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The Patron and the Implied Readership of The Hague, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, MS 76 E 5

In this essay, The Hague, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, MS 76 E 5, is studied in order to illustrate central research problems related to multi-text codices. It considers the supposed patron of the manuscript, noting that the individual who commissions a codex is not necessarily to be identified with its users. Assuming that the implied readers of a compilation of texts were the decisive factor in shaping its composition, I argue that audience-related features of all the assembled texts should be taken into account. I conclude that the contents of KB, 76 E 5 suggest that this text collection addresses youthful members of the civic elite, both male and female.¹

Amidst dozens of modest multi-text manuscripts preserving Middle Dutch literature, a single *de luxe* copy catches the eye. This splendid book, kept in The Hague's Koninklijke Bibliotheek under the shelf mark 76 E 5, is often called the '*Beatrijs* codex' by specialists in Dutch Studies. It contains the unique textual witness of this short verse narrative, which is as famous in The Netherlands and Flanders as canonical medieval Dutch texts such as *Van den vos Reynaerde* and *Karel ende Elegast*. However, as will soon become clear, '*Beatrijs* codex' is a misleading name, because what KB, 76 E 5 preserves is, in fact, a collection of works, in which *Beatrijs* does not figure as the core text. In the past, and more prominently in recent times, scholars have discussed the patron and the audience of this multi-text codex, pointing to different social groups and even individuals. Owing to these divergent views on the supposed patron and readers of KB, 76 E 5, the codex and its contents make it eminently suitable as a case study illustrating central research problems related to medieval multi-text manuscripts. On what grounds have particular patrons and audiences been identified? Is it essential to

¹ This publication has resulted from the project 'The Dynamics of the Medieval Manuscript: Text Collections from a European Perspective' (www.dynamicsofthemedievalmanuscript.eu), which was financially supported by the HERA Joint Research Programme (www.heranet.info) and the European Community FP7 2007–2013. I should like to thank Jos Biemans, Gerard Bouwmeester, Frank Brandsma, Daniël Ermens, and Paul Wackers for their comments on an earlier draft of this essay.

distinguish between the patron and the user of a manuscript? Can we reconstruct the implied readers of a collection of texts? What are the pitfalls?

I. Codex and Content

KB, 76 E 5, measuring 257 mm in height and 190 mm in width, is made of high-quality parchment.² The codex consists of ten quaternions. Whereas the last quire lacks two folios, the first gathering is preceded by two added leaves, resulting in: II + 1–9⁸ [72] + 10⁸⁻² [78]. A single scribe copied the text in two columns of 37 lines per page in a textualis script. The level of execution is particularly high, which befits a codex that is lavishly decorated, including six historiated initials, border decoration and pen-flourished initials. Thanks to the presence of the Easter table on the verso of the first added leaf, the manuscript can be dated accurately. The table's introduction reads: 'Jnt iae r ons heeren .m.ccc.lxxiiij. es die sondach lettere op .a. ende de mane es prime op .vij.' [In the year 1374 AD, the Dominical letter is 'a', and the new moon is on VII]. As a result of this note, Dutch critics are almost unanimous in their conviction that KB, 76 E 5 was made in or shortly before 1374.³ There is a little less certainty about the localisation of the codex, albeit that linguistic and textual features firmly point to Brabant, while Brussels, more specifically, is often mentioned in recent publications. I shall return to this issue below.

KB, 76 E 5 preserves a collection of works as presented in the table below (line references, when given, indicate where a text starts or ends on the page. Otherwise a text begins at the top of the folio):

Quire	Folios	Content	Remarks
	I–II	I ^v Easter table II ^{r-v} Table of contents of <i>Dietsche doctrinael</i>	II ^{r-v} chapter headings are grouped by means of initials and bracketed
1–5	1–40	1 ^r <i>Dietsche doctrinael</i> 7 ^{va} 'ander boec' 33 ^{vb} 'derde boec'	1 ^{ra} historiated initial (17 lines high) 7 ^{tb} last third of column (12 lines) blank 7 ^{va} historiated initial (13 lines high) 33 ^{va} last part of column (7 lines) blank 33 ^{vb} historiated initial (16 lines high)

2 For an elaborate description of the codex by G. I. Lief tinck, see Verhofstede et al. (eds) 1948: 25–36. See also Deschamps 1972: 70–72.

