Ghent University Archives

2.25] King Baudouin arriving  
at the inauguration of  
the Boudewijn (Baudouin) hall  
of residence in 1967.  
Ghent University Archives

2.26] The Jewish medical student  
Fanny Vorobeitchik and  
her husband Israël Levit  
in the 1920s.  
Ghent University Archives

2.27] Student room, probably  
in the 1970s.  
Ghent University Archives

2.28] An engineering student’s digs  
in the 1950s. Individual  
students rented rooms,  
known in Dutch as *koten*.  
These days more and more  
companies also let out  
rooms for students.  
Private collection

2.29] Nienke Bakker studied Germanic Languages in Ghent in the 1930s. She kept a wonderful photograph album of her life as a student, which illustrates *thé dansants*, gala balls and stage plays, outings with the Germania student society, long walks along the rivers Leie/Lys and Scheldt, posing in Citadelpark and the peace and quiet of her student room.

Letterenhuis Antwerp

2.30] A series of nostalgic photographs of a small group of engineering students in the 1950s.

Private collection

### 2.03] **'Street theatre'**

These days it is difficult to distinguish students from their contemporaries unless perhaps it is by their UGent sweater. Their manner, appearance and clothes are part of the same globalized youth culture which originated in the 1960s. It was not always like that. In drawings and photographs we see students toggled out in suit and tie with a hat, cap or fashionable scarf. They were young gentlemen, often seen out and about with a walking stick. The female students also dressed elegantly, sporting a velvet cap. The colour of that cap said something about their identity.

More students than you might expect came from abroad: in 1930 a third of the students were not Belgian. In particular, Eastern Europeans and Latin Americans came here to follow the highly-rated engineering courses, adding an exotic touch to the streetscape.

2.31] A few students from the Vlaamsche Hoogeschool (Flemish College of Higher Education, 1916–1918) strolling along the Kouter.

Ghent University Library

2.32] Foreign students in the streetscape around 1925.

Ghent University Archives

2.33] Nienke Bakker and friends in Veldstraat, 1930s.

Letterenhuis Antwerp

2.34] A group of foreign students around 1930, probably on the Kouter.

Ghent University Archives

2.35] International students fraternizing; group photograph taken in 1891.

Ghent University Archives

2.36] Probably a Romanian engineering student, second half c. 19.

Ghent University Archives

2.37] A gentleman student: Daniël van Duyse (1852–1924), later professor of medicine, around 1875.

Ghent University Library

2.38] View of the Church of St Nicholas around 1900. The shops built onto the church include the Van Goethem university bookshop.

Ghent Archives (City of Ghent and OCMW Ghent)  
– photograph Edmond Sacré

2.39] Menu for the 25<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration of the Cercle des étudiants Wallons Libéraux, January 21<sup>st</sup> 1894.

Letterenhuis Antwerp

2.40] The traders see the students as a source of income: advertisements for Meyer van Loo, Opticien Braga, Huis Nagels & Esders, Vander Haeghen publisher's and Brasserie Valentino.

Ghent University Library

2.41] Tickets for activities organized by the Société Générale des étudiants in the 1880s.

Ghent University Library

2.42] Invitation to a masked student ball, February 1<sup>st</sup> 1845.

Ghent University Archives

2.43] Remains of a student joke from the 1950s, referencing a baby's bib.

Ghent University Archives

## 2.04] **Relaxation and sport**

Once students were done for the day with studying, city life beckoned with its cafés, theatres, cinemas and assembly halls where balls and banquets were held. There were student organizations which enticed their members with the pleasures of club life and 'student houses' where students could go and read the newspaper or play billiards. Around the Kuiperskaai there were cinemas and dance halls. The Blandijnberg catered for the left-wing counterculture and in the 1980s the Overpoort became a go-to area for nightlife. Sport provided another outlet. The university offered its students more and more choice: interuniversity championships were introduced, the Higher Institute for Physical Education and the Ghent University Sports Association were founded, the university built a sports infrastructure round the Watersportbaan (watersports course), and the Twelve-hour Run was introduced. Rowing was a good combination of sport and relaxation. Like fencing, it was a traditional student sport. Outings on the water also took place. For example, the rowing excursion organized by 't Zal Wel Gaan opened students' eyes to the delights of the rivers Leie (Lys) and Scheldt.

2.44] Fencers at a prize-giving.

Ghent University Library

2.45] The interuniversity sports meetings of 1939: the 1,500-meter athletes.

Ghent University Archives –  
photograph Albert Ritsaert

2.46] Student society 't Zal Wel Gaan, with its ritual 'beard and top hat meetings', ca. 1930.

Ghent University Library

2.47] Rowing competition by the students of the Taalminnend Studentengenootschap 't Zal Wel Gaan' in 1929.

Ghent University Archives

2.48] Relaxing in the Hou ende Trou student house in Sint-Pieters-nieuwstraat (1916–1918).

Ghent University Library

2.49] Students practising sports, 1920–1930.

Ghent University Archives

2.50] In 1910 the Ghent university rowing club was the Belgian champion in the Eights.

Ghent University Archives

2.51] Interuniversity fencing competition cup, 1910.

Ghent University Archives

## 2.05] Students today

The post-war democratization of higher education led to a growing number of students. With student grants and social services becoming more readily available, the number of students quadrupled between 1949 and 1969. The reorganization of higher education led to a second period of growth in the 1990s. A third expansion dates from the integration of academic courses at colleges of higher education (*hogescholen*) into the university. By 2017 the 2,552 students of 1949 were 40,000.

The *kandidaturen* and *licenties* have become Bachelor and Master degrees. Students can map out an individual course of study and follow lectures in English. The number of faculties has risen from four to eleven. The student population has seen further democratization and the number of women has increased, but the lecture theatres are still largely 'white'. A cultural change has also taken place. Students no longer see themselves as an intellectual spearhead of society, but as a 'client' of an educational institution. The degree is their ticket into society.

## 3] LANGUAGE

*The four languages spoken at Ghent university over the last 200 years are Latin, French, Dutch and English. Language opens the door for students or it may act as a barrier, and it has been the nub of a fierce linguistic battle.*

When the university was founded, Latin was the language of instruction. Latin was once the everyday language used in universities and among scholars, but by the nineteenth century it was something of an anachronism. In the newly established Belgium, French was chosen as the official language, the language of the elite and one in which foreign students were also competent. But while Dutch was gradually introduced in administrative matters, criminal proceedings and state secondary education at the end of the nineteenth century, the university of Ghent remained French-speaking. More and more people favoured the use of Dutch. A bill was presented for debate in parliament, but the First World War interrupted the process. After the war the debates resumed but with the activist Vlaamsche Hoogeschool — the Flemish College of Higher Education — still fresh

in the memory, certainly not everyone was ready to back a Dutch-speaking university. It was 1930 before Dutch became the language of instruction. Like Latin in the Middle Ages, English is now the lingua franca of scientific research and an increasing number of subjects are taught in English.

### 3.01] 1817–1913

In 1817 the university introduced lectures, exams and doctorates (PhDs) in Latin. However, it was not the language of modern science in the nineteenth century and not all professors and students had the same command of Latin. Belgian independence changed all that. Latin was dropped and in 1835 a law came into effect which stated (among other things) that lessons should be delivered in French. Very soon people began to argue in favour of the use of Dutch. The student organization Taalminnend Studentengenootschap 't Zal Wel Gaan was a zealous advocate of a course in Dutch. This was introduced in 1854. Close on 40 years later, several professors founded the organization Hooger Onderwijs voor het Volk (Higher Education for the People), which provided public courses in the vernacular.

The idea of introducing Dutch was also a subject of debate in parliament, led by three young politicians, the so-called ‘three crowing cockerels’. In 1911 Frans Van Cauwelaert (Catholic), Camille Huysmans (socialist) and Louis Franck (liberal) presented a bill which from 1917 would gradually introduce Dutch as the only language at the university. Talks were still ongoing when the First World War broke out but no vote was taken.

3.07] Poster for a Flemish meeting in the Valentino assembly hall in Ghent, 1902.  
Ghent Archives (City of Ghent and OCMW Ghent)

3.08] Student march for the Dutchification of education, 1911.  
Spaarnestad Photo

3.09] Poster for a meeting of De Rodenbachsvrienden (The Rodenbach Friends) society, who were campaigning for a ‘Vlaamsche Hoogeschool’ — a Flemish College of Higher Education, 1900.  
Ghent Archives (City of Ghent and OCMW Ghent)

3.10] Poster announcing propaganda meetings for the Dutchification of Ghent university. There were campaigns in several parts of Ghent. 1911.  
Letterenhuis Antwerp

3.11] Poster of the Association flamande pour la vulgarisation de la langue française, a Flemish society that promoted the French language.  
Ghent University Library

3.12] The ‘three crowing cockerels’, Frans Van Cauwelaert (1880–1961), Camille Huysmans (1871–1968) and Louis Franck (1868–1937), came to Ghent in 1910 to make a speech in the Wintercircus in Lammerstraat.  
Letterenhuis Antwerp

3.13] Letter from Ferdinand Snellaert (1809–1872) to Jacques Kesteloot (1778–1852) about the “matter of the Flemish language”, 1852.  
Ghent University Archives

3.14] As a Flemish liberal, the historian Paul Fredericq (1850–1920) was committed to the Dutchification of Ghent university. In this diary in September 1892 he described how he was extremely busy preparing for Hooger Onderwijs voor het Volk, which organized scientific lectures at higher education level for the ordinary people of Ghent.  
Ghent University Library

- 3.15] Johan Thorbecke (1798–1872), lecturer at the new Ghent state university. He lectured in Latin and in Dutch, as in this statistics course in 1826.

