Arnold ther Hoernen and his Cologne competitors: of sheets, corrections and variants

The *Fasciculus Temporum*, that special compilation of important events in the history of the world, selected and recorded by the Cologne Carthusian Werner Rolevinck (1425-1502), was intended already shortly after completion for a much wider public. At an early stage of their relationship, the well-read monk, aware of the possibilities afforded by the printing press, discussed a suitable edition of his brainchild with his near neighbour, the printer Arnold ther Hoernen. Around 1474 the latter had at his disposal a corpus more or less completed by the compiler himself, with precise instructions for its arrangement, making this an ‘exemplary book’ quickly to be reprinted by others.

Whilst Ther Hoernen minutely followed the laid-down pattern using a smaller type than usual, another Cologne printer, Nicolaus Götz, executed a similar text more coarsely. Despite lacking the author’s co-operation he may have pipped Ther Hoernen at the post with this differing chronicle. Ther Hoernen nevertheless laid claim to the ‘devout Carthusian’s’ authentic text while the latter – who refused to have his name entered in the colophon – introduced the eight-leaf index with the words *Tabula brevis et utilis ...*, in view of the extensive index Götz had himself made, which came to 70 pages, a phrase perhaps expressing a certain conceit. With their few simple and in Götz’s edition at times original woodcuts these are the first two illustrated books printed in Cologne.

It is practically certain that Ther Hoernen counted on managing with two printed pages for the text of each hand-written page. Through what I take

1 This could be a certain Arnold Horn, born in Hoorn and from the diocese of Utrecht. F. Geldner, *Die deutschen Inkunabeldrucker*, Bd. 1 (Stuttgart 1968), p. 89.

2 To what extent he was able to use the original manuscript is not known. Text considered actual has been added; it does not seem improbable to me that Rolevinck delivered parts of text for copy as he had written it, leaf by leaf.


4 It is also possible that pages which we define as recto and verso were marked by means of a dot respectively before and after the folio number as an ingenious reaction to Götz’s printed pagination.

5 Surprisingly, there are no illustrations in the part after the birth of Christ.

6 It can be assumed that the autograph came to 30 leaves. In ‘Observations on the manuscript of Werner Rolevinck’s Fasciculus Temporum’ (*Quaerendo*, 22 (1992), p. 299) E.A. Overgaauw lists...
to be a faulty estimate of the run of the text in the Old Testament section and
the shift caused by the interpolated articles on the teachings of Mohammed,
the incunable, without index, came however not to 120 but to 128 pages, the
last of which remained blank. Because of the resulting paper shortage, the
index was produced in a lower print-run than originally intended. It was
possible, when additional copies of the index had to be printed, to adapt it.
Ther Hoernen was able to incorporate improvements linked to the
editions brought out – while his own Fasciculus was still to be had – by
two other Cologne printers: Conrad Winters and, once again, Nicolaus
Götz. On the strength of, among other reasons, the differences in the index,
Murray arrived at a division of Ther Hoernen’s work into four ‘issues’: a
first, with an index of eight leaves (sixteen pages), still without an illustration
of the Crucifixion and without that of Cologne; a second, with the same
index, plus the illustrations printed later on two sheets of the third gathering;
a third, with the revised index of nine leaves (totalling eighteen pages),
printed on paper ‘of finer texture’; a fourth, brought out soon after the
funeral of Charles the Bold in January 1477. Murray believed that Ther
Hoernen might have brought out this ‘re-issue’ – with ‘stop-press’ and con-
necting texts on recent years, printed on the last page previously left blank –
in order to get the better of Götz whom he supposed to have been less up to
date. (Illus. 1.) He found yet another difference, present in three of the four
issues: an interchange of the illustrations of Niniveh and Trier which in the
case of Niniveh caused the text to overrun a little.

It seems on the whole a fair sequence of variations, brought about in the
course of the years by the insertion of two woodcuts received later, the
changes made to the index, and the updating of the contents; but to measure
the ‘duration’ of the issues more than Murray’s nine copies (six of them in
British ownership) are needed. A table in a recent article by Hellinga/Ford, four early manuscripts extending to 30 leaves; the manuscript in the Arnhem Library has a text area of 28.4 x 40.8 cm, the type area in the incunable is 19 x (up to) 27 cm.

8 A third, Heinrich Quentell, does not come within the scope of this argument: his edition, of 1479, did not influence Ther Hoernen’s.
9 Murray (n. 3), pp. 62-3.
10 The importance of the new impression in black and red as a possible reaction to the Winters edition escaped Murray who was more concerned with the Götz-Ther Hoernen ‘controversy’. Ther Hoernen stood out in Cologne by his adoption of a printed supporting colour, ‘merkwürdi-
gerweise’ only until 1475. E. Voulliéme, Der Buchdruck Kölns bis zum Ende des 15. Jahrhunderts (Bonn 1903), p. ci; but here, as we may assume, late in 1476.
11 Murray (n. 3), p. 63. Ther Hoernen reported the funeral of Charles the Bold whereas Götz would have included the defeat of the Count of Lorraine as his ‘stop-press’, which is however not true as is evident from fig. 3.