3 As far as I know, the only divergent opinion was voiced by Jan van Herwaarden, whose textual analysis of *Vanden aflate van Rome* (see below) made him conclude, in 1987, that the manuscript was produced in the second half of the fifteenth century. However, he does not offer an explanation for the Easter table. See the reprint of his article in Van Herwaarden 2005 (83–107, 253–62, in particular 92–93).

(Continued)

Quire	Folios	Content	Remarks
6	41–48	47 ^{rb} end of <i>Dietsche doctrinael</i> 47 ^{va} <i>Beatrijs</i>	47 ^{rb} last line ‘nota’ 47 ^{va} historiated initial (5 lines high)
7	49–56	54 ^{va} , line 5 end of <i>Beatrijs</i> 54 ^{va} –54 ^b , line 9 <i>Pater Noster</i> , <i>Ave Maria</i> , <i>Credo</i> 55 ^{ra} <i>Tien ghebode</i> 55 ^{va} , line 22 <i>XII articlen</i> 56 ^{ra} <i>Seven werken</i> 56 ^{ra} , line 21 <i>Seven hoeft son-</i> <i>den</i> 56 ^{va} , line 33 <i>Seven sacramente</i>	54 ^{va} lines 6–8 blank 54 ^{rb} last part of column (12 lines) blank
8	57–64	57 ^{rb} , line 7 end of <i>Seven sa-</i> <i>cramente</i> 57 ^{rb} , line 8 <i>Seven gaven</i> 57 ^{va} , line 26 end <i>Seven gaven</i> 57 ^{vb} <i>Aflate van Rome</i> 61 ^{ra} , line 10 end of <i>Aflate van</i> <i>Rome</i> 61 ^{va} <i>Heimelijcheit der heime-</i> <i>lijcheden</i>	57 ^{va} last part of column (11 lines) blank 57 ^{vb} historiated initial (4 lines high) 61 ^{ra} – ^b most part of column a and column b blank 61 ^{va} historiated initial (6 lines high)
9–10	65–78	76 ^{ra} , line 15 end of <i>Heime-</i> <i>lijcheit der heimelijcheden</i>	76 ^{ra} – ^b majority of columns a and b blank 77–78 blank

The second added leaf preserves a table of contents, in the hand of the scribe who copied the whole compilation. This table does not offer a key to the complete contents of the manuscript, but is limited to its first text.⁴ A list of chapter titles provides an overview of the subjects which are discussed in the *Dietsche doctrinael* [Dutch treatise on ethics]. Unfortunately, this list is not very helpful for a reader looking for a particular chapter, because corresponding numerals are lacking, both in the table and in the text of the treatise. Doubtless for this reason, the scribe bracketed all chapter titles appearing on the same book opening (see Image 1 on the next page); the accompanying roman numerals in red correspond with the numerals, also in red, indicating book openings, which he noted in the upper margins of the verso sides of folios 1–46. This search tool may not be very sophisticated, but it certainly facilitates selective reading of the *Dietsche doctrinael*.

Readers of KB, 76 E 5 could access the manuscript as a whole with the help of its decoration. The structure of the collection is elucidated by means of historiated initials, which reveal, I would suggest, a division into six parts.⁵

4 See the essay by Wendy Scase in this volume for a typology of Tables of Contents.

5 This view on the structure of the text collection is corroborated by most of the blank spaces in

inspiration.⁷ On folio 7^{va}, an initial of 13 lines picturing a wise man, who uses a scroll to read aloud to an audience, announces the text's 'ander boec' [second book]. On folio 33^{vb}, an initial of 16 lines showing the Trinity and the symbols of the four Evangelists, indicates the beginning of the 'derde boec' [third book]. The *Dietsche doctrinael* is a Middle Dutch verse translation of the Latin treatise *De amore et dilectione Dei et proximi et aliarum rerum et de forma vitae*, composed by Albertanus of Brescia around 1238. This rendition was completed, according to its epilogue, in Antwerp in 1345 (ll. 6650–55), in the thirty-third year of the reign of Duke John III of Brabant (ll. 6660–63).⁸ The author of the translation does not name himself, but it has been convincingly argued that the *Dietsche doctrinael* was written by Jan van Boendale, who was secretary to the aldermen of Antwerp and a very productive author.⁹