National Archives of the Netherlands

- 3.16] The student society 't Zal Wel Gaan dedicated its 1880 almanac to Paul Fredericq.

Ghent University Library

- 3.17] Julius Mac Leod, *Taal en Kennis* (Language and Knowledge), 1895.  
► Julius Mac Leod (1857–1919), lecturer at the faculties of Medicine and Sciences and later director of the Botanical Garden, lectured and published in Dutch. He was one of the founders of Hooger Onderwijs voor het Volk. In 1897 he was the key member of a committee at the university which proposed gradual Dutchification.

Ghent University Library

- 3.18] 1911 petition for the Dutchification of the university, with the signatures of (among others) Herman Teirlinck (1879–1967) and Karel van de Woestijne (1878–1929).

Ghent University Archives

### 3.02] **The First World War and the Vlaamsche Hoogeschool**

In 1914, Ghent became the headquarters of the 4th German army. The university closed down and the occupiers took over buildings like the Aula and the Institute for Sciences in Jozef Plateaustraat and used them as barracks. As part of the German occupier's *Flamenpolitik*, which tried to get the Flemish people on side, a Dutch-speaking university – the Vlaamsche Hoogeschool – was founded in Ghent in 1916. Flemish activists supported this initiative but the majority of the professors refused to cooperate. Two of them, Henri Pirenne and Paul Fredericq, were arrested and deported to Germany. The government in exile in Le Havre also distanced itself from the 'Von Bissing University'. The Vlaamsche Hoogeschool opened on October 24<sup>th</sup> 1916 with governor general Moritz Von Bissing in attendance. Only seven professors from the French-speaking university switched allegiances. Some 60 students enrolled. In the course of the year that number rose to 140. The armistice on November 11<sup>th</sup> 1918 brought the institution to an immediate end. All the degrees and appointments were cancelled, the professors were prosecuted and the students excluded from Belgian universities. On January 21<sup>st</sup> 1919 Ghent university reopened with French as the official language and Paul Fredericq as its rector.



3.19] The transfer of the university to the academic authorities of the Vlaamsche Hoogeschool on October 21st 1916.

Ghent University Library

3.20] Activist students from the Vlaamsche Hoogeschool holding pamphlets, 1914–1918.

Ghent University Library

3.21] Opening of the student house Hou ende Trou, the Vlaamsche Hoogeschool's student organization. Group photograph of the guests in the garden, June 3<sup>rd</sup> 1918.

Ghent University Library

3.22] Group photograph of students in uniform, 1913.

Ghent University Archives

3.23] Activist demonstration of students from the Vlaamsche Hoogeschool in the streets of Ghent on January 27<sup>th</sup> 1918.

Ghent University Library

3.24] Ghent students were also mobilized in the First World War and left for the front, where 82 of them met their death, 1914–1918.

Ghent University Library

3.25] Poster announcing enrolments for, and the opening of the academic year in October 1917.

State Archives Hasselt

3.26] Paul Fredericq (1850–1920) and Henri Pirenne (1862–1935) were arrested on March 18<sup>th</sup> 1916 and later imprisoned in Germany. Both photographs were taken while they were prisoners. Hanging in Fredericq's cell is a poster showing the towers of Ghent.

Ghent University Archives

3.27] Programme of the 'art ceremony' at the opening of the Vlaamsche Hoogeschool on October 24<sup>th</sup> 1916.

Ghent University Library

3.28] Medal commemorating the Dutchification of Ghent University, 1916.

STAM

3.29] Visiting card of a student from the Vlaamsche Hoogeschool, 1916–1918.

Ghent University Library

3.30] Programme of the university centenary celebration on Saturday November 3<sup>rd</sup> 1917.

Ghent University Library

3.31] Banquet at Ghent Opera House on November 3<sup>rd</sup> 1917 to mark the university's centenary.

Ghent University Library

3.32] German army weather station on the roof of the Institute for Sciences.

DEHLA Bonn

### 3.03] **The ‘Nolf Shack’**

Several days after the end of the First World War, King Albert I made an official speech in which he also called for a Dutch-speaking university in Ghent. That appeal was not favourably received by everyone, including Ghent city council which was largely made up of ‘franskiljons’ (i.e. elitist citizens who used French as their main language) with their experiences of the Vlaamsche Hoogeschool still in the back of their mind. Be this as it may, the debate got under way once again. In parliament in 1921, ten years after the ‘three crowing cockerels’, Frans Van Cauwelaert relaunched the proposal to gradually Dutchify the university. The proposal made it to the Chamber, but not to the Senate. Meanwhile supporters and opponents of Dutchification mounted a campaign and took to the streets. On November 19<sup>th</sup> 1922 an anti-Dutchification march by 5,000 demonstrators, later known as the *paardenvijgenstoet* or ‘horse figs parade’, resulted in riots with pro-Flemish counterdemonstrators, who pelted the *belles dames* with horse excrement.

The Liège professor and Minister for Education Pierre Nolf eventually took the bull by the horns and compromised. The university would have two sections: one Flemish, where two-thirds of the teaching would be in

Dutch and a third in French, and a French-speaking section, where the ratio would be the other way round. This system was introduced in the academic year 1923–24, but it found little support. The university was nicknamed ‘Nolfbarak’ or Nolf Shack.

3.33] Poster produced in 1923 by the Algemeen Vlaamsch Hoogstudentenverbond – (Flemish higher education student union) calling for a boycott of the “Nolfsche Hoogeschool” (ref. Minister for Education Pierre Nolf).

Letterenhuis Antwerp

3.34] Call by several student societies to boycott the bilingual university, 1923.

Ghent University Library

3.35] Caricature dating from 1922 which was circulated after the Chamber approved by a narrow majority Van Cauwelaert’s proposal of October 19<sup>th</sup>. The caricature tried to persuade the senators to vote against it, which they did on December 22<sup>nd</sup> 1922.

Ghent University Library

3.36] ‘Naar de Gentsche Hoogeschool’; poster promoting the Dutch-language university, 1930.

Ghent University Archives

3.37] Programme for the inauguration of the *École des Hautes Études* on November 25<sup>th</sup> 1923.

Ghent University Library

3.38] The *Ligue Nationale pour la Défense de l'Université de Gand* was one of the pro-French Flemish campaign organizations. With this poster dating from 1923 one of the largest Flemish student societies, the *Algemeen Vlaamsch Hoogstudentenverbond*, defended its position.

Letterenhuis Antwerp

3.39] *flatten* and *tokken*, first half c. 20  
➤ Flemish liberals, Catholic and socialist students donned a wine-red cap known as a *flat*, symbolizing their Flemish unanimity. Their opponents were the French-speaking Ghent bourgeoisie and *franskiljons* — pro-French Flemish — students, who wore black hats or *tokken* (from the French *toques*). Interestingly, the free-thinking opponents of Dutchification reinforced their proposition with statements by Cardinal Mercier, while Catholic supporters opposed Mercier's opinion that higher culture was impossible without French.

Ghent University Archives

3.40] Members of the *Taalminnend Studentengenootschap 't Zal Wel Gaan*, sporting their cap, on the steps of the *Aula* in 1928. This student society was also a supporter of a Dutch-language university.

Letterenhuis Antwerp

3.41] Promotion of the Dutchified university, with a student wearing a red cap, 1932.

Ghent University Library

3.42] In protest against the bilingual university, in 1923 Ghent *franskiljons* — pro-French Flemish — set up a counter-university: *l'École des Hautes Études*, housed in this building on the *Korenlei*. The institution still existed after 1930 and thus thwarted the newly-Dutchified university.

Ghent University Archives

3.43] Ceremonial hat worn at Ghent university ceremonies. This hat has a French-language medallion; in 1930 it was replaced by one in Dutch.

Ghent University Archives

3.44] Photograph of the opening of the 1933 academic year.

Ghent University Archives

### 3.04] **Monolingual Dutch**

Right from the start of the bilingual system in 1923, it was clear that it would not be long-lived. The opening was boycotted: neither Ghent city council, nor French-speaking students, nor the radical Flemish-nationalist student organizations showed up. At the same time, the political climate was also evolving. In Flanders the language demands rang out with ever-greater force, and in 1929 Flemish nationalists won the parliamentary elections. After several months of political wrangling, an agreement was reached which included the complete Dutchification of Ghent university. It was approved in Chamber and Senate in March 1930. That same year, socialist politician and professor of history of art August Vermeylen opened the academic year as the new rector. In those first few years, incidents between students were a common occurrence and it was not easy for rector Vermeylen to keep the Dutchified university on the rails.

3.45] Ceremonious opening of the academic year in the Aula on October 21<sup>st</sup> 1930.  
► In his speech, rector August Vermeylen (1872–1945) called for tolerance, but Flemish nationalist students nevertheless remonstrated by singing the *Vlaamse Leeuw* (official anthem of Flanders) and the *Wilhelmus* (national anthem of the Kingdom of the Netherlands) during the Belgian national anthem, the *Brabançonne*. There was great indignation in patriotic circles and the matter landed on the Cabinet table.

Letterenhuis Antwerp

3.46] August Vermeylen and his wife Gaby at the opening of the Dutch-language university in 1930.

