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The late Fifteenth-Century Utrecht Chronicle of the Teutonic Order : manuscripts, sources, and authorship

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1 Introduction

1.1 Introduction

“Listen to me”, Duke Swietopelk on his deathbed told his four sons. “Eleven years I have fought against the Teutonic Order. I have tried force and I have tried deception. But ever since I opposed them, my honour, power and wealth have dwindled while they grew ever stronger. That is how I know they have God fighting on their side. Their brethren are all of illustrious lineage and come from noble families. All monarchs, princes and lords are favourably disposed towards them and gave them support. So dear children, listen to my advice. I beg you not to fight them, but to stay on friendly terms with them. This I will leave you as a policy and as part of my will.”

- Croniken van der Duytscher Oirden.¹

The Teutonic Order had a long tradition of historical writing. From the thirteenth century onwards a long list of historiographical works were produced, describing the order’s affairs in the Holy Land and particularly the Baltic region. Such texts were mainly written in Prussia or Livonia, where the order had become engaged in a crusade against pagan powers in the area, and often in the vicinity of the grand master of the Teutonic Order. The last words of Duke Swietopelk II of Pomerania (d. 1266), as presented here, first appeared in a chronicle written by Peter of Dusburg, priest of the Teutonic Order, who finished it in 1326.² It resurfaced in almost every subsequent major chronicle of the order.³ At the end of the fifteenth century, when the historiographical tradition of the order was in an apparent decline, the story appeared in the Middle Dutch *Croniken van der Duytscher Oirden* (*‘Chronicle of the Teutonic Order’*).

It will become clear from this study that the author of the *Croniken* – in the German speaking world better known as the *Jüngere Hochmeisterchronik* (*‘Younger Chronicle of the Grand Masters’*) – had access to almost all the various chronicles that contained the story. In the instance of this particular episode, he drew his information from a short Prussian chronicle that was written perhaps just one or two decades earlier, the so-called *Kurze Hochmeisterchronik* (*‘Short Chronicle of the Grand Masters’*).⁴ The author also added his own touches: new are the references to the noble

¹ “Ende in’t eynde van sijnen leven soe riep hij syn vier sonen bij hem ende seyde hem: ‘Lieve sonen, ick hebbe elff jaer lanck krijch ende oirloch gevuert teghens desen Duytschen Oirden mit macht ende mit boser list. Soe segghe ick dij voirwair, sint dat ic mij teghens den Duytschen Oirden settede, soe nam ick altijt off aen eer aen goet ende aen macht, ende sy namen altijt toe ende worden altijt machtigher. Dairom weet ick voirwaer dat Godt mit hem strijt. Ende die broederen sijn alle grote gheboirtighe mannen off van goeden edelen geslachten. Ende alle vorsten, princen, ende heren sijn hem gunstich, ende doen hem grote hulpe ende bijstant. Dairom, mijn lieve kijnder, hoirt mijnen raet ende mijn leer. Ick bid u dat ghy u nyet teghens hem en settet, mer houdtse the vriende. Dit laet ick u tot eenre leer ende tot enen testamente.’”: *Croniken van der Duytscher Oirden* c.431.

² K. Scholz and D. Wojtecki eds., *Peter von Dusburg. Chronik des Preussenlandes*. Ausgewählte Quellen zur deutschen Geschichte des Mittelalters 25 (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft 1984) III–128.

³ For instance, the *Kronike von Pruzinlant* (*‘Chronicle of Prussia’*) by Nikolaus of Jeroschin: E. Strehlke, ‘Di Kronike von Pruzinlant des Nikolaus von Jeroschin’, in: Th. Hirsch, E. Strehlke and M. Töppen eds., *Scriptores Rerum Prussicarum. Die Geschichtsquellen der preussischen Vorzeit bis zum Untergange der Ordensherrschaft I* (Leipzig 1861) 291–648, there vv. 13011–13086; and the *Ältere Hochmeisterchronik* (*‘Older Chronicle of the Grand Masters’*): ‘Ancienne Chronique des Grands-Maîtres: édition critique’, in: M. Olivier ed., M. Olivier, *Une chronique de l’ordre Teutonique et ses usages à la fin du Moyen Âge: l’Ancienne Chronique des Grands-Maîtres et sa réception jusqu’au milieu du XVIe siècle* (Paris: Université Paris XII Val de Marne 2009) I–LXXXVIII, there c. 72.

⁴ Berlin, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin - Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Ms. Germ., Fol. 1289, f. 409r–409v.

ancestry of the brethren, and the assistance the order received from powerful secular leaders. Both points are repeatedly stressed in the *Croniken* and reflect some of the transformations the Teutonic Order underwent at the end of the fifteenth century.

With hindsight, we can observe that disruptive wars against the Polish kings and Prussian cities in the fifteenth century marked a transition towards a state of affairs for the order where spilling the blood of pagans became an anachronism, a thing of the past. The lives of the brethren were geared towards different objectives. Especially in the bailiwicks, the territorial divisions of the Teutonic Order in the Holy Roman Empire, the requirement of new knight brethren to produce proof of noble descent was progressively more strictly adhered to. Furthermore, new brethren were recruited from an increasingly select group of (knightly) families. This led to the transformation of the Teutonic Order into a ‘hospice for the lower German nobility’, as contemporaries called it: a place where younger members of the lower German nobility could maintain a way of life fitting to their noble status.⁵ Simultaneously, the order sought ways to strengthen its relationship with princely families in the Holy Roman Empire. This became apparent both in the appointment of grand masters with a princely background in 1498 and 1511, and in the tendency of the land commanders in Utrecht to seek support for their appointment at the Burgundian court. Additionally, around this time the grand master and German master became elevated to the ‘*Reichsfürstenstand*’ (the estate of imperial princes).⁶

The *Croniken* is one of a very limited number of narrative sources originating from the order during this transformational period. It sheds light on how the brethren viewed this new direction taken by the order. In this sense, while narrating the past, the chronicle is essentially about the present. The deeds of the past as described in the text are employed to legitimize the late fifteenth-century status quo. The blood spilled by the Teutonic Order in the long struggle against pagans played a central role in their claims to eternal rule over the lands they had conquered on these nonbelievers. The attention given to the assistance provided to the Teutonic Knights in these past struggles by both secular and ecclesiastical rulers, from dukes and bishops to popes and emperors, serves to emphasize the longstanding association of the order with the high and mighty of medieval society.

At the same time, the *Croniken* offered brethren and their families in a peripheral bailiwick of the order an opportunity to keep the memory of the order’s activities in the Baltic region alive. During the Thirteen Years’ War (1454–66) between the Teutonic Order on the one hand and the Prussian Federation and the Polish king on the other, many brethren from the Low Countries who served in the Prussian commanderies deserted and returned home. Upon arrival they demanded food and shelter in the commanderies of the Utrecht bailiwick.⁷ Besides numerous adverse effects, this will

⁵ J.A. Mol, ‘The Hospice of the German Nobility. Changes in the Admission Policy of the Teutonic Knights in the Fifteenth Century’, in: J. Sarnowsky ed., *Mendicants, Military Orders and Regionalism in Medieval Europe* (Aldershot: Ashgate 1999) 115–130, there 127–129.

⁶ H.H. Hofmann, *Der Staat des Deutschmeisters. Studien zu einer Geschichte des Deutschen Ordens im Heiligen Römischen Reich Deutscher Nation*. Studien zur bayerischen Verfassungs- und Sozialgeschichte 3 (München: Kommission für Bayerische Landesgeschichte 1964) 109.

⁷ J.A. Mol, ‘Crisis in Prussia, crisis in the bailiwicks? The case of Utrecht, 1443-1469’, in: R. Czaja and J. Sarnowsky eds., *Die Ritterorden in Umbruchs- und Krisenzeiten*. Ordines Militares. Colloquia Torunensia Historica 16 (Toruń: UMK 2011) 173–189.

have provided the regular brethren in the bailiwick with a supply of first-hand information and accounts of experiences from Prussia.

However, only a few years before the *Croniken* was written, the last of the brethren who had returned from Prussia decades earlier had died. There were still brethren from the Low Countries being recruited for military service in the Baltic region, for instance in Livonia, but for various reasons they had become much less numerous, and there were no further cases of returning brethren in this period. For the first time in the bailiwick's history the exchange of brethren between the sphere of influence of the bailiwick and other parts of Europe was by and large suspended. There was, therefore, a real risk that local brethren's memory of the order's military activities would fade away. One of the intended aims of the *Croniken* can have been to address that risk.

There were more functions for the text, many of which I shall address over the course of this study. Significantly, however, while human links between the bailiwick and Prussia and Livonia may have started to grow weaker, the effects of this divergence are not discernible in the processes of production and reception of the *Croniken van der Duytscher Oirden*: the text stands firmly within the tradition of history writing in the Teutonic Order that had matured in the Baltic region. It is indebted to a wide selection of earlier texts in this tradition, but it is also a source of inspiration for a completely new variety of texts produced from the sixteenth century onwards.

At the same time, the *Croniken* is unmistakably different from the underlying tradition. It is different because the narrative structure first laid out by Peter of Dusburg was not left intact, further developing the first tentative steps into that direction by the much shorter *Kurze Hochmeisterchronik*. It is different because instead of focussing on the Teutonic Order's achievements in either Prussia or Livonia, it encompassed both – and quite prominently the Holy Land as well. And it is different because in order to succeed in bringing together these geographically different focal points it had to involve a much wider selection of disparate sources, often brought together for the first time. These included sources from the Baltic region, but also texts produced locally in the Low Countries. Most importantly, it is different in being a peripherally produced chronicle: while in Prussia and Livonia there was a vibrant historiographical tradition of the order, and authors could consult nearby libraries for earlier examples, the *Croniken* seems to appear out of thin air. There are few records of previous involvement with historiography by any of the brethren of the bailiwicks, and surviving manuscripts of Teutonic Order chronicles before the *Croniken* that show a provenance outside Prussia or Livonia are even more rare. So how was the tradition of writing the Teutonic Order's history introduced into the Low Countries? And how did this change of environment of production influence the message, representation, and purpose of the chronicle?

In the following study I shall examine the conditions of this knowledge transfer between the Baltic region and the Low Countries, and how familiar historical narratives concerning the Teutonic Order were adapted to the needs and interests of the brethren in the Low Countries at the time. The following dissertation is primarily a study of the Middle Dutch manuscripts of the *Croniken van der Duytscher Oirden*. It is believed that the *Croniken* was originally written in Middle Dutch. This assumption will be backed by the codicological evidence presented here. Shortly after the creation of the Middle Dutch chronicle, as early as the first decades of the sixteenth century, numerous German adaptations

were written. These adaptations were widely received within and outside the order in the Baltic region and certain parts of the Holy Roman Empire. Although Hirsch has tried to create some clarity in their textual affiliation by dividing them in the so-called Livonian and Prussian branches, their mutual textual affiliations are not yet fully elucidated.⁸ These later German adaptations will be dealt with only cursorily here.⁹

Chapter 2 is dedicated to the primary sources containing the text of the *Croniken*. Both the German and Middle Dutch manuscripts will be discussed, though special attention will be given to the interesting nature of the Middle Dutch Vienna manuscript and its genesis. In Chapter 3, I shall discuss the sources and composition of the *Croniken*. The author of the *Croniken* had access to a wide variety of sources, from religious texts to works of an encyclopaedic nature, and from numerous chronicles of the Teutonic Order to archival material. Additional to identifying these sources, the origin of the sources, the author's methodology of handling them, as well as the overall composition and content of the *Croniken's* will be the subject of analysis. Chapter 4 will present a study of the author of the *Croniken*. A profile of the author is drawn up from the evidence in the *Croniken*, after which possible candidates will be surveyed. One of the ways the authorship of the chronicle is examined, is by using non-traditional authorship attribution techniques. This opens up the possibility to compare the stylistic differences of various parts of the *Croniken* – especially the bailiwick chronicle and the grand masters' part.

In the conclusion we will come back to the outcomes of the previous parts and draw a picture of the context in which the *Croniken* functioned in the Utrecht bailiwick and, later, in other parts of Europe – both within and outside of the Teutonic Order's sphere of influence. By changing the arena in which the historiography of the order was used, the message was inherently altered. Before I shall turn to the first chapter, I shall give an overview of the traditions of historical writing in the military orders leading up to the *Croniken* and provide a survey of the existing literature on the *Croniken van der Duytscher Oirden*.

⁸ Establishing their textual affiliation has become even more problematic by the tragic fate of many of the libraries in Eastern Europe over the course of the twentieth century. See for example: R.G. Päsler, 'Anmerkungen zu den mittelniederdeutschen und mittelniederländischen Handschriften der ehemaligen SUB Königsberg', *Korrespondenzblatt des Vereins für niederdeutsche Sprachforschung* 102 (1995) 6–14; and several contributions in: R.G. Päsler and D. Schmidtke eds., *Deutschsprachige Literatur des Mittelalters im östlichen Europas. Forschungsstand und Forschungsperspektiven* (Heidelberg 2006).

⁹ See chapter 2.1.