The remaining three historiated initials are noticeably smaller. On folio 47^{va}, an initial of 5 lines showing a nun kneeling before Mary, who holds the Christ child, marks the beginning of *Beatrijs*, which opens the fourth part of the text collection. This verse narrative of 1038 lines, probably composed in the fourteenth century, features a female sacristan who leaves her convent in order to live with the man she loves, and finds out, on returning after fourteen years of love, motherhood, prostitution, and poverty, that Mary has taken her place and has fulfilled her duties during her absence.¹⁰ This famous adaptation of an exemplum by Caesarius of Heisterbach is followed by various short texts, starting with the *Pater Noster in Dietsche* [*Lord's Prayer in Dutch*], the *Ave Maria in Dietsche* [*Ave Maria in Dutch*] and the *Credo in Dietsche* [*Creed in Dutch*]. These three texts are copied from Jan van Boendale's *Leken spiegel* [*Laymen's Mirror*].¹¹ They are followed by the Ten Commandments, which are headed by an extensive title: 'Dit sijn die heyleghe tien ghebode die alle menschen die hare beschedenheit hebben van rechte schuldech sijn te wetene ende te houdene. Sonder die welke nyeman behouden en mach sijn' ['These are the ten holy commandments, which all people who are in possession of their faculties are obliged to know and to maintain; without these no one can be saved'].¹² Immediately following the Ten Commandments, and copied under the rubric quoted here, there is one of Seneca's sayings and a short text which compares the 'heyleghe kerke' [holy church] with a ship.¹³ The fourth part of the text collection in KB, 76 E 5 is

7 See also Meier 2000: 359–60.

8 I quote the digital edition by Willem Kuiper ((ed.) 1998). See also Jonckbloet (ed.) 1842.

9 See Reynaert 2002. For an overview of Boendale's oeuvre, see Van Oostrom 2013: 142–75.

10 For an edition, see Meder (ed.) and Wilmink (trans.) 1995. For an English translation, see Colledge 1965: 123–87.

11 See Verhofstede et al. (eds) 1948: 33.

12 For an edition, see van Vloten (ed.) 1851: 61–63.

13 For Seneca's sayings, see van Vloten (ed.) 1851: 63. The text on the church has not been edited.

concluded by five other enumerations: *Die XII articten des heylichs kerstens gheloefs* [*The Twelve Articles of the Holy Christian Faith*], *Die seven werken der ontfermherteheit* [*The Seven Works of Mercy*], *Die seven hoeft sonden die contrarie sijn der gratien gods ende allen doeghden* [*The Seven Cardinal Sins, which are Opposed to God's Grace and all Virtues*], *Die seven sacramente der heylegher kerken* [*The Seven Sacraments of the Holy Church*], and, finally, *Die seven gaven des heylichs gheests* [*The Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit*], ending with a saying by Jerome.¹⁴ It is noteworthy that parts of the *XII articten*, the *Seven sacramente* and the *Seven gaven* were taken from various texts written by the famous mystic Jan van Ruusbroec (1293–1381), who was living in the vicinity of Brussels when KB, 76 E 5 was produced.¹⁵

The fifth part of the compilation in KB, 76 E 5 consists of a single text. On folio 57^b, a historiated initial of 4 lines, showing the head of Christ, marks the beginning of the *Aflate van Rome* [*Indulgences of Rome*].¹⁶ This text, which is part of the widely distributed textual tradition of the *Indulgentiae ecclesiarum urbis Romae*, offers a detailed description of the seven most important Roman basilicas, referred to as the ‘coninlike kerken’ [royal churches], and briefly mentions an additional one (‘Sente Eustatius’). These churches granted various indulgences to visiting pilgrims (see Miedema 2003).

The final part of the text collection starts on folio 61^{va}, marked by a historiated initial of 6 lines, showing a king and a wise man holding a scroll. Obviously, they are Alexander the Great and Aristotle, because this sixth part consists of the *Heimelijcheit der heimelijcheden* [*Secret of Secrets*], in which ‘Aristotiles ende geen ander / Sinen jonghere Alexander / Leerde die werelt berechten / Ende jeghen die sonden vechten’ [Aristotle and no one else taught his pupil Alexander to rule the world and fight against sins].¹⁷ In the prologue of this treatise, it is stated that the text was written by Jacob van Maerlant (l. 9). He was a prolific Flemish author, who is thought to have translated the *Secretum secretorum* around 1266 (see Van Oostrom 1996: 135).

