Regions as vehicles for local interests: the spatial strategies of medieval and modern urban elites in the Netherlands

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HIGHLIGHTS (max 5 and 85 characters incl spaces per bullet)

- History is important to understand current regions
- Medieval and current regions are too different social objects to compare
- Regions are more the outcome of spatial strategies of local stakeholders than objects
- The spatial strategies of medieval and contemporary local stakeholder are comparable
- Medieval and current local actors support regions for similar reasons
ABSTRACT

The importance of history in the formation of regions is widely accepted. Academics and regional politicians use regional history to explain or legitimise the current political position of particular regions. History is widely regarded as an important element in the social construction of regions. This dominant evolutionary approach to regions has provided useful insights, but suffers from some fundamental problems. We illustrate this through an analysis of the historical development the present day Dutch province of Gelderland, which origins can be traced back into the Middle Ages. Its relatively stable geographical shell suggests historical continuity, but hides fundamental changes. We propose to shift the focus from the historical analysis of the evolution of regions towards comparing the spatial strategies used by local stakeholders towards regions in different historical settings. We identify four logically different but empirically related spatial strategies used by local stakeholders to promote their interests through their support of specific regions: 1) the territorialisation of networks to realise economies of scale; 2) cooperation against sub-regional threats; 3) regional territorial defence against other regions; 4) scalar politics against supra regional control. These were useful to understand the shifting regional alignments of the urban elites in medieval Nijmegen, and of the contemporary bulb growers in an area in the western part of the Netherlands. Historical analysis of the reasons why actors in these widely divergent historical cases sometimes use regions to promote their specific interests can help us to better understand under which conditions regions sometimes become important political entities.

Keywords:
Region, spatial strategies, local stakeholders, Middle Ages, methodology, Netherlands
The growing contemporary significance of regions has increased academic interest in regional history in recent decades. Some regional administrations and political parties in regions such as Flanders, Scotland and Catalonia use their history to legitimise their struggle for political autonomy. \(^1\) Many other regional administrations use their history to promote a distinct regional identity. \(^2\) History has also become important in academic discourses on regions. Regions are no longer seen as stable spatial territories, but as changeable human constructions. Regions as they currently exist are seen as part of a historical process through which regions are formed and changed. \(^3\)

The use of an historical perspective in the study of regions often leans towards an evolutionary approach to regional development. Regions are conceptualised as socially constructed objects whose identities are formed during their history. Although this commonly used evolutionary approach has generated many useful insights into the historical roots of current regions, we seek in this paper to link geography and history in a different way. We argue here that it is useful to shift attention from the historical evolution of current regions to the circumstances in the past and in the present in which regions are actually constructed. Our starting point is not the social construction of a specific region, but the motives behind the use of regions by local stakeholders in different historical situations to promote their interests. In many different contexts, the region is an important instrument to promote the mutual interests of local stakeholders. Through cooperation within a region, local stakeholders can achieve economies of scale and can defend themselves against both internal and external competitors. Although we acknowledge that regions are also used by centralising powers to control their territory, we focus our analyses of regions on the role of local stakeholders. This bottom-up perspective is more suited to the comparative analysis of the use of regions in different historical periods. The huge differences in the role and significance of central authorities between, for example, the Middle Ages and the twenty-first century world makes it very difficult to compare the current and medieval use of regions from a top-down perspective.

This ‘local stakeholder’ perspective on regional formation was developed during our participation in the Cuius Regio project of the European Science Foundation which studies the long-term evolution of European historical regions from the Middle Ages onward. \(^4\) In our work, a collaboration between an medieval historian and a human geographer, we tried to compare medieval and contemporary regional formation in the Netherlands. Direct comparisons proved extremely problematic as will try to make clear in this paper, not least because of fundamental differences in societal and political contexts and in the role of national state formation. Rather than comparing the spatial form of regions in these different settings directly, we therefore chose instead to focus on the role of those constructing the regions. The general and comparative question therefore becomes: why do local stakeholders cooperate at the regional level to promote their specific interests? Instead of tracing the evolution of patterns of regional formation, as reflected in a single region over time, we seek to compare why local stakeholders shift their support for many partially overlapping regions in order to secure and promote their local interests to accommodate changing circumstances.