1.2 Narrative traditions in the military orders

Myths of origin

From the outset, the concept of the military order was an anomaly in medieval society. The orders combined a military function, originally in the Holy Land, with a formal religious life. Their members were required to take monastic vows of chastity, poverty and obedience. Nevertheless, the higher ranks and all fighting members were laymen. Only a minority of members were ordained as priests. This state of affairs attracted praise as well as scepticism. Critics ranged from members of the clergy who questioned the sanctification of knights, to secular and clerical detractors alike who condemned the orders for lack of success in defending or recovering the Holy Land.¹⁰

The novelty of their situation prompted the orders to legitimize their existence and actively propagate any of their accomplishments as defenders of the Christian faith. Such efforts were not only directed at the orders' critics, but also at essential new recruits and possible benefactors. Conceptually of great importance was *De laude novae militiae* ('In praise of the new knighthood') by Bernard of Clairvaux. Although it was not his most read work, it had a profound influence on scholarly debates regarding the military orders. The treatise, most likely written in 1131, was addressed to Hugh of Payns, master of the Order of the Temple, the first military order, which had been formed in the years just prior to writing. It called on secular knights to direct their energy away from worldly matters and follow a more ascetic life as members of the Order of the Temple – the 'true knights of Christ' – in defence of the Holy Land. By describing the various holy places in the second part of his treatise, Bernard effectively portrayed the Knights Templar as custodians of these pilgrimage sites.¹¹

At least in certain ecclesiastical circles, *De laude novae militiae* was disseminated quickly.¹² It came to function as an identity-defining text for the Knights Templar. However, although some Templar brethren are known to have been familiar with its content,¹³ little is known about the actual reception of the text within the Order of the Temple. No manuscript containing the text can be connected to a Templar library, and only one has so far been identified in any of the known libraries of the other military orders.¹⁴ Nor was the narrative as laid out by Bernard of Clairvaux, who

¹⁰ H.J. Nicholson, *Templars, Hospitallers and Teutonic Knights. Images of the military orders, 1128-1291* (Leicester/London/New York: Leicester University Press 1995).

¹¹ Bernard of Clairvaux, M.C. Greenia (translator), 'In Praise of the New Knighthood', in: *The Works of Bernard of Clairvaux 7, Treatises III. Cistercian Fathers Series 19* (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications 1977) 113–174.

¹² J. Schenk, *Templar families. Landowning families and the Order of the Temple in France, c. 1120-1307*. Cambridge studies in medieval life and thought 4th ser., 79 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2012) 207–209.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 208–209; A. Demurger, 'Étourdis ou petits malins? Pourquoi les Templiers n'ont-ils pas eu de mythe d'origine?', in: Ph. Josserand and M. Olivier eds., *La mémoire des origines dans les ordres religieux-militaires au Moyen Âge. Die Erinnerung an die eigenen Ursprünge in den geistlichen Ritterorden im Mittelalter*. Vita regularis 51 (Berlin: Lit 2012) 73–82, there 76; Nicholson, *Images of the military orders*, 108; K.J. Lewis, 'A Templar's belt. The oral and sartorial transmission of memory and myth in the Order of the Temple', *Crusades* 13 (2014) 191–209, there 202.

¹⁴ Only one extant manuscript, in the grand priory of the Hospitallers at St. Gilles, can be linked to one of the military orders: K. Elm, 'Die Spiritualität der geistlichen Ritterorden des Mittelalters. Forschungsstand und Forschungsprobleme', in: Z.H. Nowak ed., *Die Spiritualität der Ritterorden im Mittelalter. Ordines Militares. Colloquia Torunensia Historica VII* (Toruń: UMK 1993) 7–44, there 13; note also the absence from inventories published by Legras and Lemaître (Templars and Hospitallers) as well as Mentzel-Reuters (Teutonic Order): A.-M. Legras and J.-L. Lemaître, 'La pratique liturgique des Templiers et des Hospitaliers de Saint-Jean de Jérusalem', in: C. Bourlet and A. Dufour eds., *L'Écrit dans la société médiévale. Divers aspects de sa pratique du XIe au XVe siècle*.

also helped to draft the Templars' statutes,¹⁵ used for further textual production by members of the order. Neither *De laude novae militiae*, nor the statutes, for instance, were used as a starting point for official historiography of the order.¹⁶ Rather, the order may have exhorted to non-written traditions in regard to its history.¹⁷

Whereas *De laude novae militiae*, in combination with the Templars' statutes¹⁸ and their association with and physical presence at the Temple Mount,¹⁹ helped to define and make public the Templars' identity, other military orders adopted different ways of manifesting themselves. Many orders stressed their own achievements and origins, not in the least to favourably compare their own position to that of other military orders such as, perhaps primarily, the Knights Templar. Although in general relations between the military orders were cordial, rivalry and competition between the military orders was not uncommon.²⁰ The ability of individual military orders to stand out and attract attention to their own successes has justly been considered vital for their survival.²¹ Smaller orders that failed to attract enough attention, such as the Order of Saint Thomas of Acre²² or the Order of Dobrin,²³ languished or were compelled to merge with larger military orders. Publicity was a prerequisite for attracting bequests and gifts and for the recruitment of brethren. The means used for attracting attention differed from order to order and orders rarely limited

Textes en hommage à Lucie Fossier (Paris: Éditions du C.N.R.S. 1991) 77–137; A. Mentzel-Reuters, *Arma spiritualia. Bibliotheken, Bücher und Bildung im Deutschen Orden*. Beiträge zum Buch- und Bibliothekswesen 47 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz 2003).

¹⁵ J. Sarnowsky, 'Die Entwicklung des historischen Selbstverständnisses in den geistlichen Ritterorden', in: Ph. Josserand and M. Olivier eds., *La mémoire des origines dans les ordres religieux-militaires au Moyen Âge. Die Erinnerung an die eigenen Ursprünge in den geistlichen Ritterorden im Mittelalter*. Vita regularis 51 (Berlin: Lit 2012) 43–58, there 45; discussing different views on the role of Bernard of Clairvaux with regard to the statutes: Lewis, 'A Templar's belt', 191–192.

¹⁶ Indeed, with only a single, doubtful, exception, no tradition of Templar historiography existed. This exception is the *Templar of Tyre*, who wrote a history of the kingdoms of Jerusalem and Cyprus through the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, became involved in historiography. And although that chronicle is written from the viewpoint of someone close to the grand master of the order, it is not a history of the Knights Templar. Moreover, there is significant doubt whether he was, in fact, a member of the Order of the Temple. P. Crawford ed., *The "Templar of Tyre". Part III of the "Deeds of the Cypriots."* Crusade texts in translation 6 (Aldershot/Burlington: Ashgate 2003) 2–7; This does not mean that the Knights Templar were not engaged in any form of literature. Regarding the vernacular bible translations associated with the order, see recently: A. Mentzel-Reuters, 'Leseprogramme und individuelle Lektüre im Deutschen Orden', in: B. Jähnig and A. Mentzel-Reuters eds., *Neue Studien zur Literatur im Deutschen Orden*. Zeitschrift für deutsches Altertum und deutsche Literatur, Beihefte 19 (Stuttgart: Hirzel 2014) 9–58, there 18–28; The order also produced various reports and letters regarding the Templars' achievements in the Holy Land. For examples: Nicholson, *Images of the military orders*, 105–107.

¹⁷ Lewis, 'A Templar's belt'.

¹⁸ Sarnowsky, 'Entwicklung des historischen Selbstverständnisses', 46.

¹⁹ Demurger, 'Étourdis ou petits malins?', 78ff.

²⁰ N. Morton, *The Medieval Military Orders: 1120-1314* (Abingdon: Routledge 2014) 60–62.

²¹ Nicholson, *Images of the military orders*, 107.

²² A.J. Forey, 'The military order of St Thomas of Acre', *The English Historical Review* 92 (1977) 481–503; D. Pringle, 'The Order of St Thomas of Canterbury in Acre', in: P. Edbury ed., *The Military Orders 5: Politics and Power* (Farnham: Ashgate 2012) 75–82.

²³ Z.H. Nowak, 'Milites Christi de Prussia. Der Orden von Dobrin und seine Stellung in der preußischen Mission', in: J. Fleckenstein and M. Hellmann eds., *Die geistlichen Ritterorden Europas*. Vorträge und Forschungen XXVI (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke 1980) 339–352.

themselves to a single approach.²⁴ It is, however, striking that quite a number of the military orders, the Knights Templar being the most notable exception,²⁵ turned to legendary origin myths to strengthen their spiritual credentials.²⁶

Two of the earliest examples of this are the Order of Saint John and the Order of Saint Lazarus. The Order of Saint John, or Knights Hospitallers, produced a set of texts known as the *Legends* or *Miracles*, in which the order's origins are traced back to Maccabean times. The first Latin versions are tentatively dated as early as between circa 1140 and 1160.²⁷ A generation later, before 1185, an English priest-brother of the Hospitallers translated the *Legends* into Anglo-Norman, perhaps at their regional headquarters in Clerkenwell near London.²⁸ Various Latin adaptations as well as translations into French, Italian and a rhymed version in German would follow. The *Legends* continued to be well-read into the fifteenth century and were included, in yet another form, in the order's statutes at the statute reform of 1489/1493.²⁹ In the words of Rudolf Hiestand, the *Legends of the Hospital* "are nothing but an important indicator of an internal insecurity towards other orders that can fall back to a historically and legally verifiable founding document, even if this was closer to the present time."³⁰ In the thirteenth century the *Legends* appear to have been used in campaigns to sell indulgences and attract benefactors to the order.³¹ There is ample evidence that the Hospitallers' origin myths were read by audiences outside the order, such as chroniclers, popes and emperors.³² In a rare example of a critique of the historical veracity of the *Legends*, a brother of the order, William of San Stefano, stated around 1300: "I reckon that seekers [of alms] invented these things in order to get more..."³³

²⁴ See Nicholson, *Images of the military orders*, 102–124.

²⁵ It has been suggested that as Bernard of Clairvaux and others laid focus on the novelty of the Knights Templar, seeking an ancient and legendary origin would be contradictory to the order's self image: Lewis, 'A Templar's belt', 200.

²⁶ Medieval religious orders regularly claimed ancient origins: F. Cygler, 'Le discours sur les origines dans les ordres religieux au Moyen Âge. Brèves observations liminaires', in: Ph. Jossierand and M. Olivier eds., *La mémoire des origines dans les ordres religieux-militaires au Moyen Âge. Die Erinnerung an die eigenen Ursprünge in den geistlichen Ritterorden im Mittelalter*. Vita regularis 51 (Berlin: Lit 2012) 23–42; K. Elm, 'Die Bedeutung historischer Legitimation für Entstehung, Funktion und Bestand des mittelalterlichen Ordenswesens', in: P. Wunderli ed., *Herkunft und Ursprung. Historische und mythische Formen der Legitimation. Akten des Gerda-Henkel-Kolloquiums, Düsseldorf, 13. bis 15. Oktober 1991* (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke 1994) 70–90; G. Melville, 'Geltungsgeschichten am Tor zur Ewigkeit. Zu Konstruktionen von Vergangenheit und Zukunft im mittelalterlichen Religionsentum', in: G. Melville and H. Vorländer eds., *Geltungsgeschichten. Über die Stabilisierung und Legitimierung institutioneller Ordnungen* (Köln/Weimar/Wien: Böhlau 2002) 75–108.

²⁷ A.T. Luttrell, 'Préface', in: A. Calvet, *Les Légendes de l'Hôpital de Saint-Jean de Jérusalem*. Centre d'Enseignement et de Recherche d'Oc 11 (Paris: Presses de l'Université de Paris Sorbonne 2000) 5–20, there 7.

²⁸ K.V. Sinclair ed., *The Hospitallers' Riwle. Miracula et Regula Hospitalis Sancti Johannis Jerosolimitani*. Anglo-Norman Text Society 42 (London: Anglo-Norman Text Society 1984); K.V. Sinclair, 'The Anglo-Norman Miracles of the Foundation of the Hospital of St John in Jerusalem', *Medium Aevum* 55 (1986) 102–108.

²⁹ Luttrell, 'Préface', 18; A. Küster, *Von dem Spital von Jêrusalêm. Ein Gedicht verfasst von einen Angehörigen des Johanniter-Orden* (Wiesbaden: Diss. Phil. Strassburg 1897).

³⁰ "[Die Legenden] sind aber ein wichtiges Zeichen für eine innere Unsicherheit gegenüber anderen Orden, die sich auf einen historisch und juristisch klar nachweisbaren Gründungsakt stützen konnten, selbst wenn dieser die eigenen Gegenwart näher lag": R. Hiestand, 'Die Anfänge der Johanniter', in: J. Fleckenstein and M. Hellmann eds., *Die geistlichen Ritterorden Europas. Vorträge und Forschungen XXVI* (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke 1980) 31–80, there 32.

³¹ K. Borchartd, 'Spendenaufrufe der Johanniter aus dem 13. Jahrhundert', *Zeitschrift für Bayerische Landesgeschichte* 56 (1993) 1–61; J.S.C. Riley-Smith, *The Knights Hospitaller in the Levant, c.1070–1309* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan 2012) 16.

³² For some examples, see Nicholson, *Images of the military orders*, 112–113; S. Schein, 'The Miracula of the Hospital of St John and the Carmelite Elianic Tradition. Two Medieval Myths of Foundation?', in: M. Goodich, S. Menache and S. Schein eds., *Cross cultural convergences in the Crusader period. Essays presented to Aryeh Grabois on his sixty-fifth birthday* (New York: Peter Lang 1999) 288–296, there 290.

³³ Translation via Nicholson, *Images of the military orders*, 113.

