

# Beguinages: Flemish Invention in the Thirteenth Century. How Independent Life for Women became possible in the Middle Ages<sup>1</sup>?

Toshiko Kamijo

## I. Introduction

This paper discusses origins and function of the Flemish beguinage<sup>2</sup>. Among numerous beguinages existing in today's Belgium and Holland thirteen places have been registered to the World Heritage of UNESCO since 1998, and attracting tourists.

Beguinages or Begijnhof (plural Begijnhoven) in local language have existed since as early as the thirteenth century when religious fervor took place in Europe and the life as a beguine was a common choice for women in medieval cities.

As I have demonstrated in another paper<sup>3</sup>, originally they were

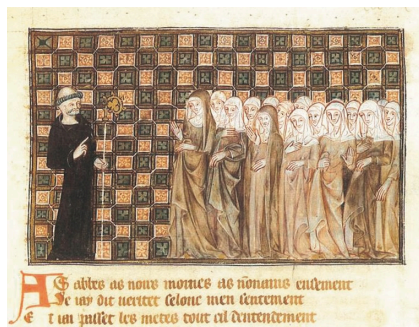


Fig 1. Beguines listening to a priest



ベルギーにおけるベギンホフの分布

言語境界の上半分つまり北側は、オランダ語方言のフラマン語が住民の言語であり、南側ではフランス語が住民の言語である。フラマン語を話すフラマン人とワロン人（フランス語を話し、主にベルギーの南半分とブラッセルに居住する）とは風俗、気質ともに異なることされる。

ベルギーのベギンホフは、フラマン語地域に多い。

Fig. 2 Spread of the beguinages in Belgium

living scattered in various place of the cities in twos or threes, but in the middle of the thirteenth century came to gather in special places exclusively occupied by women. This place was called a beguinage. What is remarkable about these women was that they intended to live independent life by manual labor and social services such as that in cloth industry as well as education and nursing<sup>4</sup>. The beguinages that housed these women existed in almost every city of today's Belgium, and what is remarkable about these places is that they survived until modern times. But how could this kind of community of gathering have lasted so long? I hope by answering this question we could deepen our understanding about European past and gender in history. But before addressing this question I would like to refer to my first impression of Belgium and the beguinages there.

It was in the summer of 1987 that I landed in Belgium for the first time in my life. I can still vividly recall the beautiful landscape alongside the way from Brussels to Leuven. The green color of the low hills well matched with that of the brick houses scattering here and there. I was impressed by the beauty of the landscape. Within two weeks of my landing, I had succeeded in visiting two famous beguinages in Belgium, one in Leuven<sup>5</sup>, and one in Bruges. I was surprised by their large size. Six hectares in case of the beguinage in Leuven! As a medievalist I had some knowledge about beguinages before visiting them, but I had never imagined they could be so large. It was only after arriving in Belgium that I learned that



Fig 3. Inner court of the Beguinage in Bruges

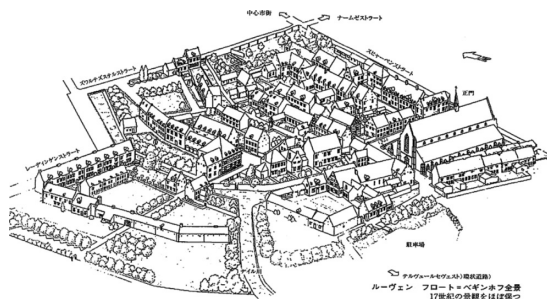


Fig 4. Bird's eye of the Groot Begijnhof Leuven (Big Beguinage)

the Flemish beguinage is often called a city within a city. This is in fact very apt designation. In Leuven's Groot Begijnhof (literally, Big Beguinage<sup>6</sup>) we find small streets running in different directions, green space with trees spreading, and even a river running through the quarter inside this city within a city<sup>7</sup>.

It is amazing that such a huge closed area has existed for hundreds of years without its presence being known until recently or without its purpose and meaning being precisely understood by foreigners. This is not because no foreigner has visited this place. On the contrary some of the beguinages, like that in Bruges, have been famous tourist spots for more than half a century. But most visitors have interpreted the meaning of beguinages as they like it, and therefore missed understanding the role they played in women's history.