Letterenhuis Antwerp

3.47] Caricature of August Vermeylen in *Koekoek*, Vooruit's humorist weekly, June 11<sup>th</sup> 1931.

Amsab-ISH Ghent

3.48] Caricature in *Koekoek* of October 5<sup>th</sup> 1933 relating to the opening of the 1933 academic year: Minister for Education August Lippens (1875–1956) conducts the Belgian national anthem. There had been no festive opening ceremonies for the last two academic years to avoid a repeat of the 1930 incidents.

Amsab-ISH Ghent

3.49] Bust of August Vermeylen, made by Emiel Poetou, 1932.

Rectorate Ghent University

### 3.05] **Second World War**

Chaos broke out when the German army captured Ghent in May 1940. Lectures at the university were suspended. Seventy of the 167 professors fled to France, along with many of the scientific staff. The Nazi regime took control, appointed pro-German professors — including activist professors from the *Vlaamsche Hoogeschool* — and organized lecturer exchanges with Germany in subjects like Germanic Studies and Ethnology. Though there were members of the resistance among the staff and students during the war, there were no major confrontations. A total of 25 students and members of staff lost their lives in the Second World War. Two of them, mineralogist Valère Billiet and commercial scientist Karel Verlat, died in prison after being arrested for their resistance activities. After the war, legal action was taken against some 20 professors for collaboration and they were dismissed. One hundred and eleven students were punished in some way, ranging from a censure to definitive exclusion.

3.50] Flemish Nationalist Dietsch student conference in the Aula on April 3<sup>rd</sup> 1941, where the foundation of the *Vlaamsche Hoogeschool*, 25 years earlier, was commemorated.

Amsab-ISH Ghent — photograph Paul De Clercq

3.51] Lookout post on the Book Tower — 1944–45.

► After the liberation of Ghent in September 1944, the Passive Air-raid Defence Service kept an eye on the airspace, for the danger of bombing was not over until the armistice on May 8<sup>th</sup> 1945. Captain Frans — “Loecky” — Vervenne takes up his position on the Book Tower.

Private collection

3.52] Exhibition of Albrecht Rodenbach manuscripts in de Aula at the Dietsch student conference, 1941.

Amsab-ISH Ghent — photograph Paul De Clercq

3.53] Tripod of a German army telescope from the Second World War, left behind on the belvedere of the Book Tower. In 1942 the occupiers also installed anti-aircraft guns on the tower.

Ghent University Library

3.54] Card belonging to resistance member Alphonse Cuelenaere (1925–?), 1951.

Ghent University Archives

3.55] 1939 passport belonging to Jewish student of physics and medicine David Lustig. Under German occupation, Lustig was refused entry to the university. Later on he was deported; he died in 1943, a victim of the Holocaust.

Private collection

3.56] Photograph of Albert Einstein on his arrival in Antwerp in 1933. Professor Jules Verschaffelt is the fourth from the right, between the two ladies.

KIK-IRPA Brussels – photograph  
Jacques Hersteven

3.57] Reproduction of a letter written by Albert Einstein (1879–1955) in 1933 to professor Jules Verschaffelt (1870–1955), in which Einstein recommends his Jewish colleague L. Hopf to rector Vermeyleen. When the Nazis came to power in 1933, many Jewish academics lost their job. Physicist Verschaffelt saw it as an opportunity to attract German physicists.

GUM collection (Museum for the History of Sciences)

3.58] Jewish restaurant in Jozef Plateaustraat, s.d.

Private collection

### 3.06] **Ghent University**

It took a long struggle to achieve instruction in Dutch at the university of Ghent and it is an important legacy of the Flemish movement. The anglicization of higher education nevertheless affected the Flemish universities. The Erasmus exchange programme was established in 1988. One of its main objectives is to offer European students the opportunity to immerse themselves in the language and culture of the hosting university. The Bologna Declaration of 1999 established a system of comparable degrees in Europe and a credit transfer system, which promoted the mobility of students and professors. To attract more international students, the language policy was relaxed. A package of 30 of the 180 units of credit at Bachelor level could be given in another language. A Master's could be offered in another language, so long as that course was also available in Dutch at another Flemish university. The university now has over 4,000 foreign students, so ways of introducing even more flexibility are being studied.

3.59] English language courses  
taught at Ghent university.

Private collection

3.60] *I would like to thank you for  
kindly congratulating the rector.  
But what a wasps' nest!*

Rector August Vermeylen, 1930

3.61] *I see some twenty poor souls, city  
and country dwellers, come out of  
our University, including several very  
young lads like Jaak, barely more  
than children. They are packed into  
the patrol wagon and two giants  
of German gendarmes wearing  
spiked, shiny copper helmets huddle  
next to the driver. The wagon-load  
of misery drives off. I'll never forget it.  
That became my Alma Mater  
in German hands.*

Paul Fredericq, February 10th 1916

3.62] *Mr. Braun bears a grudge against  
Flemish because it reminds him  
too much of his mother tongue.*

Camille Huysmans pokes fun at Emile Braun's German origins when the latter supports a French-speaking university in Ghent, but at the same time proposes the foundation of a Flemish university in Antwerp.  
November 23rd 1922

3.63] *However, I am prepared to vote  
for the creation of a Flemish  
university in Antwerp, because  
next to the poison is the antidote.*

Former burgomaster and MP Emile Braun at the parliamentary discussions on October 19th 1922. He wanted to establish a Dutch-speaking university in Antwerp with a francophone university in Ghent as the 'antidote'.

3.64] *A humorist cook, but such  
complicated sauces are not to our  
taste and the Flemish stomach  
will not digest them.*

The later rector August Vermeylen, a socialist MP in 1923, draws on culinary jargon when referring to Minister Nolf.

3.65] *Politics — and I say this most  
emphatically: all politics — must  
remain outside the University.*

Rector August Vermeylen, 1930

#### 4] **PROTEST AT THE UNIVERSITY AND IN THE CITY**

*In the late 1960s some students and professors spoke out in the public and political debate. The student protest motivated by greater social commitment went beyond the university walls.*

In Europe student anti-establishment protests broke out in Paris in May 1968 and reached Ghent in 1969. On March 12<sup>th</sup> of that year, rector Jean-Jacques Bouckaert banned without explanation the use of slides in a panel discussion entitled ‘Pornography, sense or nonsense?’. Students occupied the rectory, the protest escalated but was dampened because of internal divisions and – more prosaically – stuvac (STUdy VACation). However, the March movement sowed the seed for later protests. Students questioned the running of the university and words like democratization, involvement and participation circulated. There was great disappointment in 1971 when the students were given just four representatives on the governing board. Students were also demanding greater freedom

in their own lives with, for example, protests in 1972–74 against ‘sex controls’ in the halls of residence. Professors like Jaap Kruithof and Etienne Vermeersch, who later proved to be prominent voices in the social debate, supported some student campaigns.

Governmental cuts in the 1970s led to higher registration fees, changes to the grant system and to modifications in the social sector and in university financing. These cuts provoked fierce protest. Opposition to the increase in the registration fee in 1972 was a foretaste of the mass protests of 1978–1979, when the registration fee for non-grant students was raised to 10,000 Belgian francs (250 euros). The campaign dragged on until October 1980, but in the end the 10,000 francs were paid. Further protest followed when the registration fee went up to 13,000 Belgian francs (325 euros) in 1986, but later increases passed more or less tacitly.



- 4.02] The pirate radio station Radio Aktief was deployed in the protest against the 10,000 francs. Poster from 1980.  
Ghent University Archives
- 4.03] Protest posters against the increase in the registration fee, 1979.  
Ghent University Archives
- 4.04] Call for demonstration against the increase in the registration fee to 10,000 Belgian francs for non-grant students, 1978.  
Ghent University Library
- 4.05] Set of slides for the panel discussion ‘Pornography, sense or nonsense?’ on March 12<sup>th</sup> 1969. Rector Jean-Jacques Bouckaert banned these images from being shown, which led to student protests.  
Private collection
- 4.06] Poster for a teach-in against repression, 1980. Students, workers and a mineworker from Mijnerwerkersmacht (M.W.M. or Power to the Miners) came and gave lessons.  
Ghent University Library
- 4.07] Debate organized by the Marxist-Leninist Movement about the rise of the far-right Flemish party, Vlaams Blok, 1988.  
Ghent University Archives
- 4.08] Meeting of the Marxist-Leninist Movement and AMADA (Alle Macht Aan De Arbeiders or All Power to the Workers) against the Egmont plan, March 2<sup>nd</sup> 1977.  
Ghent University Archives
- 4.09] Hurriedly-made poster calling upon students to take part in the demonstration with protesting ACEC workers, 1970s.  
Ghent University Archives
- 4.10] Pamphlet produced by the Ghent Student Syndicate in 1965 calling upon students to strike and demonstrate against the ‘Expansion Law’, allowing the government to set up new universities in Antwerp, Bergen/Mons and Namur along with a department of the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven in Kortrijk. Despite protests by the existing state universities, the expansion law was introduced.  
Ghent University Archives
- 4.11] Pro-democratic education badges, s.d.  
Ghent University Archives

4.12] Truncheon, found by assistant police commissioner Walter Eeckhaute in the large auditorium in the Blandijn complex during the 1969 protests. Originally yellow, the truncheon was used by law and order officials in demonstrations probably by the Volksuniejongeren (Young People's Union).