This alternative way of linking history and geography in the study of regions is applied in the final section of this paper in a study of the spatial strategies of local stakeholders in medieval and modern contexts. Based on our different disciplinary backgrounds as a medieval historian and a human geographer and our shared spatial expertise, we analyse the use of regions by medieval urban elites in Nijmegen (a town in the province of Gelderland in the East of the Netherlands) and by the modern bulb growers in the Bollenstreek (an agricultural area in the West of the Netherlands). \(^5\)

The paper begins with a discussion of the changing views on regions in human geography. We then use the current dominant evolutionary approach to regions to analyse the historical development of the Dutch province of Gelderland which can be traced back into the Middle Ages. While its relatively stable shell suggests historical continuity, that story hides fundamental changes. This analysis of Gelderland shows the strengths and limitations of the standard evolutionary approach. We then identify four spatial strategies used by local stakeholders to promote their interests through the support of regions. This framework is then applied in the analysis of two case-
studies of spatial strategies in the formation of regions: those of contemporary bulb growers and urban elites in medieval Nijmegen.

REGIONS IN HUMAN GEOGRAPHY: FROM SPATIAL REALITIES TO SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIONS

Until the 1960s the dominant view in human geography was to regard regions as distinct spatial objects formed by internal relations. The aim was, as promoted in the late nineteenth century by Vidal de la Blache and by Alfred Hettner, to understand the specific way in which humans interacted with the environment within each region. Many traditional regional geographers followed the ideas of Hettner, starting with the material basis of regions and then moving upwards to consider human activities and culture. The local population was studied as a regional property, a human layer in the formation of regions, which interacted with other regional layers in much the same way as physical layers like soil and climate. This geographical approach to regions has also influenced how historians have studied regional history.

In this tradition, regional geographers used the historic roots of regions to emphasise the stability of the characteristics of specific regions and regional administrative units. This stable regional structure was seen as the backbone of the nation-state and the national identity. This interest in the long-term historic roots of how humans interacted with their environment was also reflected in scholarly research in the Middle Ages and Antiquity. Studying the distant past was regarded as an important means of identifying the origins of the current differences between regions. In the early twentieth century, when regions were being transformed by urbanisation and related socioeconomic changes, the role of history in the study of regional geography started to change. Initially, the focus was on the slow transformation of rural regions which through their deeply-rooted regional structures appeared to be more resilient to modernisation than cities. Later attention shifted to the historic roots of the variable pattern of regional response to social changes. In this retrospective approach, history is still used to explain the present, but the focus has shifted from stability to change. Thus while traditional regional geographers focussed on deep-rooted historical stability in order to explain continuity, contemporary geographers focus more on recent history in order to understand uneven patterns of regional development.

After the economic stagnation of the 1970s, geographers started to study the different ways in which regions coped with the new economic challenges of de-industrialisation and globalisation. The initial focus on the various ways in which actors in local communities coped with deteriorating economic circumstances was later widened to the study of linkages between places and processes of globalisation in general. In particular, economic geographers focussed on how different social, political, economic and cultural characteristics influenced the successful transformation of old industrial regions like the Ruhr, Midlands and Wallonia. This perspective has developed into a general evolutionary approach using concepts of path-dependency and institutional lock-in to explain contemporary differences in economic performance between regions. In this approach, however, regions are no longer studied as given entities, but as the provisional outcomes of the evolution of business networks. These are very specific kinds of regions based on different types of business relations in a wide variety of economic sectors. These networks are rarely clearly delimited and evolve in complex ways over time.