For example, in the 1980s when I started my study of the history of beguinages, a famous Japanese scholar asserted that they are a kind of old people's home (養老院)<sup>8</sup>. Even today Wikipedia's Japanese version introduces beguinages as one of religious order (女子修道会), though religious order is highly an inappropriate designation for the community. Also, to call beguinages a religious order is misleading and reflects total ignorance of church law and trends in Christian culture in late medieval Europe, since the inhabitants of the

beguinages were not nuns. But this point might be too complicated to mention here<sup>9</sup>.

Although I do not wish to carry on an argument that the reader may find tedious, it is worthwhile to make a few more points to show what distinguishes a beguinage from a religious order. Firstly, beguinages developed into different institutions from nunneries, partly because they were free from regulations that restricted nunneries. Secondly, the inhabitants of the beguinages can best be defined as semi-religious persons who do not make solemn vow like nuns<sup>10</sup>. Thirdly, nuns never suffered condemnation as heretics unlike the beguines.

There may be other points that outline the differences between nunneries and beguinages, but instead of discussing this further, let us move on to a topic on which we can share recognition and interest more easily.

## II. Appearance of today's Beguinage and its Brief History

Most Japanese who have visited beguinage of Bruges might admit that it is so beautiful that they cannot resist taking pictures of it, yet do so without knowing who lived there or how and for what purpose such beautiful place was prepared. This type of place actually originated in the thirteenth century for the use of chaste women who were generally known as beguines. At first, these women were called by various names. For example when Pope Honorius III took them under his protection around 1216 he did not use the term “beguines<sup>11</sup>” to refer to the women. The term beguine first appeared around 1207 and it was only over the course of time that “beguine” became most popular term to denote a pious woman living in the city among lay people outside the nunnery. By the 1230s, many beguinages were constructed for these women in the Low Countries. This term “beguinage” comes from beguine, and is per-



Fig. 5 Bird's eye of the Beguinage in Bruges



Fig. 6 Entrance of the Beguinage in Bruges

haps equivalent to the Latin “beguinagium”. Its Flemish equivalent “begijnhof” literally means “beguine’s court”, whose equivalent in Japanese is perhaps 比丘尼御所 (bikhuni-gosyo)<sup>12</sup>. Compared to beguinages common in other parts of Europe, which sometimes



Fig. 7 Beguinage in Diest



Fig. 8 Beguinage in Diest



Fig. 9 Beguinage in Diest



Fig. 10 Beguinage in Diest



Fig. 11 Beguinage in Diest



Fig. 12 Beguinage in Diest



Fig. 13 & Fig. 14 Beguinage in Kortrijk



Fig. 15 Groot Begijnhof Leuven



Fig. 16 Groot Beijnhof Leuven



Fig. 17 Groot Begijnhof Leuven



Fig. 18 Groot Begijnhof Leuven



Fig. 19 Begijnhof in Dixmuide

consist of one house or even part of a house as was often the case in the Rhinland in Germany<sup>13</sup>, the feature of Flemish beguinages are that each of them is spacious and enclosed by a wall or moat with its own church and infirmary inside the wall. This was a device to prevent women from going out in the evening in order to go to church. It is worth mentioning here that going to a church other than parish church was a privilege in the Middle Ages. So it could



be said from religious point of view beguines were a privileged class.

### III. What a Beguinage meant for Unmarried Women: a Protected Area.

The calm and unique atmosphere of the beguinage is one of the features that attracted people. For unmarried women the beguinage was in fact an ideal place to live in, the atmosphere was peaceful, security checks were perfect. The gate was closed in the evening, and reopened in the morning. No male person was allowed to enter the area about after six o'clock in the evening. Not even a priest could spend night inside the beguinage in Leuven<sup>14</sup>. Undesirable person such as soldiers or strangers were checked at the gate<sup>15</sup>. Here, women could lead independent life without being much bothered by daily nuisance<sup>16</sup> or the dangers that unmarried women were likely to encounter in their life career, perhaps the most serious of these being sexual exploitation<sup>17</sup>.

But how did such independent and protected life become possible for women? Why did this type of beguinage spread and survive almost only in what is today' Belgium's Flemish area?