► In March 1969 Eeckhaute was deployed by the Ghent corps command in the student riots on the Blandijn-berg. At the time, he himself was a working student, studying criminology and a year later he obtained his licentiate degree. It was Eeckhaute's job to escort the student demonstration. Everything was going well until one of the students recognized him in uniform. The demonstrators started chanting: "Your place is here, your place is here!"

Private collection

#### 4.01] **Social commitment in practice**

The student involvement of the late 1960s and 1970s went beyond the university walls. From 1969 working parties were set up in several faculties in a bid to make specialized knowledge available to society in general and to those in difficult circumstances in particular. Well-known examples include the Socio-Medical Working Party (1969) – later Mordicus – in Medicine, the Engineers & Society Working Party (1970) in Applied Sciences, the Socio-Juridical Working Party alias SoJuWe (1969) in Law, the Critical Action Group Psychology and Pedagogy (KRAPP), the Social Working Party History or Sowege (1973), the Free Education Working Party and the Economics Working Party (1974–1975).

The Socio-Juridical Working Party was behind the 'Law Shop', which was set up in 1972 to provide students with free legal advice. Much of the Law Shop's work related to rental problems, but it also supported students prosecuted for activities relating to the 10,000-franc registration fee. Ghent's local community health centres, created in the mid-1970s, are still striving for more accessible health care today.

Politically engaged students were more sympathetic to socio-economic problems and world affairs. In the 1960s and 70s considerable attention was still being paid to capitalism and the workers' struggle. Later on the focus shifted to nuclear energy, the environment, disarmament, racism, unemployment, and the emancipation of women and the GLBT community.

- 4.13] Poster, published by the Abortion Committee Ghent and Dolle Mina Ghent in 1978 for the debate 'Freedom and lack of freedom in the sex life of women'.  
Amsab-ISH Ghent
- 4.14] Poster produced by the Ghent Student Working Party Homosexuality (Gentse Studentenwerkgroep Homofilie), 1973.  
Ghent University Archives
- 4.15] Poster for a party in 1984 to support the Law Shop. The liberal politician Jean Gol was Minister for Justice at the time, hence the name 'Gol fuif' or 'Gol Party'.  
Ghent University Archives
- 4.16] Article about the Law Shop in the student magazine *Schamper*, 1976.  
Ghent University Library
- 4.17] *Schamper* 569 from 2016.  
Ghent University Library
- 4.18] Photograph of a student gathering with a poster in the background relating to an open evening about the use of contraceptives, 1970s.  
Ghent University Library
- 4.19] In 1978 the student magazine *Schamper* argued in favour of the legalization of abortion. Stickers (in transparent Bible paper) were stuck over the addresses of abortion clinics in the Netherlands to prevent the threatened seizure of No. 51 by the judicial authorities.  
Ghent University Library
- 4.20] Publication dating from 1962 by Jaap Kruithof and Jos Van Ussel about the 'sexual issue' as regards Flemish students.  
Amsab-ISH Ghent

4.21] In 1962 Leo Apostel and Marcel Bots published the book *Pluralisme en verdraagzaamheid* (Pluralism and Tolerance). Leo Apostel was an advocate of free thinking. He and Jaap Kruithof set up and shaped the Moral Sciences Seminary in 1962.

Amsab-ISH Ghent

4.22] *Abortus pro/contra. Een kritische analyse* (Abortion for/against. A critical analysis) by Hugo Van den Enden and Jaap Kruithof, 1971.

Ghent University Library

## 5] THE CITY AS A LABORATORY

*City and university are inextricably linked.*

*The city is an important source of inspiration and a subject of research for the university.*

Since its foundation back in 1817, the university has grown and become firmly embedded in Ghent. It is spread across scores of locations in the city and its neighbouring municipalities, but also far beyond. It even has a campus in South Korea. Science only makes sense if it comes down from its ivory tower, shares and applies its knowledge, and is open to its immediate environment. With its patients, mentally ill, children, pupils, workers, intellectuals, industrialists, plants and animals, etc., Ghent has been an inexhaustible field of activity for all scientific areas for more than two centuries. The city serves as a laboratory for body, mind, industry and science, art and culture, fauna, flora and architecture.

## 5.01] The city and its doctors

In 1817 the Faculty of Medicine approached the Bijloke, the hospital which for centuries had catered for the city's poor, with a view to giving its students practical training. At the Bijloke, professors and students of medicine witnessed on a daily basis the harrowing conditions to which Ghent's textile workers were subjected. Several professors undertook to improve the lot of workers and the poor through the free provision of care, new treatments and research into the social causes of epidemics. With the publication of his thesis *Verhandeling over den Druiper en de Pokziekte* (Treatment of Gonorrhoea and Smallpox) in 1797, Joseph Kluyskens (1771–1843) began a crusade for the cowpox vaccination in the Southern Netherlands. Jacob Kesteloot (1772–1852) strove for the distribution of the vaccine against smallpox. Adolphe Burggraeve (1806–1902) graduated in 1828 with a dissertation on syphilis and denounced the neglect of Ghent's working-class districts. He called for preventative medicine with public hygiene and health as the key to social progress and launched the idea of a health centre. Today the involvement of these nineteenth-century doctors lives on in renewed attention to basic health care, excellent training for GPs and Ghent's local community health centres.

5.02] Portrait of Jacob Kesteloot (1778–1852), physician and professor at the Faculty of Medicine and man of letters, 1844.

Ghent University Library

5.03] Portrait of Adolphe Burggraeve (1806–1902), professor of anatomy and surgery at the Faculty of Medicine in Ghent, 1857.

Ghent University Library

5.04] Anatomical preparation made by Adolphe Burggraeve (1806–1902).  
► A piece of skin injected with mercury to illustrate the working of the lymphatic vessels. The young Ghent doctor specialized in making anatomical preparations and laid the foundations for the university's valuable anatomical collection. Only a handful of Burggraeve's preparations have been preserved.

GUM Collection (Anatomical collection)

5.05] Amputation saw used by surgeon Joseph Kluyskens (1771–1843) when tending to wounded soldiers at the Battle of Waterloo (1815).

GUM Collection (Museum for the History of Medicine)

5.06] Group photograph of medical students in their second year, 1891.  
► Belgium was the first country in Europe to run a university course for doctors, surgeons and obstetricians.

Ghent University Archives

5.07] Course in surgery and pathology by professor Victor Deneffe (1835–1908), 1874–75 academic year.

Ghent University Library

## 5.08] **For mother and baby: maternity care in Ghent**

In the early days, practical training in obstetrics was given in the provincial midwifery school, founded under William I to combat death in childbirth and to take care of single women. But the women of Ghent preferred a student midwife to a male student during their confinement. Midwives and professors were at loggerheads: the midwives set less store by university clinical teaching. Relations improved when a municipal maternity hospital with school for midwives was built. They moved into their new premises on the Bijlokekaai in 1866. The *Moederhuis* or Maternity Home was a modern building with several labour wards,

a bathing unit and a room for newborn babies. Elaborate rules and regulations separated the practical lessons, patients and medical instruments for midwives and students. The old conflict flared up again when Frans Daels (1882–1974) was made head physician at the maternity hospital in 1924. The power struggle did nothing to help the reputation of the *Moederhuis* and the students. Daels modernized and professionalized his clinic and gave out popular handbooks. The Clinic for Gynaecology and Obstetrics in the new Academic Hospital on De Pintelaan opened in 1964. The maternity hospital on the Bijlokekaai closed in 1977.

5.09] Obstetrics forceps, invented by the Ghent barber surgeon Jan Palfyn (1650–1730) in 1723 to speed up childbirth.

GUM Collection (Museum for the History of Medicine)

5.10] Frans Daels (1882–1974), *Voor moeder en zuigeling* (For Mother and Baby), with a foreword in the first edition by Cyriel Verschaeve and drawings by Joe English, 1920.  
 ► Frans Daels, professor of obstetrics and gynaecology, professionalized training for

midwives and modernized the *Moederhuis* or Maternity Home in Ghent. As a supporter of the Flemish Movement, he played a role in the Front Movement in the First World War and strove for the Dutchification of the university. As a member of the Vlaamsch Nationaal Verbond (VNV, Flemish National Union), he got involved in collaboration in the Second World War. He wrote this book for the young women of Flanders during his time at the front. It contains explicit moral lessons for a ‘clean’ sex life.

Documentatiecentrum voor Streekgeschiedenis  
 Dr. Maurits Gysseling

5.11] Skeleton of a 22-week foetus.

GUM Collection (Museum for the History of Medicine)

5.12] The Bijloke *Moederhuis* (Maternity Home) on the Bijlokekaai, completed in 1866.

Ghent University Archives

5.13] Auditorium of the women’s clinic in the *Moederhuis* (Maternity Home) on the Bijlokekaai.

Ghent University Library

5.14] **From municipal hospital to Academic Hospital**

The Bijloke hospital with its medieval infrastructure was antiquated and unsuited to progress in medicine and hygiene. Head surgeon Adolphe Burggraeve (1806–1902) was the first to champion modern, hygienic clinics. City architect Adolphe Pauli (1820–1895) designed a ‘new Bijloke’ in neo-Gothic style. The hospital was inaugurated in 1878 and had 800 beds for men, women and children.

As part of the transition to a research university, the Rommelaere complex was built in 1898 opposite the Bijloke hospital. Designed by Louis Cloquet (1849–1920), the complex housed modern laboratories and institutes for scientific research. Ten years later the university also acquired its own clinics and polyclinics on Pasteurlaan. In spite of all the annexes, the university still dreamt of an academic hospital. Building work started in 1937, but the outbreak of the Second World War and a lack of financing meant that the work dragged on. The polio epidemics of the 1950s gave a new urgency to the building work. On November 5<sup>th</sup> 1959, Ghent celebrated the official opening of its Academic Hospital, the *Academisch Ziekenhuis*, and one by one the medical services vacated the Bijloke site.

