

Definitions and terminology

This terminology list gives an overview of the terms that are frequently used in the MeMO database (<http://memo.hum.uu.nl/database/index.html>) and supporting products. These three overviews (objects, text carriers, and institutions) are also provided in chapters four, five and six respectively of the introductory texts of the database. They have been thematically arranged.

4. Objects

Term	Explanation
<i>General</i>	
Commemorative marker	An umbrella term for all memorial items that were intended to indicate a grave. In the MeMO database and supporting products, however, the term is used for a specific group of these, i.e. the memorial tablets, the crosses and the wall memorials.
Memorial item	Object with a commemorative purpose
<i>Types of tomb monuments</i>	
Chest tomb or altar tomb	A monument consisting of a tomb chest, with or without an effigy on the tomb cover. See MeMO memorial object ID 2941 and fig. 9 . Note that in this monument type the body is buried under the monument
Cross	Usually a grave marker in churchyards, made of wood or stone, with or without an inscription, and sometimes with heraldry. See MeMO memorial object ID 1628 .
Double-decker monument	A particular type of a two-tier tomb (see below) showing an effigy of the deceased on the upper level and a corpse or cadaver figure below. See MeMO memorial object ID 2251 .
Floor slab	Stone monolith slab of varying sizes used to cover an intramural grave, i.e. burial under the church floor with the slab lying flush with the surrounding floor. See also Tomb slab and Memorial tablet.
Freestanding tomb monument	A monument physically detached from the surrounding architecture, often situated prominently before an altar. See MeMO memorial object ID 2972 . However, such a monument may have been moved against a wall or into a niche or recess at a later date: see MeMO memorial object ID 1210 .
Memorial brass	An engraved copper alloy plate usually sunk into a stone slab and affixed with metal rivets; varying in size, it may feature an inscription, heraldry, and an effigy of the deceased. Many such brasses have disappeared over time,

	leaving only an indent and sometimes the rivets with which the plates were fastened to the stone. See fig. 2 but also MeMO memorial object ID 1090 .
Painted burial cyst	A small intramural burial vault, usually made of brick, with its plastered inner walls decorated with painted scenes, especially of a religious nature; known in Dutch by the term 'grafkeldertje' (French: 'caveau peint'). Found in e.g. Aardenburg and Utrecht See MeMO memorial object ID 3277 .
Recess tomb	A monument comprising a tomb (chest), placed inside a niche or recess in a wall. See MeMO memorial object ID 2959 .
Sarcophagus	Monolithic stone coffin with a tapered lid, which may feature painted or sculpted decoration or an inscription. See MeMO memorial object ID 2565 . A sarcophagus may consist of a plain coffin and a decorated lid. Often only the latter survives: see MeMO memorial object ID 2342 .
Tomb slab	Stone monolith slab used to cover a tomb chest or a raised grave. It can be difficult to distinguish between a tomb slab and a floor slab, as subsequent alterations may have resulted in the loss of the tomb chest itself and the placement of the tomb slab directly onto or inserted into the floor. See MeMO memorial object ID 414 and ID 449 .
Two-tier tomb	A monument consisting of an upper and lower tier, e.g. two platforms that may each feature an effigy or other commemorative object, such as armour. See MeMO memorial object ID 2970 .
Wall tomb	A monument comprising a tomb (chest), placed against (or partly inserted into) a wall. See MeMO memorial object ID 3522 .
<i>Memorial pieces</i>	<i>Memorial image, memorial tablet, Memorialbild</i>
Diptych	A painted or sculpted memorial piece consisting of two wings. See MeMO memorial object ID 719 .
Memorial painting	A painted memorial piece on panel, canvas, glass or a wall. See the Beesd van Heemskerk memorial painting and fig. 3
Memorial piece	Memorial pieces consisting of religious images (usually present), with devotional portraits of the persons to be commemorated, usually with their patrons saints, and with accompanying texts with the names and dates of death and a request for prayer, and - where applicable - their heraldry. In the Netherlands there are memorial paintings in which the main image consists of the devotional portraits.
Memorial sculpture	A sculpted or engraved memorial piece of wood, stone or metal. See MeMO memorial object ID 492 , ID 503 and ID 925 .
Memorial tablet	A panel, usually made of stone and fixed to a wall, with an engraved or painted commemorative text. Memorial tablets may be confused with other objects, as they may originally have been <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • part of a larger memorial piece • a small floor slab with an inscription that has been inserted into a wall at a later date. See fig. 6.
Polyptych	Generally painted or sculpted artworks that consist of more than one piece, with one or more wings. However, in the MeMO database, websites and PDFs polyptych is used for artworks consisting of a middle part with more than two wings. See MeMO memorial object ID 677