Fig. 20 Beginage in Antwerpen

#### IV. Thirteenth Century Flanders

The most common explanation for the origin of beguinages was that it was the solution to the problem of women who had been deserted by young men taking part in the Crusades. But considering the fact that the Crusades had begun in 1096, and the construction of beguinages in only the mid thirteenth Century, this is not sufficient explanation for the flourishing of the beguinage<sup>18</sup>.

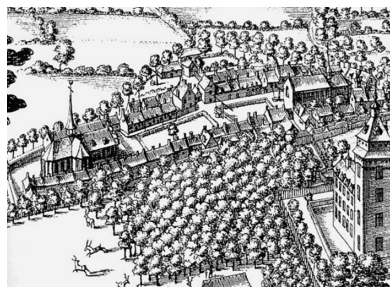
To know the background, it is necessary to have an understanding of the age during which most Flemish beguinages were founded<sup>19</sup>. Generally speaking, the Low Countries as well as Italy was the most urbanized area in Europe in the Middle Ages. At that time these area flourished due to the textile industry. In fact, the textiles produced in Flanders were famous for their quality, and were exported to other parts of Europe in those days<sup>20</sup>. This economic environment certainly have formed the basis of the development of spacious beguinages. There is no doubt that not a few women could support themselves rather easily by working for the textile industry in this region. On the other hand single women residing in the beguinage were indispensable work force for the city economy<sup>21</sup>.

There is another feature of Flemish beguinages to be explained, namely their structure as a complex of buildings. The existence of beguines was common phenomenon in the thirteenth century Europe from France and Switzerland in the south to Poland in the east. But the most spacious beguinages were to be founded mostly in what is the today's northern part of Belgium<sup>22</sup>. This phenomenon can be partly explained by the fact that two succeeding Countesses of Flanders, Margareta and Joanna, dominated Flanders in the thirteenth century and willingly protected beguines. They even helped construct spacious beguinages by generous donation in many parts of their territory and protected them<sup>23</sup>. The story goes that the Countesses noticed and felt it pity that the daughters of honorable



ベギンによるレース編み作品

Fig. 21 Lace work by beguines



1670年のトゥルンハウトのベギンホフ 城に隣接して設置されたことがわかる

Fig. 22 Beguinage in Turnhout next to a castle

people even that of nobles, who had no other choice to lead a dishonorable life and bear shame, just because they couldn't find appropriate marriage partner due to reasons such as their family condition, personal problems of potential partners, or they could not enter a nunnery<sup>24</sup>. In one word for the Countesses, the purpose of founding beguinages<sup>25</sup> was to save single women from a shameful life. Also, when the Vienne Council condemned certain kind of beguines, the House of Flanders, seemingly in corporation with the regional bishop, protected the inhabitants of the beguinage and thus enabled them to survive into the later Middle Ages.

The role played by the House of Flanders, especially by the succeeding two Countesses Johanna and Margarita, can thus be safely said to have been another key element for the success and survival of the regional beguinages<sup>26</sup>

As for the relationship between courteous culture and beguinages, we can cite the example of one beguinage that was constructed next to a castle<sup>27</sup>, namely that of Turnhout. The high quality of products produced by beguines also indicates they inherited the art of handicraft from courteous culture.

## V. Cultural Heritage

Encouraged by the successful Flemish models, beguinages spread rapidly to wider part of Europe. Even Paris had a beguinage in the thirteenth century. But life within the beguinage was rather different in Paris than in Ghent. In Paris beguines wore coats with fur. On the other hand in Ghent beguines owned very limited belongings and was busy earning their living with their own hands<sup>28</sup>. This did not necessarily mean that they were humble in their social origin, but that they were under training to live frugal and industrious life. Meanwhile in Paris, where the beguinage was introduced and protected by the king of France, who was impressed by the Flemish model, the idea of frugal living was not introduced from the beginning or else quickly forgotten.

This contrast demonstrates that the mental attitude is something very difficult to be imitated or to be imported compared to external features of the beguinages such as its being exclusive gathering place for unmarried females. In fact during the French Revolution when today's Belgium was occupied by the French Army, all the beguinages and nunneries were confiscated, and beguines were prohibited from wearing its habit. Yet after some years when political condition changed, Flemish beguinages were rehabilitated<sup>29</sup> though the number of their proper inhabitants decreased significantly thereafter.