5.15] Ward in the old Bijloke, end c. 19 – beginning c. 20.

Ghent University Library

5.16] Interior of the sixteenth-century ‘sick house’, the first extension of the Bijloke hospital, ca. 1900. The space was used as a ward until 1976.

Ghent Archives (City of Ghent and OCMW Ghent)

5.17] Entrance to the new Bijloke clinic, designed by architect Adolphe Pauli (1820–1895) and completed in 1878.

Ghent University Archives

5.18] Sign from the department of Paediatrics headed up by professor Carlos Hooft (1910–1980) in the Bijloke.

Ghent University Archives

5.19] Bijloke staff in 1938, from left to right: Dr J. Vandeveldde, Denise Van Doorselaer, sister Boniface, Dr De Breuck and Dr Georges Vandeputte.

Ghent University Archives

5.20] Enamel name plates from the old Bijloke hospital in Ghent. The plates refer to the various wards, laboratories, store rooms, etc.

Ghent Archives (City of Ghent and OCMW Ghent)



5.21] A bird's-eye-view pen drawing of the Rommelaere complex, ca. 1900.

GUM Collection (Museum for the History of Sciences)

5.22] University clinics and policlinics on the Pasteurlaan, ca. 1900.

GUM Collection (Museum for the History of Sciences)

5.23] Operating quarters and auditorium in the university clinics on the Bijloke, ca. 1917.

Ghent University Library  
Ghent University Archives

5.24] Anatomy lesson by Professor Julien Fautrez (1914–1995), dissection of a foot, 1953.

Ghent University Archives

5.25] Professor Fritz De Beule (1880–1949) and a student with a patient during a clinical lesson in the Bijloke auditorium, 1938.

Ghent University Archives

5.26] The Academic Hospital's new buildings, ca. 1965.

Ghent University Archives

5.27] The Academic Hospital (AZ) under construction, 1939.

Flowerbed at the entrance at the opening of the Academic Hospital, 1959.

Ghent University Archives

5.28] Prostheses used by Joseph Kluyskens (1771–1843).

► The son of a village doctor from Erpe, Kluyskens worked as apprentice barber with a barber surgeon in Ghent. After the Battle of Waterloo in 1815, he organized assistance for wounded soldiers in Brussels. He carried out more than 300 amputations to prevent gangrene in wounded or shattered limbs.

GUM Collection (Museum for the History of Medicine)

5.29] Portrait of Joseph Kluyskens (1771–1843), c. 19.

STAM

5.30] Johan Baptist Lodewyk Maes (1794–1856), *De koepokinenting* (The Vaccination against Cowpox), 1819

► The painting probably refers to the activities of the Ghent barber surgeons Guillaume Demamet and Joseph Kluyskens (1771–1843). From 1800 both strove for the general acceptance of the vaccinations.

STAM

5.31] Norbert Sauvage, *Dissectie van een Siamese tweeling* (Dissection of a Siamese Twin), 1703.  
► The Collegium Medicum was established in Ghent in 1665. This corporate organization of doctors and barber surgeons laid the foundations for the teaching of anatomy and medicine in the city. In 1703 Jan Palfyn (1650–1730), barber surgeon and member of this college, carried out a public dissection on a ‘Siamese’ twin born prematurely in Ghent. The analysis aroused great interest and was captured on canvas by Norbert Sauvage. The painting hung in the Collegium Medicum’s room in the Town Hall until 1848.

MSK Ghent

5.32] Group photograph of the Anatomical Conference in Jena, 1904.  
► Bertha De Vriese (1877–1958) — the first woman to graduate from Ghent university as a doctor of medicine — takes her place in the first row among all her male colleagues. At the time De Vriese was a researcher at the prestigious Morphological School of the Anatomical Institute on the Bijloke.

GUM Collection (Museum for the History of Medicine)

5.33] Casts of the blood vessels which supply blood to the brain, made by Bertha De Vriese (1877–1958), ca. 1905.  
► After obtaining her degree in 1900, five years later De Vriese added a doctorate in human anatomy to her CV. She made these casts as part of her doctoral research. Despite her laudable research findings and exertions, her mandate as an assistant was not extended. Professor Leboucq (1848–1934) gave precedence to his own son and later successor, Georges Leboucq (1880–1958). De Vriese became head of the children’s department of the Bijloke hospital in Ghent and opened a private practice for paediatrics.

GUM Collection (Anatomical collection)

5.34] Classic obstetric manikin, Pinard type, c. 19.  
► The obstetric manikin is a model of a female pelvis with external genitalia made of leather into which a foetus fits. It was used to teach and practise obstetric grips.

GUM Collection (Museum for the History of Medicine)

5.35] Mobile scales, used by midwives for home births.

GUM Collection (Museum for the History of Medicine)

5.36] **A healthy body**

Inspired by study trips to Stockholm, Berlin, Copenhagen and Hamburg, in 1908 the doctor Florent Gommaerts (1865–1934) founded the Higher Institute for Physical Education. The Gymnastic Orthopaedic Institute of Stockholm served as a model for the Ghent institute. To start with, the practical lessons were given in the gymnasium at the Emile Braun Municipal School for Girls on Paddenhoek. From 1913 Irène Van der Bracht (1891–1941), who held a licentiate degree, gave practical lessons to girls and in 1925 she became Belgium's first female professor. Until 1931 the Higher Institute for Physical Education was unique in Belgium and, along with Stockholm, it was the only university institute in Europe where physical education was taught on a scientific basis. In 1960 the institute moved to the Watersportbaan.

5.37] Even today the bench and the buck, attributes from Swedish gymnastics, are essential pieces of equipment in every gymnasium.

GUM Collection (GUSB)

5.38] Gymnasium of the Higher Institute for Physical Education in the Emile Braun Municipal Primary School (old Jesuit monastery) on the Paddenhoek, ca. 1910.

Ghent University Archives

5.39] The Higher Institute for Physical Education's new sports centre on the Watersportbaan, inaugurated in 1960.

Ghent University Archives

5.40] Students from the Higher Institute for Physical Education look on as Florent Gommaerts (1865–1934) teaches using visual aids, ca. 1917.

Inside view of the Clinique gymnastique-orthopédique. Florent Gommaerts (1865–1934) is in the middle, in the white coat, 1917.

Female physical education students with their teacher Irène Van der Bracht (1891–1941), 1927.

Ghent University Archives

## 5.41] **The mind and the brain**

Joseph Guislain (1797–1860) graduated in 1819 and was one of Ghent's first medical doctors to do so. From the outset, he strove to reform care for the 'insane'. In the belief that mental illness is influenced by 'moral pain', he put the emphasis on gentle treatment and therapy and banned brutal coercive measures. His new approach led to a productive cooperation with Canon Petrus-Jozef Triest, father superior of the Congregation of the Brothers of Charity. As a liberal local councillor, Guislain also championed the building of a new and scientifically-based mental institution for impecunious male patients. Designed by Adolphe Pauli (1820–1895) and located just outside the city, the Guislain Institute opened in 1857 and became an internationally acclaimed institution. Guislain died in 1860. Twenty years later Jules Van Biervliet (1859–1945), physicist and psychologist, founded the first ever laboratory for experimental psychology in Belgium. He used new equipment to study human perception (visual illusions), attention (reaction times) and above all memory.

5.42] Registering the shape of the skull using a 'hat', from the Jules Van Biervliet (1859–1945) collection. The hat registers the circumference of the skull by means of a pricking system.  
GUM Collection (Museum for the History of Medicine)

5.43] An electroshock device for treating the mentally ill, c. 20.  
Museum Dr Guislain

5.44] Injection needles and dispensing bottles containing *Vinum aromaticum* and valerian, c. 20.  
Museum Dr Guislain

## 5.45] **Experimental schools for children**

Pedagogues need pupils and a testing ground for their teaching and research. The City of Ghent put a small school in Molenaarsstraat at the disposal of students from the Higher Institute for Pedagogy (1927) as a demonstration school and training centre. Part of the playground was turned into a vegetable garden for the children and each child was given a box containing a piece of soap, a towel and a toothbrush. The charismatic driving force behind the project, Jozef Verheyen (1889–1962), believed that physical and 'moral'

education go hand in hand. The subject matter of lessons was inspired largely by what presented itself in the immediate surroundings, a forerunner of the Freinet educational concept.

In 1948 Richard Verbist (1911–2010), a pupil and assistant of Verheyen, set up a new experimental school in a villa in Zwijnaarde. The Verbist School was first and foremost a pedagogic laboratory where teaching techniques were tried out. On September 1<sup>st</sup> 1960 the school moved to Henri Dunantlaan. The experiment evolved gradually and became a school for children from often elitist and intellectual circles. The school closed down in 1991. Certain pedagogical ideas championed by the experimental school live on today in the municipal Freinet schools.

5.46] Apparatus and materials used for psychotechnical examinations in the laboratory for Applied Psychology.

- Box containing writing materials according to the D’Haese method, for the first to fourth school years, ca. 1950–1960.
- Wooden box containing materials for the Borelli-Oléron block-building test, 1955.

Ghent University Archives

5.47] Experimental school founded by the pedagogue Richard Verbist (1911–2010), 1965–1970.