These changes in the conceptualisation of regions - from historically-rooted stable objects, to entities whose character and boundaries are in continual flux over time - is not limited to economic geography. Many historical geographers, for example, no longer use regions simply as convenient areal containers, but instead regard them as complex, ambiguous, and ever-changing phenomena. Donald Meinig’s analysis of the shaping of America, for example, showed the usefulness of a more dynamic conceptualisation of regions. In contrast to the traditional regional geography approach, still dominant in the post-second world war period, Meinig presented the historical geography of North America as a developing spatial system. At the continental level, regional structure is formed by the emergence of strong cities creating spatial systems characterised by the expansion of influence from
a hearth land towards various types of periphery with moving frontiers. These regions are not clearly delimited territories and their development can only be understood in relation to their wider contexts at different spatial scales: “Expansion from the most vigorous nuclei created territorial units on a new scale, which I shall call regions”. Meining adopted a similar approach to the study of the social construction of cultural regions. In more recent years, cultural geographers have shifted their attention from studies of the identity of cultural regions to how individuals interpret regions and how the meaning given to these regions by powerful others influence their daily life. At the same time, they have questioned the traditionally dominant cultural role of the nation state and given more attention to other scales of belonging.

In political geography the attention has also shifted from the functioning of states at the national level to the changing relations between the national and other levels. Since the 1980s, especially, Peter Taylor stressed the importance of both the wider world-system and the role of regional interests in shaping the geography of the state and political life more generally. In the 1990s the growing influence of border studies further challenged assumptions about the unproblematic and fixed character of state and other borders. There are now many historical studies of how regional and national territories are constructed. Borders are no longer conceptualised as fixed barriers, but as provisional regulators of interaction. Attention has increasingly shifted from the relationship between the construction of political boundaries and nation-state formation to the various opportunities and limitations this national border has for different groups living at the national border. Linked to this focus on the social construction of borders is a growing interest in the emergence of new forms of governance in cross-border regions. Stimulated by new policies within the European Commission, new forms of cross-border cooperation have emerged. In recent years there have been studies of, for example, the origins of the varying degrees of cross-border cooperation and the institutionalisation of cross-border regions, and the different forms of cross-border cooperation. These studies are part of a general shift from the traditional focus on the hierarchical top-down organisation of the nation-state to the study of more complicated network-based systems of multi-level governance. The national level has lost much of its dominance to both higher levels, such as the EU, and the lower levels of regional and local administrations. These different administrations increasingly coordinate their policies through the creation of more tailored networks which not only cut across administrative scales, but also include different social stakeholders. In many of these new administrative networks local administrations cooperate on the regional level in order to more effectively deal with the tasks decentralised from the national level. These new regions are according to Neil Brenner ‘new state spaces’ which are part of the ‘rescaling of statehood’. As a consequence of the inherent contradictions of this process, new regions constantly emerge especially to deal with the still unsolved fundamental problems of regulating the economy by West European states.

While regions have become more important for many different types of geography, they are no longer studied as distinct spatial objects formed in isolation from each other, but rather as overlapping networks of created by particular actors for specific purposes. The resulting regions are very diverse, ranging from demarcated political territories to economic networks between localised businesses but with permeable and unstable boundaries. These changes have been accompanied by calls from geographers (including Ron Johnston, Allan Pred, Anne Gilbert, and Nigel Thrift) for a new and revitalised regional geography. However, the thematic focus of most studies hinders the systematic analysis of the social construction of regions and relatively few human geographers connect the administrative, political, economic and cultural processes through which regions are constructed. 

Anssi Paasi’s framework for studying the institutionalisation of regions is one of the few attempts to integrate these different economic, political, cultural and historical contexts for the social construction of regions. It is through the interplay between these different aspects that a region can institutionalise itself in society. This approach has in recent years become one of the most influential and most-used analytical frameworks for studying the social construction of regions. Paasi’s analysis of the process of regional institutionalisation is based on four aspects or ‘shapes’ of regions. The territorial shape is the most tangible aspect of a region. It includes its borders and the
way in which these were constructed in history. Physical regional characteristics, such as patterns of land use, are also part of this shape. The symbolic shape is constituted by regional stereotypes based on for instance its territorial form or the characteristics of its population. The institutional shape enshrines forms of regional consciousness over generations especially through the educational system and the mass media. The structure of territorial administration is an important part of this aspect of a region. Finally, the functional shape refers to the established role of a region in larger systems, such as for instance its economic ties with neighbouring regions. The specific interplay between these four kinds of shapes differs between regions and gives them a distinct character. These shapes interact over time in the process of institutionalisation. An historical perspective is therefore fundamentally important to this form of analysis. Paasi’s study of the institutionalisation of regional structures in Finland thus spans several centuries from the Middle Ages to the present.