Single piece	Artwork consisting of one part, without any wings. See MeMO memorial object ID 524 and 843
Succession series	Series of portraits or heraldry of successive secular or religious officials, or of the heirs of a family. See MeMO memorial object ID 748 .
Triptych	Artwork consisting of a central part with two wings. See MeMO memorial object ID 516
Wall memorial	A commemorative object attached to a wall, designed to commemorate a person or group of persons, usually consisting of a commemorative text with a decorative surround. See MeMO memorial object ID 1385
<i>Features</i>	
Cadaver	A depiction of the deceased as a (shrouded) corpse or skeleton to emphasise the transitoriness of the body, either sculpted in the round or engraved on a flat surface; also known as a transi. MeMO memorial object ID 281 . (A cadaver may also be a personification of Death or a generic emblem of mortality, see MeMO memorial object ID 2251 .)
Devotional portrait (Dutch: gebedsportret)	A portrait of a person presented in an attitude of prayer, i.e. kneeling and/or with hands held in prayer. See the Beesd van Heemskerk memorial painting
Effigy	A portrait of a deceased person as part of a tomb monument or slab, usually sculpted or engraved, and often shown as a recumbent figure; also known as a gisant. See MeMO memorial object ID 1291
Epitaph	The word epitaph already occurs in the Middle Ages for memorial pieces and is as such used in other European languages (cf. German 'Epitaf') both memorial pieces and the commemorative texts on a monument, but it is more strictly used in English to describe the commemorative text. In the MeMO database and supporting products 'epitaph' is used for commemorative texts only.
Gisant	A recumbent figure of a deceased person as part of a tomb monument or slab, usually sculpted or engraved (fig. 1), see Effigy
Palimpsest	Current in manuscript studies to describe a re-used page, the term is also applied to re-used brass plates and stone slabs that have been turned over and engraved anew.
Pleurant or weeper	Strictly used to describe the figures of mourners on a tomb chest; not to be confused with bedesmen (i.e. praying clerics) that one may find at the feet of effigies on (English) tombs, or with the smaller subsidiary figures of offspring and/or relatives that one may find accompanying the life-size effigies of the deceased.
Shield	The various shapes of the shields listed in the MeMO database can be found in this drawing
Tapered slab	A stone slab that gradually decreases in width; its shape indicates that it is a sarcophagus lid, MeMO memorial object ID 1382 .

5. Text carriers and texts

Term	Explanation
<i>General</i>	
Book of death (doodboek)	General term, not necessarily contemporary, for various types of memorial registers, see for example MeMO text carrier ID 138 and MeMO text carrier ID 337
Composites	Manuscripts containing texts that were conjoined without necessarily sharing a theme or originating from the same institution. The texts in such a manuscript were usually bound together on the basis of the sizes of the separate parts (texts). There does not need to be any cohesion between the texts in a composite. This type of manuscript was often produced by order of a later owner. See MeMO text carrier ID 19
Convolutes	See Composites
Liber memoriarum	Contemporary term for any type of memorial register, used in the manuscript itself. MeMO text carrier ID 187 , for instance, is a mixture of a register of graves containing the names of the buried persons, and a register with memorial services (fig. 1)
Memorial register	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Modern collective noun for all types of memorial registers• Contemporary term for any type of memorial register, used in the manuscript itself. MeMO text carrier ID 193, for instance, is a list of names containing some biographical information in some cases, and in a few other cases information on memorial services to be performed.• Please note: The term memorial register was also used for other types of sources, such as surveys of revenues, but also for sources relating to administrative matters, see for example the memorial register of the city of Ghent, http://www.dbnl.org/tekst/heul008memo01_01/
Miscellany	Manuscript containing multiple texts that show coherence in their themes or contents and/or that originated in the same institution. A miscellany may contain texts that all concern the commemoration of the dead. These manuscripts may have been copied as a whole in one go for the institution where they were used. The texts in the text carrier, for instance a list of graves or a donations register, may have subsequently been kept up to date for a longer period, but it may also have been extended with new texts. See MeMO text carrier ID 17
Register of a chapter (Liber officii capituli)	Manuscript used during the meetings of the chapter of a monastery, containing one or more memorial registers, see MeMO text carrier ID 17
Text carrier	A text carrier may contain one or more texts. If it contains multiple texts, it is important to know how these manuscripts were produced, because this can contribute to knowledge about the functioning of the separate texts. Text carriers containing multiple texts can be roughly subdivided into composites and miscellanies, see relevant

