

COUDENBERG PALACE BRUSSELS

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From Medieval Castle to Archaeological Site

SCIENTIFIC DIRECTION:

Vincent Heymans

COORDINATION:

Laetitia Cnockaert and Frédérique Honoré

AUTHORS:

P. Anagnostopoulos, A. Buyle, P. Charruadas, L. Cnockaert, M. de Waha,
S. Demeter, Y. Devos, C. Dickstein-Bernard, A. Dierkens, M. Fourny,
C. Gaier, M. Galand, D. Guillardian, S. Guri, V. Heymans, J. Houssiau, J.-P. Huys,
C. Loir, P. Lombaerde, M. Meganck, S. Modrie, C. Paredes, P. Sosnowska,
S. van Sprang, B. Vannieuwenhuyze, A. Vanrie



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Authors: Pierre Anagnostopoulos, Anne Buyle, Paulo Charruadas, Laetitia Cnockaert, Michel de Waha, Stéphane Demeter, Yannick Devos, Claire Dickstein-Bernard, Alain Dierkens, Michel Fourny, Claude Gaier, Michèle Galand, David Guillardian, Shipé Guri, Vincent Heymans, Jean Houssiau, Jean-Philippe Huys, Christophe Loir, Piet Lombaerde, Marc Meganck, Sylvianne Modrie, Cecilia Paredes, Philippe Sosnowska, Sabine van Sprang, Bram Vannieuwenhuyze, André Vanrie

Their titles and institutions are given at the end of the book

Scientific committee: Vincent Heymans (President), Pierre-Paul Bonenfant †, Marcel Celis, Stéphane Demeter, Alain Dierkens, Michel Fourny, Sylvianne Modrie, Anne Vandenbulcke, André Vanrie

The scientific committee very much regrets that one of its members passed away during preparation of the work: Professor Pierre-Paul Bonenfant, President of the Société royale d'Archéologie de Bruxelles, who was involved in this enterprise from the beginning. His death deprived the editorial team of his contribution to the chapters relating to the archaeological excavations

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Translation: Gitracom (Veronica Kelly, Charles Lucas, Laura Williams), Miles Translation, Áine Pedersen

Proofreading: Kathie Berger, Áine Pedersen

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Cover page: Cellar of the former palace main building, as seen at the Goudenberg archaeological site. Photo M. Vanhulst (2009) / *Curia Brabantiae, in celebri et populosa Urbe Bruxellis*, engraving by Claes Jansz. Visscher from a drawing by Jean Van de Velde, 17th century / Red earthenware jug, 17th century.

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FROM THE COUDENBERG PALACE TO THE ROYAL QUARTER

Michèle GALAND

Since my arrival in this country it has always pained me to see the afflicting spectacle afforded by the tumble-down walls of the palace which served in other days as the residence of the sovereign princes of the Low Countries, and which was reduced to ashes in 1731.¹

RECONSTRUCTION PLANS FOR THE PALACE

For every observer studying the history of the palace on the Coudenberg, destroyed by the disastrous fire of 3 February 1731, one crucial question arises: why did more than forty years have to go by before a solution emerged and a new use was finally found for the abandoned area? To answer this question we need to examine the chronology of events and review the plans that were drawn up in the intervening period.

The blaze struck with devastating effect on 3 February, leaving the palace in a sorry state and forcing its occupants – including the governess-general, Archduchess Maria Elisabeth – to seek refuge elsewhere.² The archduchess moved into the Orange-Nassau palace, close by, in the upper part of the city. Only the chapel survived the catastrophe. It would again be used for religious services, and would continue to be maintained until it was decided, in 1774, to demolish it in order to build the Royal Quarter.

Very soon, meetings were held to seek a solution and restore the Brussels palace. The Viennese authorities were kept informed of the content of the discussions.³ The main obstacle was financial as – at a time when the public finances were in such pitiful condition that government employees were not paid regularly – the government was unable to disburse large sums. In May 1731 the rebuilding project was discussed in the Council of State, in the presence of the governess-general. Opinion was divided as to what funds should be employed, but in the end it was decided to approach the States of Brabant. Maria Elisabeth wrote to them on 16 June 1731. In their reply, dated 11 October, they proposed finding extraordinary resources for the reconstruction: 500,000 florins could be allocated to it, taken from the loan given by the States to reimburse the

Dutch. And the States also asked to be allowed to organise lotteries in the Austrian Netherlands. As this would take time, it would be advisable to find other, quicker means to rebuild the Brussels palace. Unfortunately, however, it was not a good time for expenditure on ceremonial.

Nevertheless, the plan to rebuild the palace was not abandoned, as can be seen from the different designs preserved in Brussels and in Vienna: the architectural plans drawn up by Royet, by Hano-teau and by the court architect, Anneessens, are all evidence of this intention of the government.⁴ But the pace was very slow, because the Brussels government alone could not possibly support such expenditure, and it needed time to negotiate with the country's wealthy abbeys. Then, too, the years that followed were marked by the start of a Europe-wide conflict, which meant that all dreams of beautifying Brussels were postponed: the War of the Austrian Succession (1740-1748) broke out and soon involved the Netherlands, which were occupied by France from 1745 to 1748.

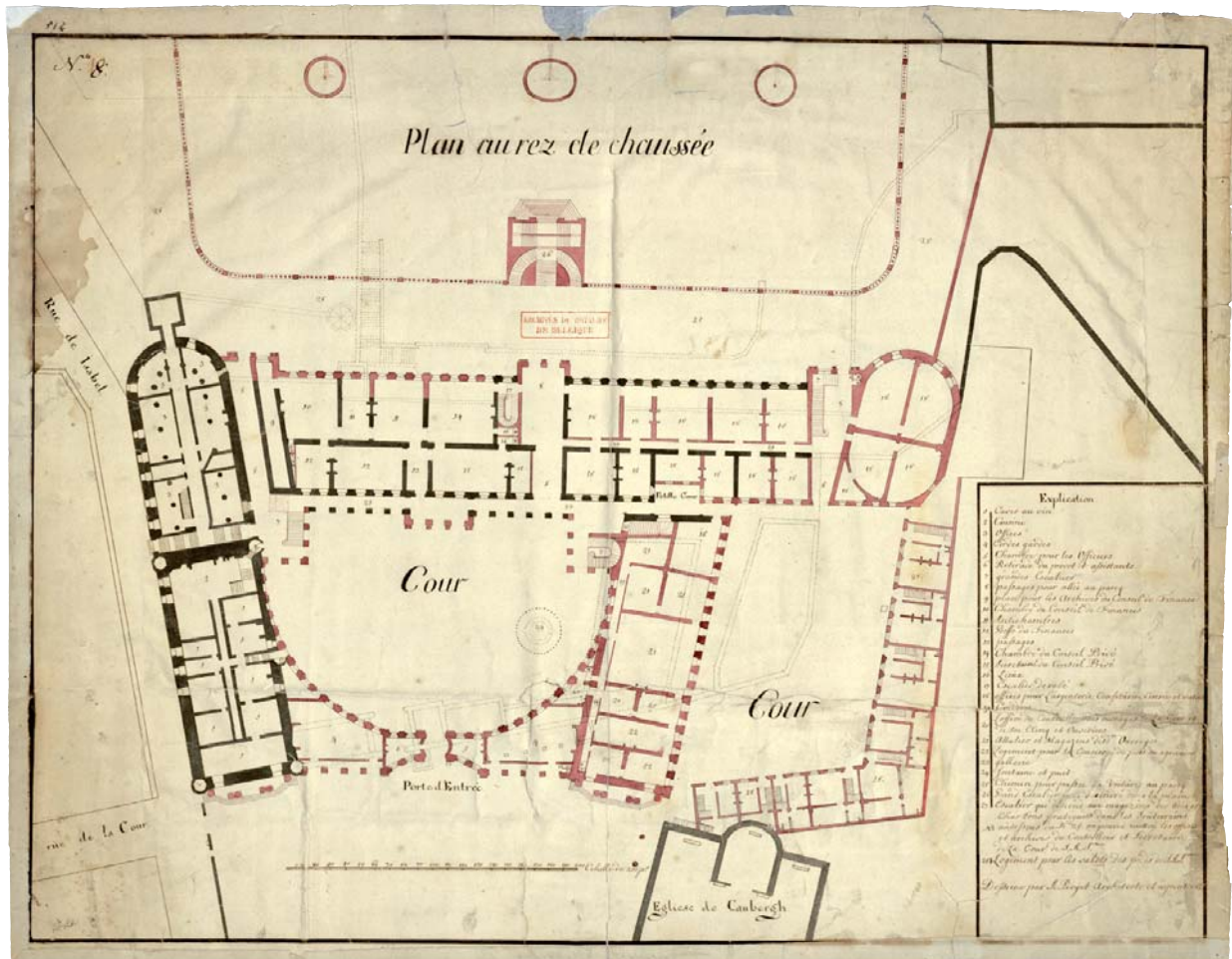
Once the Austrian regime returned in 1748, the government of Brussels was governed by the brother-in-law of Empress Maria Theresa, Prince Charles Alexander of Lorraine, who had only been able to stay a few weeks in Brussels in 1744. Like Archduchess Maria Elisabeth, he lived in the Nassau palace. In 1751 he recounted to the Viennese authorities his lack of success in involving the States in paying for the rebuilding of the Brussels palace. The States had apologised for their inability to contribute, and had asked for the issue to be postponed to a better time. Since it still did not seem possible to restore the palace, Duke Silva Tarouca, the president of the Supreme Council in Vienna, merely made an oral report of the situation, and the issue remained in abeyance.⁵ A document preserved in the Chamber