Ghent University Archives

5.48] J. Van der Plaetsen, portrait of Dr Guislain, professor at the Faculty of Medicine and “father of Belgian psychiatry”, c. 19.

Museum Dr Guislain

5.49] Inauguration of the statue of Joseph Guislain (1797–1860) on the Begijnhoflaan, 1887.

Ghent University Archives

5.50] Dr Guislain’s doctor’s bag. In 2006 students and staff at Ghent University proclaimed Joseph Guislain their university’s greatest professor.

Museum Dr Guislain

5.51] Straightjacket used to restrain the mentally ill, c. 20.

Museum Dr Guislain

5.52] **Education and school savings banks to elevate the populace**

François Laurent (1810–1887), professor of jurisprudence and liberal local councillor, saw education as the lever for a moral civilization. Child labour should be banned, compulsory education was the message. He firmly believed that workers could lift themselves out of poverty through order, thrift and foresight. In 1866 he introduced a school savings system into Ghent's municipal schools. Until well into the twentieth century, every Belgian child's school bag contained the typical savings book. In 1908 his statue was inaugurated on what is today the Laurentplein.

5.53] Children of the Geluk in 't Werk (Happiness at Work) circle with Professor François Laurent (1810–1887) on the right in the second row, ca. 1880.

► Laurent made a great contribution to municipal education, established workers' circles and introduced school savings.

Ghent University Archives

5.54] Lieven De Winne, *Portret van professor François Laurent* (Portrait of Professor François Laurent), 1877.

MSK Ghent

5.55] Experimental school in the municipal school in Molenaarsstraat, 1928.

Ghent University Archives

5.56] End-of-year celebrations in the new experimental school on the Dunantlaan, 1961–62.

Ghent University Archives

5.57] King Baudouin visits the experimental school on the Dunantlaan, May 19<sup>th</sup> 1967.

Ghent University Archives

5.58] Creative art class at the experimental school, ca. 1964.

Ghent University Archives

5.59] The Bollekensschool, 1970s. At the time, outdoor lessons were seen as enlightened.

City of Ghent Education Department

5.60] Photograph album of the experimental school founded by pedagogue Richard Verbist (1911–2010) in Zwijnaarde, 1950–1960.

Ghent University Archives

5.61] 'Klein Schooltje' (Little School), a radio documentary (5 min.) made by Greet De Lathauwer in 2010 about the experimental school in Zwijnaarde.

## 5.62] **A laboratory in the city**

The city recognized the importance of scientific innovation and financed a well-equipped laboratory for applied chemistry in the former Emile Braun School next to the Aula. Among other things, it boasted a photography room. François Donny (1822–1896), self-taught chemist and amateur photographer, was made temporary director of the laboratory after the death of Daniël Mareska (1803–1858), professor of chemistry. As Mareska's successor, in 1858 the university recruited August Kekulé (1829–1896), a young German lecturer from Heidelberg, for the chair of General Chemistry. At the time German universities led the way in fundamental research and in developing experimental laboratories. Ghent's chemistry laboratory underwent dramatic expansion under Kekulé, who turned it into a state-of-the-art research lab. The university's teaching lab was the only one of its kind in Belgium. The impressive room had seven windows, a large modern laboratory table and incinerators. At the time of the publication of Kekulé's discovery of the ring-shaped structure of benzene in 1865, his laboratory was already world famous. However, Ghent was too small for Kekulé and he left the city for a post in the hypermodern Chemical Institute in Bonn.

5.63] Molecular model showing the structure of benzene as discovered by August Kekulé (1829–1896).

GUM Collection (Museum for the History of Sciences)

5.64] Sketch of professor Kekulé's chemistry teaching lab in the old university on Lange Meer (today Universiteitstraat).

State Archives of Belgium, Brussels

5.65] View of the Muinkmeersen and of Sint-Pietersnieuwstraat, ca. 1850.

► These photographs are some of the oldest photographic views of Ghent.

Ghent University Archives – photographs François Donny

5.66] Wire figures for experimenting with surface tension.

GUM Collection (Museum for the History of Sciences)

5.67] A microscope and several phials and platinum instruments from the laboratory of chemist Frédéric Swarts (1866–1940) of the Kekulé school.

GUM Collection (Museum for the History of Sciences)

5.68] **From working-class area to ‘Palace of the Sciences’**

City and state soon realized that the industrial city of Ghent had at its disposal ‘technical’ sciences capable of stimulating industrialization and technological innovation. Special schools for ‘polytechnic’ courses in Arts and Trades, Civil Engineering and Bridges and Roads were grafted onto the Faculty of Sciences. These engineering courses were hugely successful, not least among foreign students. In the 1860s the engineering schools had more students than the four ‘ordinary’ faculties together. A new institute for the Sciences was required to meet the pressing need for buildings and laboratories for both the engineering schools and the Faculty of Sciences. City architect Adolphe Pauli (1820–1895) drew up the plans for a majestic building, which necessitated uprooting more than 300 working-class families under the pretext of public health. In November 1890 the Natural Sciences and Engineering faculties moved amid festive celebration from Voldersstraat to the new building in Jozef Plateaustraat and Rozier. It was 1957 before the technical schools’ engineering courses became the Faculty of Applied Sciences, part of which has since moved to the Technology Park in Zwijnaarde.

5.69] Report by doctors Daniël Mareska (1803–1858) and Jules Heyman on living conditions in the working-class area of Batavia, 1843.  
► They condemned the lack of healthy food and the unhygienic dwellings. The Batavia area, which posed a threat to public health, made way for the Institute for Sciences.

Ghent University Library

5.70] Scientific staff from the laboratory for General Chemistry in the Plateau building, 1898.

Ghent University Archives

5.71] Laboratory for Applied Chemistry of William-Marie De la Royère (1856–1924) at the école Spéciale du Génie Civil et des Arts et Manufactures, in the Plateau building, 1890.

Ghent University Library

5.72] Physics lab in the Plateau building, ca. 1910–1920.

Ghent University Library

5.73] Inner courtyard at the Institute for Sciences, with chemistry students Marc Van Montagu, Greta Coppens and Hubert Sion, 1954.

Laboratory for Organic Chemistry of Firmin Govaert (1902–1993), with (among others) Marc Van Montagu and Greta Coppens, 1954.

Private collection Marc Van Montagu



5.74] **University  
and industry**

In the 1920s engineer and concrete expert Gustave Magnel (1889–1955) called for better cooperation between university and industry. He endeavoured to achieve a specialized laboratory where theoretical teaching and experimental research could fecundate each other, for the existing Institute for Sciences no longer satisfied the modern standards for technical labs. On Feyerick's old factory grounds alongside the Muinkschelde, between 1934 and 1937 Magnel and his colleague, steel expert Jean-Norbert Cloquet (1885–1961), had a new building erected to house laboratories for the Technical Schools: the Technicum. Magnel's famous laboratory for Reinforced Concrete was located on the ground floor. The Ardoyen campus in Zwijnaarde was created in 1972 in an effort to stimulate cooperation between university and industry. First and foremost, the campus met the need to expand the Faculty of Applied Sciences. Later on Ardoyen became a Science Park, where university and business world meet.

5.75] Laboratory for Hydraulics at the Technicum.

Ghent University Archives –  
photograph R. Masson

5.76] Engineer Gustave Magnel (1889–1955) in his office. He had a profound influence on the development of prestressed concrete between the wars.

Ghent University Archives

5.77] Gustave Magnel (1889–1955) (with walking stick) and fellow engineers visit the foundation works at the Basilica of the Sacred Heart in Brussels, 1920.

Ghent University Archives

5.78] Laboratory for Reinforced Concrete in the Technicum. ► The floor load capacity is impressive. In 1972 the laboratory moved to Campus Ardoyen.

Ghent University Archives

5.79] Series of photographs of students at the Technicum, 1950s.

Private collection

5.80] Façade of the Institute for Sciences, ca. 1900.

Ghent University Library

View of Rozier from Sint-Pieters-nieuwstraat, 1936.

► The Institute for Sciences is located opposite the De Vreese working-class area where the Book Tower was built later on.

Ghent University Library

- 5.81] Façade of the Institute for Sciences, ca. 1920.

Ghent University Library

Interior of the Institute for Sciences, ca. 1918.

Ghent University Library

Students in the laboratory for Applied Chemistry, 1895–1900.

Ghent University Archives

- 5.82] View of the Muinkkaai, 1901.

View of the C. De Keukelaere wood and coal merchant's with workers' houses, factories and St Peter's Abbey in the background, 1901.

Ghent Archives (City of Ghent and OCMW Ghent)

- 5.83] Steel truss of the Technicum, ca. 1934–35.

Ghent University Library

Block 2 of the Technicum built in the 1930s. On the left, the car park with a concrete span which was impressive in its day.

Ghent University Archives

- 5.84] Under its current name of Tech Lane Science Park (52 ha), Campus Ardoyen is home to numerous university laboratories, research institutes, international corporate research & development centres and high-tech growth companies. Every year the Science Park welcomes ten new start-ups, so it has become the natural home of spin offs of VIB, Imec, VITO and Ghent University itself.