This overview makes it likely that the codex was made in one go: all texts were copied by a single scribe, and nowhere do quire boundaries coincide with textual boundaries. This opinion on the manuscript’s genesis is corroborated by the catchwords. Underlined in red, and impossible to overlook, each of them in-

14 For the relevant editions, see Tinbergen (ed.). 1907: 142–43 (*XII articten*); Tinbergen (ed.) 1907: 146–47 (*Seven hoeft sonden*); Van Vloten (ed.) 1851: 63–64 (*Seven sacramente*); Van Vloten (ed.) 1851: 65–66 (*Seven gaven* and Jerome’s saying). The *Seven werken* remains unedited.

15 See Verhofstede et al. (eds) 1948: 33; Ampe 1981, number 34; Janssens et al. (ed.) 1986: 90. For Ruusbroec, see Warnar 2003 and Van Oostrom 2013 (242–54, 261–81).

16 For an edition, see Kist (ed.) 1835.

17 Verdenius (ed.) 1917: ll. 11–14.

variably marks the end of a quire, and connects it faultlessly with the subsequent quire. However, other codicological features reveal, perhaps, that the codex developed over time.¹⁸ The table of contents refers solely to the *Dietsche doctrinael*, and the historiated initials structuring this treatise are distinctly larger than the other three historiated initials.¹⁹ While stressing the textual hierarchy in KB, 76 E 5, these elements may also indicate that the manuscript was begun as a copy of the *Dietsche doctrinael*, and was subsequently expanded with copies of other texts in various stages. If this was the case, it is important to note that these phases must have followed hard upon each other. Nowhere does the manuscript indicate that these hypothetical stages were not very close together in time. We may assume, therefore, that KB, 76 E 5, whether it was made in one go or not, preserves a collection which was coherently planned.

II. Production and Reception

In his 1948 description of the codex, Lieftinck discussed the localisation of KB, 76 E 5 (Verhofstede et al. (eds) 1948: 35). The high-quality features of the manuscript, and in particular the splendid image of the Trinity and the symbols of the four Evangelists on folio 33^{vb}, suggested to him that the codex could only have been produced in a prominent cultural centre, such as an important city or a monastery which possessed an extensive library. In addition, the presence of various Ruusbroec excerpts in the text collection pointed to Brussels or a religious house outside the city, according to the renowned codicologist. More recently, Erik Kwakkel (2002: 162–75) has considerably strengthened the Brussels localisation.²⁰ In his view, KB, 76 E 5 was made by a commercial manuscript producer active in that city.²¹ Kwakkel substantiates his assumption by pointing to the high level of execution of KB, 76 E 5 and by showing that Brussels accommodated a commercial network of book producers.²² His chief witness for this network is the stationer Godevaert de Bloc, whose business went into liquidation in 1383. Godevaert may help us find the area where KB, 76 E 5 was

18 Jos Biemans put forward this idea when we were jointly studying the codex *in situ* (March 7, 2014).

19 Since chapter headings of lengthy works could travel independently on scrolls, the table of contents may have been copied as a separate text. See Rouse and Rouse 2011 and Wendy Scafe's essay in this volume.

20 See also Janssens 2003.

21 In that context, he convincingly rejects the hypothesis, formulated by Anneke Mulder-Bakker (2002: 73 and 2005), that KB, 76 E 5 was a household manuscript ('Hausbuch').

22 Against the background of commercial book production I wonder if the bold presence of catchwords in KB, 76 E 5 (and other manuscripts, for that matter), so clearly visible to the reader, served as an indicator of quality.

produced. His shop was located in the Bergstraat, which was presumably the centre of the Brussels book market. As Kwakkel notes (2002:171), the Bergstraat ran opposite the St Gudele Church. This is an intriguing fact, because Ruusbroec served as a chaplain of that church between 1317 and 1343 (the year in which he left the city to spend the rest of his life in the neighbouring Forest of Soignes). As we shall see below, during that period of time Ruusbroec wrote two texts of which we find traces in KB, 76 E 5: *Dat rijke der ghelieven* [*The Kingdom of Lovers*], written around 1333, and *Vanden kersten ghelove* [*Of the Christian Faith*], which was finished in 1343 at the latest.²³ All in all, it is reasonable to assume that KB, 76 E 5 came into being in the context of a bespoke trade in Brussels: a commercial producer made the book according to someone's specifications.