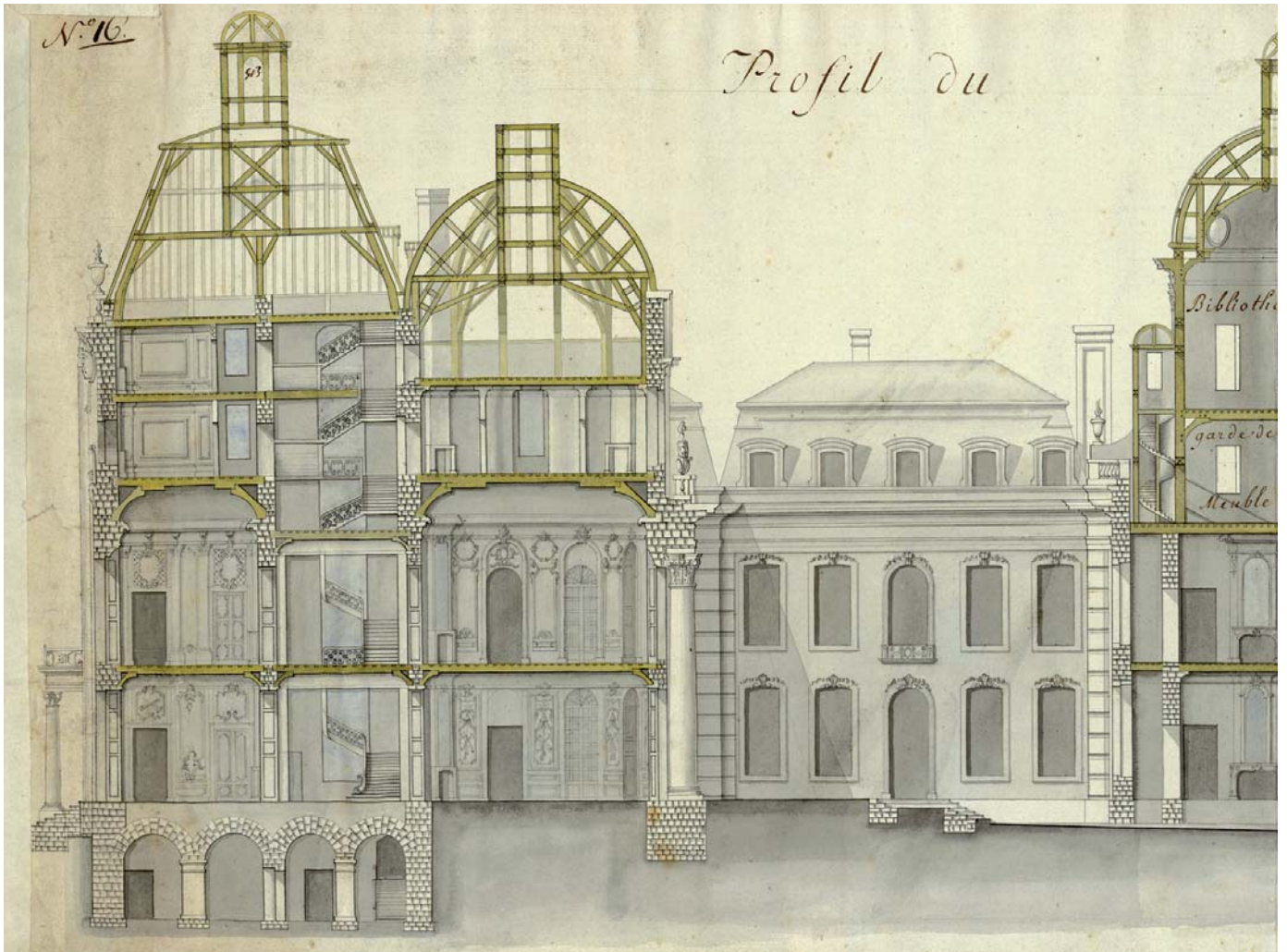
⇨ Anonymous plan for a palace on the Coudenberg, 1751.



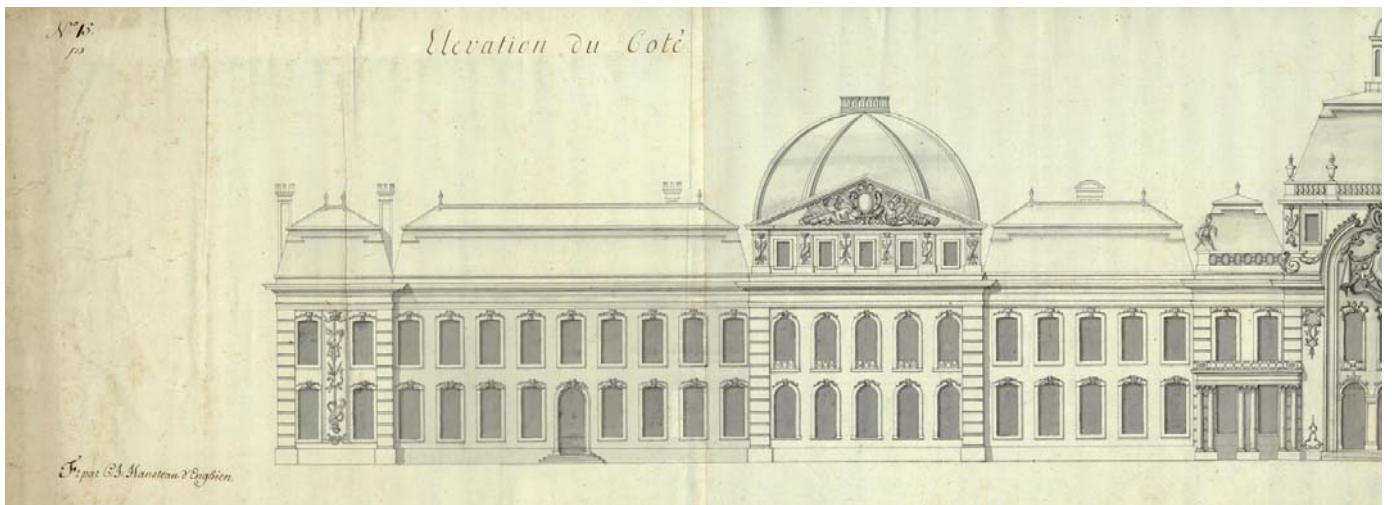
⇨ Anonymous, undated view of the "Burnt Court". The Aula Magna can be seen on the left, with the monumental steps leading up to it.