The Order of Saint Lazarus, a small military order which originated from a leper hospital outside the city walls of Jerusalem, clung on to a pre-Christian origin myth which was remarkably similar to those of the Hospitallers. It is not completely clear at which point in time the myth was developed, but some elements of the legend, including a reference to the Maccabean high priest John Hyrcanus, already appeared in the middle of the twelfth century – around the time the Hospitaller *Legends* were probably first put together.³⁴ Another small military order, the Order of Saint Thomas of Acre, did not claim an ancient origin, but did claim – perhaps falsely or with some exaggeration – that it was founded by King Richard I of England.³⁵ Such royal support is also included in the descriptions of the origins of the Spanish Order of Santiago and the Teutonic Order, both as a part of the prologues of their earliest statutes.³⁶

There are indications that the military orders were aware of each other's origin myths. Whereas the similarities between the origin myths of the Order of Saint Lazarus and the Hospitallers' *Legends* suggest some form of communication, the Hospitallers' *Legends* itself seem to have been a response to the Knights Templar. The *Legends* were first composed at a time when the Knights Hospitallers, originally founded purely as a hospitaller order, were in the process of becoming militarized. This put them in much more direct competition with the Order of the Temple, which had been military in nature from its conception. Indeed, some of the biblical events mentioned in the *Legends* were more commonly associated with the Temple Mount in Jerusalem, where, in the Temple of Solomon, the Knights Templar had their headquarters. The Hospitallers tried to appropriate these events and associate them with their hospital, located near the Holy Sepulchre.³⁷

Nonetheless, the content of the *Legends* is only to some degree related to the order's intensifying military activities, and it does little to suggest a long and illustrious history of defending the Holy Land on the battlefield.³⁸ In part this can be linked to internal debates regarding the direction of the order. At the time of writing it was by no means clear which of the dual roles of the order, caring for the sick and acting as a military body, was to prevail in a struggle for resources.³⁹ The apparent downplaying of the military nature of the order could also be an attempt to distinguish it

³⁴ K.P. Jankrift, *Leprose als Streiter Gottes. Institutionalisierung und Organisation des Ordens vom Heiligen Lazarus zu Jerusalem von seinen Anfängen bis zum Jahre 1350*. Vita regularis 4 (Münster: Lit 1996) 31.

³⁵ Forey, 'St Thomas of Acre', 481–482.

³⁶ Sarnowsky, 'Entwicklung des historischen Selbstverständnisses', 45; The origin myths of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre, not yet a military order at the time, were remarkably similar to the other military orders mentioned here. However, the earliest texts containing these myths that I have been able to find date from the seventeenth century. G. Ligato, 'L'ordine del Santo Sepolcro. Il mito delle origini', in: F. Cardini and I. Gagliardi eds., *La civiltà cavalleresca e l'Europa. Ripensare la storia della cavalleria (Atti del convegno internazionale di studi, San Gimignano, 3-4 giugno 2006)* (Pisa: Pacini 2007) 189–213, there 190–191. For the Teutonic Order, see below.

³⁷ Nicholson, *Images of the military orders*, 113; Schein, 'Two Medieval Myths of Foundation?', 289–290; For the changing attitudes to the "holy geography" of Jerusalem, see S. Schein, 'Between Mount Moriah and the Holy Sepulchre. The changing traditions of the Temple Mount in the Central Middle Ages', *Traditio. Studies in Ancient and Medieval History, Thought, and Religion* 40 (1984) 175–195.

³⁸ Sarnowsky, 'Entwicklung des historischen Selbstverständnisses', 46.

³⁹ Riley-Smith, *Knights Hospitaller in the Levant*, 32–36.

from the Order of the Temple. After all, the Hospitallers were known for deliberately exploiting their non-military functions whenever it suited the occasion.⁴⁰

The Teutonic Order, too, may have adjusted the official narrative of its origins under the influence of narratives from other military orders. Like the Templars, other military orders and indeed medieval knighthood in general, it explicitly associated itself with the Maccabees. However, initially, and in contrast to the Hospitallers or the Order of Saint Lazarus, the brethren of the Teutonic Order did not claim that any of their order's origins could be traced back that far. Rather they adhered to an account that the order originated from a field hospital set up by citizens of the cities of Lübeck and Bremen during the siege of Acre in 1190 and that this initiative was supported and subsequently maintained by Duke Frederick VI of Swabia, son of Emperor Frederick I, and others who were present at the siege.⁴¹ It has been suggested by Nicholas Morton that this initial reluctance to produce ancient origin myths was intentional: in this way the order could elude the fact that the pre-existing hospital for German pilgrims at Jerusalem, handed over to the Teutonic Order in 1229 and a perfect location for the attribution of an ancient origin, had previously been administered by the Order of Saint John. Any indebtedness to another military order, a potential rival when it came to recruitment of knights and bestowal of goods and goodwill, would not have fared well in a story of the Teutonic Order's origin.⁴²

At a much later date, the Teutonic Order shook off its reservations, completely. In the chronicle that stands at the heart of this study, the *Croniken van der Duytscher Oirden*, perhaps the most elaborate origin myth of any of the military orders is produced. Several dozens of biblical and Roman/Byzantine actors are mentioned in the text. Many are described as living in the house that would later become the German hospital in Jerusalem, appropriately situated by the author on Mount Zion. Some, such as Moses, King David or the Maccabees, are characterized as direct forerunners of the Teutonic Order. Furthermore, in the prologue of the *Croniken* the order is repeatedly juxtaposed to the other military orders, especially the Order of Saint John. Contrary to historical fact, and contradicting the general consensus at the time, the Teutonic Order's hospital at Jerusalem, described as a precursor of the order founded at Acre in 1190, is even described as being slightly older than that of the Order of Saint John.

⁴⁰ Nicholson, *Images of the military orders*, 120–122; note also the late medieval role of the hospital at Rhodes as a political tool, aimed at the visiting pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem: J. Hasecker, *Die Johanniter und die Wallfahrt nach Jerusalem (1480-1522)*. Nova Mediaevalia 5 (Göttingen: V&R Unipress 2008).

⁴¹ M. Perlbach ed., *Die Statuten des Deutschen Ordens nach den ältesten Handschriften* (reprinted Hildesheim/New York: Olms 1975; Halle a. S.: Niemeyer 1890) 22; The fact that the Teutonic Order was younger than the Order of St John or the Order of the Temple was also stressed in the privilege and indulgence collections of the Teutonic Order. They explicitly stated that the privileges of the earlier military orders were subsequently applied to the Teutonic Order as well: A. Ehlers, 'Indulgentia und Historia. Die Bedeutung des Ablasses für die spätmittelalterliche Erinnerung an die Ursprünge des Deutschen Ordens und anderer Gemeinschaften', in: Ph. Josserand and M. Olivier eds., *La mémoire des origines dans les ordres religieux-militaires au Moyen Âge. Die Erinnerung an die eigenen Ursprünge in den geistlichen Ritterorden im Mittelalter*. Vita regularis 51 (Berlin: Lit 2012) 227–236, there 234–235; This is also regularly mentioned in the *Croniken*: *Croniken van der Duytscher Oirden*, c.116–118, c.120, c.161–162, c.404.

⁴² N.E. Morton, 'The defence of the Holy Land and the memory of the Maccabees', *Journal of Medieval History* 36 (2010) 275–293, there 290; for the German hospital in Jerusalem and claims of ownership by the Knights Hospitaller, see G. Müller, *Jerusalem oder Akkon? Über den Anfang des Deutschen Ordens nach dem gegenwärtigen Stand der Forschung* (2nd edn; Bad Münstereifel: Udo Arnold 1989); M.-L. Favreau, *Studien zur Frühgeschichte des Deutschen Ordens*. Kieler Historische Studien 21 (Stuttgart: Klett 1977).

The timing of this chronicle is particularly intriguing. New evidence presented in this study suggests that the writing of the chronicle had begun in or around 1480.⁴³ The work on the text would span well over a decade. In that same decade, but far removed, on the Iberian Peninsula, the Order of Santiago also commissioned two accounts of its origin, with some remarkable similarities to the *Croniken*. The first, the *Compilación de los milagros de Santiago* ('*Compilation of Miracles of St James*'), was written by the historian and canon Diego Rodríguez de Almela.⁴⁴ It was commissioned by a visitor of the order in Murcia on April 3rd, 1481, and finished within just three months. The short text contains many references to the life and miracles of St James and includes a mythical history of the foundation of the Order of Santiago in the early days of the Reconquista. The order's foundation is also, significantly, placed within the context of the other European and Iberian military orders. At the end follows a brief catalogue of the masters of the order.⁴⁵

Although the master of the order, Alfonso de Cárdenas, welcomed this rushed attempt, soon afterwards, in 1485, he commissioned two commanders of the order, Pedro de Orozco and Juan de la Parra, to write a second, more substantial chronicle on the order's history, edited as the *Primera historia de la Orden de Santiago* ('*First History of the Order of Santiago*').⁴⁶ Building further on some of the foundations laid out by Almela in the *Compilación*, they finished it in 1488.⁴⁷ However, they omitted the suggestion – apparently controversial at the time – that the order was founded in the ninth century during the early days of the Reconquista.⁴⁸ Around the same time the *Chronik der vier Orden von Jerusalem* ('*Chronicle of the Four Orders of Jerusalem*') was written in the bailiwick of the Teutonic Order in Franconia. It described the history of four military orders that originated in Jerusalem: the Order of the Holy Sepulchre (not yet a military order when it was founded), the Order of Saint John, the Order of the Temple and – the major part of the text – the Teutonic Order.⁴⁹

This sudden rise in production of similar histories by chroniclers from military orders in disparate European regions is striking. Especially noteworthy are the shared interests of Almela and the authors of the *Croniken* and *Chronik der vier*

⁴³ Some elements of the text may, however, have pre-existed, but it is unclear for how long. For more information, see chapter 2.

⁴⁴ J. Torres Fontes ed., *Compilación de los milagros de Santiago de Diego Rodríguez de Almela* (Murcia: Universidad de Murcia 1946).

⁴⁵ D.W. Lomax, 'The medieval predecessors of Rades y Andrada', *Iberoromania* 23 (1986) 81–90, there 85–86; Ph. Josserand, 'L'Ordre de Santiago face au récit de ses origines au tournant du Moyen Âge et de l'Époque Moderne. Variations sur l'espace et le temps', in: Ph. Josserand and M. Olivier eds., *La mémoire des origines dans les ordres religieux-militaires au Moyen Âge. Die Erinnerung an die eigenen Ursprünge in den geistlichen Ritterorden im Mittelalter*. Vita regularis 51 (Berlin: Lit 2012) 121–134, there 128–132.

⁴⁶ A. de Vargas-Zúñiga y Montero de Espinosa ed., *[Primera] historia de la Orden de Santiago. Manuscrito del siglo XV, de la Real Academia de la Historia* (Badajoz: Institución "Pedro de Valencia" de la Excelentísima Diputación Provincial 1978).

⁴⁷ Lomax, 'Medieval predecessors', 86–88.

⁴⁸ Josserand, 'L'Ordre de Santiago', 125–126.

⁴⁹ R. Töppen, 'Chronik der vier Orden von Jerusalem', in: W. Hubatsch and U. Arnold eds., *Scriptores Rerum Prussicarum. Die Geschichtsquellen der preussischen Vorzeit VI* (Reprint/adaptation of 1895; Frankfurt am Main 1968) 106–164; Mathieu Olivier, following a review of the edition by Max Perlbach, dates the chronicle later, between 1516 and 1522. Perlbach found similarities between the *Chronik der vier Orden von Jerusalem* and the world chronicle by Johannes Nauclerus, which was posthumously published in 1516, and assumed it was used as a source. However, a quick examination of some watermarks showed that the date is actually closer to 1491, the date mentioned by the editor Robert Töppen. I have not been able to further study the manuscript and its content. M. Olivier, *Une chronique de l'ordre Teutonique et ses usages à la fin du Moyen Âge: l'Ancienne Chronique des Grands-Maîtres et sa réception jusqu'au milieu du XVIe siècle* (unpublished doctoral thesis under direction of J.-M. Moeglin, Paris: Université Paris XII Val de Marne 2009) 1013; M. Perlbach, '[Review: R. Töppen ed., *Chronik der vier Orden von Jerusalem*]', *Alt-preußische Monatsschrift* NF 32 (1895) 348–350.

Orden von Jerusalem in describing the histories of their respective orders in the context of that of other military orders. A possible explanation of this sudden rise may lie in the aggressive marketing strategies of the Order of Saint John after it successfully withstood the Siege of Rhodes by the Ottomans in 1480. The report of the attack by the order's vice-chancellor Guillaume Caoursin, *Obsidionis Rhodiae urbis descriptio*, was printed within months after the end of the siege in August 1480. Within twenty-two years, no less than twenty different versions by almost as many printers were printed all over Europe, including translations in English, German, Italian and Danish.⁵⁰ The text must have increased the order's prestige throughout Europe. The dissemination of the text ran parallel to campaigns by the order to sell indulgences, for instance in the Low Countries.⁵¹ This activity certainly attracted the attention of other military orders. One of the versions of Caoursin's text was printed in Zaragoza in the kingdom of Aragón on March 1, 1481. Only a month later Almela was commissioned to write a history of the Order of Santiago. Seen in this light it is particularly significant that one of the legendary appearances of Saint James in the text by Orozco and De la Parra is set at the Siege of Rhodes.⁵² In the *Chronik der vier Orden von Jerusalem*, too, the events at Rhodes in 1480 are given much attention.⁵³

The *Croniken van der Duytscher Oirden* does not mention the Siege of Rhodes. After the fall of Acre to the Mamluk Sultanate in 1291 and the expulsion of the Christians – including the military orders – from the Holy Land, the *Croniken* no longer keeps track of military orders other than the Teutonic Order and its predecessors in the Baltic region. Regarding the Order of Saint John, it only mentions that after a brief stay at Cyprus, the order relocated to the island of Rhodes.⁵⁴ The author did, however, as we shall see in chapter 3, have access to one of the Hospitallers' *Legends* as well as other Hospitaller documents. In a similar fashion to that of William of San Stefano in the early fourteenth century, the author criticized the *Legends'* historical value. Instead, he constructed an entirely new origin myth for both orders, one which was much more favourable towards the Teutonic Order – and much less so to the Hospitallers, who happened to be their close neighbours in the city of Utrecht where the *Croniken* was written.