Several years ago last beguine of traditional type in Kortrijk died and today there is no traditional beguine living in Belgium and younger generation in Belgium are not interested in becoming beguines, yet beguinages are still treated as something to be reserved and kept in memory by local people<sup>30</sup>.

## VI. Conclusion

I would like to conclude this paper by relating one episode from when I visited the beguinage in Amsterdam. I had had some difficulty in finding the place before I managed to enter inside the beguinage. Once inside, the woman with whom I tried to conduct an interview was at first very cautious and dubious about who I am, and for what purpose I visited there. It was only after I had introduced myself in Dutch and said I was a student of KUL<sup>31</sup> and interested in the history of beguines that her attitude changed dramatically. She looked very happy after hearing my introduction, and recommended me to buy a newly published Dutch book about beguinages.

The mental attitude which cherished beguine life<sup>32</sup> is hard to explain in English or Japanese, just because each language represents its culture and values<sup>33</sup>.

Still so far we could recognize several factors that enabled women's community to last more than 750 years. To summarize these, socioeconomic factor was certainly important to the development and prosperity of the Flemish beguinages. But life as a beguine and beguinages had some value beyond economical need to local people. The beguinage protected young women and trained them so that they can lead honorable life. Also the lifestyle of beguines was the embodiment of an ideal Christian life for citizens, as a thirteenth century famous priest put it, "They are burden to nobody. Their lifestyle is next to Heaven<sup>34</sup>," and they were "superior to the cloistered by their activity of charity" even though they live amid lusty secular people with secular habit, as if they were hermits in the midst of noise<sup>35</sup>. Even today their contributions to the fields of education and nursing are commemorated by local people.

The success of Flemish beguinages is not something that can be explained by a single factor such as the Crusades, but both the problem of gender throughout history<sup>36</sup> as well as the notion of an

ideal Christian life in the later Middle Ages have been factors deeply entrenched in the success of the beguinage in Belgium<sup>37</sup>.

[注]

- <sup>1</sup> This paper is based on the presentation given at the BJAS (Belgium Japan Association) meeting held at the Embassy of Belgium on the 31st of July, 2012.
- <sup>2</sup> For the location of beguinages in today's Belgium see 上條敏子『ベギン運動の展開とベギンホフの形成』(刀水書房, 2001) (Toshiko Kami-jo, *The development of the beguine movement and the formation of the beguinages*, Tousui, 2001) p. 103. For economic and charitable activity of beguines see 上條敏子「中世における女性の経済活動と社会的貢献に関する覚書」『史学』(Toshiko Kami-jo, 'Women's economic activity and social contribution in the Middle Ages', *Shigaku*) 79 (2010) pp. 401-419.
- <sup>3</sup> See 上條敏子「単身女性の住まい方——中世北西ヨーロッパにおけるベギンの居住及び組織形態」赤阪俊一, 柳谷慶子編著『ジェンダー史叢書 第8巻 生活と福祉』(明石書店, 2010年) (Toshiko KAMIJO, 'Life styles of single women, with special emphasis on medieval North-western Europe', Shunichi Akasaka, Keiko Yanagiya ed, *Seikatsu to fukushi, A Series on Gender History*, vol 8, Akashi, 2010), pp. 193-229.
- <sup>4</sup> See 上條敏子「単身女性の住まい方」esp. pp. 200-204, pp. 217-220. Poverty was common religious motif in thirteenth century Europe, and early beguines seemingly followed that ideal. About the poverty of beguines see 上條敏子『ベギン運動の展開とベギンホフの形成』, pp. 20-21, 同「単身女性の住まい方」pp. 197-204.
- <sup>5</sup> About Big Beguinage (in Dutch Groot Begijnhof) of Leuven see Olyslager, W. A., *Het Groot Begijnhof van Leuven*, Leuven, 1978, 上條敏子, 『ベギン運動の展開とベギンホフの形成——単身女性の西欧中世』(刀水書房, 2001年), esp. pp. 107-202, p. 220, pp. 288-292, pp. 294-295, pp. 301-303.
- <sup>6</sup> There are two beguinages in Leuven, bigger one is called Groot Begijnhof and smaller one is called Klein Begijnhof.
- <sup>7</sup> For plan of Groot Begijnhof Leuven see 上條敏子『ベギン運動の展開とベギンホフの形成——単身女性の西欧中世』, p. 133.