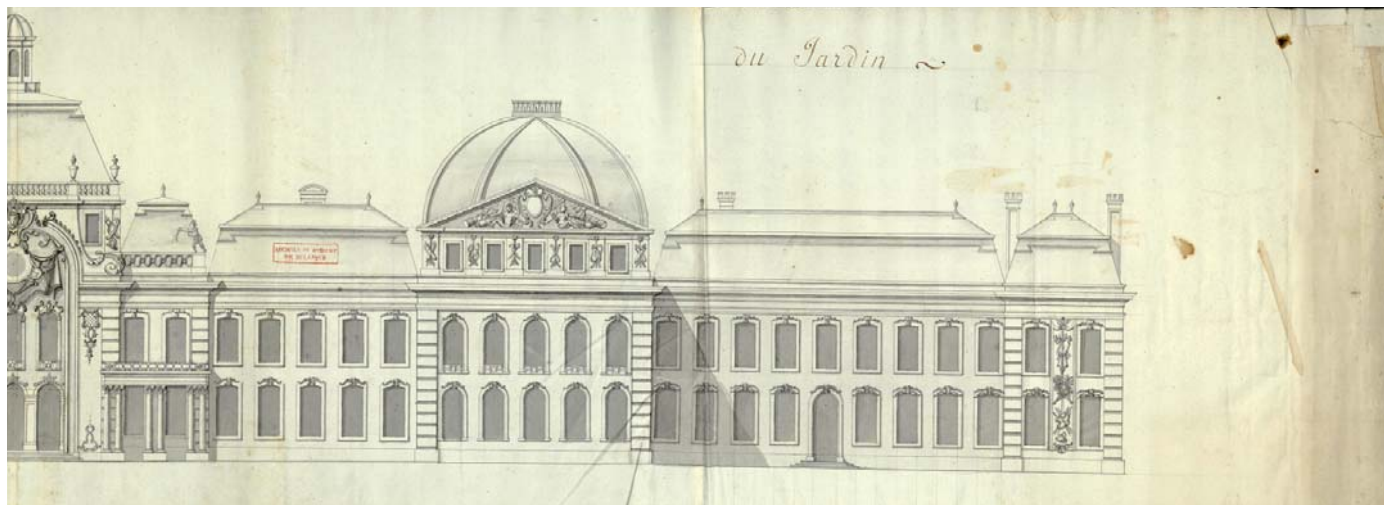
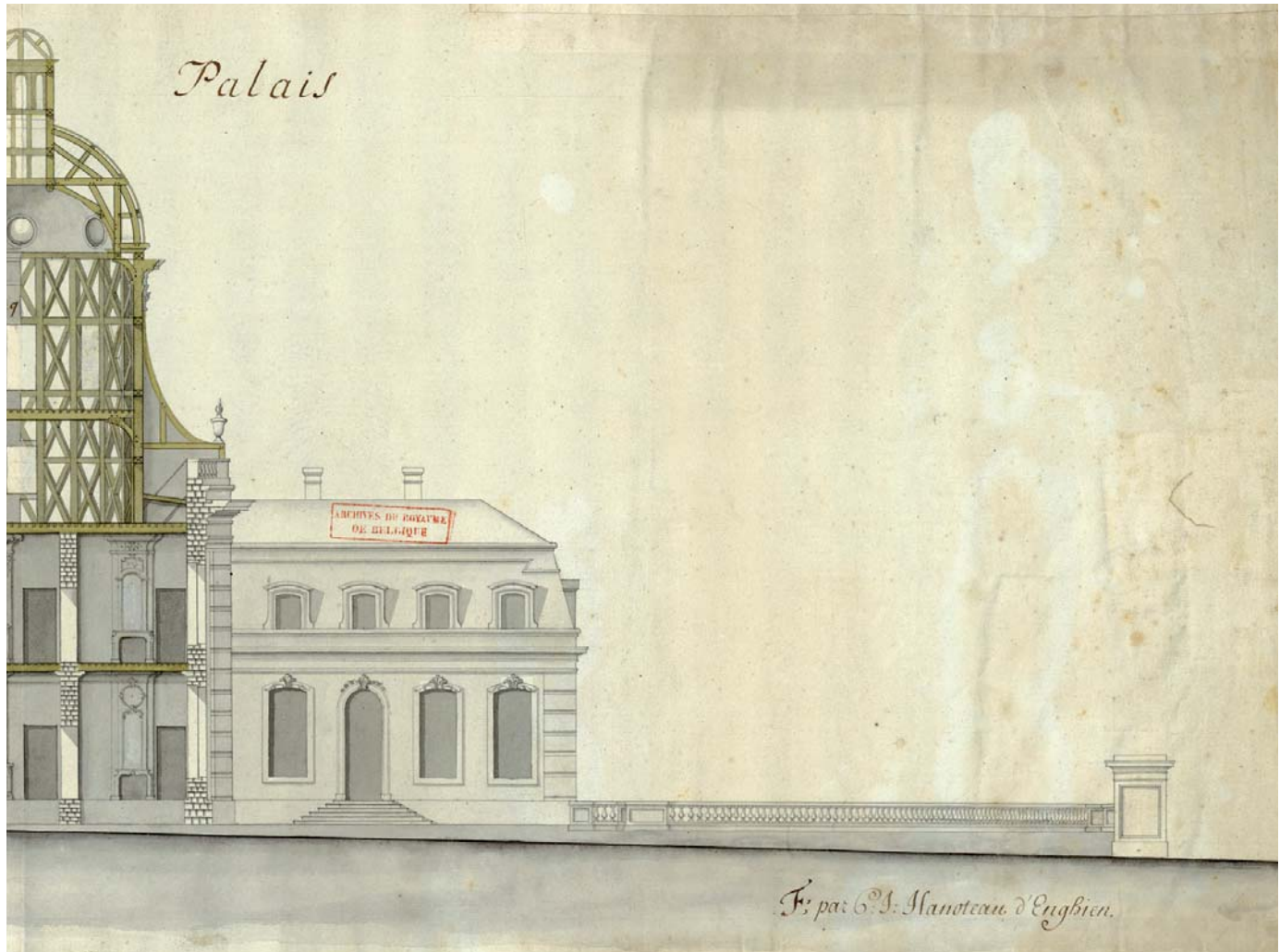
⇩ A. Royet, reconstruction plan for the Burnt Court, mid-18th century.





C. J. Hanoteau d'Enghein, reconstruction plan for the Burnt Court, mid-18th century.





of Accounts, probably drafted at the same period, highlights the well-developed project to persuade the abbeyes, the nobles, government officials and the military to contribute to the restoration of the palace in Brussels so as *not to leave the royal residence any longer buried beneath its ruins and hovels for foreigners to gaze at and be scandalised by*.⁶

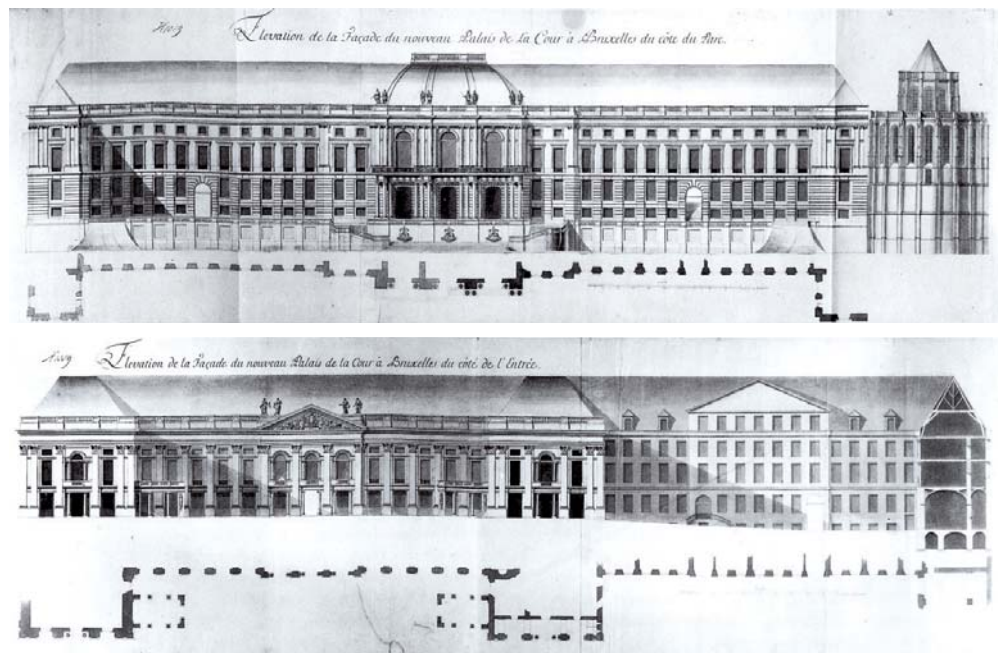
The diplomatic situation was actually very unstable at the time, and in 1755 a new international war loomed. In Brussels, the threat of invasion by French troops forced even the government to prepare to leave the Netherlands.⁷ Hope returned only with the signing of the 1st Treaty of Versailles, on 1 May 1756, sealing the reversal of the alliances: France and Austria were now reconciled, which released the Brussels authorities from the anguish of the previous weeks.⁸ Thanks to this diplomatic revolution, the Austrian Netherlands would be spared the Seven Years' War, declared soon after that. Unlike Austria and the German hereditary lands they would enjoy a lengthy period of peace leading to economic prosperity. During the conflict, however, the "Belgium provinces" ("*provinces belgiques*") were pressingly solicited, and they supported the Hapsburg monarchy's war effort by granting subsidies and free gifts.⁹

THE PURCHASE AND RENOVATION OF THE FORMER ORANGE-NASSAU HOUSE

A few days after the new alliance was announced, on 18 June 1756, Charles of Lorraine purchased the Nassau palace, which he had been renting since 1744, from the dowager princess of Orange.¹⁰ This purchase was to result in far-reaching changes to the subsequent plans for the burnt-out Court, as the prince had now chosen his new residence and would spend large sums of money on renovating it.¹¹ This decision merely set the seal on the *de facto* situation: since the fire, court and government were no longer contained within the same walls.