During his work on the *Croniken*, the author may have become aware of other myths concerning the Hospitallers' past, too. For the Haarlem commandery of the Hospitallers in the County of Holland, artist-in-residence Geertgen tot Sint Jans painted an altarpiece, of which two parts survive. They were painted after 1484 and are now two of the masterpieces of the *Kunsthistorisches Museum* in Vienna. In one of these parts, the *Legend of the Relics of St John the Baptist*,

⁵⁰ 'Incunabula Short Title Catalogue' search for keywords "obsid* rhod*" <<http://istc.bl.uk/>> [accessed 2 May 2016]; for a complete list of all versions see also T.M. Vann, 'Guillaume Caoursin's Descriptio Obsidione Rhodiae and the archives of the Knights of Malta', in: Z. Hunyadi and J. Laszlovszky eds., *The Crusades and the Military Orders. Expanding the Frontiers of Medieval Latin Christianity*. CEU Mediaevalia 1 (Budapest: Central European University Press 2001) 109–120, there 115–117; an edition and English translation has recently become available: T.M. Vann and D.J. Kagay, *Hospitaller Piety and Crusader Propaganda. Guillaume Caoursin's Description of the Ottoman Siege of Rhodes, 1480* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate 2015).

⁵¹ P. Fredericq, *Codex documentorum sacratissimarum indulgentiarum Neerlandicarum. Verzameling van stukken betreffende de pauselijke aflaten in de Nederlanden (1300-1600)*. Rijks Geschiedkundige Publicatiën: Kleine Serie 21 (The Hague: Nijhoff 1922) 287–288, 291–293; See also: Vann, 'Guillaume Caoursin's Descriptio Obsidione', 114; H.J. Nicholson, *The Knights Hospitaller* (Woodbridge/Rochester, NY: Boydell 2001) 62.

⁵² Lomax, 'Medieval predecessors', 87; De Vargas-Zúñiga y Montero de Espinosa ed., *Primera historia de la Orden de Santiago*, 333 (Lib. I, c. VIII).

⁵³ Töppen, 'Chronik der vier Orden', 115–116.

⁵⁴ *Croniken van der Duytscher Oirden*, c.511.

the Hospitallers are portrayed rescuing the relics of St John from being burned by Emperor Julian the Apostate in the fourth century.⁵⁵ The commission of the painting was triggered by a diplomatic gift Sultan Bayezid II made to the order in 1484 as part of a larger settlement.⁵⁶ That gift comprised of two relics of St John – an arm and finger –, both depicted on the altarpiece in the hands of the Haarlem Hospitallers (Figure 1.1).



Figure 1.1 Geertgen tot Sint Jans, *Legend of the Relics of St John the Baptist, after 1484* (detail). Haarlem Hospitallers depicted rescuing the arm and finger of St John the Baptist from being burned by Emperor Julian the Apostate in 362 AD. It is generally considered the first group portrait in the Netherlands.⁵⁷

For the Hospitallers, the possession of such relics enhanced both their political and especially their religious reputation. Relics were also suitable objects to convey community pride to the outside world, or compete with other religious communities for funds, protection or spiritual standing.⁵⁸ No wonder the Haarlem Hospitallers, all priest-brethren, chose to publicize it so soon after the gift was made hundreds of miles away in the Mediterranean. The timing of the propagation in Haarlem of the translation of the relics followed the dissemination of Guillaume Caoursin's account on the Siege of Rhodes and the accompanying indulgence campaigns, also in the Low Countries, shortly. This means that in the span of a couple of years the Order of Saint John greatly intensified the attempts to seek publicity for its actions and improve its standing. Judging from the coinciding appearances of the aforementioned historiographical texts from other military orders, in the Iberian Peninsula, Franconia and in the Low Countries, the Hospitallers' publicity drive

⁵⁵ The painting is also known as *Burning and Restitution of the Bones of the Baptist*: M. Faries, 'The Vienna wing panels by Geertgen tot Sint Jans and his drawing and painting technique', *Oud Holland* 123 (2010) 187–219.

⁵⁶ Nicholson, *The Knights Hospitaller*, 62–63.

⁵⁷ Geertgen tot Sint Jans, 'Legend of the Relics of St John the Baptist', *Google Cultural Institute: Art Project* <<https://www.google.com/culturalinstitute/asset-viewer/legend-of-the-relics-of-st-john-the-baptist/2wHsU51xGd9knQ>> [accessed 2 May 2016].

⁵⁸ P.J. Geary, *Furta sacra. Thefts of relics in the central Middle Ages* (revised ed.; Princeton: Princeton University Press 1990) 58, 82–86.

provoked competing activities in the other orders. It appears to have created an atmosphere of competition between the military orders lasting about a decade.

While, as I have indicated, the various narratives of the military orders, and in particular the origin myths, had functions aimed at external audiences – whether they be competing military orders or otherwise – they were also aimed at audiences within the respective orders that produced them. Judging from the dissemination of the texts, internal audiences (i.e., the brethren of the orders) were often the first consumers of such narratives. At first sight, Caoursin's report of the Siege of Rhodes does not suggest such internal consumption: although it was spread widely, it is absent from the order's main archives.⁵⁹ This would appear to highlight the external use of the report.⁶⁰ However, both Almela's history and the one by Orozco and Parra, as well as the *Croniken*, were accompanied by, or even occasioned by an internal reform programme.⁶¹ They also provided *exempla*, moral anecdotes, for both brethren and prelates, and helped create a corporate spirit based on a sense of a shared, illustrious past. As will become clear over the course of this study, the functions of such texts, and their intended audiences, were often multifaceted and complex.

Other narrative traditions

These origin myths and the more complex chronicles that contained them were not the only types of narrative sources the military orders produced. Jürgen Sarnowsky has recently categorized the historiographical activity of the military orders.⁶² Some categories, such as the legends described above, developed quite early. Another early form of rudimentary historical writing arose from the practice to commemorate the deceased masters and other brethren or benefactors of the orders. In almost all military orders, much like in other religious orders, lists or catalogues of the prelates were available – akin to the popular historiographical genre of *gesta*.⁶³ In many cases these catalogues were enlarged with additional information about the lives of the masters, ranging from very brief, stereotypical character sketches to more extensive biographical remarks, such as those of the Hospitallers' *Cronica magistrorum defunctorum* ('Chronicle of the Deceased Masters') or the Teutonic Order's *Hochmeisterverzeichnisse* ('Catalogues of the Grand Masters').⁶⁴

⁵⁹ Vann, 'Guillaume Caoursin's Descriptio Obsidione', 109.

⁶⁰ The brethren did play a crucial role in disseminating the text: *Ibid.*, 114.

⁶¹ Lomax, 'Medieval predecessors', 85. For the latter, see in the chapters below.

⁶² J. Sarnowsky, 'Historical writing in the Military Orders. 12th-16th centuries', in: I.C.F. Fernandes ed., *As Ordens Militares e as ordens de cavalaria entre o Ocidente e o Oriente. Actas do V Encontro sobre Ordens Militares*. Coleção Ordens Militares 2 (reprinted in: J. Sarnowsky, *On the Military Orders in Medieval Europe. Structures and Perceptions*, Variorum Collected Studies CS992 (Farnham/Burlington VT: Ashgate 2011) III 109-119; Palmela: Câmara Municipal de Palmela 2009) 109-119; Sarnowsky, 'Entwicklung des historischen Selbstverständnisses'.

⁶³ M. Sot, *Gesta episcoporum, gesta abbatum*. Typologie des sources du moyen âge occidental 37 (Turnhout: Brepols 1981); R. Kaiser, 'Die Gesta episcoporum als Genus der Geschichtsschreibung', in: A. Scharer and G. Scheibelreiter eds., *Historiographie im frühen Mittelalter*. Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für österreichische Geschichtsschreibung 32 (Vienna/München 1994) 459-480; S. Vanderputten, 'Typology of Medieval Historiography Reconsidered: a Social Re-interpretation of Monastic Annals, Chronicles and Gesta', *Historical Social Research* 26 (2001) 141-178, there 152-155.

⁶⁴ 'Cronica Magistrorum Defunctorum', in: W. Dugdale ed., *Monasticon Anglicanum. A history of the abbies and other monasteries, hospitals, frieries, and cathedral and collegiate churches, with their dependencies, in England and Wales* 2. 6 (London: Bohn 1846) 796-798; For some short remarks regarding these texts: A.T. Luttrell, 'The Hospitallers' Historical Activities: 1291-1400', *Annales de l'Ordre Souverain Militaire de Malte* 24 (1966) 126-129, there 128-129; E. Strehlke, 'Verzeichniss der Hochmeister des

As a further category of narrative sources which existed early within the military orders, Sarnowsky further identifies reports and narratives of particular military conflicts. Such reports were used to inform both brethren and outsiders of the order's achievements. They could assume very divergent forms, both in length and in terms of appearance.⁶⁵ Gathered together such narratives, existing in most military orders, would form ideal ingredients from which to compose more substantial chronicles of the order's history, but only in the Teutonic Order, and to a lesser degree in the Order of Santiago, did such a substantive historiographical tradition develop. Both will be discussed here.

The number of historiographical texts linked to the military orders was by far the largest in the Teutonic Order.⁶⁶ The production of narrative sources within the Teutonic Order commenced in the mid-thirteenth century. Most of the early works were rather short, such as the prologue to the order's statutes and the so-called *Bericht Hermann von Salzas über die Eroberung Preussens* ('Account of Hermann of Salza on the Conquest of Prussia') and *Bericht Hartmanns von Heldringen über die Vereinigung des Schwertbrüderordens mit dem Deutschen Orden* ('Account of Hartmann of Heldringen on the Union of the Order of the Sword Brothers with the Teutonic Order').⁶⁷ There was a strong preference for the vernacular, although Latin was used as well. From the late thirteenth century increasingly substantial texts were produced. The legendary origin myths, together with necrologies and catalogues of grand masters and military reports were aggregated into a full-blown historiographical tradition. Although most military orders combined some or all of these different genres, the Teutonic Order was quite unique in bringing the genres together in comprehensive historiographies.

The first large chronicle was written at the end of the thirteenth century in Livonia: the *Livländische Reimchronik* ('Livonian Rhymed Chronicle').⁶⁸ It was followed a few decades later by substantial examples from Prussia. From that moment onwards, the historiographical traditions in Prussia and Livonia developed largely independently of each other. The backbone of the historiographical tradition of the order in Prussia was formed by the Latin chronicle by Peter of Dusburg, the popular translation in rhyme by Nikolaus of Jeroschin, and the fifteenth-century prose adaptation, the *Ältere Hochmeisterchronik* ('Older Chronicle of the Grand Masters').⁶⁹ In Livonia a continuation may have been

Deutschen Ordens', in: Th. Hirsch, E. Strehlke and M. Töppen eds., *Scriptores Rerum Prussicarum. Die Geschichtsquellen der preussischen Vorzeit bis zum Untergange der Ordensherrschaft III* (Leipzig 1866) 388–397; There are ample other examples. For some of these: Sarnowsky, 'Entwicklung des historischen Selbstverständnisses', 48–52.

⁶⁵ Nicholson, *Images of the military orders*, 105–107; Sarnowsky, 'Historical writing', 113–114; Sarnowsky, 'Entwicklung des historischen Selbstverständnisses', 54–56.

⁶⁶ See also the various entries in the *Encyclopedia of the Medieval Chronicle*. References to the chronicles can be found in the overview article: G. Dunphy, 'Teutonic Order chronicle tradition', in: G. Dunphy ed., *Encyclopedia of the Medieval Chronicle* (Leiden/Boston: Brill 2010) 1412–1414.

⁶⁷ Perlbach ed., *Statuten*; Th. Hirsch, 'Hermann von Salza's Bericht über die Eroberung Preussens', in: Th. Hirsch, E. Strehlke and M. Töppen eds., *Scriptores Rerum Prussicarum. Die Geschichtsquellen der preussischen Vorzeit bis zum Untergange der Ordensherrschaft V* (Leipzig 1874) 153–168; Th. Hirsch, 'Hartmanns von Heldringen Bericht über die Vereinigung des Schwertbrüderordens mit dem Deutschen Orden und über die Erwerbung Livlands durch den letztern', in: Th. Hirsch, E. Strehlke and M. Töppen eds., *Scriptores Rerum Prussicarum. Die Geschichtsquellen der preussischen Vorzeit bis zum Untergange der Ordensherrschaft V* (Leipzig 1874) 168–172.

⁶⁸ L. Meyer ed., *Livländische Reimchronik. Mit Anmerkungen, Namenverzeichniss und Glossar* (reprinted Hildesheim/New York: Olms 1963; Paderborn 1876).