- <sup>8</sup> The reason Japanese scholars believed that beguinages are only for elderly is apparent. At least from the Seventeenth century on and if we believe legend from the Middle Ages Flemish Beguinages functioned as reserves of maidens who were desired as preferable marriage partner by upper and middle classes, as they were believed sexually innocent. For very reason of this Japanese scholars, who were male stranger to the local people, were prohibited from learning what it was because there still lived beguines within beguinages until late 20<sup>th</sup> century. On the contrary as I was a young female when I visited Belgium in the 1980s, my tutor asked me if I was a virgin and told me to be cautious saying that beguines were socially sanctioned if she quits beguinage and returns to the world as was the case with nuns who returned to the world, even though the no written rules prohibited beguines from quitting the community in order to get married.
- <sup>9</sup> Main difference in terms of religious obligation between beguines and nuns was related to vow. While nuns are bounded by solemn vow consists of obedience, poverty, and chastity which was for life, vow of beguines contained only chastity and was effective only while they live in beguinages. Also strict enclosure limited activities and life of nuns while it was not the case for beguines.
- <sup>10</sup> About various trends in monasticism and the apparition of beginism in the thirteenth century see 上條敏子『ベギン運動の展開とベギンホフの形成』, p. 11, pp. 22-23, p. 34, pp. 237-274. About atmosphere at the beginning of the thirteenth century when first beguines appeared see 上條敏子『ベギン運動の展開とベギンホフの形成』 pp. 32-34. Hygens, *Lettres de Jacques de Vitry*, 1960., p. 74 no. 1. For Japanese translation of this source see 上條敏子『ベギン運動の展開とベギンホフの形成』, p. 294.
- <sup>11</sup> Hygens, *Lettres de Jacques de Vitry*, 1960., p. 74 no. 1. For Japanese translation of this source see 上條敏子『ベギン運動の展開とベギンホフの形成』, p. 294.
- <sup>12</sup> About 比丘尼御所 (bikuni-gosyo) see 荒川玲子「最慶寺の沿革——尼五山研究の一齣——」『書陵部紀要』28号, 1977年 (Reiko Arakawa, 'Saikeiji no enkaku — Amagozan kennkyu no hitokoma', *Bulletin:*

*study on the Japanese culture in relation to the Imperial Family and Court*, vol 28, 1977), 湯之上隆「足利氏の女性たちと比丘尼御所」・「遠江国浅羽荘と比丘尼御所」(同著『日本中世の政治権力と仏教』思文閣出版, 2001年)(Takashi, Yunoue, 'Ashikagashi no joseitachi to bikunigoshō', 'Tominokuni Asabanoshō to Bikunigoshō', Id. *Nihon chusei no seijikenryoku to bukkyō*, Shibunkakusyuppan, 2001), 中井真孝「崇光院流と入江殿」(『日本宗教社会史論叢』図書刊行会, 1982年) Shinko Nakai, 'Sutokuinryū to Iriedono', "*Nihon shukyo shakaishi ronso*, Toshokankokai, 1982), 加藤知恵子「室町時代比丘尼御所入室と室町殿免許について — 伏見宮家姫宮と入室尼寺をめぐる」『史学』(Chieko Kato, 'Muromachijidai bikunigoshō nyushitsu to Muromachidono mennkyō ni tsuite — Fushiminomiyake himemiya to nyushitsu amadera wo megutte', *Shigaku*, 73 (2005年) pp. 371-396, 大石雅章「比丘尼御所と室町幕府 — 尼五山通玄寺を中心にして」『日本史研究』(Masaki Ooishi, 'Bikunigoshō to Muromachibakufu — Amagōzan Tugenji wo chushin nishite, *Nihonshi kenkyū*) 335 (1990), pp. 1-28 再録『日本女性史論集 5 女性と宗教』(吉川弘文館, 1998年) (Reprinted in *Nihonjoseishi ronshū 5 josei to shukyo*, Yoshikawakobunkan, 1998, 同『日本中世社会と寺院』(清文堂出版, 2004年) (Id., *Nihonchusei-shakai to jūin*, Seibundō syuppan, 2004, 菅原正子「中世後期の比丘尼御所: 大慈院の生活と経営」『学習院女子大学紀要』(Masako Sugawara, 'Chuseikōki no Bikunigoshō: Daijūin no seikatsu to keiei', *Bulletin of Gakushuin Women's College*) 6号 (2004年) pp. 37-54, パトリシア・フィスター「比丘尼御所文化とお伽草子 — 二人の近世皇女の信仰と文化活動」『<江戸>の人と身分 4』(吉川弘文館, 2010年) (Patricia Fister, 'Bikunigoshobunka to otogizoshi — futari no kinsei kojo no shinko to otogizoshi', 伊藤慎吾著「比丘尼御所文化とお伽草子 — 恋塚物語をめぐる」(徳田和夫編『お伽草子百花繚乱』笠間書店, 2008年) (Shingo Ito, 'Bikunigoshobunka to otogizoshi — Koizukamonogatari wo megutte', "Kazuo Tokuda ed., *Otogizoshi hyakkaryōran*, Kasamashoten, 2008.), 榎原雅治「南朝系比丘尼御所保安寺について — 世良親王の遺領に関する一考察」(Masaharu Makihara, 'Nanchokei bikunigoshō Hoanji nitsuite — Yoyoshi shinno no iryo ni kansuru ichikosatsu'), 木原弘美「天王寺妙厳院比丘尼御所 — 中世大阪の寺院史についての試み」『史窓』(Hiromi Kihara, 'Tennoji myogenin bikunigoshō —