PLANS FOR A BUILDING TO HOUSE THE MAIN GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS

Events and the need to provide for the preservation of the state papers prompted the Brussels authorities to remind Vienna of the need to establish a new administrative building in Brussels. The fact was that the Tour des Chartes, which housed the Chamber of Accounts and its precious archives, was in danger of collapsing, despite repairs made after the earthquake damage it had suffered in 1761, so that there was no choice but to demolish it.¹²



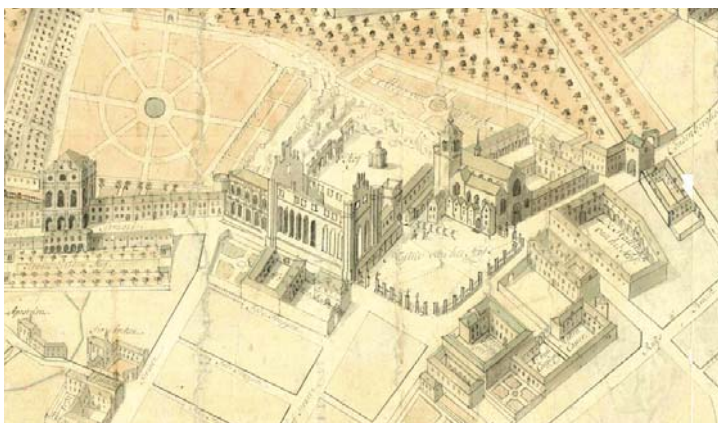
Jean-André Anneessens, reconstruction plan for the Burnt Court, mid-18th century.

The governor and minister took advantage of the fact that a French architect, Charles François Roland Le Virloys (designor of the theatre in Metz), was passing through Brussels to ask him to draw plans for a building to house the Chamber of Accounts, the Collateral Councils and their documents. The building should be constructed entirely without wood in either floors or roof. It was to be vaulted, to prevent the risk of fire. The cost of the work would amount to some 300,500 florins; by using the debris from the Chamber of Accounts tower, and from the burnt-out Court, costs could be kept to a minimum. As it was estimated that the work would take three years, the expenditure could be spread out so that its impact would be felt as little as possible. In a later publication the architect alluded to this building which was to have been erected on the Place de Louvain.¹³ Even before the official report was sent on 5 July, Cobenzl, the plenipotentiary minister, took it on himself to inform Chancellor Kaunitz of this ambitious project.¹⁴ The latter immediately dampened his enthusiasm, worried by the cost:

*Knowing that building in Bruxelles is very dear and, conversant as I am with architects' estimates, I believe I can predict that you will not execute this building with five or six hundred thousand florins. It would undoubtedly be an expense well above what our finances could sustain. Our debts, and a body of troops of twenty-five thousand men to feed, are two items that clash furiously with a desire to house papers in magnificent style.*¹⁵

Kaunitz suggested renting a house in Brussels and having it vaulted, rather than envisaging this building work in such uncertain times. It was obvious that the project was not compatible with the financial difficulties facing Austria in those years of war, and despite his determination, Cobenzl had to abandon the enterprise, at least for the time being.¹⁶

The need to preserve the archives led the Brussels government to raise the need for a suitable building once again in November 1763.¹⁷ As there could be no question of going back to the idea put forward in 1761, Charles of Lorraine proposed having designs drawn for a small building to store the papers safely. In August 1764 Cobenzl had to give an account of his actions, and he admitted that Savoet, the architect, was preparing a design at the request of the Finance Council. He immediately reassured the chancellor by explaining that this construction project would be placed under the supervision of the government, not the architect, once every precaution had been taken in relation to its quality and cost.¹⁸ A few months later, on 7 January 1765, minister Cobenzl again raised the costly idea of a large building, although he foresaw a refusal from



The "Burnt Court" on a map of Brussels, circa 1750.

Vienna.¹⁹ And sure enough, the chancellor rejected the suggestion, explaining to Maria Theresa: *Now less than ever do I think it appropriate to initiate a building on this scale.*²⁰ In his private correspondence with Cobenzl he ended up by giving an unequivocal response on the subject:

I know, Monsieur, that you lack good architects and I know too that in your country there will be no more economy in buildings than there has been in various enterprises that have been undertaken on behalf of Her Majesty. Now this building, such as it would have to be in order to meet the objectives proposed, would be a matter of the greatest consequence, and yet it appears that on this matter there has been a willingness to listen to the proposals of a man like Savoet. My dear Count, I speak to you bluntly: after that, what opinion do you expect me to form of the management body that will have to preside over such an important enterprise? When I see you consulting men like Virelois, and Savoet, however much of an upright man the latter may be, when I observe that, despite the repugnance we, here, have more than once evinced at the idea of incurring such expense, you over there are always bringing it up for discussion again, and you do not appear to be too concerned with seeking or proposing to us possible resources that might be found to fund it, I believe I am entitled to infer from this that a desire to build may perhaps be as much part of this project as the need to do so.

*Would there not therefore be some way of adapting one or other of the houses on our estates to be a repository for our archives, even if we spent a certain amount this would still be well below what a completely new building would require, would it not be possible to rebuild and adapt part of the burnt-out Court?*²¹

Kaunitz exhorted the plenipotentiary minister to put forward no new projects until the value of the houses owned by the state – and what income

might be derived from their sale if none of them could house the archives – were known. The plan for a new building would have to be accompanied by a precise estimate of the expenditure involved, justification for the sums to be allocated to it, and some indications regarding management of the project and how long it would take to complete.

In his reply, Cobenzl gave interesting information about how the project was evolving: he had followed it closely and had abandoned the idea of calling on Virloys, only to turn to Savoet, an architect *who is recognised as a good worker and an upright man*.²² His plan was submitted to the Collateral Councils and the Chamber of Accounts.²³ With this concrete projet, the minister next turned to an architect *who built with taste and with order eight or ten of our abbeys*, asking him to prepare another plan. This architect, unnamed, was clearly Laurent-Benoît Dewez, who was appointed court architect in 1767 and who had rebuilt several abbeys in the region in the neoclassical style.²⁴ Once this second project had been settled on, Cobenzl proposed to draw up an itemised list of expenditure so that the chancellor could estimate to *within a thousand florins* what this urgently needed building would cost.

The plan to build a mansion for the government thus remained on the table and, even though once again the chancellor sounded extremely severe, it was noticed that the idea of this project was not rejected out of hand as in 1761. The war had been over for two years, and thoughts could turn to seeking a home for the Brussels government, even if Vienna was still trying to delay these costly works.

ACQUIRING AND MODERNISING GRANVELLE PALACE

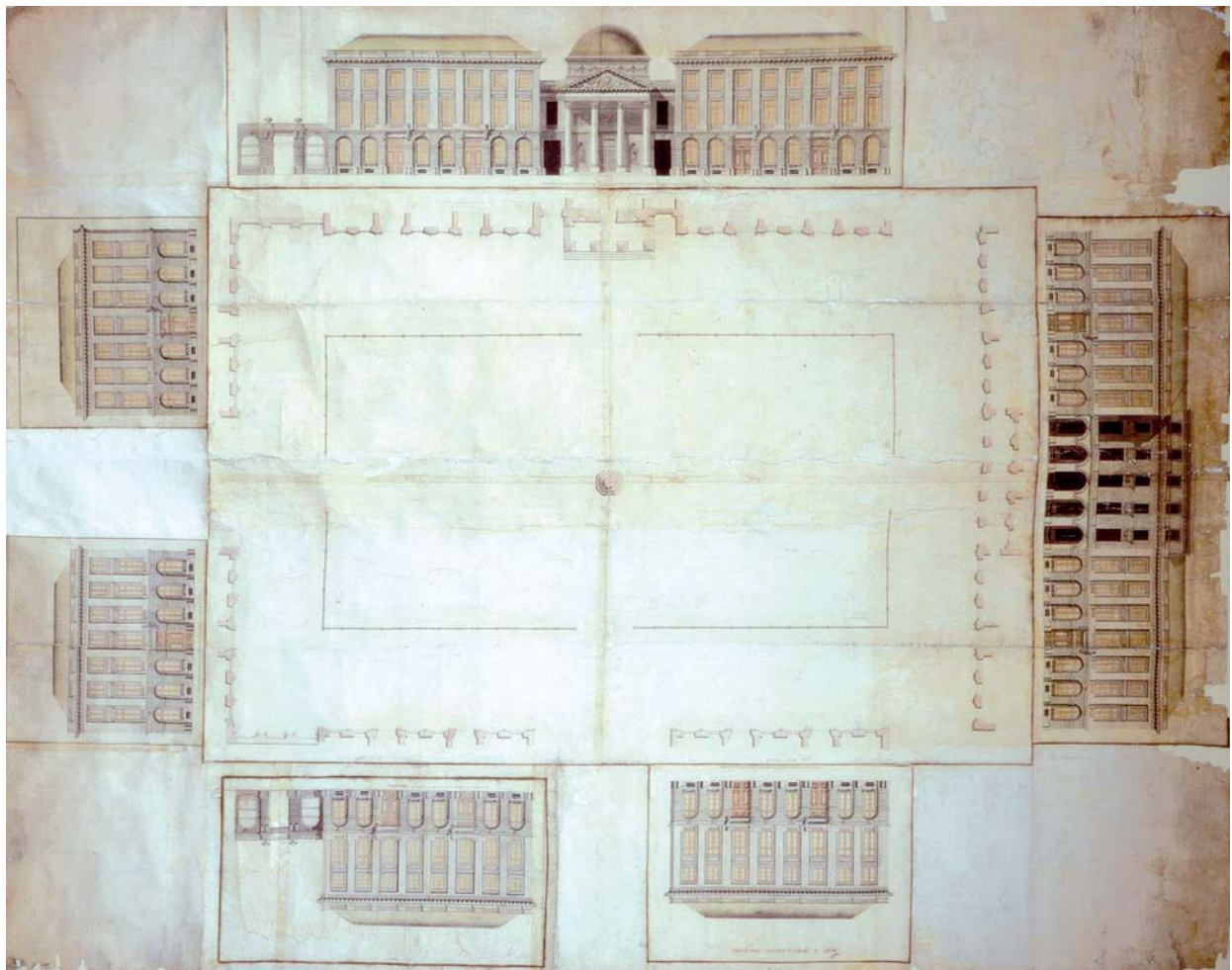
On 22 May 1768 Charles of Lorraine presented to Maria Theresa the fruit of the discussions in Brussels about constructing a new building to house the Collateral Councils, the Chamber of Accounts and the government archives.²⁵ Count Cobenzl for his part wrote to Kaunitz to support the initiative. The government authorities followed all the proper procedures when submitting this proposal because, after the mishaps that had befallen the Chamber of Accounts, the Finance Council had now also been forced to take refuge in the Lotto House for its working sessions. The premises at Granvelle Palace had become too dangerous, despite the reinforcements to the building.²⁶ Two different plans had been commissioned: one from Savoet the supervisor of court works and his son²⁷ (apparently not en-