THE INSTITUTIONALISATION OF A DUTCH PROVINCE: ARE GUELDERS AND GELDERLAND ONE HISTORICAL REGION?

At this point, it is useful to present a brief example of the institutionalisation of regions as seen from this perspective, in order to draw out both its strengths and its limitations. In this section, we therefore consider how the medieval county of Guelders (Dutch: Gelre) developed into the current Dutch province of Gelderland. It is impossible to pinpoint exactly when the county of Guelders came into being, but a document written in 1096 that first mentioned a certain Gerard of Wassenberg as count of Guelders provides us with a terminus post quem. From the twelfth century onwards, the territorial shape of Guelders gradually came to resemble that of the current province of Gelderland, at least in part. It was sustained as a princedom under the rule of the counts and dukes of Guelders (in 1339 the county was elevated to the status of duchy) and remained a more or less independent state until 1543, when Emperor Charles V conquered the duchy and added it to his possessions in the Netherlands. Subsequently Guelders became involved in the Dutch Revolt, the uprising of the Dutch Provinces against Charles’ son Philip II. It was incorporated into the Dutch Republic at the end of the sixteenth century. The Quarter of Roermond, or Overkwartier was ceded to the Spanish. The main part of this area was incorporated into the Dutch state as section of the newly formed province of Limburg after the Treaty of Vienna of 1815. The remaining three Quarters formed the province of Gelderland, which remains to this day a Dutch province with only minor changes to its boundaries (see Figure 1).
This territorial shape is the most tangible of the four aspects of regional institutionalisation distinguished by Paasi. The development of the symbolic shape of Guelders, however, is less easy to trace. In sources from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the terms ‘Guelders’ or ‘land(s) of Guelders’ mostly referred to the lands and rights that the dynastic princes of Guelders held as their own private possessions. Little is known concerning the regional consciousness of other inhabitants of Guelders at that time. In the ensuing centuries, as towns and nobility became more influential political stakeholders (see below), the term ‘Guelders’ was de-personalised. Gradually it came to signify a territorial unit that existed regardless of the person of the ruler. However, no strong symbolic shape or articulated ‘Guelders identity’ emerged on this basis, in part because of the internal divisions within the county. What is clear is that during the military struggles in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the military enemies of Guelders branded the inhabitants as a violent and uncivilised lot, a characterisation that the Guelders’ people borrowed in an inversed version. In the historiography of Guelders in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, a number of Guelders’ authors nurtured the image of the inhabitants as fierce and courageous. After the integration of Guelders into the Habsburg Empire, and subsequently in the Dutch Republic, this heroic self-image withered away. Instead, some early modern humanist authors from Gelderland, most notably Gerhard Geldenhouwer from Nijmegen, debated where the first population settled in the Netherlands. This intellectual discourse no longer focussed on the identity of Guelders, but on the role of Gelderland in Dutch national identity. There was a national debate about whether the German tribe of the Batavians first settled in Holland or in the Guelders’ river area. The Batavians were regarded as the predecessors of the Dutch nation and their rising against the Roman Empire was portrayed as the precursors of the Dutch revolt against the Habsburg tyranny. Nowadays, as a province, Gelderland is quite indistinct, apart from a vague ‘green’ identity based on the wooded Veluwe and its many rural regions. The identity of the many different rural regions and distinct cities is much stronger than that.
focussing on the province. Compared to other Dutch provinces the identification of its population with the provincial level is very low. 34

