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Title:	Short notice/ Call for participation: <b>Collateral Councils – Collateral)e Raden - Conseils collatéraux of the Low Countries (1531-2031)</b>
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Abstract:	A collaborative workgroup aims to bring together scholars and researchers from the four countries that share a common past as the Habsburg Low Countries: the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg and (Northern/North-Eastern) France. The workgroup focuses on the 500 <sup>th</sup> anniversary of the so-called “Collateral Councils” in 2031. The multinational workgroup aims to stimulate and publish hitherto unpublished and novel research in a special issue in the Journal for Digital Legal History (Open Access, peer-reviewed, with ongoing publications).



Engelbert Maes, chairman of the Privy Council by Adriaan Waterloos (1622). Source Rijksarchief Amsterdam: <http://hdl.handle.net/10934/RM0001.COLLECT.57830> (CC BY)

Short notice/ Call for participation:  
**Collateral Councils – Collateral)e Raden - Conseils collatéraux  
of the Low Countries  
(1531-2031)**

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A collaborative workgroup aims to bring together scholars and researchers from the four countries that share a common past as the Habsburg Low Countries: the Netherlands, Belgium,

Luxembourg and (Northern/North-Eastern) France. The workgroup focuses on the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the so-called “Collateral Councils” in 2031.

The Emperor and King Charles V reorganised and reformed the political institutions of the Habsburg Low Countries in 1531. On the central level, this process gave birth to three specialized “Collateral Councils” meant to assist and advise the governor-general in governing the Habsburg Netherlands:

- a Council of State,
- a Privy Council, and
- a Council of Finances.

On a provincial level, there were also important institutional adaptations, for instance, in the Duchy of Luxembourg, where the Provincial Council was renovated the same year. The context of the reforms is well documented, as are the structure, composition, and evolving competences of the various Councils throughout the decades. Recent research has focussed on the ways early modern dynastic agglomerates or so-called “polycentric” monarchies worked, among others on the chronic tensions between centre and periphery. However, there is still a lot to say about the *power balances* within the Habsburg Low Countries and between the central government in Brussels and the various provincial authorities. The *institutional aspects* must not be neglected either, with the progressive separation of the Northern Provinces at the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century and the creation of two separate entities in the 17<sup>th</sup> century as a complex background. In the (Northern) Netherlands, the “Raad van State” subsisted (and still subsists) as “legitimate successor” to the “Collateral Councils”, while the competences of the “Geheime Raad” were absorbed by other institutions.<sup>1</sup> In the Southern Low Countries (today’s Belgium and Luxembourg), the Councils disappeared at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Their legacy and memory are strongly linked to the “Ancien Régime” but they have many layers and should be studied in depth. Exploring them can further knowledge about the modern and contemporary states that succeeded the Early Modern Habsburg Low Countries.

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<sup>1</sup> A Council of State also exists in Belgium, but this institution is a creation dating from the 20<sup>th</sup> century, so there is no continuity with the Ancien Régime.

### *Call for contributions*

The multinational workgroup aims to stimulate and publish hitherto unpublished and novel research in a special issue in the Journal for Digital Legal History (Open Access, peer-reviewed, with ongoing publications). Topics can cover, but are not limited to, the organisation and its functioning, throughout three centuries of conflict; “Give faces” to the Councils through special dedicated (short) contributions on those men that served in the councils; interesting finds in and/or overviews of entries of sources in institutions. Though the journal prefers links to digitised sources or digital methodology – it will accept (pending positive peer-review) publications on the topic without the digital component. Contributions could be as short as 1,000 words and as long as 10,000 words. Submissions go via: <https://openjournals.ugent.be/dlh/>. Student assignments are eligible for submission, pending positive peer review.

### *Call for participation:*

The workgroup currently consists of but a few enthusiastic members. However, to organise more to commemorate the 500 years anniversary we could much benefit from additional help. If you want to contribute in any kind of way and are interested in the topic, we warmly welcome your participation. Please contact any of the listed authors through their institutional e-mail addresses to learn more.