chusei Osaka no jinnshi ni tsuiteno kokoromi' *Kyoto Women's University journal of historical studies*) 第 58 卷 (2001 年) pp. 233-242, 岡佳子「近世の比丘尼御所(上)宝鏡寺を中心に」『仏教史学研究』(Yoshiko Oka, 'Kinsei no bikunigosho (jo) Hokyoji wo chushinni', *Bukkyoshigaku kenkyu*) 42 (2000 年) pp. 30-60, 同「近世の比丘尼御所(下)宝鏡寺を中心に」『仏教史学研究』(Id., 'Kinsei no bikunigosho (ge) Hokyoji wo chushinni', *Bukkyoshi kenkyu*) 44 (2002 年) pp. 1-40. Japanese word Bikunigosho (比丘尼御所) can best be translated into English as "court of women religious in Buddhism." Generally saying the term Bikunigosho (比丘尼御所) was deserved for the temple which accepted daughter of imperial family, or of the family nearly equivalent in dignity, such as 将軍家 (Shogun-ke) or 摂関家 (Sekkan-ke).

<sup>13</sup> Philips, D., *Beguines in medieval Strasbourg, A study of the Social Aspect of Beguines Life*, 1941; Asen, J., *Die Beginen in Köln.*: 111 (1927), pp. 81-180; 112 (1928) pp. 71-148; 113 (1928), pp. 13-96.

<sup>14</sup> For example the house of the priest of the Groot Begijnhof Leuven was outside of the Beguinage though it was nearby the beguinage.

<sup>15</sup> Olyslager. W. A., *Het Groot Begijnhof van Leuven*, 1978, pp. 55-56. About the life within the beguinage in general see 上條敏子『ベギン運動の展開とベギンホフの形成』pp. 123-201.

<sup>16</sup> For example of minor nuisance such as harassment from student see Olyslager, W. A., *The Groot Begijnhof of Leuven*, n.d., p. 118.

<sup>17</sup> For examples of sexual exploitation of working women in premodern and modern Japan and counteraction against it by women see 上條敏子「単身女性の住まい方」p. 229. n. 26.

<sup>18</sup> Basic work about beguines and their male counterpart beghards remains McDonnell, E., *Beguines and Beghards in Medieval Culture; with special emphasis on Belgian Scene*, 1954. Also important are Greven, J., *Die Anfänge der Beginen. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Ordenswesens im Hochmittelalters*, Münster, 1912.; Nimal, H., *Les béguinages, Origines, développement, organisation intérieure, influence, Annales de la Societe archéologique de l'arrondissement de Nivelles IX*, Nivelles, 1908; Philippen, L. J. M., *Begijnhoven: Oorsprong, Geschiedenis, Inrichting, Antwerpen*, 1918; Mens, A., *Oorsprong en de*