Who could have commissioned this codex? A wealthy layperson is obviously the vague but safe answer to this question. However, in more recent years scholarly attention has been drawn to an individual. Characterizing *Beatrijs* as a courtly text and pointing to the presence of the mirror of princes the *Heimelijcheit der heimelijcheden*, in the compilation Theo Meder has suggested that KB, 76 E 5 was ordered by Joanna, Duchess of Brabant between 1356 and 1406 (Meder (ed.) and Wilmink (trans.) 1995: 39–40, 103–04). While Joanna and her husband, Wenceslaus of Luxembourg, promoted French culture at the court of Brabant – Jean Froissart's employment being an excellent example of this pursuit – Dutch and German speaking poets were also well-received guests (Sleiderink 2003 (123–40) and 1993). That Joanna even had a preference for Dutch is suggested by a 1401 expenditure statement. The statement was written in Dutch instead of Latin, the clerk noted, because the duchess wished to read it herself (Sleiderink 2003: 138). There is evidence, furthermore, that Joanna ordered books. In 1375–1376 she commissioned a very expensive prayer book, and in 1377–1378 she bought various books, one of them entitled *tgebet* [the prayer], from the aforementioned Godevaert de Bloc, which she donated to a protégé in the Louvain monastery of canon regulars (Sleiderink 2003: 138–39, and Kwakkel 2002: 172). These facts clearly support the idea that Joanna could have been the patron of KB, 76 E 5 (Sleiderink 2003: 140, and Kwakkel 2002: 172, n. 146).

Obviously, Joanna was not the only wealthy person to appreciate books and texts living in Brussels around 1374. Various book-loving patricians, in particular, are known to us. A manuscript made around 1350 and containing a Middle Dutch translation of Henricus Suso's *Horologium aeternae sapientiae*, for example, was in the possession of a certain Gijsbrecht Spijsken, who in 1388 presented the book as a gift to Rooklooster, a priory located just outside Brussels (Warnar 1997: 101–02, and Van Oostrom 2013: 245). On two occasions, around 1360 and around 1384, another patrician from Brussels, the influential alderman

23 Van Oostrom (2013: 243) lists and dates Ruusbroec's works.

Jan Taye, requested Middle Dutch translations of large parts of the Bible (Kwakkel 2002: 141–42, and Van Oostrom 2013: 213–14, 217, 239–40). In 1373, the translator, a Carthusian from an abbey near Brussels, Herne, completed a Middle Dutch rendition of the Rule of St Benedict at the request of the Brussels banker Lodewijc Thonijcs, who supported the Carthusians financially, and whose brother Jan served as treasurer of the aforementioned church of St Gudele.²⁴ Like Joanna, patricians such as Spijsken, Taye and Thonijcs could have commissioned KB, 76 E 5.

Searching for the patron of a manuscript is an important aspect of studying the reception of a medieval book. However, Joanna's gift of a codex to her protégé reminds us of a serious pitfall: the patron and/or buyer of a codex is not necessarily to be identified with its user(s). The individual who commissioned a manuscript or acquired an already existing one might have intended to read the text(s) him- or herself. But it is just as likely that the codex was meant for someone other than the patron or the buyer. The actual readers are, furthermore, almost always untraceable. We have to content ourselves with their rare marginal notes. Research on the reception of a book heavily depends, therefore, on the analysis of the text(s) which it contains. In addition to codicological and paleographical features which may reveal the intended use of a manuscript and the cultural background of its readers,²⁵ the texts themselves anticipate reading by a particular (group of) person(s). We may assume that the implied readers of a collection of works were the decisive factor to shape its composition.²⁶ Reconstructing this audience may be at least as rewarding for our understanding of the use of a book as searching for the patron of the manuscript.

In the case of KB, 76 E 5, the table of contents and the historiated initials indicate that the *Dietsche doctrinael* is the obvious starting point for such a reconstruction. Within thirty years after its composition, the text was considered so important that it could occupy three parts of the six-part compilation. Like its Latin source text, Albertanus of Brescia's treatise, the *Dietsche doctrinael* served as a compendium providing intellectual and moral instruction, based on Seneca, Cicero, and Cato in particular (Reynaert 1994). These lessons in the vernacular, which could be read from the beginning to the end or selectively, as the table of contents suggests, are tailored to a secular audience (Reynaert 2002: 143–44). Joris Reynaert (1992: 467–69) has convincingly argued that the *Dietsche doc-*