⁶⁹ Scholz and Wojtecki eds., *Peter von Dusburg*; Strehlke, 'Kronike von Pruzinlant'; recently translated in English: M.C. Fischer, *The chronicle of Prussia by Nicolaus von Jeroschin. A history of the Teutonic Knights in Prussia, 1190-1331*. Crusade Texts in Translation 20 (Farnham: Ashgate 2010); Olivier, *L'Ancienne Chronique des Grand-Maîtres*.

added to the *Livländische Reimchronik* in the mid-fourteenth century; around the same time, Hermann of Wartberge produced a separate chronicle in Latin prose.⁷⁰ At a later stage, at least from the early sixteenth century, short chronicles containing biographies of the masters of Livonia started to appear. This type of biographical historiography also became popular in Prussia and in the bailiwicks in the Holy Roman Empire.⁷¹

Chronicles were far from the only type of narrative texts created or read within the order. It has been associated with a wide variety of texts, including most notably many bible translations.⁷² In the past this corpus of texts has been referred to as ‘Deutschordensliteratur’ (‘literature of the Teutonic Order’), although there is some debate about both the usefulness and scope of this category.⁷³ It is interesting that, eventually, the narrative traditions which originated in the Teutonic Order formed the basis for traditions that were primarily concerned with the lands they governed: the chronicles of the order found a new readership among the citizens of Prussia and Livonia who were becoming increasingly aware of their own history and its connection with that of the order.⁷⁴

The historiographical tradition of the Teutonic Order has been attracting academic study for well over a century and a half. In the second half of the nineteenth century many of the chronicles were edited in the impressive *Scriptores*

⁷⁰ A. Mentzel-Reuters, ‘Bartholomaeus Hoeneke. Ein Historiograph zwischen Überlieferung und Fiktion’, in: M. Thumser ed., *Geschichtsschreibung im mittelalterlichen Livland*. Schriften der Baltischen Historischen Kommission 18 (Berlin: Lit 2011) 11–58; E. Strehlke, ‘Hermann de Wartberge. Chronicon Livoniae’, in: Th. Hirsch, E. Strehlke and M. Töppen eds., *Scriptores Rerum Prussicarum. Die Geschichtsquellen der preussischen Vorzeit bis zum Untergange der Ordensherrschaft II* (Leipzig 1863) 9–178.

⁷¹ A. Thumser, ‘Livländische Amtsträgerreihen des Mittelalters. Kleine Meisterchronik - Rigaer Bischofschronik - Series episcoporum Curoniae’, in: M. Thumser ed., *Geschichtsschreibung im mittelalterlichen Livland*. Schriften der Baltischen Historischen Kommission 18 (Berlin: Lit 2011) 201–253.

⁷² An example of how the use of literature in the Teutonic Order had a much wider influence outside is provided by the poet Augustijnken, who visited the Teutonic Order’s court in Prussia in the company of his lord: G. Warnar, ‘Augustijnken in Pruisen. De driifveren van een Middelnederlandse dichter en literatuur binnen de Duitse Orde’, *Jaarboek voor Middeleeuwse Geschiedenis* 8 (2005) 101–139; in general see also: A. Mentzel-Reuters, ‘“Deutschordensliteratur” im literarischen Kontext’, in: J. Wenta, S. Hartmann and G. Vollmann-Profe eds., *Mittelalterliche Kultur und Literatur im Deutschordensstaat in Preussen: Leben und Nachleben*. Sacra Bella Septentrionalia 1 (Toruń: UMK 2008) 355–368; R.G. Päsler, ‘Bedingungen für Literatur. Literaturförderung durch Mitglieder des Deutschen Ordens im Preußenland im historischen Prozess’, in: B. Jähnig and A. Mentzel-Reuters eds., *Neue Studien zur Literatur im Deutschen Orden*. Zeitschrift für deutsches Altertum und deutsche Literatur, Beihefte 19 (Stuttgart: Hirzel 2014) 59–78.

⁷³ For discussions regarding the terms “Deutschordensliteratur” and “Deutschordensdichtung”, including references to literature, see: F. Löser, ‘Literatur im Deutsche Orden. Vorüberlegingen zu ihrer Geschichte’, in: J. Wenta, S. Hartmann and G. Vollmann-Profe eds., *Mittelalterliche Kultur und Literatur im Deutschordensstaat in Preussen: Leben und Nachleben*. Sacra Bella Septentrionalia 1 (Toruń: UMK 2008) 331–354; E. Feistner, M. Neecke and G. Vollmann-Profe, *Krieg im Visier. Bibelepik und Chronistik im Deutschen Orden als Modell korporativer Identitätsbildung*. Hermaea. Germanistische Forschungen. Neue Folge 114 (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer 2007) 21–25; for a bibliography of scholarly studies regarding medieval literature used by the brethren of the Teutonic Order and in Prussia: R.G. Päsler, ‘Überlegungen zu einer Literaturgeschichte des mittelalterlichen Preussenlandes’, in: J. Wenta, S. Hartmann and G. Vollmann-Profe eds., *Mittelalterliche Kultur und Literatur im Deutschordensstaat in Preussen: Leben und Nachleben*. Sacra Bella Septentrionalia 1 (Toruń: UMK 2008) 369–392, there 385–391.

⁷⁴ A key publication regarding sixteenth-century Prussian historiography and its roots in the Teutonic Order’s historiography is: U. Arnold, *Studien zur preussischen Historiographie des 16. Jahrhunderts* (Bonn 1967); see also: A. Mentzel-Reuters, ‘Von der Ordenschronik zur Landesgeschichte - Die Herausbildung der altpreußischen Landeshistoriographie im 16. Jahrhundert’, in: K. Garber, M. Komorowski and A.E. Walter eds., *Kulturgeschichte Ostpreußens in der Frühen Neuzeit* (Tübingen: Niemeyer 2001) 581–637; Olivier, *L’Ancienne Chronique des Grand-Maîtres*, particularly 1059–1146.

Rerum Prussicarum.⁷⁵ In the current century scholarly interest in the historiographical tradition of the Teutonic Order has grown substantially.⁷⁶

Three recent studies give a good and systematic overview of the wide variety of narrative sources written, copied and read in the order. In his dissertation on the fifteenth-century *Ältere Hochmeisterchronik*, Mathieu Olivier has examined one of the major chronicles, its sources and its possible use as a source to further chronicles – including the *Croniken*. As such, because of the central role of the *Ältere Hochmeisterchronik* within this tradition, Olivier's dissertation presents an extensive study of all historiography in the Teutonic Order. A particularly valuable feature of Olivier's study is its inclusion of a systematic examination of codicological aspects of the manuscripts containing these texts; codicological analysis has been lacking in most previous studies of the literature in the Teutonic Order.⁷⁷

Two other recent studies examined the texts, with a stronger focus on their functionality. Edith Feistner, Gisela Vollmann-Profe and Michael Neecke investigated the role of the textual production of the Teutonic Order in creating a corporate identity; they focused not only on historiography, but also on religious literary works such as bible translations.⁷⁸ On a related subject, the dissertation of Marcus Wüst examined the self-perception of the Teutonic Order. He also explored both historiographical and religious works, but with a markedly different approach, covering a much wider selection of (types of) medieval texts associated with the order, and even including non-textual sources such as architecture in his analysis. His study, therefore, provides a survey of the types of texts available in the order.⁷⁹

The historiography produced by the brethren of the Order of Santiago in the Iberian Peninsula has been studied much less.⁸⁰ Besides the *Compilación de los milagros de Santiago* by Diego Rodríguez de Almela and the *Primera historia de la Orden Santiago* by Pedro de Orozco and Juan de la Parra, also two sets of annals, a short chronicle, and a biography of one of the masters of the order have been preserved. The earliest of these texts, the *Anales viejos de Uclés* ('*Old Annals of Uclés*'), may date back to the late thirteenth century. By contrast, the other Spanish military orders do not appear to have developed any substantial historiographical activities, at least until the late sixteenth century, when Francisco de Rades y Andrada, member of the Order of Calatrava, published his *Chronica de las tres Ordenes y Cauallerias*

⁷⁵ Th. Hirsch, E. Strehlke and M. Töppen eds., *Scriptores Rerum Prussicarum. Die Geschichtsquellen der preussischen Vorzeit bis zum Untergange der Ordensherrschaft I-V* (Leipzig 1861-1874).

⁷⁶ Note for instance these recent volumes: J. Wenta, S. Hartmann and G. Vollmann-Profe eds., *Mittelalterliche Kultur und Literatur im Deutschordensstaat in Preussen: Leben und Nachleben*. *Sacra Bella Septentrionalia* 1 (Toruń: UMK 2008); M. Thumser ed., *Geschichtsschreibung im mittelalterlichen Livland*. *Schriften der Baltischen Historischen Kommission* 18 (Berlin: Lit 2011); B. Jähnig and A. Mentzel-Reuters eds., *Neue Studien zur Literatur im Deutschen Orden*. *Zeitschrift für deutsches Altertum und deutsche Literatur*, Beihefte 19 (Stuttgart: Hirzel 2014); Also noteworthy is the work on the order's libraries and non-fiction texts in medieval Prussia, particularly by Arno Mentzel-Reuters and Ralf Päsler: Mentzel-Reuters, *Arma spiritualia*; R.G. Päsler, *Deutschsprachige Sachliteratur im Preußenland bis 1500. Untersuchungen zu ihrer Überlieferung* (Köln 2003); Päsler and Schmidtke eds., *Deutschsprachige Literatur*; A. Breith et al. eds., *Manuscripta germanica. Deutschsprachige Handschriften des Mittelalters in Bibliotheken und Archiven Osteuropas*. *Zeitschrift für deutsches Altertum und deutsche Literatur*, Beihefte 15 (Stuttgart: Hirzel 2012).

⁷⁷ Olivier, *L'Ancienne Chronique des Grand-Maîtres*.

⁷⁸ Feistner, Neecke and Vollmann-Profe, *Krieg im Visier*.

⁷⁹ M. Wüst, *Studien zum Selbstverständnis des Deutschen Ordens im Mittelalter*. *Quellen und Studien zur Geschichte des Deutschen Ordens* 73 (Weimar: VDG 2013).

⁸⁰ There is in fact only one article, from 1986, that provides an overview of the historiographical activities of all Spanish military orders: Lomax, 'Medieval predecessors'; regarding the origin myths of the Order of Santiago, see recently Jossierand, 'L'Ordre de Santiago'.

de Sanctiago, Calatraua y Alcantara ('Chronicle of the Three Orders and Knights of Santiago, Calatrava and Alcantara').⁸¹ This does not mean, however, that these other orders did not feel the need to write their own history. Within the Order of Saint John (the Hospitallers), for example, this need was expressed several times.⁸² Although many brethren expressed a high level of literacy,⁸³ the historical activities of William of San Stefano, whose work has been briefly mentioned, were not continued by later brethren. In addition, his texts can not be considered a continuous history of the order.⁸⁴ Juan Fernández de Heredia, grand master between 1377 and 1396, is known for commissioning an impressive scheme of translating numerous historiographical works into Aragonese. But as far as we know, he did not show a specific interest in the history of his own order.⁸⁵ Apparently, the only attempt to write a continuous history of the Order of Saint John before the late sixteenth century was conducted between 1437 and 1454 by Melchior Bandini, chancellor at Rhodes. He wrote a history of the order until his own times, but little is known of its fate and historical value.⁸⁶ Only with the writings of his vice-chancellor, Guillaume Caoursin, a large audience was reached.⁸⁷ The consequences of Caoursin's account for competing historiographical activities in the other military orders have been discussed in much detail above.

It remains unclear why the Hospitallers did not, during the Middle Ages, appear to have written a history of their order. Perhaps tackling the archival material turned out to be too much of a challenge for most brethren with a historical

⁸¹ Lomax, 'Medieval predecessors'; D.W. Lomax, 'A lost mediaeval biography: the "Corónica del Maestre Pelayo Pérez"', *Bulletin of Hispanic studies* 61 (1961) 153–154; F. de Rades y Andrada, *Chronica de las tres Ordenes y Cauallerias de Sanctiago, Calatraua y Alcantara* (Toledo: J. de Ayala 1572); the following article is (mostly) concerned with modern historiography of the military orders in the Iberian Peninsula: D.W. Lomax, 'La historiografía de las ordenes militares en la Península Ibérica. 1100-1550', *Hidalguía* 23 (1975) 711–724.

⁸² E.g.: A.T. Luttrell, 'The Hospitallers' Historical Activities: 1400-1530', *Annales de l'Ordre Souverain Militaire de Malte* 25 (1967) 145–150, there 149; some of the order's libraries did contain historical texts, showing at least some interest in history by the brethren: Luttrell, 'Historical Activities: 1291-1400', 129; Legras and Lemaître, 'Pratique liturgique', 122, 136; J.J. Witter ed., *Catalogus codicum mancriptorum, in bibliotheca sacri ordinis Hierosolymitani Argentorati asservatorum* (Strasbourg: Kürsner 1746) 45.