The weak and changing symbolic shape of Guelders is linked not only to the diversity within its territory, but also to its unstable institutional shape. The structure of territorial administration in Paasi’s account is an important part of the institutional shape of a region. Late-medieval Guelders was institutionally relatively weak, especially compared to the Burgundian and Habsburg dominions in the Netherlands. The institutional shape was further weakened when Guelders lost its independence and eventually became one of the least important provinces in the Dutch Republic. It functioned as a buffer to protect the Dutch core area against armies coming from the East. It not only suffered incursions, but the increased fortification of its towns also hindered their economic development. 35 This functional shape or established role of a Gelderland in larger systems changed only slowly in the nineteenth century. The role of Gelderland in the Netherlands is now of an environmentally attractive overspill area for the overcrowded Dutch core and an economic transit area with Germany. 36

This brief overview of the regional institutionalisation of Gelderland, as seen from the perspective of Paasi’s framework of ‘shapes’, helps to clarify its current position. It explains the emergence of an irregularly-formed territory which incorporates very diverse and unrelated areas. The areas contained within Gelderland range from the Achterhoek, a rural peripheral Eastern border region, to a strongly urbanising area in its Northwest between Ede and Harderwijk, which is becoming part of the Randstad; the core area of the Netherlands. But there are many other differences like for instance between the urbanised area of the twin cities Arnhem and Nijmegen and the empty touristic Veluwe, or the very rural Achterhoek (see Figure 1). It is difficult to discern an administrative logic uniting such a diverse region. This diversity can only be explained through the historical process of Gelderland’s highly particular and somewhat limited form of institutionalisation. This diversity hinders the role of the current province of Gelderland in the formulation of coherent regional policies and in articulating its regional interest towards the national government. 37

Although such an evolutionary perspective helps us to understand the current administrative difficulties of a region like Gelderland, it tends to assume that regions are relatively distinct and coherent objects, an assumption that is not borne out in this case. For instance, despite the above discussed relative stability of its borders, Guelders was characterised by diversity, whether in jurisdiction, borders or the structures of its power networks, which all changed over time. Until the end of the twelfth century, for example, the counts of Guelders did not rule over a fixed integrated territory. Their power and authority within Guelders was based on their scattered landownership, dispersed military power, the exercise of certain local rights formerly belonging to the German kings (such as the right to levy tolls or the development of wastelands), and the cultivation of networks of noble and ecclesiastical allies, each with their own local jurisdictional and military powers. Moreover, from the late twelfth century onwards, a number of urban nuclei within this loosely-defined sphere of influence expanded, initially aided by a number of successive counts who formalized the status of most of these towns by issuing town charters during the first half of the thirteenth century. This policy was aimed at creating an urban network that was closely tied to the elites, but over time they turned into more independent political and economic forces in their own right. The city of Nijmegen was the largest and arguably the most influential of these towns, though Arnhem, Zutphen and Roermond were also important. 38 It was not until the start of the thirteenth century that the authority of the counts of Guelders was more clearly attached to a territory: although its borders were not quite fixed yet, enclaves and exclaves existed and certain important fiscal rights were outside the control of the dynasty. Guelders was made up of four kwartieren (quarters), those of Arnhem, Nijmegen, Overkwartier and Zutphen (see Figure 1). 39 The latter was formally a separate county – the complete title of the rulers of Guelders therefore was ‘dukes of Guelders, counts of Zutphen’ until 1579. Each of the Quarters comprised influential noble families and towns and was headed by a capital town. Legal and administrative structures varied in each quarter, and could vary even further within the quarter.
The institutional shape of medieval Guelders and the current province of Gelderland also differ widely. Despite the relative unimportance of the provincial level in the contemporary Dutch state, the number and tasks performed by provincial officials for instance dwarfs the institutions of the independent duchy Guelders. The regulatory regime has changed fundamentally, from the protection of the feudal rights of the nobility to the promotion of welfare for the whole population. The functional role of a medieval duchy struggling for its independence is also evidently very different from a province with an established role in the Dutch state.