24 See Coun 1980 (189–93), Kwakkel 2002 (77–78, 138–42), Van Oostrom 2013 (216–17, 239–40).

25 Erik Kwakkel (2007) has coined the term 'cultural residue' for these codicological and paleographical features.

26 The implied reader is, according to Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan (2001: 119), 'a theoretical construct, implied or encoded in the text, representing the integration of data and the interpretative process "invited" by the text'. Cf. also Wayne Booth (1961, 136): 'every book carves out from mankind those readers for which its peculiar effects were designed'.

trinael's implied readers belonged to the urban cultural and administrative elite. With their civic interests in mind, for example, the translator of the *Dietsche doctrinael* omitted Albertanus's chapter on how to treat servants and most of the chapters on warfare, and added a diatribe against irresponsible aldermen. The chapter 'Van manlicheiden' ['On being male'], which the translator of the *Diet-sche doctrinael* also added to his source, confirms that the implied readership of the text was predominantly male (Reynaert 1992: 473). Both Reynaert (1992: 473) and Frits van Oostrom (2013: 139) state that the *Dietsche doctrinael* was written for members of the civic upper class and their offspring.

It should be stressed here that reconstructing the audience as envisaged by an author does not supply us with an indisputable clue as to the readers of copies of his work. A copy was, after all, intended to be part of a new manuscript context, and a new community of readers. This is particularly true for multi-text codices: the secondary audience of the texts which make up the collection might well differ from the primary audiences which each of the authors of the original works had in mind when they were composing their texts. In the case of KB, 76 E 5, we should also investigate, therefore, the audience-related features of the other texts in the manuscript, in spite of the fact that the *Dietsche doctrinael* dominates this collection.

Deviating from its Latin source, the *Dietsche doctrinael* refers various times to Aristotle (Reynaert 1994: 211–13). His name constitutes one of the many links between the *Dietsche doctrinael* and the last text in the collection, the *Heimelijcheit der heimelijcheden*, which features the great philosopher as Alexander's teacher. In KB, 76 E 5, Maerlant's text is the second treatise offering intellectual and moral instruction. It is noteworthy, in this context, that the Flemish author provided a shortened rendition of his Latin source by omitting from the *Secretum secretorum* many chapters on technical and medical subjects (Lie 1996). As a result, the *Heimelijcheit der heimelijcheden* is a compendium which strongly focuses on the worldly obligations of (future) 'hoghe heren' [great lords], who serve, or will serve, as 'lansheren' [rulers].²⁷ In the context of KB, 76 E 5, the combination of *Dietsche doctrinael* and the *Heimelijcheit der heimelijcheden* offers educational material to the social elite, in particular to young males.

The catechetic texts in the fourth part of the collection are highly interesting with regard to the implied readership of the text collection preserved in KB, 76 E 5. Six enumerations deal with the ten commandments, the twelve articles of faith, the seven works of mercy, the seven cardinal sins, the seven sacraments, and the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit. Discussing the *Seven hoeft sonden* [*Seven Cardinal Sins*] in KB, 76 E 5, Tinbergen (1907: 146–47) noted that the text consisted of nothing else but simple definitions of each of the sins. The other enumerations

27 Verdenius (ed.) 1917: ll. 15 and 30.

convey the same impression, which is corroborated by the way Ruusbroec's texts were adapted in order to fit the collection.

As mentioned earlier, parts of the *XII articlen*, the *Seven sacramente* and the *Seven gaven* were taken from texts written by the Brussels mystic. The fifteen lines of prose which conclude the *XII articlen* were copied from *Vanden kerstenen ghelove* [*On the Christian Faith*], composed in 1343 at the latest. In this short treatise, Ruusbroec explains the twelve articles of faith. Arguing that all believers are part of a holy community, which he compares to Noah's ark, he lists those who stay outside the ark, and will consequently perish:

Ende dat sijn alle de gene die hen ave deilen ende in enegen poente contrarie sijn der heileger kerken ochte kerstenen geloeve, dat es met valscher leren, met valschen hope, met valschen twelele ende wane; die hope ende troest setten in truffen, in boeten, in drome, in wairsegers, in toeverien, inden duvel te manenne; ende alle die meer eren ende ontsien ochte minnen enege creature dan gode, ende die meer getrouwen ochte hopen in enege creature dan in gode. Dit sijn alle avegedeilde verdorvene lede die niet en leven in enechheit der heileger kerken. (ll. 108–16)