⁸³ A particularly interesting example of the intellectual level of some Hospitaller commanderies is the commandery "Zum Grünen Wörth" at Strasbourg. From the fourteenth century onwards it became a meeting place for mystics in the Rhineland, known as the "Gottesfreunde": K. Borchardt, 'Wirtschaft und Ordensreform im späten Mittelalter. Das Beispiel der Johanniter in Straßburg (mit Ausblick auf Breslau)', in: R. Czaja and J. Sarnowsky eds., *Die Ritterorden in der europäischen Wirtschaft des Mittelalters. Ordines Militares. Colloquia Torunensia Historica XII* (Toruń: UMK 2003) 35–54; B. Fleith, 'Remotus a tumultu civitatis? Die Johanniterkommende "zum Grünen Wörth" im 15. Jahrhundert', in: S. Mossmann, N.F. Palmer and F. Heinzer eds., *Schreiben und Lesen in der Stadt. Literaturbetrieb im spätmittelalterlichen Straßburg*. Kulturtopographie des alemannischen Raums 4 (Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter 2012) 411–468; S. Mossmann and N.F. Palmer, 'Ulrich der Johanniter vom Grünen Wörth and his Adaptation of the "Liber amoris". A Critical Edition of the "Hoheliedpredigt" and of its German Precursor "Die Höhenflüge der Seele"', in: S. Mossmann, N.F. Palmer and F. Heinzer eds., *Schreiben und Lesen in der Stadt. Literaturbetrieb im spätmittelalterlichen Straßburg*. Kulturtopographie des alemannischen Raums 4 (Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter 2012) 469–520; For many other examples: Luttrell, 'Historical Activities: 1291-1400'; Luttrell, 'Historical Activities: 1400-1530'; A.T. Luttrell, 'The Hospitallers' Historical Activities: 1530-1630', *Annales de l'Ordre Souverain Militaire de Malte* 26 (1968) 57–69.

⁸⁴ Luttrell, 'Historical Activities: 1291-1400', 125–126.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 128; For one of Heredia's historiographical projects, including references to other literature: A.T. Luttrell, 'Juan Fernández de Heredia's History of Greece', *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 34 (2010) 30–37.

⁸⁶ Luttrell, 'Historical Activities: 1400-1530', 146, 150.

⁸⁷ A few decades later, following the loss of Rhodes in 1522, a wide range of chronicles and short texts were produced by the brethren of the Order of St John, including no less than four chronicles that were printed between 1523 and 1525. M. Mager, *Krisenerfahrung und Bewältigungsstrategien des Johanniterordens nach der Eroberung von Rhodos 1522* (Münster: Aschendorff 2014) 36–68.

interest. The presence of existing narratives could function as a catalyst for further historiographical production, creating a tradition of history writing. Such a tradition was clearly absent in the Order of St John. There are, nevertheless, ample examples of independent monastic, courtly and urban traditions based on local archival collections – thus there is no reason the Hospitallers could not get involved in history writing. The multilingual nature of the Order of Saint John may also have been a deterring factor, both in terms of access to sources and in terms of reaching non-Latinate audiences. In order to understand why in the Teutonic Order such a strong tradition in writing historical (and religious) texts emerged and how these texts functioned within the institutional structures of the order, it can be hugely valuable to study the lack of such a tradition in similar institutions.

To some extent, the Hospitallers' *Legends* did function as an historical account of the order, but they remain just a first step towards a grander historical narrative. However, especially if we count the legendary texts in the same category as the more straightforwardly historiographical production of the military orders, one observation can be made which may be an explanatory factor. It appears that the orders that carried out a dual role of fighting for the faith and caring for the sick, rather than those focussed on military activities alone, were also more likely to engage in creating historical narratives. The Teutonic Order, the Orders of Santiago, of Saint John and of Lazarus, who all administered hospitals, each appear to have been more occupied with writing their own history than for instance the Templars or the Spanish military orders such as those of Calatrava and Alcántara.⁸⁸ Perhaps the hospitaller orders were overall better equipped for such writing activities, in terms of the background of their personnel, especially the priest-brethren.⁸⁹ Whereas, crudely put, the Order of the Temple had to assert itself primarily on the battlefield, the hospitaller orders could use the pen *and* sword. It enabled them to be more flexible and pro-active in publicizing the achievements of their orders. Perhaps ironically, examples such as the *Croniken van der Duytscher Oirden* show that these publicized achievements remained predominantly military.

⁸⁸ The exception is the late sixteenth-century chronicle by Francisco de Rades y Andrada, member of the Order of Calatrava. It encompasses the history of the three main military orders in Spain: De Rades y Andrada, *Chronica de las tres Ordenes*.

⁸⁹ This, of course, cannot be anything more than a generalization of the different military orders, as all orders, including the Order of the Temple, had priest-brethren amongst their midst. Regarding the priest-brethren in the different military orders: J. Sarnowsky, 'The priests in the military orders - a comparative approach on their standing and role', in: N. Bériou, Ph. Josserand and L.F. Oliviera eds., *Élites et ordres militaires au Moyen Âge* (reprinted in: J. Sarnowsky, *On the Military Orders in Medieval Europe. Structures and Perceptions*, Variorum Collected Studies CS992 (Farnham/Burlington VT: Ashgate 2011) XVIII 1-14; Madrid: Casa de Velázquez 2012) 1–14; A. Gilmour-Bryson, 'Priests of the Order of the Temple: What Can They Tell Us?', in: J. Burgtorf, P.F. Crawford and H.J. Nicholson eds., *The Debate on the Trial of the Templars (1307-1314)* (Farnham/Burlington, VT: Ashgate 2010) 327–338; R.J. Stapel, 'Priests in the military orders. A prosopographical survey of the priest-brethren in the Utrecht bailiwick of the Teutonic Order (1350-1600)', in: K. Toomaspoeg ed., *Analecta Theutonica. Studies for the History of the Teutonic Order 1*. Acta Theutonica 10 (Galatina: Congedo 2014) 99–149.

1.3 The *Croniken van der Duytscher Oirden*

Editorial history

While ever since chronicles became subject of antiquarian research, there has been no lack of interest in the *Croniken van der Duytscher Oirden*, no substantial studies have been dedicated to it. In the process, there have been many ways in which the chronicle has been referred to. In the early sixteenth century, (an adaptation of) the text was referred to as “Preuschen cronica”, a Prussian chronicle.⁹⁰ Later that century, the *Croniken* may perhaps be identified with “an old handwritten chronicle of the Teutonic Order in Prussia and Livonia”, mentioned by Livonian chronicler Moritz Brandis.⁹¹ Christoph Hartknoch, who in 1679 first published the *Chronica Terrae Prussiae* (*Chronicle of the Prussian Land*) by Teutonic Order’s priest Peter of Dusburg, referred to the *Croniken* simply as “Chronicle of the order, commonly called *Ordens-Chronick* [*Order’s Chronicle*] or *Hohemeister-Chronick* [*Grand Masters’ Chronicle*].”⁹²

In 1710, Antonius Matthaeus (1635-1710), professor of law at the universities of Utrecht and Leiden, published the *Croniken* as part of his monumental edition series of medieval Dutch chronicles, *Veteris aevi analecta*.⁹³ He edited both the main chronicle and a part of the *Croniken* that covers the history of the Utrecht bailiwick, treating them as separate works, and referred to them as ‘*Chronicon Equestris Ordinis Teutonici, incerti auctoris*’ (*Chronicle of the Knights of the Teutonic Order, by an unknown author*) and ‘*Libellus de vitis Praefectorum Trajectensium, cum ejusdem observationibus*’ (*Booklet of the Lives of the Governors of Utrecht, with observations thereof*). Extracts on Livonian history taken from the chronicle (on this occasion simply titled ‘*Deutsch-Ordens Chronik*’ (*Teutonic Order’s Chronicle*)) were published by Karl Rußwurm in 1839 and Carl Napiersky in 1840 and in 1853. Both Rußwurm and Napiersky relied on Matthaeus’ edition and a couple of (now apparently lost) Livonian manuscripts.⁹⁴ Also in 1853, Max Töppen published his

⁹⁰ See note 152.

⁹¹ “Ein altt geschrieben Cronicon deß Duutschen ordens in Preussen und Lifflandt”: Stockholm, Riksarkivet, Skoklostersamml., E8722, f. 264v.

⁹² “Chronic[on] Ordinis, vulgo appellatur *Ordens-Chronick* seu *Hohemeister-Chronick*.” Hartknoch made use of a sixteenth-century adaptation of the *Croniken* by Christoph Jan of Weissenfels (see the following chapter). C. Hartknoch, ‘Selectae dissertationes historicae de variis rebus Prussicis’, in: C. Hartknoch ed., *Petri de Dusburg, Ordinis Teutonici sacerdotis, Chronicon Prussiae. In quo Ordinis Teutonici origo, nec non res ab ejusdem Ordinis Magistris ab An. MCCXXVI usque ad An. MCCCXXVI in Prussia gestae expouuntur, cum incerti auctoris continuatione usque ad annum MCCCXXXV* (2nd, Jena: Nisius; Frankfurt am Main/Leipzig: Hallervord 1679) 1–456, there 4; Pisanski used similar terms: G.C. Pisanski, *Entwurf der Preußischen Litterärsgeschichte. Mit einer Vorrede vom Leben, Character und litterarischen Verdiensten des Verfassers*. L.E. Borowski ed. (Königsberg: Hartung 1791) 93.

⁹³ A. Matthaeus ed., *Veteris aevi analecta, seu vetera aliquot monumenta, quæ hactenus nondum visa* X (1st edn; Leiden 1710) 1–284, 343–360; Reprinted: A. Matthaeus ed., *Veteris aevi analecta, seu vetera aliquot monumenta, quæ hactenus nondum visa* V (2nd edn; Den Haag 1738) 631–818, 857–890.

⁹⁴ K.F.W. Rußwurm, ‘Notiz über die Handschrift einer Chronik des Deutschen Ordens’, *Das Inland. Eine Wochenschrift für Liv-, Esth- und Curländische Geschichte, Geographie, Statistik und Litteratur* 4 (1839) 497–503, 513–522; C.E. Napiersky, ‘Zur livländischen Chroniken-Kunde. Eingegangen und verlesen den 8. November 1839’, in: *Mittheilungen aus dem Gebiete der Geschichte Liv-, Ehst- und Kurland’s, herausgegeben von der Gesellschaft für Geschichte und Alterthumskunde der russischen Ostsee-Provinzen* I (Riga/Leipzig 1840) 419–449; C.E. Napiersky, ‘Auszug aus der Chronik des Ordens vom deutschen Hause zu St. Marien in Jerusalem, soweit solche auf Livland Bezug nimmt, mit einer Einleitung, abweichende Lesarten, Anmerkungen und einigen Worterklärungen’, in: *Scriptores Rerum Livonicarum* 1 (Riga/Leipzig: Frantzen 1853) 829–906.

Geschichte der preußischen Historiographie. He wrote quite extensively on the chronicle under the heading ‘*Hochmeisterchronik*’, following the example set by Hartknoch almost two centuries earlier.⁹⁵

Some years later, Töppen, together with Theodor Hirsch and Ernst Strehlke, contributed to an impressive compilation of historical texts that were concerned with Prussia before its secularisation in 1525, the *Scriptores Rerum Prussicarum* (SRP). The *Croniken*, edited by Theodor Hirsch, was included in its fifth volume, bringing together, for the first time, all manuscripts known at the time. Hirsch’s edition became the standard edition, and is still in use today.⁹⁶ In the substantial introduction accompanying his edition, Hirsch introduced a new title for the *Croniken*: the *Jüngere Hochmeisterchronik* (Younger Grand Master’s Chronicle).⁹⁷ The addition ‘younger’ was necessitated by the existence of a somewhat similarly structured chronicle, written a few decades before the *Croniken*. It had been edited in one of the earlier volumes of the SRP as the *Ältere Hochmeisterchronik*.⁹⁸ The name *Jüngere Hochmeisterchronik* became the most commonly used name for the *Croniken*, despite being chosen somewhat unluckily. The similar sounding titles came to carry some implication of a close and above all subsidiary relationship between the two chronicles in terms of form, structure and origin.⁹⁹ This does little justice to the basic differences between the two chronicles. Furthermore, the qualifier ‘younger’ also carries a silent assumption that the text is less historically accurate or relevant, emphasizing the chronological distance between the *Croniken* and the events it describes; events already described by many authors with greater chronological proximity. It framed the *Croniken* as an afterbirth of the Teutonic Order’s chronicle tradition.

There is a persistent tendency in all available (partial) editions of the *Croniken* to regard the work as consisting of two or more separate parts.¹⁰⁰ As I have pointed out above, Matthaëus was the first to do so in his *editio princeps* of the text. The first part (the prologue and the part containing the lives of the grand masters) is generally regarded as the main chronicle. It is this part which has been edited as *the* chronicle by Matthaëus, Napiersky and Hirsch. The second part, the so-called ‘bailiwick chronicle’ covering the Utrecht bailiwick and its land commanders, was edited as an appendix by Matthaëus, who did not give any indication of its relationship to the other part of the *Croniken*.¹⁰¹ It has

⁹⁵ Apart from the given title “*Hochmeisterchronik*”, Töppen attested the use of the names “*Chronik des deutschen Ordens*” and “*Ordenschronik*” as well. Konstantin Höhlbaum referred to the text as “*grosse Hochmeisterchronik*”. M. Töppen, *Geschichte der Preussischen Historiographie von P. v. Dusburg bis auf K. Schütz. Oder Nachweisung und Kritik der gedruckten und ungedruckten Chroniken zur Geschichte Preussens unter der Herrschaft des deutschen Ordens* (Berlin 1853) 55–87; K. Höhlbaum, *Joh. Renner’s livländische Historien und die jüngere livländische Reimchronik* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 1872) 10.

⁹⁶ Th. Hirsch, ‘Die jüngere Hochmeisterchronik’, in: Th. Hirsch, E. Strehlke and M. Töppen eds., *Scriptores Rerum Prussicarum. Die Geschichtsquellen der preussischen Vorzeit bis zum Untergange der Ordensherrschaft* V (Leipzig 1874) 1–172.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 42.