tirely satisfactory), and one – more costly, admittedly, but with a better layout – by the court architect, Laurent-Benoît Dewez. The governor-general indicated his preference for the second. This involved purchasing and renovating Granvelle Palace on Rue des Sols. After reiterating the reservations that had previously enabled him to defer all expenditure until *less stormy times*, chancellor Kaunitz felt that this project should be considered.²⁸ The Councils' own building (the Councils' House) was in such a dilapidated condition that no further delay was possible. Aware of the urgency, Maria Theresa acquiesced, but she added:

*I have heard a great deal about the site of the old burnt-out palace: by designing an overall plan for it, one could gradually put back not just the castle but, as the site is very large, [and] the land belonging to me, one would not need to buy more or to knock down any houses, one could, reserving room for the palace, start on the other buildings to be used both for the Chamber and for all the other offices, and although I do not at all expect to be able to see such plans completed, I would be very glad for them to be drawn up or for a project to be prepared for me.*²⁹

To comply with this wish, Cobenzl turned to his protégé, Gilles-Barnabé Guimard, a French architect living in the Austrian Netherlands since the early 1760s, and whose taste for the neoclassical style the minister shared.³⁰ He was commissioned to draw up plans to restore the burnt-out Court, but the project came to nothing. Guimard, however, was involved in the later work on the Royal Quarter.

While the idea of rehabilitating the burnt-out Court was still dear to Maria Theresa in 1768, things had changed in Brussels since the fire and other solutions had emerged. Charles of Lorraine had invested large sums in renovating Nassau palace, making building a new palace less urgent, and the Collateral Councils had an imperative need, without delay, for salubrious premises. Informed of these last suggestions made by the sovereign, Baron Cazier, treasurer-general of the Finance Council, emphasised the urgent need to rehouse the council, and he called for the large building it occupied to be purchased immediately so that it could be renovated and the council could stay there until its new building in the upper part of town was rebuilt.³¹ This option was adopted and, once the building had been bought, Laurent-Benoît Dewez was appointed to build a new wing near the Rue des Sols.³² This meant that re-establishing the central institutions on the site of the burnt-out Court was no longer a priority, it was now possible to envisage using the site in a completely different way.



DEVELOPING THE PLACE ROYALE AND BRUSSELS PARK

From then on, things began to move quickly: in 1769 the Duke of Ursel, the military governor of Brussels, suggested creating an esplanade for the garrison's use on the Place des Bailles. This proposal was discussed, and then the question of what to do with the burnt-out Court became a very real one. In his memorandum dated 28 June 1774, the assistant supervisor at the Office of Court Works, Baudour, observed that:

*It may be regarded as certain that there will no longer be any question of rebuilding the old palace, or at least never on the site where its ruins still are. Any doubt one might conceive on this point will always be an obstacle to discussions which it will be difficult to overcome.*³³

In the memorandum, the chapel, for which the construction of a new facade was being envisaged, was not to be demolished.

Thus it was decided to knock down the ruins of the burnt-out Court – and to go beyond the original

idea of creating just a simple esplanade. The preference now was tending towards a square at whose centre would be placed the statue of Charles of Lorraine presented to him by the States of Brabant in 1769, to mark the 25th year of his government.

The initiative for this square at Place Royale, and then for the Royal Quarter, came from the Prince of Starhemberg, appointed plenipotentiary minister in 1770. It was he who finally succeeded in putting an end to all the years of hesitation, caused chiefly by the vicissitudes of war and the attendant financial difficulties. The energy expended by his predecessor, Count Cobenzl, on restoring the city of Brussels to its former glory is well known. The various proposals mentioned were prompted by his pragmatic attitude, and it was in the same spirit that in 1769 he formed the idea of designing a new square in which to erect the statue dedicated to the Prince of Lorraine, proposing to knock down the church of St Nicholas, in the city centre, and the surrounding houses. According to Starhemberg, the project put forward by Cobenzl would have

General plan of the Place Royale, attributed to J. B. Barré, 1775.



View of the Place Royale from the Montagne de la Cour shortly after it was completed. Coloured engraving by A. Rooland and G. B. Probst.

made it possible to clear some space and would, if necessary, have provided extra room *for the markets which are a little squeezed*, but it would have been very costly and would have created a good many difficulties, as a parish church would have had to be removed and *therefore it was a project more desirable than feasible*.³⁴

As the Sablon was already occupied by the beautiful fountain presented by the Duke of Aylesbury, and the Grand-Place was encumbered by markets, and was also the place where criminals were executed, neither of these two squares could be regarded as a suitable location for the august statue. In 1774, in consultation with Charles of Lorraine, and with the support of Starhemberg, the States of Brabant opted for the site of the court's inner ward (Place des Bailles). In the authorities' eyes it was desirable to be able to inaugurate the statue as soon as possible and certainly during the forthcoming visit to

Brussels by Archduke Maximilian, Maria Theresa's youngest son. To avoid wasting time on a series of consultations with the Finance Council, as would have been customary, the minister therefore agreed with Cazier, the treasurer-general, to entrust the management of the project to Limpens, the adviser to the Financial Council.

In the opinion of Limpens and Starhemberg, a clean break with the past was needed. The people still living in the ruins, or nearby, in the Borgen-dael,³⁵ would have to be moved and rehoused. And Charles V's old chapel would have to be demolished:

It is true that, inside and outside, it is a beautiful, ancient monument, but as long as it is worth preserving it only insofar as there might be a question of rebuilding a palace there for the sovereign, or his representative, to reside in – and even in that case the old alignment would certainly never be followed – from what one can see, it would only be possible to maintain it by spending money

on it and giving it, among other things, a facade which would inevitably be costly and would lead nowhere.