[And they are all those who cut themselves off and go against Holy Church or the Christian faith in any way, with false teaching, false hope, false doubt and opinion, as well as all those who put hope and trust in trifles and magic formulas, in dreams, in soothsayers, in witchcraft and the invocation of the devil; and all those who honour and fear or love a creature more than God, and who put their trust and hope more in a creature than in God. These are all cut off, rotten limbs who do not live in the unity of Holy Church. (ll. 92–99)]²⁸

While this passage was copied almost word for word in KB, 76 E 5, the *Seven sacramente* in this codex consists of excerpts which came into being in a slightly more complex way. The text starts with the enumeration of the seven sacraments, combining definitions from a passage of *Dat rijcke der ghelieven* [*The Kingdom of Lovers*], which dates from around 1333. Ruusbroec's accompanying explanations in *Dat rijcke der ghelieven* are lacking in KB, 76 E 5.²⁹ The continuation of the *Seven sacramente* is taken almost word for word from *Vanden geesteliken tabernakel* [*On the Spiritual Tabernacle*], which came into being around 1350.³⁰ This second part of the *Seven sacramente* is, in fact, an enumeration, too. Ruusbroec states (ll. 5712–15) that if people approach the holy Sacrament 'wijsleec, begheerleec ende gheesteleec' [wisely, eagerly, and spiritually], they will find in themselves the 'xii. vrochte des gheests die ons sente Pauwels beschrijft ad Galatas' [twelve fruits of the Spirit which St Paul describes for us in his letter to the

28 De Baere et al. (ed.) 1991: 394–95. Compare with Tinbergen (ed.) 1907: 142–43.

29 Compare Van Vloten (ed.) 1851: 63–64 with De Baere et al. (ed.) 2002: 159–65 (ll. 61–39). Around 1362, Ruusbroec discovered that copies of *Dat rijcke der ghelieven* were circulating despite his 1333 ban on the distribution of the text. See Van Oostrom 2013: 242–43.

30 Compare Van Vloten (ed.) 1851: 64 with De Baere et al. (ed.) 2006: 1157–59 (ll. 5712–35).

Galatians], and continues by listing these fruits. Finally, the *Seven gaven* in KB, 76 E 5 borrows in a highly selective way some phrases from *Dat rijcke der ghelieven* in order to list the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit.³¹

If the patron of KB, 76 E 5 and/or the compiler of the text collection did not make use of already existing excerpts, he had intimate knowledge of Ruusbroec's oeuvre. The method of excerption is revealing for the implied readership. No trace of Ruusbroec's complex reasoning remains. These excerpts confirm the idea that the six catechetical texts consist of elementary, straightforward enumerations, which fit the two treatises in KB, 76 E 5.

The same is true for the three texts which follow *Beatrijs* in the fourth part of the compilation. As mentioned earlier, these texts were written by Jan van Boendale. In the second book of his *Leken spiegel*, he included rhymed versions of the *Pater Noster*, the *Ave Maria* and the *Credo*.³² While these texts were copied in KB, 76 E 5, Boendale's accompanying notes were omitted. In these passages he explains the texts and accounts for his translation, as the verse form forced him to abandon the word order of the Latin originals. Apparently, the implied readers of the *Pater Noster*, the *Ave Maria* and the *Credo* in KB, 76 E 5 were expected to appreciate the presence of these elementary texts in the codex, but were not in need of commentary.

In comparison to the didactic texts which have been discussed thus far, the text which constitutes the fifth part of the collection preserved in KB, 76 E 5 is remarkably descriptive. The *Aflate van Rome* describes the seven most important Roman churches, and lists the various indulgences which were granted there to visiting pilgrims. At first sight, the presence of this text in KB, 76 E 5 may be surprising, but the historical context offers an explanation. In 1300, the plenary jubilee indulgence was first made available by Pope Boniface VIII, followed by the 1343 decision of Clement VI to hold the second jubilee year in 1350 and to institute a cycle of fifty years. Owing to the phenomenon of the Jubilee Year, pilgrimages to Rome were particularly appealing in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries (Miedema 2003: 22–23, and Van Herwaarden 2005: 91–92). It follows that a text about the indulgences of Rome was a popular item to include in any text collection which was compiled at the time that KB, 76 E 5 was made. There is no reason to assume, furthermore, that the implied readership of this text was restricted to a specific social milieu, except insofar as only wealthy people could afford to visit Rome.