⁹⁸ M. Töppen, ‘Die ältere Hochmeisterchronik’, in: Th. Hirsch, E. Strehlke and M. Töppen eds., *Scriptores Rerum Prussicarum. Die Geschichtsquellen der preussischen Vorzeit bis zum Untergange der Ordensherrschaft* III (Leipzig 1866) 519–730.

⁹⁹ Hirsch himself always made clear that both texts had little direct relation to each other. He assumed - erroneously - that the *Ältere Hochmeisterchronik*, apart from perhaps its so-called “First Continuation”, was not a source for the *Croniken*. Hirsch, ‘Jüngere Hochmeisterchronik’, 19.

¹⁰⁰ As shown in its most extreme form in the *Narrative Sources* database. The main part of the *Croniken* (NL0402) is separated from the bailiwick’s chronicle that itself is divided into three (NL0403; NL0404; NL0405). Matthaëus’ edition is given a fifth separate record (C043). ‘The Narrative Sources from the Medieval Low Countries’ (2009-2016) <<http://www.narrative-sources.be>> [accessed 2 May 2016].

¹⁰¹ Matthaëus indicated in a note that a different manuscript in his possession contained part of a text that can now be identified as part of the bailiwick’s chronicle. Possibly, this second manuscript contained the abovementioned appendix as well, although this remains unclear. Matthaëus ed., *Veteris ævi analecta* (2nd ed.) V, 765 (note 1); J.J. de Geer van Oudegein, *Archieven der Ridderlijke Duitse Orde, Balie van Utrecht I* (Utrecht 1871) nr. 193.

more recently been edited by Jan Jacob de Geer van Oudegein, who was aware of the plans to include a new edition in the SRP series and only edited the parts of the *Croniken* that Matthaëus or Hirsch left out of their editions of the text.¹⁰²

The fact that none of the later German adaptations of the *Croniken* included the bailiwick chronicle has been seen as evidence to argue that it was not part of the original organization of the *Croniken*.¹⁰³ In many of these German adaptations other – regionally significant – texts were added at the end of the chronicle, in the location where the bailiwick chronicle is found in the Middle Dutch version. For a long time only one extant copy of the Middle Dutch text was known; it was therefore possible to think of the bailiwick part as a later addition to the *Croniken*. With the recent discovery of two more Middle Dutch copies – which both include the same bailiwick chronicle – this view is becoming increasingly hard to maintain. Rather, the bailiwick chronicle should indeed be conceived as part of the original organization of the *Croniken*, and both parts should be studied in connection to each other. In Prussia and Livonia, where the German adaptations were made, the Utrecht bailiwick chronicle had lost its significance due to its provincial interest, and was omitted or replaced by other texts.

The result of the tendency to separate the parts of the *Croniken* is that there is a certain ambiguity in recent scholarly literature as to what the name *Jüngere Hochmeisterchronik* refers to exactly. More often than not the bailiwick chronicle, absent from the standard edition prepared by Hirsch, is omitted from the analysis. The name *Jüngere Hochmeisterchronik* has become widely established, and will not easily be replaced. However, since I will study the original Middle Dutch chronicle as a whole, thus including the bailiwick chronicle, I have found it more appropriate to refer to the chronicle using a name more closely related to the medieval dissemination of the work, and one which provides an unambiguous nomenclature for the purpose of this study. In order to do this we have turned to the title given by the author himself: ‘Croniken van der Duytscher Oirden van der ridderscap van den huse ende hospitaal Onsser Liever Vrouwen van Jherusalem’ (Chronicle of the Teutonic Order of the Knighthood of the House and Hospital of Our Lady in Jerusalem)¹⁰⁴ or *Croniken van der Duytscher Oirden* in short.¹⁰⁵ The various parts of the *Croniken* will be referred to as prologue, grand masters’ part and bailiwick chronicle.

¹⁰² J.J. de Geer van Oudegein, *Archieven der Ridderlijke Duitse Orde, Balie van Utrecht II* (Utrecht 1871) 238, 244 (nr. 193).

¹⁰³ Discussing this issue: J.A. Mol, *De Friese huizen van de Duitse Orde. Nes, Steenkerk en Schoten en hun plaats in het middeleeuwse Friese kloosterlandschap* (Leeuwarden 1991) 148–153.

¹⁰⁴ *Croniken van der Duytscher Oirden*, c.1, c.75.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, c.121; Marijke Carasso-Kok has previously used this same title in her *Repertorium van verhalende historische bronnen uit de middeleeuwen*, a register bibliography of medieval Dutch medieval narrative sources: M. Carasso-Kok, *Repertorium van verhalende historische bronnen uit de middeleeuwen. Heiligenlevens, annalen, kronieken en andere in Nederland geschreven verhalende bronnen* (Den Haag 1981) nr. 137; Note the missing “n” in *Cronike* in the exact title provided by Carasso-Kok (“*Cronike van der Duytscher Oirden*”). This comes down to spelling variations in the different manuscripts of the *Croniken*. We have adhered to the spelling of the newly discovered Vienna manuscript, which is generally more accurate. Confusingly, I have myself on a previous occasion also used the alternative spelling by Carasso-Kok’s alternative spelling: R.J. Stapel and G. Vollmann-Profe, ‘Cronike van der Duytscher Oirden (Chronicle of the Teutonic Order)’, in: G. Dunphy ed., *Encyclopedia of the Medieval Chronicle I* (Leiden/Boston: Brill 2010) 328–329.

Scholarly interest

Despite the fact that the *Croniken* has so far not received a dedicated study, the chronicle is included in almost every survey of the Teutonic Order's medieval historiography. Devoting around thirty-three pages to an analysis of the *Croniken*, Töppen's work on the medieval historiography of the Order contains one of the most extensive studies on the chronicle to date.¹⁰⁶ He based himself on both Matthaeus' Middle Dutch edition and one of the later German translations, a manuscript written by a certain Peter Schwinge in 1542.¹⁰⁷ Töppen provided an overview of the chronicle: its genesis, contents, sources and importantly – as dictated by the interests of nineteenth-century historical scholarship in general – its reliability. Although lacking both a clear picture of the *Croniken's* textual tradition and an awareness of the existence of the bailiwick chronicle, Töppen made some remarkably good observations. On the basis of a closer affiliation of the Middle Dutch text to one of its sources, the *Livländische Reimchronik*, Töppen concluded that the Middle Dutch text was conceived before the German version. He also added, correctly, that the text edited by Matthaeus was either faulty or that Matthaeus edited a good manuscript in an arbitrary way.¹⁰⁸

Töppen paid most of his attention to the factual accuracy of the content, however. Regarding the chronology of the lists of grand masters and masters of Prussia and Livonia in the *Croniken*, Töppen showed his intention to correct some persistent errors in the text: "We must examine the results of the author's calculations closely, as these are the main cause for the disastrous confusion of a long line of subsequent chroniclers."¹⁰⁹ The final verdict of the *Croniken* by Töppen is therefore downright negative: "As a whole, we can describe the chronicle, as it is presented to us now, only as a sad concoction."¹¹⁰ His contemporary Napiersky was much more positive in his verdict, even if he, too, was mainly concerned with the factual significance of the contents. This is shown most clearly in his choice of extracts, inspired by his interest for the Livonian history only.¹¹¹

A big step forward in the study of the *Croniken* was taken in the 1870s. De Geer van Oudegein and Hirsch, independently, but aware of each other's efforts, each prepared editions of the parts of the *Croniken*.¹¹² De Geer's transcription of the bailiwick's chronicle is of good quality, but he neglected to provide a detailed introduction to the text, giving only a couple of remarks on the manuscript and on the differences between Matthaeus' and his own edition. He had concluded – on which grounds remains unspecified – that both parts of the chronicle were written by the same person, as can be deduced from this remark: "After the unknown author of the manuscript concludes the preceding chronicle of the Teutonic Order with the words 'Et sic est finis laus Deo', he commences, on the next page and with

¹⁰⁶ Töppen, *Preussischen Historiographie*, 55–87.

¹⁰⁷ Berlin, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin - Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Ms. Boruss., Fol. 242.

¹⁰⁸ Töppen, *Preussischen Historiographie*, 56–61.

¹⁰⁹ "Wir müssen die Resultate seiner Rechnungen ausführlich vor Augen legen, da er die Hauptursache zu der heillosen Verwirrung für eine lange Reihe der späteren Chronisten gegeben hat": Ibid., 69.

¹¹⁰ "Als Ganzes betrachtet können wir die Chronik, wie sie uns einmal vorliegt, nur ein trauriges Machwerk nennen": Ibid., 87.

¹¹¹ Napiersky, 'Livländischen Chroniken-Kunde'; Napiersky, 'Auszug aus der Chronik'.

¹¹² Factual reliability still is a major theme in both editions. One of the key questions Hirsch asked himself was "what credibility can therefore be given to his work?" ("welcherlei Glaubwürdigkeit ist demgemäss ihrer Arbeit zu schenken?"): Hirsch, 'Jüngere Hochmeisterchronik', 4; De Geer van Oudegein, *Archieven I*, nr. 193.

new pagination, the history of the bailiwick of Utrecht in particular as follows”.¹¹³ Hirsch, by contrast, believed both parts to have been written by different authors and later brought together. He, too, however, fails to substantiate this claim.¹¹⁴ On firmer grounds, Hirsch concluded that the author was “quite evidently” a member of the Teutonic Order, probably a priest-brother, and indeed from one of the bailiwicks in the Lower Rhine region, likely Utrecht.¹¹⁵ Agreeing with Töppen’s initial conclusions, Hirsch considered the *Croniken* to have been written in Middle Dutch originally, and consequently translated into a Low German dialect in Livonia. In turn, he concluded, these Livonian manuscripts provided the basis for subsequent High German translations in Prussia.¹¹⁶

Hirsch’s edition is marred with inaccuracies. His transcription was based primarily on the somewhat faulty manuscript copy still held in the archives of the Utrecht bailiwick.¹¹⁷ Hirsch correctly observed this could not have been the same manuscript as the one Matthaëus consulted in the house of the Teutonic Order in Utrecht a century and a half earlier.¹¹⁸ He compared the Utrecht manuscript, which he considered to be the oldest existing copy, to the edition by Matthaëus and several German translations. In his apparatus, he provided a reasonably complete list of variants between the different texts, but on occasion he silently made significant emendations to the text of the Utrecht manuscript.¹¹⁹ Another peculiarity of his edition is that for the Livonian tradition, he did not consult any manuscripts but relied on the edition of excerpts by Napiersky, without declaring this. As a consequence, Hirsch’s edition only provides textual variations in the Livonian manuscripts for the excerpts included in Napiersky’s.¹²⁰ The extensive remarks Hirsch made on the sources of the *Croniken* should also be handled with care, as my analysis of the sources will show.¹²¹ Nonetheless, until a few years ago Hirsch’s introduction from 1874 remained the most recent study of the *Croniken* that incorporated a direct examination of its sources. It is still the main source of information for all further analysis.

Despite the absence of a dedicated study, the significance of the chronicle has been widely acknowledged. Among the respectable number of studies in which the *Croniken* is addressed in some detail,¹²² a few recurring areas of attention

¹¹³ “Nadat dan de onbekende auteur van het handschrift de voorafgaande algemeene kronijk der Duitsche orde met het onderschrift ‘Et sic est finis laus Deo’ heeft besloten, vangt hij op een volgend blad en onder een nieuwe paginatuur de bijzondere geschiedenis der balie van Utrecht aldus aan”: De Geer van Oudegein, *Archieven* I, 244 (nr. 193); Hans Mol suggested that it might also be possible that by “author” De Geer meant only “copyist”: Mol, *Friese huizen*, 366–367 (note 114).

¹¹⁴ “Ausgelassen habe ich ferner die den Holländischen Texten vorgesetzte Einleitung oder vielmehr Inhaltsangabe, da sie ersichtlich nicht von dem Verfasser der Chronik angefertigt ist, sondern von demjenigen, der dieselbe mit der Chronik der Ballei Utrecht zu einem Ganzen verband”: Hirsch, ‘Jüngere Hochmeisterchronik’, 42.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 9.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 16.

¹¹⁷ Utrecht, Archief van de Ridderlijke Duitsche Orde, balie van Utrecht, inv.nr. 181.

¹¹⁸ Hirsch, ‘Jüngere Hochmeisterchronik’, 6–7.

¹¹⁹ E.g.: *Croniken van der Duytscher Oirden*, c.311; Hirsch, ‘Jüngere Hochmeisterchronik’, c. 158.

¹²⁰ The manuscripts involved may now be considered lost: Riga, Stadtbibliothek, Fol. 2316 (Hirsch: “R”); Birkas (Estonian: Pürksi), private collection of Baron Rudolf van Ungern-Sternberg (Hirsch: “E”). On the fate of these manuscripts see also: Olivier, *L’Ancienne Chronique des Grand-Maîtres*, 995 (notes 101, 102).

¹²¹ Recently, Hirsch’s edition has come under criticism by Mathieu Olivier too: *Ibid.*, 994–1012.

