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This most welcome volume had its origins in a 1994 summer seminar, which eventually resulted in a major interdisciplinary collaboration of history (the Historisches Archiv der Stadt Köln and the Gesellschaft für Rheinische Geschichtskunde: Prof. Dr. Manfred Groten) from Cologne and the University of Bonn and of German-language philology (Prof. Dr. Kurt Gärtner and project colleagues Dr. Thomas Bohn, Dr. Andrea Rapp, Désirée Welter) from the University of Trier (Sonderforschungsprojekt Westmitteldeutsche und ostfranzösische Urkunden- und Literatursprachen im 13. und 14. Jahrhundert under Gärtner’s direction).

»Dat boich von der Stede Colne« was completed by Gottfried Hagen in the year 1271. After foregrounding his chronicle with a brief hagiographical narrative of the Christianization of Cologne (thereby framing the community as a sacred enterprise), Hagen chronicles the many political disputes and feuds between the citizenry of Cologne and archbishops Konrad of Hochstaden (1238–1261) and Engelbert II of Falkenstein (1261–1274) during the turbulent years 1252–1271. From the Battle of Frechen (1257) to Albertus Magnus’ peacemaking efforts (Kleiner Schied of 1252; Großer Schied of 1258), the Trinity Sunday battles at Alter Markt, Griechenmarkt, and in the Büttengasse (1265), the famous defense of the Ulrepforte (1268) and the imprisonments of Archbishop Engelbert to the final Charter of Reconciliation between archbishop and citizenry (1271), Hagen engagingly and passionately narrates these events all the while advocating for municipal interests in opposition to the ecclesiastical lordship of the archbishops. Yet Hagen’s inclusion of legal documents and jurisprudence are in the final analysis more important for historical study than his narrative of events, since the former educate the historian more securely than the latter.

This is because Hagen’s was an eye-witness to the events he narrates, as he held numerous public positions in Cologne during this period: notary (notarius civitatis Coloniensis), scribe (der stede schriver), and agent (procurator) of the city, envoy of the cathedral chapter, pastor of Klein St. Martin’s parish, and finally dean of the collegiate chapter of St. Georg – often holding positions in church and urban administration at the same time. In addition, he was by birth a member of the Overstolz faction of the city’s patrician leadership, which was often at odds with both the archbishops as well as the so-called Weise faction (the archbishops made much mischief by playing these patrician factions against each other, and playing them both against the craft guilds). Though the authors of the volume recognize that, having held (and not without some struggle) the pastorate of the greatest of the parish churches and thus control over substantial urban property, and having been a member of ruling Overstolz faction with leadership roles in
civic government, Hagen brings biases to his chronicle based on his vested interests\(^1\), they offer little critical reflection on the specific portions of his chronicle that were affected by his partisanship. »Seine persönliche Beteiligung an den geschilderten Ereignissen macht die ›Reimchronik‹ zu einer Geschichtsquelle allerersten Ranges\(^2\). « This may well be true in terms of Hagen’s intimate familiarity with the events he describes, but his text is not an innocent text and is therefore in need of critical interrogation as an historical source. Giving Hagen a pass on this issue, by suggesting that he was more interested in writing a poem as a homo litteratus than a proper chronicle\(^3\), only lessens the value of the text as an historical source in favor of its philological value.

Yet the philological value is great. Gottfried Hagen, a skilled producer of both Latin- and German-language charters, chose to produce what was one of the earliest vernacular rhyme chronicles (one that preceded Melis Stoke’s »Rijmkroniek van Holland« [1305]\(^4\) by a generation, for example). Such urban chronicles would become so typical by the second half of the fourteenth century, though by that time the rhyme genre would be abandoned for a prose format. Hence in literary terms Hagen was a pioneer, whose chronicle remained popular in Cologne throughout the Later Middle Ages and served as the textual basis for fifteenth-century prose versions by Johann Koelhoff the Younger (»Koelhoffsche Chronik«, 1499) and Heinrich van Beeck (»Agrippina«, 1469–1472)\(^5\). Not only is the literary value of this edition high, therefore, but so is the linguistic value. German-language linguists now have an updated, critical edition of this important Ripuarian dialect text (with no less than 6293 lines of text with which to work), which will no doubt wind up on their shelves in lieu of von Groote’s and Cardaun/Schröder’s earlier editions.

Such a complex text, written in thirteenth-century northwest Ripuarian dialect and narrating some of the most momentous events of medieval Cologne’s history, requires a significant scholarly apparatus to maximize the learning contained within its pages. The Mitarbeiter on this project have produced just such an apparatus that moves smoothly through philological and historical subjects. The substantial scholarly introduction that precedes the text itself draws largely from earlier studies on Gottfried Hagen’s identity and career, his text as a philological source, and his text as an historical source\(^6\), followed by an equally

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\(^1\) Credence is given by the authors, for example, to the possibility that Gottfried Hagen wrote this chronicle as thanks to the Overstolz faction for his election to the prestigious pastorate of Klein St. Martin parish.

\(^2\) Page XV.

\(^3\) Page XV.


detailed consideration of the text’s manuscript *stemma*, linguistic distinctives, and editing principles, including a comparative assessment of previous critical editions by Eberhard von Groote (1834) and Hermann Cardaun/Karl Schröder (1875). Of essential value as well are the thorough »Personen- und Ortsregister«, the generous glossary of Ripuarian dialect vocabulary, and the extensive bibliography containing both historical and philological scholarship.

For historians in particular the unique and perhaps most valuable aspect of this edition is an additional feature: the historical commentary on the »Reimchronik« provided by Th. Bohn with advice from M. Groten. No less than one hundred pages in length, this historical *apparatus criticus* contains historical footnotes to a myriad of passages from the »Reimchronik« that clarify and expand on the details Hagen narrates by means of both historical context as well as references to key modern scholarship on the topics at hand. Both philologists and historians will also appreciate the inclusion of a reprint of parallel passages from Johann Koelhoff the Younger’s »Koelhoffische Chronik« (1499) at the bottom of every page of the »Reimchronik« text. An additional parallel transcription of Heinrich van Beeck’s »Agrippina« (1469–1472) autograph was not included alongside the »Koelhoffschen Chronik« in order to keep the text pages to manageable size, but it does appear separately in a 27-page appendix.

In sum, though more could have been done in terms of evaluating Gottfried Hagen’s partisanship, and in terms of assessing the constitutional and jurisprudential elements in his texts, this volume is a major step forward from the earlier editions – not the least because it can serve both philologists and urban historians. Therefore all participants are to be congratulated for their collaboration and the product they have jointly published to our benefit.

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8 Robert Meier based his published critical edition of this text (as his doctoral thesis) not on the autograph manuscript (A) but on a later manuscript copy (B). The appendix version appearing in the volume under review is based on the autograph manuscript (A), but includes variations of words or passages from Meier’s edition (B).