*betekenis van de nederlandse Begijnen en Begardenwesen*, Bruxelles/Antwerpen, 1947; Grundmann, H., *Religiöse Bewegungen im Mittelalter*, Darmstad, 1961; Grundmann, H., Zur Geschichte der Beginen im 13. Jahrhundert, *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte*, Band 21, Leipzig, Berlin, 1931; Freed, J. B., Urban Development and the “Cura Monialium” in the Thirteenth Century Germany, *Viator* 3 (1972); Stein, F. M., *The Religious Women of Cologne: 1120-1320*, Ann Arbor, 1977; Simons, W., *Cities of Ladies: Beguine Communities in the Medieval Low Countries*, 2003; 上條敏子『ベギン運動の展開とベギンホフの形成』(刀水書房, 2001年); 同「単身女性の住まい方」『ジェンダー史叢書第8巻生活と福祉』(明石書店, 2010年) pp. 193-230.

<sup>19</sup> For foundation date of beguinages in the medieval Low Countries see Simons, W., *Cities of Ladies: Beguine Communities in the Medieval Low Countries*, 2001, p. 49 Table 1. As is indicated in the table, of Seventy-seven Court Beguinages sixty were founded before 1270.

<sup>20</sup> Ennen, E., *The medieval town*, tr. N. Fryde, New York, 1979, pp. 153-156, Döllinger, P., *Relations directs entre Strasbourg et le villes hansatiques*, 1975, pp. 160-161, 上條敏子『ベギン運動の展開とベギンホフの形成』p. 268, Simons W., *City of Ladies*, p. 4. Ghent was the second largest city of Europe north of Alps, after Paris around 1356-1358. Bruges had a populatltion of 46,000 in 1338-1340, comparable to London. The population of Arras, Lille, Douai, Saint-Omer, Tournai, Ypres, Valennciennes, and Mons probably reached between 20,000 and 40,000. Antwerp's population grew from 15,000 in 1437 to 55,000 in 1526 and 100,000 in 1437. Other major cities in the Low Countries include Louvain, s'hertogenbosch, Mechelen, Liege. Simons, W., op. cit., ibid. For general population size of medieval city see 上條敏子「ベギン運動の理解における聖俗二分法の限界」『一橋論叢』(‘Beginn undo no rikai ni okeru seizoku nibunnho no genkai’, *The Hitotsubashi Review*) 111 (1994) pp. 133-151.

<sup>21</sup> See Simons, W., *City of Ladies*. He emphasizes the role of women as cheep labor in such industry as textile.

<sup>22</sup> According to Simons, W., remarkable features of the southern Low Countries in the middle ages are threshold: multilingualism of the

inhabitants, high level of urbanisation, and high level of literacy not only among men but also among women. See Simons, W., *Cities of Ladies*, pp. 1-7. He also features the marriage pattern of the region as below, “Families in this region, with few exceptions, belonged to what is usually called northern or north western European type. These households were headed by the nuclear couple of husband and wife, both of whom had entered marriage rather late, at about twenty-five years of age, and were more or less of equal age. The couple married when financial independence from their parents enabled them to set up a separate household”. Id. op. cit., p. 7. See also Martha C. Howell, *Women, Production, and Patriarchy in Late Medieval Cities* (Chicago, 1986); and idem, *The Marriage Exchange*, Greilsammer, *l'envers du tableau: Marriage et maternité en Flanders medieval*, (Paris 1990); Eric Bousmar, “Du marche aux bordiaux. Hommes, femmes et rapports de sexe (gender) dans les villes des Pays-Bas aux bas moyen age. Etat de nos connaissances et perspectives de recherche” in Myriam Carlier et al., eds., *Hart en marge in de laat-middeleeuwse stedelijke maatschappij* (Louvain and Apeldoorn, 1997), pp. 51-70. Such marriage pattern must have encouraged the life in beguinage while young.

<sup>23</sup> Tough modern scholar often asserts that Dominicans took initiative in founding Flemish beguinages, the legend among the beguines in Gent goes that successive Countesses of Flanders noticed the difficult situation of unmarried women and by inspiration through the God invented the institution of beguinages. Also one of the oldest beguinages, namely that of Louvain, was connected to Cistercians in early days. For the case of Louvain see 上條敏子 『ベギン運動の展開とベギンホフの形成』, p. 123-4.

<sup>24</sup> Béthune, J., *Carturaire de Sainte-Elisabeth à Gand*, 1883, pp. 74ff. For Japanese translation of the carturaire 上條敏子 『ベギン運動の展開とベギンホフの形成』 pp. 296-297.