In truth the site of the chapel, whose underground spaces could quite easily and even usefully be preserved, is not intended to form part of the new square. But despite this, I still think that the chapel should be included in the demolition. On the other hand, the further we take the demolition of buildings that cannot be maintained without great expenditure – and this is the case with the chapel – the greater will be the benefit of the demolition to Her Majesty.³⁶

The report by Limpens, the financial adviser consulted by minister Starhemberg, shows that the chapel had always been regarded as a monument worthy of preservation. He proposed razing all the parts of it above ground, however, because, despite its beautiful architecture, from now on it would be merely an isolated building that would match poorly with the new square and park. A close examination of the chapel, moreover, revealed that seven pillars had been charred in 1731 and that the

cost of restoring them (essential if the chapel was to be transformed into a repository for archives or a library) was estimated to be at least 25,000 florins. The sale of the materials recovered from the demolition of the building, on the other hand, could bring in 15,803 florins.³⁷ The idea of renovating it needed to be abandoned, therefore, and Starhemberg too argued strongly for this:

The project certainly presents more than one advantage: first of all, it offers something we could not find anywhere else in the city – a place that is decent and suitable in every way for the statue of a prince whose memory must be passed on for all time. It will destroy walls – for that is all there is any more – that present a sight as sorrowful as it is disagreeable, and it will prevent accidents and mishaps that are all the more to be feared as, since the fire, these walls have been exposed in the open air to bad weather and they stand on their own, attached to nothing other than a part of the chapel, which is itself not very safe, and without, moreover, having any support.³⁸

The decision to go ahead with full demolition meant they could be freed from the constraints of the past and could start work on one of the most important renovation schemes ever undertaken in Brussels: beyond the Place Royale, surrounded by broad roads in the neoclassical style, Brussels Park, would follow on from the first shovel-load of upturned sod, in 1774. Within a decade the whole district would have been altered, radically transforming the appearance of the capital of the Austrian Netherlands, heretofore not particularly open to new architectural trends, with the exception of the Place Saint-Michel, created in the same period in the lower part of the city.³⁹

Before and After the Development of the Place Royale

Christophe LOIR

When construction work was beginning on the new district on the Coudenberg, the artist François Lorent was given the task of immortalising the condition of the area before and after its transformation.

His 1774 drawing, entitled *Vue de la vieille Cour à Bruxelles, ruinée par l'incendie le 4 Février 1731* (View of the old court in Brussels, destroyed by fire on 4 February 1731), shows the Place des Bailles as seen from the Rue Montagne de la Cour with, prominent on the left, part of Hoogstraeten House, the start of Rue Isabelle and the Aula Magna (largely destroyed). In the background is the church of St James on the Coudenberg, surrounded by modest dwellings.

In 1778, when the building work was already well advanced, Lorent drew the new square from the same vantage point, with the statue of governor-general Charles of Lorraine in the centre, the portico of the new church behind

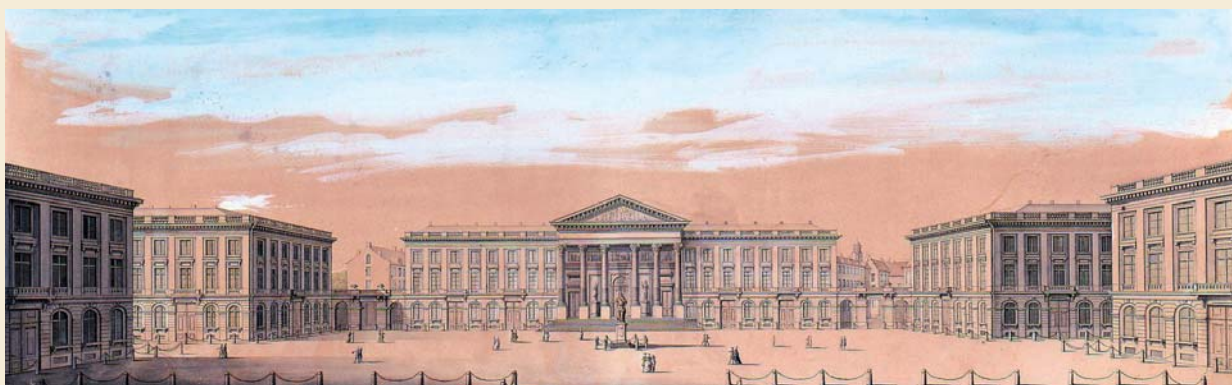
and, all around, the eight private mansions. The contrast, of course, is striking: the new developments are distinguished by their regularity and uniformity, their alignment, and their classical style. As with the drawings of the new and old parks, also done by Lorent, these views were intended to be a reminder of the dilapidated state of the Coudenberg after the fire, and to document the metamorphosis of the district achieved between 1774 and 1785, thanks to its renovation. The government, in fact, noted in relation to Lorent's drawings that *posterity and, without going so far, the next generation will not credit that what now exists was preceded by a sight so bleak, so lacking in pleasantness, without taste, or form, or utility [...]*.

Over and above this visual contrast, the transition from Place des Bailles to Place Royale – like that from Warande to Brussels Park – was notably marked by the relocation and slight

withdrawal of the palace (into what had been Nassau House and was now known as the palace of Charles of Lorraine). And, in practice, the new palace no longer played the same central, structuring role as the old one. The forecourt of the old palace (Place des Bailles) and its gardens (the Warande) had now become, respectively, an independent public square (Place Royale) and a public park (Brussels Park). This radical transformation, which reflects the emergence of public spaces in the 18th-century Age of Enlightenment, did not, however, weaken the close links between the Coudenberg and those in power: rather, it illustrated the evolution both of the sovereign's legitimacy and of the ways in which political power was presented to the public. Meanwhile, the Coudenberg would continue to exert a strong attraction for prestigious buildings, as would be demonstrated by the debate on the palaces in the 19th century (see Chapter 13).



François Lorent, View of the ruins of the old palace of Coudenberg, 1774.



François Lorent, View of the Place Royale after the destruction of the old palace ruins, 1778.

ABREVIATIONS

ACPASB	Archives du CPAS de Bruxelles
AEA	Archives de l'État à Anderlecht
AGR	Archives générales du Royaume (Brussels)
ARB	Académie royale des Sciences, des Lettres et des Beaux-Arts de Belgique
ASRAB	Annales de la société royale d'Archéologie de Bruxelles
AVB	Archives de la Ville de Bruxelles
CAPB	Chancellerie autrichienne des Pays-Bas (AGR)
CB	Cahiers bruxellois
CC	Chambre des comptes (AGR)
CP	Cartes et plans, inventaire manuscrit (AGR)
CPB	Cartes et plans de Bruxelles et de la Région bruxelloise (AVB)
CRH	Commission royale d'histoire
DEA	Diplôme d'Études Approfondies
FI	Fonds iconographique (AVB)
HHStA	Haus-Hof-und Staatsarchiv (Vienna)
IRPA	Institut royal du Patrimoine artistique
KBR	Bibliothèque royale de Belgique
MRBAB	Musées royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique
MRAH	Musées royaux d'Art et d'Histoire
MRBC	Ministère de la Région de Bruxelles-Capitale
MVB	Musée de la Ville de Bruxelles – Maison du Roi
OC	Ouvrages de la cour (AGR)
PP	Plans portefeuilles (AVB)
RBAHA	Revue belge d'archéologie et d'histoire de l'art.
SRAB	Société royale d'Archéologie de Bruxelles
TP	Travaux publics (AVB)

- communication de la cour de l'Hôtel d'Hoogstraete, dont vous avez fait abattre le toit (arrange for the removal of the two springers bearing the floor of the communication of the court of Hoogstraeten House, whose roof you have had demolished).
- 28 A. HENNE & A. WAUTERS, *Histoire de la ville de Bruxelles* (new edition of the original text published in 1845), vol. 3, Brussels, 1975, pp. 366-367. We have not found the sources to which these authors refer.
 - 29 M. CELIS, "L'hôtel d'Antoine de Lalaing", *op. cit.* note 3, pp. 81-95.
 - 30 D. VAN EENHOOGHE & M. CELIS, "Het 'Hof van Hoogstraten'", *op. cit.* note 1, p. 45.
 - 31 Brussels, AGR, Greffes scabinaux et du Notariat, 8.676, 22 December 1775, Notary Gilles Herdies.
 - 32 Bastendorff, Plan parcellaire de Bruxelles, 1821: Archives de la Ville de Bruxelles, Cartes et plans de Bruxelles et de la Région bruxelloise, no. 48.
 - 33 *Keldermans. Een architectonisch netwerk in de Nederlanden, 's-Gravenhage-Bergen op Zoom, 1987.*
 - 34 L. DE CLERCQ, *Renovatie van de gebouwen de Lalaing-Hoogstraeten. Laat-Gothische ganderij. Materieel-technisch onderzoek van de afwerkingslagen. Restauratie-advies*, unpublished study commissioned by the MRBC, March 1999, p. 9.
 - 35 These features are known only from the drawing by Remigio Cantagallina.
 - 36 L. MERTENS, "Het Gelmelslot", *op. cit.* note 3, pp. 38-46.