	entries (but there are all sorts of variations).
Verzamelhandschrift	See Miscellany
<i>Memorial registers</i>	<i>Classification of the memorial registers in the MeMO-database</i>
Register of burial places	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a. Registers with the names of those buried, see fig. 1 • b. Registers of owners of graves, MeMO text carrier ID 179
Register of gifts and foundations	Registers with descriptions of various types of gifts and foundations, see fig. 3
Register of memorial services	Registers containing information about which memorial services should be performed for whom and when. See: Register of memorial services included in a martyrology of the Carthusian Monastery Nieuwlicht
Register of names	Register of names not belonging to the aforementioned groups, see fig. 4
Register of pittances and doles	Registers with pittances and doles (usually) with mentions of the names of the donors, recipients, when and where the alms/gifts were to be handed out, and what they were to consist of, MeMO text carrier ID 372
<i>Memorial registers: other names</i>	<i>Used in the sources, in inventories and catalogues of archives and libraries, in the classification by Huyghebaert and Lemaître, etc.</i>
Anniversarium	See Necrology
Calendar	See Necrology
Jaargetijdenboek	See Necrology
Liber foundationum	Register of foundations or donations
Martyrology	Calendar with saints that were to be commemorated. In some cases martyrologies are also used to note the names of to be commemorated persons (who were not saints). See: Register of memorial services included in a martyrology of the Carthusian Monastery Nieuwlicht
Necrology	Calendar which features a list (sorted per day), of the names of persons who were to be commemorated during Mass. A necrology mainly has a liturgical function. Over the course of time necrologies also came to include information about donations and/or locations of graves. The necrology traces its origins to martyrologies, which were used in the first Christian communities during services to recite the names of the martyrs and of saints in general. See the distinctions made by Huyghebaert discussed previously.
Obituary	The obituary is a register in the form of a Roman calendar with the dates of anniversaries and other obligations to be fulfilled in a parish, monastery or chapter. See the distinctions made by Huyghebaert discussed previously.
Propijnboek	See Register of pittances and doles
Register for the burning of candles (Belichtingsboek)	Register with an overview of how many candles were to be lit for who, when and where (fig. 7)
Succession list (opvolgingslijst)	A type of chronological register of names of worldly and ecclesiastical dignitaries of a particular office. See MeMO text carrier ID 35 .

<i>Narrative sources</i>	<i>Sources which are described in the MeMO database</i>
Annals (annalen)	Overview of events which concerned a particular area, institution or family, etc. sorted by year.
Biographical descriptions of clergymen, religious men and women, and laypersons (Bruderbuch / Schwesterbuch)	These manuscripts mainly concern the lives of male and female conventuals written in the houses of the Modern Devotion, in remembrance of their virtues and special deeds, their gifts to the convent, their activities in memoria practices, counter gifts they received for their foundation, etc. See MeMO text carrier ID 268 . Note that in some cases biographies for female members of convents are also included in the manuscript with the biography of the rector. See MeMO text carrier ID 1 .
Chronicle	Chronicles are narrative overviews of one or more events in the history of for instance a particular area, monastery or family. Included are only chronicles concerning memoria, e.g. reporting on the founding of religious institutions, important gifts and memorial practices, see: Chronicle of the Convent of Barbara in Delft .
Gesta	Gesta are overviews of actions of persons, for instance abbots of monasteries. MeMO text carrier ID 6 .

6. Institutions

Term	Explanation
Abbey	Monastery with an abbot or an abbess as its superior
Abbot/Abbess	Superior of a monastery, especially of the ancient orders, with the highest level of independence (fig. 6a and 6b)
Advowson	The right to have the functionary of an ecclesiastical office receive his living from that office and to propose him for appointment to the ecclesiastical authorities. Synonym: collation.
Arch diocese	1. Ecclesiastical province, the largest jurisdiction of the Latin church, headed by an archbishop. The ecclesiastical province is divided into dioceses 2. Diocese directly ruled by an archbishop
Bailiff	Head of a bailiwick
Bailiwick	Commandery of which the head supervised the commanderies in its region
Beguines (or Beguins) and Beghards (or Beguards)	Men/women who unite to lead a religious life without taking monastic vows and with the right to own private property
Bishop	Head of a diocese, who has both the power of ordination (the ordainment of priests and the consecration of churches and altars) and the power of jurisdiction and administration in his diocese
Brothers/sisters of the Common Life	Clergy and laymen/women who, inspired by the Modern Devotion, led a religious life in common possession of properties but without taking monastic vows
Canons and canonesses regular	Members of an order that observes the Rule of St Augustine
Chantry	A foundation consisting of a reserved capital with a its own administrative regulations, to support a priest for an altar service.
Chapel	Building or part of a building in which an altar was founded
Chaplain	Priest performing the altar service that is provided for in a chantry founded for that purpose
Chapter	1. Institution founded to enable its members, the canons, to perform the daily liturgy of the Hours. The chapter can be established in a church of its own or in a parish church 2. Supralocal association of monasteries who live by the same rule and practices, that inspect each other through visitations
Chapter of Sion	Supralocal association of monasteries of observant monasteries of canons and canonesses regular in the county of Holland
Chapter of Venlo	Supralocal association of monasteries of observant monasteries of canonesses regular, primarily in the diocese of Liège
Chapter of Windesheim	Supralocal association of monasteries of observant monasteries of canons and canonesses regular, founded in 1395