<sup>25</sup> Generally speaking the rent of the house in beguinages was reasonable and if not expelled contract was for life. Also the beguines living in beguinages were titled to various privileges which included exemption from certain taxes and regulation by Zünft. See Stefens,

A., *De social-economique betekenis der begijnhoven, Steden en Landschappen* 7 (1931), pp. 27-33; 上條敏子 「中世における女性の経済活動および社会的貢献に関する覚書 — 北西ヨーロッパのベギンを中心に」 『史学』 79 (2010), pp. 401-419, esp. pp. 63-66. For other privileged status of beguines including papal protection or attending mass at a church of their choice in the event of three most important festival day in Christian calendar see 『ベギン運動の展開とベギンホフの形成』, pp. 63-64.

<sup>26</sup> In other parts of Europe such as east of Germany powerful priest such as bishop was apparently hostile to popular religious movement in the thirteenth century. See Grundmann, H., *Religiöse Bewegungen im Mittelalter*, Darmstad, 1961, pp. 334-336.

<sup>27</sup> For a beguinage which was located next to a castle see 上條敏子 『ベギン運動の展開とベギンホフの形成』 The connection between court culture and beguinage has not been pointed so far. Since Bücher spreaded the idea beguinages were a kind of house for poor it was generally believed that social origin of the beguines were low. This view was challenged by Grundmann. Recently Simons pointed out that social origin of the beguines were contagious and only part of the beguines were poor.

<sup>28</sup> About the life within the beguinage of Gent see Béthune, op. cit., *ibid.*; 上條敏子 『ベギン運動の展開とベギンホフの形成』 pp. 295-296.

<sup>29</sup> see 上條敏子 『ベギン運動の展開とベギンホフの形成』 pp. 203-236.

<sup>30</sup> see 上條敏子 『ベギン運動の展開とベギンホフの形成』 pp. 3-5. For the Japanese translation of the newspaper article concerning the death of the last beguine in Louvain titled “De laatste begijntje in Leuven overleden” see 上條敏子 『ベギン運動の展開とベギンホフの形成』 pp. 291-292.

<sup>31</sup> KUL stands for Katholieke Universiteit Leuven.

<sup>32</sup> The symbolical core of beguine life is life as a bride of Christ as is indicated in the initiation ceremony in which a woman receives veil which symbolizes the bride.

<sup>33</sup> One Flemish scholar explains poverty as the state of mind saying “What matters was absence of a desire to own temporal goods. The ideal of apostolic poverty might therefore be realized, with some

restrictions, as a state of mind rather than as a fact of life.” Simons, W., *Cities of Ladies*, p. 14. Example of other related notion to the beguinage and ideal woman in Flandre, are “schon” (beautiful but also clean and pure), and “stout” (stable and strong).

<sup>34</sup> R. W., サザーン著, 上條敏子訳 『西欧中世の社会と教会 — 教会史から中世を読む』 (R. W., Southern, Toshiko Kamijo trs, *Western Society and the Church in the Middle Ages*, Yasakashobo, 2007), 370 頁.

<sup>35</sup> ‘Licet enim huiusmodi mulieres, quales in dyocesi Leodiensi plurimas esse nivismus, in habitu seculari secularibus cohabitant, luti tamen calustralibus caritate superior sunt: inter luxuriosos celibes, in medio turarum vitam ducunt heremiticam’ cited from McDonnell, E. W., op. cit., p. 529.

<sup>36</sup> see 上條敏子 「単身女性の住まい方 — 中世北西ヨーロッパにおけるベギンの居住及び組織形態」 passim.

<sup>37</sup> About the transition of notion concerning ideal Christian life in the later Middle Ages see Southern, R. W., *Western Church and Society in the Middle Ages*, 1970, ch. 6 and ch. 7 (邦訳 R. W., サザーン 『西欧中世の社会と教会 — 教会史から西欧中世を読む』 八坂書房, 2007 年), pp. 243-414, esp. p. 413-414.

\* The full-color version of this paper will be available on the website of the Institute for Christian Culture Fuji Women’s University, after April, 2015.

\* カラー版は藤女子大学キリスト教文化研究所の HP 上にて 2015 年 4 月より公開予定。