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- 1 Y. DEVOS *et al.*, "An archaeopedological and phytolitarian study of the "Dark Earth" on the site of Rue de Dinant (Brussels, Belgium)", in *Catena*, vol. 78, Amsterdam, 2009, pp. 270-284. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.catena.2009.02.013>.
- 2 Y. DEVOS *et al.*, "Buried Anthropic Soils in the Centre of Brussels (Belgium): Looking for Fields in a (Proto-)urban Context", in K. FECHNER *et al.* (eds), *Archaeology, Soil- and Life-Sciences Applied to Enclosures and Fields. Proceedings of the Session 'From microprobe to spatial analysis - Enclosed and buried surfaces as key sources in Archaeology and Pedology'*, European Association of Archaeologists 12th Annual Meeting Krakow, Poland, 19th to 24th September 2006, Oxford, 2011, pp. 143-161 (British Archaeological Reports International Series, 2222).
- 3 C. DAVID *et al.*, «Problématique archéologique. Méthodes et techniques appliquées à l'étude des terres noires: état de la recherche», in *Terres Noires - 1*, Tours, 2000, pp. 15-38.
- 4 Y. DEVOS *et al.*, «Buried Anthropic Soils», *op. cit.* note 2.
- 5 Y. DEVOS, L. VRYDAGHS & S. MODRIE, «L'étude des Terres Noires bruxelloises: l'exemple du site de l'hôtel d'Hoogstraeten (Région Br.)» in *Archaeologia Mediaevalis Chronique*, vol. 33, Brussels, 2010, pp. 63-65.

CHAPTER 12| FROM THE COUDENBERG PALACE TO THE ROYAL QUARTER

- 1 Quotation taken from a report by Prince Starhemberg, plenipotentiary minister in Brussels to Chancellor Kaunitz, 3 August 1774 (Brussels, Archives générales du Royaume (AGR), Austrian Chancellery in the Netherlands (CAPB), 481).
- 2 L.-P. GACHARD, "L'incendie du palais royal de Bruxelles (3 février 1731)", in *Bulletin de l'Académie royale des Sciences, des Lettres et des Beaux-Arts de Belgique*, 2nd series, XXXV, Brussels, 1873, pp. 109-147.
- 3 On the correspondence between Brussels and Vienna at the time of Maria Elisabeth, see: F. PICHORNER, *Wiener Quellen zu den Osterreichischen Niederlanden: die Statthalter Erzherzogin Maria Elisabeth und Graf Friedrich Harrach (1725-1743)*, Vienna/Böhlau, 1990. See also Brussels, AGR, CAPB, 264-270, general index to the official correspondence between Brussels and Vienna.
- 4 These plans have been reproduced in: A. SMOLAR-MEYNART *et al.*, *Le Palais de Bruxelles. Huit siècles d'art et d'histoire*, Brussels, 1991, pp. 152-153 and in B. D'HAINAUT, "L'édification d'une allégorie politique néo-classique", in A. SMOLAR-MEYNART & A. VANRIE (eds), *Le Quartier Royal*, Brussels, 1998, p. 158 and p. 179. See also the 1736 memorandum by Strozzi, member of the Finance Council on the restoration of the royal palace in Brussels, published by M. HUISMAN, "Quelques documents inédits sur la cour de l'archiduchesse Marie-Elisabeth d'Autriche, gouvernante des Pays-Bas", in *Annales de la Société d'Archéologie de Bruxelles*, vol. 15, Brussels, 1901, pp. 64-70 (here, in particular pp. 72-75).
- 5 Brussels, AGR, CAPB, 399, account given by Charles of Lorraine to Maria Theresa, 6 March 1751. Brussels, AGR, Manuscript maps and plans (CP), Series 1, 511, plan and elevations for a new palace designed for the site of the burnt-down palace, 1751 (on two sheets).
- 6 Document published in full by P. SAINTENOY, *Les arts et les artistes à la Cour de Bruxelles. Le Palais royal du Coudenberg du règne d'Albert et Isabelle à celui d'Albert Ier, roi des Belges*, Brussels, 1935, pp. 175-187 (Académie royale de Belgique. Classe des Beaux-Arts. Mémoires, collection in 4^e, 2nd series, vol. VI).
- 7 M. GALAND, "Vienne et Bruxelles: deux échelons de l'administration des Pays-Bas autrichiens", in J.-P. LEHNERS, C. BRUNEBEL & H. REINALTER (eds), *L'Autriche, les Pays-Bas et le Duché de Luxembourg au XVIII^e siècle*, 1999, pp. 11-23 (Publications du Centre Universitaire de Luxembourg, Cahiers d'Histoire, IV).
- 8 L.-P. GACHARD, "Le traité de Versailles de 1756. (Lettres confidentielles de Marie-Thérèse au prince Charles de Lorraine)", in L.-P. GACHARD, *Études et notices historiques concernant l'histoire de Belgique*, III, Brussels, 1890, pp. 233-253.
- 9 H. COPPENS, *De financiën van de centrale regering van de zuidelijke Nederlanden aan het einde van het Spaanse en onder Oostenrijks bewind (ca. 1680-1788)*, Brussels, 1992, pp. 328-341 (Verhandelingen van de Koninklijke Academie voor Wetenschappen, Letteren en Schone Kunsten van België, Klasse der Letteren, 142).
- 10 C. LEMAIRE, "Le palais de Charles de Lorraine 1750-1780", taken from the *Bulletin trimestriel du Crédit Communal de Belgique*, No. 135-136, 1981.
- 11 In 1757, Maria Theresa granted him permission to take 2,000 florins a month out of state funds for the work to be done on the palace (Brussels, AGR, Conseil des Finances, 2052, Order from Cobenzl to the Finance Council, 4 October 1757).
- 12 Brussels, AGR, CAPB, 448, account given by Charles of Lorraine to Maria Theresa dated 5 July 1761. On the sites of the Chamber of Accounts in Brussels, see: A. VANRIE, *Bruxelles: les archives centrales et le Quartier de la Cour. Catalogue de l'exposition organisée à l'occasion du bicentenaire des Archives de l'État*, Brussels, 1996, pp. 14 and 21.
- 13 M. C. F. ROLAND LE VIRLOYS, *Dictionnaire d'architecture civile et navale, antique et moderne et de tous les arts et métiers qui en dépendent, etc.*, Paris, 1770-1771. In the article entitled "Accouplement", the author alludes to the polyglyph "as I have practised it in Brussels, at the entrance to the Palais des Conseils, on the Place de Louvain" (vol. 1, p. 15). The representation of this polyglyph is reproduced in vol. 3, pl. XC, fig. IV. This publication is accessible online at *Internet Archives*: <http://www.archive.org/details/dictionnairearco1rola>, <http://www.archive.org/details/dictionnairearco2rola>, <http://www.archive.org/details/dictionnairearco3rola> (consulted 30 May 2011).
- 14 Vienna, Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv (HHStA), Belgien, Berichte, DDA 86, report from Cobenzl to Kaunitz, 5 June 1761.
- 15 Vienna, HHStA, Belgien, Weisungen, DDA 7, letter from Kaunitz to Cobenzl, 15 July 1761.
- 16 Vienna, HHStA, Belgien, Berichte, DDA 86, reports from Cobenzl, 24 July and 5 August 1761.
- 17 Brussels, AGR, CAPB, 456, account given by Charles of Lorraine to Maria Theresa, 24 November 1763, and opinion of the treasurer-general of the Finance Council, Baron de Cazier, 28 February 1763.
- 18 Vienna, HHStA, Belgien, Berichte, DDA 102, report from Cobenzl to Kaunitz, 18 August 1764.
- 19 Vienna, HHStA, Belgien, Berichte, DDA 105, report from Cobenzl to Kaunitz, 7 January 1765.
- 20 Brussels, AGR, CAPB, 456, report from Kaunitz to Maria Theresa, 4 February 1765.
- 21 Vienna, HHStA, Belgien, Weisungen, DDA 11, letter from Kaunitz to Cobenzl, 30 May 1765.
- 22 Vienna, HHStA, Belgien, Berichte, DDA 107, report from Cobenzl to Kaunitz, 8 June 1765.
- 23 Brussels, AGR, CP, Series 1, 493: Plans and elevations of a building for the Collateral Councils, to be built in the park, near the Place de Louvain, surveyed and drawn by the architect B. Savoet.

