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

Stapel, R.J.

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Author: Stapel, Rombert

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Propositions

Belonging to the dissertation: 'The Late Fifteenth-Century Utrecht Chronicle of the Teutonic Order: Manuscripts, Sources, and Authorship', to be defended at Leiden University on Wednesday 25th January 2017, 15:00, by Rombert Jouke Stapel, born in Hardenberg in 1983.

1. Discussions on the usefulness and scope of the term 'Deutschordensliteratur' ('Literature of/by the Teutonic Order') are little fruitful without thorough codicological studies of the manuscripts that were owned and written by the brethren of the Teutonic Order. With few recent exceptions, such codicological analyses are absent from the scholarly field that studies the military orders.

F. Löser, 'Literatur im Deutsche Orden. Vorüberlegungen 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.

2. The conjectural text that is commonly referred to as the *Jüngere Livländische Reimchronik* rather seems a selection of short independent stories that form a loosely defined corpus. The corpus, possibly existing in different compositions, shows an entangled dissemination together with the *Ältere Livländische Reimchronik* in the late-fifteenth and sixteenth centuries in Livonia, the Hanse cities of North Germany, and the Low Countries.

This dissertation, pp. 163–175.

3. The humanist influence presumed present in the works of historiographers in the late medieval Northern Low Countries such as Johannes a Leydis may not have been as great as once expected (Ebels-Hoving 1985; contra: Ebels-Hoving 2011, pp. 58-67); their networks and communities of exchange show great similarities to the humanist circles of the early sixteenth century, such as the Gouda circle of humanists which included Erasmus, and should be studied as direct precursors of such circles.

B. Ebels-Hoving, 'Johannes a Leydis en de eerste humanistische geschiedschrijving van Holland', *BMGN* 100.1 (1985) 26–51; This dissertation, pp. 163–175; B. Ebels-Hoving, *Geschiedenis als metgezel: confrontaties met een vak, 1950-2000* (Hilversum 2011); 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 (2015) 95–137; This dissertation, pp. 145–152, 284–289.

4. Lemmatization of texts with high levels of spelling variation has proven to be an effective method to prepare these texts for further computational analysis (e.g. Kestemont et al. 2016). Researchers however should be aware that spelling variation itself carries an abundance of relevant knowledge of the text and its creators as well and can be studied quantitatively as well. Lemmatization or other forms of textual normalization should therefore not lead to the neglect of the original spelling variants.

M. Kestemont, G. de Pauw, R. van Nie, and W. Daelemans, 'Lemmatization for variation-rich languages using deep learning', *Digital Scholarship in the Humanities* (2016; Advance Access) 1–19; This dissertation, pp. 75–84, 324–330.

5. Data aggregation is the perfect way to mask aberrant methodological approaches, spatially relevant observations, and individual disparities or those of smaller collectives. The need for aggregation becomes less pressing with modern visualization techniques, and its use should therefore be minimized as much as realistically possible.
6. Without proper schooling in computational skills for humanities students, digital humanities will not fully surpass the 'next big thing'-phase and remain associated with a hype, or, worse, the field will be taken over by non-humanities scholars.
7. Socioeconomic statistics are too often vaguely spatially defined by historians. Carefully defining which areas are covered by such statistics and which are not is essential and a necessity for meaningful temporal comparisons. It should be as normal for historical journals to demand from researchers that submit statistically-rich papers that these papers are accompanied by precise geographic definitions, for instance in the form of GIS files, as it is becoming normal to deposit the statistics themselves.
8. Questioning the 'end of the Middle Ages' by looking at the diminishing growth and rapid decline of monasteries in the Low Countries in the early sixteenth century, carries the risk of undervaluing the spectacular growth of the number of monasteries that preceded this development, especially from the 1380s onwards. The dissolution of monasteries in the sixteenth century was as much the announcement of a new era as it was a return to normality.

K. Goudriaan, *Het einde van de middeleeuwen?* (valedictory address, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, 17th September 2015).