Whereas the *Aflate van Rome* and similar texts about the indulgences of Rome featured as *passe-partout* texts in late medieval compilations, the presence of

31 Compare Van Vloten (ed.) 1851: 65–66 with De Baere et al. (ed.) 2002: 211 (ll. 584–85), 225 (ll. 749–52), 234 (l. 1070).

32 De Vries (ed.) 1844–1848: Book 2, chap. 41, ll. 12–22; chap. 42, ll. 6–10; chap. 43, ll. 1–32.

Beatrijs in KB, 76 E 5 is enigmatic. Despite the manuscript's nickname, the story of the transgressing sacristan who is protected by Mary is the odd one out in the collection. According to modern genre distinctions, *Beatrijs* is, after all, the only narrative in the midst of treatises, prayers, and catechetical texts. As a result, the text is of prime importance for our understanding of KB, 76 E 5. Why was *Beatrijs*, an apparent outsider in the collection, included?

Recently, Van Oostrom (2013: 18) has characterised *Beatrijs* as a story illustrating 'hoe een mens zich tussen hemel en aarde verscheurd kan voelen, maar altijd steun kan zoeken bij Maria' [how a human being can feel torn between heaven and earth, but may always turn to Mary for support]. Actually, this description is slightly misleading, because it conceals the fact that the central character is a woman. Anneke Mulder-Bakker (2002: 110–11; 2005: 192–93) may be mistaken in claiming that *Beatrijs* is the centrepiece of KB, 76 E 5, yet she is surely right to stress the presence of a female protagonist. At the beginning of the narrative, *Beatrijs* is introduced as a 'joffrouwe' [damsel], who is in love with a 'jonghelinc' [young man] 'sint dat si out waren XII jaer' [since they were twelve years old].³³ It would, of course, be wrong to exclude a male audience for this narrative, but female readers and listeners may certainly sympathise far more easily with the young lady's experiences (motherhood, prostitution). In this context, it is worth noting that another female character, the widow who lives next to the nunnery, is of crucial importance for the happy outcome of the events, since she adopts *Beatrijs*'s children (ll. 867–910).³⁴ In contrast to its source, Caesarius of Heisterbach's Latin exemplum, the *Beatrijs* seems particularly attuned to female readers and listeners.

In his 1948 description of KB, 76 E 5, Liefstinck (Verhofstede et al. (eds) 1948: 35) suggested that the compilation was made for lay brothers, underpinning his opinion by pointing to the catechetical texts in the codex. In recent research, the whole collection of texts has been taken into account. Mulder-Bakker (2002: 111; 2005: 193) has argued that its content is tailored to a rich merchant family. In Van Oostrom's view (2013: 18–19, 139–41), KB, 76 E 5 is a particularly edifying book, used by the civic elite as a kind of 'geestelijke huisapotheek' (19) [spiritual medicine chest]. The foregoing analysis does not focus on the codex's actual audience, but on its implied readership. A shared feature of both the core text, the *Dietsche doctrinael*, and Maerlant's *Heimelijcheit der heimelijcheden* in KB, 76 E 5 is that they address the members of the civic elite and their young sons in particular. If this was indeed one of the reasons to bring them together in this collection, it is reasonable to assume that Boendale's works and the elementary catechetical texts were included with youthful readers and listeners in mind too.

33 Meder (ed.) and Wilmlink (trans.) 1995: ll. 37, 82, 92.

34 I owe this observation to my Utrecht colleague Diewuë van der Poel.

With comments on their sex, we reach the limits of reasonable inference. More speculatively, I would suggest that the reason for including *Beatrijs* in KB, 76 E 5 was to appeal to both male and female readers and listeners. The idiosyncratic poem in this collection points to an implied readership which was mixed. The compiler counterbalanced the male-orientated *Dietsche doctrinael* and *Heimelijcheit der heimelijcheden* by incorporating *Beatrijs* in the collection.

This hypothesis lends support to the theory that KB, 76 E 5 was commissioned by a wealthy patron in order to make it available to a family of patricians. Whether the sons and daughters of this family actually consulted the manuscript we cannot know. The least one can say, however, is that KB, 76 E 5 was not frequently read. Marginal notes and dirty spots which would point to a well-thumbed book are conspicuously lacking. It looks as if one of the most famous codices preserving Middle Dutch texts served for centuries as a *de luxe*, high-status object, more valued for its appearance than for its substance.

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