- 24 On Dewez, the architect, see: X. DUQUENNE, *Le château de Senneffe*, Brussels, 1978, pp. 101-114. C. DE BRAEKELEER, *Laurent-Benoît Dewez – 1731-1812*, Senneffe, 1992.
- 25 Brussels, AGR, CAPB, 466, account given by Charles of Lorraine to Maria Theresa, 22 May 1768.
- 26 After the fire, the Privy and Finance Councils held their meetings in the old Granvelle Palace on the Rue des Sols. On this palace, see K. DE JONGE, "Le palais Granvelle à Bruxelles: premier exemple de la Renaissance romaine dans les anciens Pays-Bas?", in K. DE JONGE & G. JANSSENS (eds), *Les Granvelle et les anciens Pays-Bas: Liber doctori Mauricio Van Durme dedicatus*, Leuven, 2000, pp. 341-387.
- 27 Savoet's son, who had also trained as an architect, was made second-in-command in the Office of Court Works (*Bureau des ouvrages de la cour*) in 1760, and inspector in 1767. See: K. BÉTHUME, *Gestion et entretien des bâtiments royaux dans les Pays-Bas autrichiens (1715-1794)*. *Le Bureau des Ouvrages de la Cour*, Brussels, 2001, p. 194 (Études sur le XVIII^e siècle, XIX).
- 28 Brussels, AGR, CAPB, 466, report from Kaunitz to Maria Theresa, 7 July 1768.
- 29 Brussels, AGR, CAPB, 466, margin note autographed by Maria Theresa on the report by Kaunitz dated 7 July 1768.
- 30 X. DUQUENNE, *Le Parc de Bruxelles*, Brussels, 1993, pp. 35-36. I would like to thank Monsieur Duquenne who drew my attention to this early involvement by Guimard in the plans for renovating the Royal Quarter.
- 31 Brussels, AGR, CAPB, 466, copy of Cobenzl's report to Kaunitz dated 31 July 1768.
- 32 On the purchase of the building, see: Brussels, AGR, CAPB, 466, report from Kaunitz to Maria Theresa, 16 August 1768. On the series of alterations made to this palace, see: A. HENNE & A. WAUTERS, *Histoire de la ville de Bruxelles*, 1845, re-ed. M. MARTENS, Brussels, 1975, vol. III, pp. 350-356.
- 33 Cited by G. DES MAREZ, *La place royale à Bruxelles: genèse de l'oeuvre, sa conception et ses auteurs*, Brussels, 1923, p. 101 (Académie royale de Belgique, Mémoires, Classe des Beaux-Arts, coll. In-4^e, 2nd series).
- 34 Brussels, AGR, CAPB, 481, account given by Starhemberg to Maria Theresa, 3 August 1774.
- 35 On this, see: A. VANRIE, "La place des Bailles vers la porte de Namur", in A. SMOLAR-MEYNART & A. VANRIE (eds), *Le Quartier Royal*, op. cit. note 4, pp. 42-61.
- 36 Brussels, AGR, CAPB, 481, account given by Starhemberg to Maria Theresa, 3 August 1774.
- 37 Brussels, AGR, CAPB, 481, report from Kaunitz to Maria Theresa, 24 August 1774.
- 38 Brussels, AGR, CAPB, 481, account given by Starhemberg to Kaunitz, 3 August 1774.
- 39 C. LOIR, *Bruxelles néoclassique: Mutation d'un espace urbain, 1775-1840*, Brussels, 2009, pp. 69-119. It was then that the Chamber of Accounts could finally be rehoused, as room was found for it in the left wing of the Council of Brabant, at the edge of the park word "palace", see L. MOULINIER-BROGI, "Palais: la singulière fortune d'un mot", in M.-F. AUZÉPY & J. CORNETTE, *Palais et Pouvoir. De Constantinople à Versailles*, Saint-Denis, 2003, pp. 295-308 and G. SABATIER, "Le palais d'État en Europe, de la Renaissance au Grand Siècle", in M.-F. AUZÉPY & J. CORNETTE, *Palais et Pouvoir*, op. cit., pp. 81-108.
- 3 *Description de la Ville de Bruxelles, enrichie du plan de la ville et de perspectives*, J.L. de Boubers, Brussels, 1782, p. 2.
- 4 Abbé MANN, *Abrégé de l'histoire ecclésiastique, civile et naturelle de la ville de Bruxelles, et de ses environs; avec la description de ce qui s'y trouve de plus remarquable, partie seconde: Description de Bruxelles, ou Etat présent tant ecclésiastique que civil, de cette ville*, Lemaire, Brussels, 1785, p. 204.
- 5 *Ibidem*, p. 82.
- 6 X. DUQUENNE, "Le nouveau Château de Charles de Lorraine à Tervuren", in *Revue belge d'Archéologie et d'Histoire de l'Art*, pt. 77, Brussels, 2008, pp. 101-132.
- 7 H. LORENZ, "Le château en Europe", in T.W. GAERTGENS & K. POMIAN (eds), *Le XVIII^e siècle*, Paris, 1998, pp. 257-261 (Histoire artistique de l'Europe).
- 8 Brussels, Archives générales du Royaume (AGR), Conseil des Finances, 2062, essay dated 6 May 1793. Acknowledgements to Michèle Galand for transmitting this document.
- 9 X. DUQUENNE, *Le Parc de Wespelaar. Le jardin anglais en Belgique au XVIII^e siècle*, Brussels, 2001, pp. 52-54. See also A. MOLITOR et al., *Le Palais Royal de Bruxelles*, Brussels, 1993 (Musea Nostra, 32); V.G. MARTINY, "Charles Vander Straeten, architecte des palais royaux, 1771-1834", in *Industrie*, No 12, December 1971, pp. 748-759; L. RANIERI, "Le Palais Royal de 1780 à nos jours", in A. SMOLAR-MEYNART et al., *Le Palais de Bruxelles. Huit siècles d'art et d'histoire*, Brussels, 1991, pp. 267-302.
- 10 J.J. DE CLOET, *Châteaux et monuments des Pays-Bas*, Jobard, Brussels, undated, No 69.
- 11 L. RANIERI, *Léopold II urbaniste*, Brussels, 1973, p. 155.
- 12 Brussels, Archives de la Ville de Bruxelles (AVB), Cartes et plans de Bruxelles et de la Région bruxelloise (GPB), No 45, "Projet pour l'agrandissement et l'embellissement de la Ville de Bruxelles, pour y former de grandes communications et y placer convenablement le palais de Sa Majesté. Dédié et présenté à Son Altesse Royale Monseigneur le Prince d'Orange le 11 septembre 1817, par [françois] Verly, son architecte". The quotations which follow are taken from the detailed legend of the plan.
- 13 A.C. QUATREMÈRE DE QUINGY, *Dictionnaire historique de l'Architecture*, Volume 2, Paris, Adrien Le Clere et Cie, 1832, note on "palais", p. 186.
- 14 L. SOMERHAUSEN & W. VAN DEN STEENE, *Le Palais de la Nation*, Tielt, 1981.
- 15 C. DELVOYE, *Le Palais des Académies. Esquisse historique*, Brussels, 1980.
- 16 Notably H. FIOCCARDO, *Bruxelles, les palais de Laeken et de Tervueren*, Brussels, 1824, p. 30.
- 17 The names of the paths of the park, including "Avenue du Palais", are shown on the topographic map of the city of Brussels and its suburbs, drawn in 1816 by Jean-Baptiste De Bouge, see L. DANKAERT, *Bruxelles. Cinq siècles de cartographie*, Tielt-Knokke, 1989, p. 98. The project is also mentioned by B. DE SMEDT, *Le parc de Bruxelles ancien et moderne*, Brussels, 1847, p. 129.
- 18 Y. LÉBLICQ, "Les deux Palais de Justice de Bruxelles au XIX^e siècle", in *Poelaert et son temps*, Brussels, 1980, pp. 245-296.
- 19 C. BLANQUIE, "Le palais de la justice dans la France d'Ancien Régime: où siègent les présidiaux?", in M.-F. AUZÉPY & J. CORNETTE (eds), *Palais et Pouvoir*, op. cit. note 2, pp. 333-350; R. JACOB & N. MARCHAL-JACOB, "Jalons pour une histoire de l'architecture judiciaire", in *La Justice en ses temples*, Poitiers-Paris, 1992, pp. 23-68; J. POUMARÈDE & J. THOMAS (eds), *Les Parlements de province*, Toulouse, 1996.
- 20 Notably A. IMBERT & B.-L. BELLET, *Tablettes bruxelloises ou Usages, mœurs et coutumes de Bruxelles*, Brussels, 1828, p. 42. For an overview of these institutions located in the old Court, see M. VAN KALCK, "Le musée et la vie culturelle à Bruxelles", in M. VAN KALCK (ed.), *Les Musées royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique. Deux siècles d'histoire*, vol. 1, Brussels, 2003, pp. 147-166.
- 21 The street takes its name from the body of municipal officers who were the forerunners of the present Communal Council.
- 22 A commission was established in 1817 by decision of the Municipal Council to consider the various plans for the opening-up

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- 1 Brussels, Archives générales du Royaume, Collection des Manuscrits du département II, Création de la place Royale et du Parc, vol. 4, fol. 112-118.

CHAPTER 13 | A HISTORY OF THE PALACES AROUND COUDENBERG

- 1 The authors have deliberately restricted themselves to complexes explicitly called "palaces" and which have retained the same function up to the present day. This choice explains the absence of buildings such as the palace of the Count of Flanders in Rue de la Régence, which became a princely residence at a late stage and quickly lost the status of "palace", or the Hôtels d'Egmont on Rue aux Laines which gained the title of "palace" after being combined, rearranged and expanded to form the single complex that we know today.
- 2 *Dictionary of the French Academy*, 4th edition, 1762, consulted on 4 September 2011 at <http://artflx.uchicago.edu/cgi-bin/dicos/pubdic1look.pl?strippedhw=palais>. On the evolution of the