City of Ghent

## 5.85] **Accumulated knowledge and culture**

In 1933 the university commissioned the internationally famous architect Henry Van de Velde (1863–1957) to design a new university library. Baudelo Chapel had been unsatisfactory as a library for years and it had developed structural problems. Built on the site of the De Vreese group of workers' houses between the Sint-Pietersplein and Rozier, the new library was to become a symbol of the 'new-style' Dutch-speaking university. Once again workers had to make way for developments in science. It was a difficult project from the outset. At the time it aroused little enthusiasm and it was hampered by the

outbreak of the Second World War. The Book Tower was completed in 1942, at the height of the war. It rose up above the city as its ‘fourth tower’, a symbol of knowledge and science. More than three million books, magazines, maps and manuscripts are stacked up there like beacons of knowledge and culture.

5.86] Inside the De Vreese working-class area on the Blandijnberg (hill), 1929.

Amsab-ISH – photograph Jules Beheyt

5.87] Main entrances to the De Vreese area on the Blandijnberg (hill), 1936 – photograph Geo Pieters.

Inner courtyard in the De Vreese area with view of the roofs of the Institute for Sciences, 1936.

Ghent University Library – photograph Geo Pieters.

5.88] Plan of appropriation drawn up by the City of Ghent for a new university library, 1920.  
► Building work on the Book Tower began on the De Vreese site in 1936.

Ghent University Library

5.89] Large reading room in the University Library, ca. 1950 – photograph Walter De Mulder.

Light designed by Henry Van de Velde (1863–1957) for the large reading room in the University Library.

Ghent University Library

5.90] The monumental work *Histoire de Belgique* (History of Belgium, seven parts, published between 1899 and 1932) by Henri Pirenne (1862–1935), ‘godfather’ of Ghent’s historical school. Pirenne was one of the first to professionalize the practice of history. He inspired generations of committed historians, including Hans Van Werveke (1898–1974), Frans Ganshof (1895–1980), Jan Dhondt (1915–1972) and Adriaan Verhulst (1929–2002).

Ghent University Library

5.91] Card index box with the University Library catalogue.

Ghent University Library

5.92] Interior views of the new University Library, 1950s.

Ghent University Library

5.93] Several students in the seminar library of the Faculty of Arts and Philosophy, 1920s.

Ghent University Library

5.94] **Voices from the past**

In the 1920s Edgard Blancquaert (1894–1964) conceived a plan to have 141 Dutch sentences translated by good dialect speakers and accurately transcribed phonetically. He started in the region where he was born, Klein-Brabant in the province of Antwerp, but gradually the project was extended to the whole of Flanders and later also to the Netherlands. Between 1923 and 1982 several dialect atlases were published.

*Stemmen uit het Verleden* (Voices from the Past) is the title of the collection of dialect tapes which the university produced in the 1960s and 70s. A total of 783 recordings from 550 places tell the life stories of hundreds of dialect speakers who were born around the end of the nineteenth, beginning of the twentieth century.

5.95] Forms for completion for the dialect study carried out by the department of Linguistics-Dialectology, 1963–1982.

Audio recording of dialects

Ghent University Archives

5.96] Life-size models of human heads used in the Experimental Phonetics course to demonstrate the working of the larynx, the vocal cords, the tongue, the oral cavity, etc.

GUM Collection (Museum for the History of Sciences)

5.97] Main wing of the newly opened Faculty of Arts and Philosophy, the ‘Blandijn’, shortly after it was brought into use, ca. 1960.

Ghent University Archives

5.98] **A mighty, vertical bookcase**

Designed by the Ghent architect and professor Henry Van de Velde (1863–1957), the Book Tower is an architectural gem. The idea of stacking the entire collection of books in a high-rise building was inspired by several American libraries and was unprecedented in Belgium in the 1930s. For the construction and finish in reinforced concrete, Van de Velde drew on the expertise of his colleagues Norbert Cloquet (1885–1961) and Gustave Magnel (1889–1955). The 64-meter-high tower was erected using the innovative slip forming construction method. The emphasis in this modernist work of art is on the restful integrity of the pure line. Restoration work on the Book Tower began in 2012.

5.99] Set of photographs showing the construction of the Book Tower at various stages from December 1936 to March 10<sup>th</sup> 1937.

Ghent University Library

5.100] Design sketch of the Book Tower by Henry Van de Velde (1863–1957), ca. 1933.

Ghent University Library

5.101] View of the Book Tower, ca. 1960

Ghent University Library –  
photograph Raf van den Abeele.

Catalogue Room in the University Library, 1972–1973.

Ghent University Library

Large reading room in the University Library, ca. 1950.

Ghent University Library –  
photograph Paul Bijtebier

5.102] Elks on the Vrijdagmarkt.

► For archaeologists the city is an archaeological treasure trove of evidence and remains which allow them to probe deep into the past. In 1981 the antler of a bull elk was found while work to construct the car park beneath the Vrijdagmarkt was under way. This find tells us how some 40,000 to 50,000 years ago a herd of elks grazed on what is today the city centre. The rare Gallo-Roman Castor hunt cup which is preserved in the university's archaeological collection is further evidence of the existence of elks in our region.

Ghent University, department of Geology  
GUM Collection (Archaeological Museum)

## 5.103] **The Coupure: from Ghent horticulturalists to bioengineers**

Back in the second half of the eighteenth century, several horticultural enterprises made the rural Coupure their base. A century later Ghent's horticulturalists built the prestigious Casino there as the venue for the large five-yearly flower show held for the first time in 1839. This 'Palace of Flora', designed by architect Louis Roelandt (1786–1864), attracted new market gardening companies and companies specializing in ornamental plants.

One of the founders of Ghent's ornamental plant and horticulture industry was Jean Linden (1817–1898). This Belgian plant hunter and businessman undertook a number of expeditions to Central and South America on behalf of the Belgian state, introducing hundreds of tropical plants on his return. In 1869 Linden took over a large horticultural company located in Stoppelstraat off the Coupure, where he grew tropical flowers and plants, including camellias, azaleas and orchids, and put Ghent on the world map with his horticulture empire. Ghent was also the only European city to boast a horticultural school, which attracted market gardeners and florists from all over Europe.

For more than a century the Coupure had been the hub and heart of Ghent horticulture, so it is hardly surprising that when the State Agricultural College was looking for a new building in the 1930s, they chose the site of the Rasphuis, the old prison on the left bank of the Coupure.

5.104] View of the Casino, which became an important place in the social and cultural life of Ghent's bourgeoisie. In 1839 the first large, five-yearly flower show was held there, heralding the now famous Ghent Floralias.

Ghent Archives (City of Ghent and OCMW Ghent)

5.105] Lithograph of the *Uropedium lindenii* de Lindley, *La Belgique horticole, Journal des jardins, des serres et des vergers*, IV, 1854, plate 1–2, p 195.  
► In 1843 Jean Linden (1817–1898) discovered the *Uropedium lindenii* and in 1846 Lindley described this extraordinary flower in *Orchidaceae Lindenianae*. The flower has remarkably long, almost tail-shaped petals. Linden found the plant in New Granada, in the territory of the Chiguara Indians.

Jean Linden's new winter garden, a drawing by P. De Panne-maeker, *L'Illustration horticole*, 22, 1875, plate 227.

GUM Collection (Botanical Garden)

5.106] Engraving of the company owned by Ambrosius Verschaffelt (1825–1886), later bought by Jean Linden, *L'Illustration horticole*, vol. 1 (1854).

► In the nineteenth century the Verschaffelt family florist's business was an important centre for the European cultivation of camellias.

Interior of Jean Linden's winter garden, *L'Illustration horticole*, 28, 1881, plate 422.

GUM Collection (Botanical Garden)

5.107] Roots of palm trees.

GUM Collection (Botanical Garden)

5.108] Drawing of the new building of the State Agricultural College on the left bank of the Coupure, 1940.

Ghent University Archives

5.109] Experimental field of the Rijksstation voor Sierplanten-veredeling (Experiment Station for the Improvement of Ornamental Plants, 1946–1955) at the State Agricultural College on the campus Coupure Links.

Greenhouses belonging to the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences on the campus Coupure Links.

Ghent University Archives

5.110] **A botanical garden for scientists, students and citizens**

By the end of the nineteenth century the botanical garden on the Baudelo site was derelict and polluted by smoke from the surrounding factories. Julius Mac Leod (1857–1919), brand-new director and founder of the botanical society known as the Société botanique Dodonaea, recognized the need for a new location. In 1900 Ghent university's new Botanical Institute was built in Ledeganckstraat opposite Citadel Park. The colourful neo-Gothic building by Louis Cloquet (1849–1920) with its modern classrooms, microscope room, herbarium, museum, laboratories, surrounding greenhouses and gardens was ready for the scientific changes of the twentieth century. Today the Botanical Garden is a public garden for scientists, students and plant lovers.

On June 15<sup>th</sup> 1959, on the land next to the Botanical Garden, the first stone of the Ledeganck was laid, a new building for the Faculty of Sciences' *kandidatuur* (degree) students.

5.111] Didactic model of a flower by the firm Brendel, 1880.

GUM Collection (Botanical Garden)

5.112] The library and the laboratory in the Botanical Institute in Ledeganckstraat, ca. 1905.

Ghent University Archives

5.113] Professor Camille De Bruyne (1861–1937) and staff of the Botanical Garden, 1931.

Ghent University Library

5.114] Along with master of agricultural science Walter Fiers (°1931) and biologist Jeff Schell (1935–2003), chemist Marc Van Montagu (°1933) was the driving force behind two new laboratories in Ledeganckstraat: the laboratory for Molecular Biology and the laboratory for Genetics. It was the start of pioneering research into molecular biology and bacteriological genetics.