¹²² In chronological order: E. Maschke, ‘Quellen und Darstellungen in der Geschichtsschreibung des Preußenlandes’, in: P. Blunk ed., *Deutsche Staatenbildung und deutsche Kultur im Preußenland* (Königsberg 1931) 17–39, there 26–27; Edited and reprinted as: E. Maschke, ‘Die ältere Geschichtsschreibung des Preussenlandes’, in: W. Hubatsch and U. Arnold eds., *Scriptores Rerum Prussicarum. Die Geschichtsquellen der preussischen Vorzeit VI* (Frankfurt am Main 1968) 1–21, there 12–13; E. Maschke, ‘Die inneren Wandlungen des deutschen Ritterordens’, in: W. Besson and F. Hiller von Gaertringen eds., *Geschichte und Gegenwartsbewusstsein; historische Betrachtungen und Untersuchungen. Festschrift für Hans Rothfels zum 70. Geburtstag dargebracht von Kollegen*,

can be distinguished. First is the position of the text within the larger tradition of history writing in the order, as “key-stone in the building that is the official historiography of the order”, in the words of Udo Arnold.¹²³ Secondly, the *Croniken* has been seen as a unique expression and reflection of the self-consciousness of the order’s brethren in the late fifteenth century.¹²⁴ Thirdly, the *Croniken* has been recognized as one of the very few texts of the Teutonic Order that did not originate in Prussia or Livonia, but in the Holy Roman Empire.¹²⁵ This change of perspective also contributed to the fact that – for the first and only time – a history of the entire order was written, rather than one limited to the order in Prussia or Livonia.¹²⁶ More than in any other of the order’s histories, Jerusalem became the focus of the

Freunden und Schülern (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 1963) 249–277, there 271–272, 275–276; O. Engels, ‘Zur Historiographie des Deutschen Ordens im Mittelalter’, *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte* 48 (1966) 336–363, there 339–342, 358–360; Arnold, *Studien zur preussischen Historiographie*, 26–28; U. Arnold, ‘Geschichtsschreibung im Preussenland bis zum Ausgang des 16. Jahrhunderts’, *Jahrbuch für die Geschichte Mittel- und Ostdeutschlands* 19 (1970) 74–126, there 90–91; W. Wippermann, *Der Ordensstaat als Ideologie. Das Bild des Deutschen Ordens in der deutschen Geschichtsschreibung und Publizistik*. Einzelveröffentlichungen der Historischen Kommission zu Berlin 24. Publikationen zur Geschichte der deutsch-polnischen Beziehungen 2 (Berlin 1979) 64; U. Arnold, ‘Jüngere Hochmeisterchronik’, in: K. Ruh et al. eds., *Die deutsche Literatur des Mittelalters: Verfasserlexikon* 4 (Berlin: De Gruyter 1983) 922–923; H. Boockmann, ‘Geschichtsschreibung des Deutschen Ordens im Mittelalter und Geschichtsschreibung im mittelalterlichen Preußen. Entstehungsbedingungen und Funktionen’, in: K. Stackmann and L. Grenzmann eds., *Literatur und Laienbildung im Spätmittelalter und in der Reformationszeit* (Stuttgart 1984) 80–92; U. Arnold, ‘Deutschordenshistoriographie im Deutschen Reich’, in: Z.H. Nowak ed., *Die Rolle der Ritterorden in der mittelalterlichen Kultur*. Ordines Militares. Colloquia Torunensia Historica III (Toruń: UMK 1985) 65–89, there 78–81; H. Boockmann, ‘Die Geschichtsschreibung des Deutschen Ordens. Gattungsfragen und „Gebrauchssituationen“’, in: H. Patze ed., *Geschichtsschreibung und Geschichtsbewusstsein im späten Mittelalter*. Vorträge und Forschungen XXXI (Sigmaringen 1987) 447–469, there 468–469; Mol, *Friese huizen*, 148–153; U. Arnold, ‘Die Jüngere Hochmeisterchronik’, in: U. Arnold ed., *800 Jahre Deutscher Orden. Ausstellung des Germanischen Nationalmuseums Nürnberg in Zusammenarbeit mit der Internationalen Historischen Kommission zur Erforschung des Deutschen Ordens* (Gütersloh 1990) 41–42; P. Johansen, *Balthasar Rüssow als Humanist und Geschichtsschreiber. Aus dem Nachlaß ergänzt und herausgegeben von Heinz von zur Mühlen*. Quellen und Studien zur baltischen Geschichte 14 (Köln/Weimar/Wien: Böhlau 1996) 13–21; J. Sarnowsky, ‘Identität und Selbstgefühl der geistlichen Ritterorden’, in: S. Kwiatkowski and J. Małek eds., *Ständische und religiöse Identitäten in Mittelalter und früher Neuzeit* (Toruń: UMK 1998) 109–130, there 118; J. Sarnowsky, ‘Das historische Selbstverständnis der geistlichen Ritterorden’, *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte* 110 (1999) 315–330, there 327–329; Päsler, *Deutschsprachige Sachliteratur*, 302; R.J. Stapel, *Cronike vander Duytscher Oirden. Motieven voor het schrijven van de zgn. “Jongere Hoogmeesterkroniek”* (Utrecht, ca. 1500) (unpublished research seminar thesis under direction of dr. A. Janse, Leiden: Universiteit Leiden 2006); A. Kuz, *La Jüngere Hochmeisterchronik. L’autoreprésentation littéraire de l’ordre Teutonique* (unpublished master thesis under direction of J.-L. Sarrazin, Nantes: Université de Nantes 2007); J.A. Mol, ‘Jüngere Hochmeisterchronik (Kat.-Nr. III. 3.89)’, in: J. Trupinda ed., *Imagines Potestates. Insignien und Herrschaftszeichen im Königsreich Polen und im Deutschen Orden. Katalog der Ausstellung im Schlossmuseum in Marienburg 8. Juni - 30. September 2007* (Malbork: Museum Zamkowe w Malborku 2007) 301–302; Sarnowsky, ‘Historical writing’, 118; Olivier, *L’Ancienne Chronique des Grand-Maîtres*, 994–1012; Stapel and Vollmann-Profe, ‘Cronike van der Duytscher Oirden’; S. Foidl, ‘Jüngere Hochmeisterchronik’, in: W. Achnitz ed., *Deutsche Literatur-Lexikon: Das Mittelalter. Autoren und Werke nach Themenkreisen und Gattungen* 3: Reiseberichten und Geschichtsdichtungen (Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter 2011) 1055; J. Sarnowsky, ‘The Military Orders and the Idea of Holy Wars’, in: J. Sarnowsky, *On the Military Orders in Medieval Europe. Structures and Perceptions*. Variorum Collected Studies CS992 (Farnham/Burlington, VT: Ashgate 2011) V 1–24, there 21–22; Sarnowsky, ‘Entwicklung des historischen Selbstverständnisses’, 56–57; R.J. Stapel, ‘Layer on layer. “Computational archaeology” in 15th-century Middle Dutch historiography’, *Literary and Linguistic Computing* 28 (2013) 344–358; Wüst, *Studien zum Selbstverständnis*, 132–137; R.J. Stapel and J.D.E. de Vries, ‘Leydis, Pauli, and Berchen revisited. Collective history writing in the Low Countries in the late fifteenth century’, *The Medieval Low Countries. An Annual Review* 1/2014 (2015) 95–137; R.J. Stapel, ‘The development of a medieval scribe’, in: O. Duntze, T. Schaßan and G. Vogeler eds., *Kodikologie und Paläographie im Digitalen Zeitalter 3 / Codicology and Palaeography in the Digital Age 3*. Schriften des Instituts für Dokumentologie und Editorik 10 (Norderstedt: Books on Demand 2015) 67–86.

¹²³ “Schlußstein im Gebäude der offiziellen Historiographie des Ordens”: Arnold, ‘Geschichtsschreibung im Preussenland’, 91.

¹²⁴ For example by Maschke, ‘Inneren Wandlungen’; Sarnowsky, ‘Identität und Selbstgefühl’; Sarnowsky, ‘Historische Selbstverständnis’; Mol, *Friese huizen*, 150–153; Wüst, *Studien zum Selbstverständnis*, 132–137.

¹²⁵ Especially: Arnold, ‘Deutschordenshistoriographie’.

¹²⁶ Engels, ‘Historiographie’, 342.

historiographical enterprise: the place from which the Teutonic Order but also the other military orders had supposedly originated.¹²⁷

Following Hirsch, scholars have generally accepted that the chronicle was written in the 1490s, or shortly after 1492.¹²⁸ This *terminus post quem* is based on the bailiwick chronicle, which mentions the date of death of Land Commander Johan van Drongelen (15 August 1492). Using it as a date for the *Croniken* as a whole implicitly acknowledges both parts to form a single entity. Hans Mol was the first to review this relationship explicitly. On close examination of the text he concluded both parts were indeed the work of a single author; that is not necessarily to say that the two were written consecutively and conceived as a single work – Mol posed the exact relation between the parts of the chronicle as a subject for further discussion. Mol showed the orthography of the two parts to be identical, as are the choice of words, rhetoric and structure of the content, including the programme of coloured heraldic arms in the margins.¹²⁹ He also directed attention to some curiosities in the bailiwick chronicle that could link Land Commander Johan van Drongelen to the production of the *Croniken*.¹³⁰ The significance of this will be discussed in detail later.¹³¹

New material and new research questions

There are two important factors which justify a new study at this point. First and foremost, two more copies of the Middle Dutch chronicle – unknown to Hirsch – have surfaced in recent years. One of these is kept in the Teutonic Order's central archive in Vienna.¹³² The other manuscript is now held in the city archive of Ghent.¹³³ In the most recent inventory from 1983 this manuscript is absent, which suggests that it is a relatively recent accession.¹³⁴ The two manuscripts offer many alternative readings to the Utrecht manuscript used by Hirsch and De Geer van Oudegein as well as the text presented by Matthaeus. The texts of the Ghent and Vienna manuscripts have considerably fewer flaws such as scribal errors. In some places, entire passages can be found that are unavailable in the Utrecht and Matthaeus copies. Many of the 'improvements and additions' that Hirsch thought belonged to the German versions of the *Croniken*, are in fact already found in the Middle Dutch version represented by these manuscripts. Moreover, the fact that both the Vienna and Ghent manuscript include the bailiwick chronicle may help in understanding the original composition of the chronicle.

¹²⁷ E.g.: Sarnowsky, 'Historische Selbstverständnis', 327–329.

¹²⁸ Arnold, 'Jüngere Hochmeisterchronik (1983)'; recently, another possibility was put forward – independent of each other – in two student theses. There a *terminus post quem* has been suggested of 1494. In c.257 and c.728-730 the *Croniken* mentions that the German master was considered a sovereign. He was recognized as such in the Holy Roman Empire from 1494 forward. Other evidence, however, contradicts this suggestion. Stapel, *Cronike vander Duytscher Oirden* (research seminar thesis), 25; Kuz, *Jüngere Hochmeisterchronik*, 32 (note 132). The issue will be addressed in more detail in section 2.3.

¹²⁹ Mol, *Friese huizen*, 148–149.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 149–150.

¹³¹ See chapter 4.

¹³² Vienna, Deutschordenszentralarchiv, Hs. 392; F. Lackner, *Katalog der Streubestände in Wien und Niederösterreich. Nichtarchivalische mittelalterliche Handschriften und Fragmente in Korneuburg, Mistelbach, Retz, St. Pölten, Tulln, Waidhofen an der Thaya, Weitra, Wien, Wiener Neustadt und aus Privatbesitz* I. Veröffentlichungen der Kommission für Schrift- und Buchwesen des Mittelalters, Reihe II, Verzeichnisse der Handschriften österreichischer Bibliotheken 5/1 (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften 2000) nr. 62.

¹³³ Ghent, Stadsarchief, Ms SAG/2.

¹³⁴ J. Decavele and J. Vannieuwenhuysse, *Archiefgids I: Oud Archief* (Ghent: Stadsbestuur, Dienst voor Culturele Zaken 1983).

The newly surfaced Ghent and Vienna manuscripts provide an excellent opportunity to reconsider the genesis of the *Croniken*. Codicological inspection of the manuscripts has proven to be a particularly fruitful approach, opening up new opportunities for the study of the context of the genesis of the *Croniken*. The discovery of the manuscripts also justifies a new edition of the chronicle. With the aim of providing the materials for such an edition, this study is accompanied by diplomatic transcriptions of all four available complete Middle Dutch copies of the *Croniken* (i.e., the Vienna, Ghent and Utrecht manuscripts, and Matthaeus' edition). They have been written in an XML (eXtensible Markup Language) format using the P5 guidelines provided by the Text Encoding Initiative (TEI).¹³⁵ A normalized transcription of the Vienna manuscript is also provided. The choice for this specific manuscript is justified by the codicological analysis.¹³⁶

The second factor justifying a new study of the *Croniken* is that although the historical significance of the *Croniken* has been widely accepted, most scholarly attention to date has remained superficial. The studies that cover the *Croniken* review either a larger part of the medieval historical tradition of the Teutonic Order, or explore a particular angle of their content such as signs of self-consciousness of the brethren; in all cases the *Croniken* is just one of many texts analysed. As a result, although many aspects of the *Croniken* have been dealt with superficially, few underwent deeper scrutiny. Without any serious attempt at primary source criticism, there is also a tendency of reiteration without introducing fundamentally new insights about the text. Especially the author's use of sources can be considered a *terra incognita*, since Hirsch's preparatory work has proved to be far from conclusive. Who wrote the *Croniken* and how did he attain the skills to do so? How could someone in the Low Countries get access to texts often thought to be confined to libraries in Prussia and Livonia? How is the text related to historiographical traditions in both the Low Countries and the Teutonic Order? Surprisingly little is known about the circumstances in which the *Croniken* was written and the particular context(s) in which the work functioned. In order to answer these questions, we will first turn to the manuscripts that contain the text of the *Croniken*.

¹³⁵ 'TEI P5: Guidelines for Electronic Text Encoding and Interchange' <<http://www.tei-c.org/P5/>> [accessed 2 May 2016].

¹³⁶ See chapter 2.