Clergy (regular)	Men who took vows to follow a rule approved by the church
Clergy (secular)	Men who received (lower and/or higher) Holy Orders
Collation	The right to have the functionary of an ecclesiastical office receive his living from that office and to propose him for appointment to the ecclesiastical authorities. Synonym: advowson.
Collegiate church	Church in which a chapter had taken residence
Commandery	Independent establishment of a military order such as the Teutonic Order
Commander	Administrative superior of a commandery (fig. 6c)
Confraternity or guild	Association of clergy and/or laymen founded e.g. to the honour of God and his saints and to keep an altar service. Often called a guild
Convent	Religious community, though not an abbey, monastery, commandery or house
Curate	The clergyman to whom the care of the soul in a parish is entrusted. Synonym: parish priest
Dean	1. In a chapter: priest-canon who is responsible for the daily running of the chapter under the authority of a provost 2. Head of a deanery, responsible for supervision and jurisdiction, who is usually a curate in one of the parishes belonging to the deanery
Deanery	District (subdivision of a diocese) that rules a number of parishes
Diocese	Part of an Arch diocese, ruled by a bishop
Divine Office	The official prayers that are to be recited or sung seven times per day, guided by the requirements of the liturgical year. Synonym: Liturgy of the Hours
Double monastery	A monastery that combines a community for monks with an annexed community for nuns, under the unitary leadership of the head of the monks' monastery (usually an abbot)
Enclosure	Separation from the outside world of certain areas of a monastery, where enclosed nuns remain permanently and to which outsiders have no access
Guild	See Confraternity or guild
Hospital	Foundation for the care for one or more categories of those in need
Hours, Liturgy of the Hours	The official prayers that are to be recited or sung seven times per day, guided by the requirements of the liturgical year. Synonym: Divine Office
House	Religious community of brothers and sisters of the Common Life
Indulgence	Originally: full or partial remission of ecclesiastical penance imposed at confession. In the course of time it also came to mean a shortening of the souls' stay in purgatory
Military order	Order that emerged during the crusades that consisted of knights (who do battle), priests and brothers, all three of which took monastic vows
Modern Devotion, <i>Devotio Moderna</i>	Religious revival among religious people and laymen from the end of the fourteenth century emerging in the Northern Netherlands
Monastery	Establishment of persons who choose to separated themselves from the world to lead a life devoted to God and who take the three vows of poverty, obedience and chastity

Monastic Order: Mendicant order	Order of conventuals who maintain the vow of poverty not only individually, but also collectively, by begging and devoting themselves to the care for the soul
Monastic Rule	Ecclesiastically sanctioned rule by which monks and nuns lived. The major rules in late-medieval Western Europe are the Rule of St Benedict, of St Augustine and the first and second rules of St Francis
Monk	Men who have taken the three monastic vows of poverty, obedience and chastity (members of the Military Orders and Canons regular are not considered monks)
Nun	Woman who has taken the three monastic vows of poverty, obedience and chastity
Observance	Renewed strict compliance with a monastic rule
Orphanage	See hospital
Parish	Basic unit of an ecclesiastical organisation for the care for the soul: the place where the parishioners receive the sacraments
Pilgrimage	Journey undertaken with a religious aim, especially of visiting a place with a specific cult
Prior	1. In ancient orders: second in command of the monastic community; the superior is an abbot. 2. In more recent orders: monastic superior.
Prioress	Superior of a women's abbey, either independently, or under the rule of an abbot
Provost	1. Superior of a secular chapter. 2. In some ancient orders: Superior of a monastic establishment that is dependent on an abbey
Religious order: contemplative order	Order of conventuals who consider prayer for the church, the world and their patrons their most important task
Secular chapter of canonesses	Secular chapter inhabited by canonesses of noble birth
Semi-religious people	Common term (but incorrect in canon law) for men and women who lead a religious life but have not taken the three vows
Tertiaries	Men/women who either individually or collectively lead a religious life and observe the third Rule of St Francis, which is intended for laymen