Private collection Marc Van Montagu

5.115] Campus Ledeganck with the complex built in the 1960s and in the foreground the Botanical Institute, which was demolished a short while later, ca. 1965.

Ghent University Archives – photograph R. Masson

5.116] Jean Linden's company in Ghent.  
► In 1880 Linden's company comprised 46 greenhouses with a large winter garden for large plants in the centre. Other important collections included tree ferns from Australia, camellias, azaleas, hothouse plants, orchids, bromelias and tropical fruit trees. Rhododendrons and conifers were grown outside. The Linden company took part in numerous international exhibitions.

Ghent Archives (City of Ghent and OCMW Ghent)

5.117] Between 1937 and 1940 the State Agricultural College complex appeared on the left bank of the Coupure. Later on it became the Faculty of Bioscience Engineering.

Ghent University Library

5.118] Poster for *L'Illustration horticole*, ca. 1884.  
► In 1869 Jean Linden took over the editing of *L'Illustration horticole*, a famous horticulture magazine which was published for over 43 years.

Ghent University Library

5.119] Design sketches for the Botanical Institute by Louis Cloquet (1849–1920).

GUM Collection (Museum for the History of Sciences)

5.120] flower models by Brendel, ca. 1880.  
► Robert Brendel (1821–1898) started making flower models in Breslau (Silesia, today Wrocław in Poland) in 1866. The workshop made some 200 different models from all plant groups: algae, mosses, ferns and seed plants. The models are largely made of papier mâché and materials like wood, cotton and gypsum. In the second half of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century, they were used for teaching botany.

GUM Collection (Botanical Garden)

5.121] Box containing 100 specimens to distinguish agricultural seeds from weeds, c. 20.

GUM Collection (Botanical Garden)

5.122] Drawings of a *Camellia chimera* and an orchid by P. Stroobant for the magazine *L'Illustration horticole*, 1881.

Private collection



## 5.123] Zoological garden

In 1851 the Ghent Natural History Society started a zoological garden in the Muinkmeersen area. The founding committee consisted of eminent Ghent citizens like senator Jean-Baptiste d'Hane de Potter (1797–1858) and professor Adolphe Burggraeve (1806–1902), and three architects: Adolphe Pauli (1820–1895), Pierre Kerfysen (1801–1852) and Louis Roelandt (1786–1864). Pauli drew up the plans. The exotic-looking buildings echoed the animal collection they housed. The animals of prey were kept in the Byzantine-style main building, then there were cages for birds of prey, a monkey palace and an oriental tent for a dromedary and for Betsy the elephant. Not all the animals were blessed with a long life. Some dead animals found their way into the university's zoological collection, where their skeletons were preserved as didactic material. The zoo survived for barely half a century. A lack of interest forced it to close in 1904.

5.124] Stuffed chimpanzee and skeleton of a monkey, from Ghent zoo.

GUM Collection (Zoology Museum)

5.125] Postcard of Ghent zoo featuring Betsy the elephant and her attendant, 1908.

Ghent University Library

Registers and accounts from the zoo, 1851–1904.

Ghent University Library

Vertebra of Betsy the elephant

GUM Collection (Zoology Museum)

5.126] Ghent university's zoological collection on the second floor of the old university on Lange Meer (today Universiteitstraat) next to the Aula, which now houses the Faculty of Law.

Ghent University Library

New Year card of Ghent zoo for the year 1890.

House of Alijn Ghent

5.127] **From cows and pigs  
to small pets**

In 1935, on the site of the Casino of Louis Roelandt (1786–1864) on the Coupure, architect August Desmet (1887–1964) built a modernist complex for vets. For a long time the building served as a reference point for veterinary clinics in Europe. Like the State Agricultural College, the Flemish Veterinary School was a direct result of the Dutchification of the university in the 1920s and 30s. Both schools met the long-standing demand of the Flemish movement to provide agricultural courses in Dutch at higher education level as the economic engine for agrarian Flanders. For a long time horses dominated vets' activities because of the crucial role they played in providing traction in agriculture, the army, trade, transport and industry. After the Second World War, attention shifted to pigs, an economically important branch in Flanders. Only in 1968–69 did the veterinary course become a separate faculty. Because of post-war university expansion and further specialization, the school's location in the city centre became untenable. In the 1990s the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine moved to a new site in Merelbeke. These days the majority of the students are female and many specialize in small pets.

- 5.128] This plastinated dog's head (Yorkshire terrier) was a didactic model used to illustrate the structures of the throat.
- The German pathologist and anatomist Gunther von Hagens, famous for the controversial exhibition *Körperwelten* (Body Worlds), invented the plastination process, whereby the fluid in a corpse is replaced by a type of silicone. As well as being useful for teaching and research, many of the anatomical preparations are also fascinating and have an aesthetic value.

GUM Collection (Morphology Museum)

- 5.129] Professor Eugène de Somer (1885–1958), assistants and members of staff during a scientific experiment on an animal, ca. 1940–1950.

Detail of the façade of the Veterinary School and the Faculty of Zoology on the right bank of the Coupure. August Desmet (1887–1964), professor of architecture and urbanism, designed the plans for the new brick building.

Ghent University Archives –  
photograph Hilde Christiaens.

5.130] Didactic wooden models of horse teeth show the evolution of a foal to a fully-grown horse, c. 20.

GUM Collection (Morphology Museum)

5.131] Didactic model horses designed by the German architect and sculptor Max Landsberg. They were gifted to the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, probably as reparation after the First World War, ca. 1885.

GUM Collection (department of Nutrition, Genetics and Ethology)

5.132] Skeleton of a baby dromedary, an ostrich and a lama from Ghent zoo.

GUM Collection (Zoology Museum)

5.133] Drawing of Ghent zoo in the marshy Muinkmeersen, with St Peter's Abbey in the background, 1872.

Ghent University Library

6] **THE CITY  
DEBATE**

*City and university have coexisted for 200 years, so this is not only a time to look back, but also a time to look forward and to reflect on the role of the university in the city. The debate will provide the impetus for a city academy.*

If the university reflects on the city, what will happen then? The aim of the city academy is to bring together researchers, students, staff, policy-makers, civil servants and citizens to debate the great social challenges: homes, mobility, energy and food, from our own backyard to global change. During the exhibition several formats will be drawn up for a city academy. Staff and students from the Architecture and Urban Planning department are putting the programme together.

The abbey church is the laboratory for the city academy-to-be. As well as scope for lectures, workshops and debate, there will be work on show by three architectural firms, all keen to shape the future of the city. The three installations reflect on city and university as a history of accumulation in which the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. Maat-ontwerpers presents a manifesto with a new map of Ghent, which has 200 years of coexistence metamorphose into an urban project on the basis of four principles. The Cloud Collective presents those 200 years as a paper trail of intellectual sense and nonsense which radiates out to the city. The installation combines traces of finished work by students with new work by the city academy. Bovenbouw architecten presents 200 years of city and university as a huge layered cake, a joyful accumulation of 200 years of building.

6.01] **First move  
in a city debate  
3 x 200 — 3 x ‘what if’**

**Accumulation**

*200 years — (1) accumulated  
opportunities*

After 200 years, the university is mega! Lots of students, lots of buildings, lots of lectures, lots of publications, lots of locations, lots of bicycles, lots of meals served, lots of burnt-up energy, lots of printed pages, lots of coffee. And consequently lots of potential. 200 years of university is a future brimming over with steadily accumulated opportunities.

*200 years — (2) in many places*

The growth of the university followed that of the city, from centre to outskirts. Spatially, in broad outline the university followed the suburban expansion of the city in a southerly direction. University buildings and campuses once surrounded by meadows are now located in the city. In its 200-year history, the university has acquired strategic locations in the city, which are becoming ever-more significant.

*200 years — (3)  
on commissioning bodies*

It was clear at the outset. The city built for the university. The architects were ‘city architects’ and they taught at the university. They built a neoclassical city with grand façades, which lent decorum to the vibrant industrial city. In 1929 the state became the property developer and a different, but equally coherent cityscape began to take shape. A city with commercial architecture, on campuses alongside new motorways, glowing with the optimism of a welfare state in-the-making. Today the university builds, but which city is it building?

## **The university as urban actor**

### *What if – (1) playing the urban card*

The university is facing the same major transitions as the city.

It must phase out the use of fossil fuels, it must get its employees and students out of their cars, it must consume more sustainably and keep housing affordable.

What if the university played the urban card and saw those questions not as problems, but as opportunities? Opportunities to tap the accumulated value added of density, vicinity, merged functions and shared use of space.

### *What if – (2) shared space*

Historically-speaking, the university has followed suburbanization, but it has itself become urbanized in the process.

Student digs dominate neighbourhoods. University campuses have become functionally more diverse and will increasingly serve as urban public domain. What if the university looked more to the outside world and seriously set about developing its own locations as integral parts of the city?

### *What if – (3) the city academy as a co-laboratory*

For many people their student days are their first experience of urban citizenship. But does the university community really engage with the city? Within the university, thought is being given to major sustainability transitions. The city is being re-drawn to meet those new challenges. What if the city, university, researchers, students and citizens were to organize a long-term discussion on the subject and embrace the urban space as a shared laboratory?

# STAM

Registered publisher: Annelies Storms, AGB Erfgoed, Botermarkt 1, B-9000 Gent

Translation: Alison Mouthaan / Editing: Mia Verstraete

Graphic design: Dooreman & Dams



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drop me  
in the box  
as you  
leave