FROM THE SOCIALLY CONSTRUCTED REGION TO THE CONSTRUCTORS OF REGIONS

This seemingly stable regional shell thus hides many fundamental differences in the nature of regions between different periods. While an evolutionary analysis helps to explain some basic elements of the current region, it also makes clear that medieval and current regions are very different. Another problem in the evolutionary approach as outlined here is that it focusses too much on single regions. Although ample attention is often given to the diversity of and conflicts between different social actors in the process of region formation, the focus is still on the outcome of this process in the form of a distinct region. This focus on the evolution of individual discrete regions risks falling into the territorial trap of conceptualising regions as containers. Dividing space into separate objects, whose development is then studied and compared with other regions, is widely recognised as problematic, and was one of the fundamental points made in critiques of traditional regional geography. The work of human geographers such as Ash Amin, Nigel Thrift and Doreen Massey has highlighted the limitations of a regional approach which is too cut off from wider structures and networks. They fear that it reifies space by treating the region as a 'given', isolating it from the dynamic relations through which actors constantly create space through various kinds of relationship which are always in process.

Despite these objections to conceptualising regions as historically-rooted, discrete and distinct spatial objects, regions are still widely regarded as important. Given the complexity and discontinuity exhibited in the historical evolution of many regions, the importance attached to stable regional identities – in academic, government, media or popular arenas – remains a remarkable and enduring feature of debate. However, the evident continuity in regional discourse is, in our opinion, based more on continuities in the utility of regions to social actors, and specifically on their reasons for using regions, than on any underlying continuity in the role of these regions as institutions. Any simple comparison between the institutional forms of medieval and modern regions is highly problematic, as the example of the Duchy of Guelders and the Dutch province of Gelderland showed. Instead of comparing medieval and modern regions, we focus in the rest of this paper on those who constructed regions – not just one region, but many – in complex and overlapping forms in order to pursue their own interests.

For practical reasons, we limit our discussion in this paper to the use of regions by local stakeholders. The paucity of mediaeval sources on regional identity leads us to focus more especially on the political and economic interests of local stakeholders, i.e. those actors whose interests are linked to a place. While focussing on the role of local stakeholders, we of course acknowledge the widely-discussed importance of the role of centralising political institutions in the formation of regions. Yet regional formation is more than a matter of top-down discourses of state formation and the loss of local autonomy, and exploring these processes from the perspective of local stakeholders offers a distinctive perspective. In any case, these top-down and bottom-up processes are to a large extent mutually dependent, and it is necessary to unravel the complex trans-scalar relations involving both sets of forces.

Many geographers and historians have stressed the importance of the relations between lower and higher scales in the formation of regions. Some develop these general ideas further and identify different scalar strategies deployed in local conflicts. Here we develop a model which identifies four different but related types of reasons why local stakeholders cooperate on the
regional level. These four spatial strategies are based on a hierarchy of scalar relations. The first is about economies of scale and scope, providing a rationale for some individuals to collaborate in forming regional networks; the second focusses on the relations between networks and collective territorial institutions within a region; the third concentrates on the relations between collectives of the same scale; and the fourth considers the relations between collectives of different scales. Having introduced this framework, the remainder of the paper seeks to apply it in the discussion of two case studies.

1. Economies Of Scale and Scope

The most common reason for actors to cooperate is in order to undertake activities that are beyond their individual capacity. These range from, for instance, pooling resources for large-scale economic ventures like long-distance trade to organising waste collection. The basic form of the cooperation is a network connecting similar stakeholders. A distinct territorial structure can help communication and facilitate the mobilisation of different nearby stakeholders. Other local stakeholders who have no interests in these activities are not relevant partners for cooperation in this network. Despite being located within the area covered by this functional network, they simply do not need to be part of it. For example, there is no need for the general population to participate in regional business networks. Nonetheless, these networks have some distinct regional and territorial characteristics. The size of the network is influenced by distance as networks tend to cluster in space. Organising who is eligible for membership and regulating the relations between different networks also tends to give these networks some territorial characteristics.

2. Cooperation Against Sub-Regional Threats

People and goods travel through space between the nodes in a network. This intermediate space through which the relations of this network operate is frequently not controlled by the participating local stakeholders. Protecting their relations thus forces many networks to get more involved in the regulation of relations in the area between its participating local nodes. The networks of local stakeholders transform into regions when their relations are threatened by actors outside their network, like for instance medieval robber barons or modern opponents to new infrastructure using democratic means. Local support for regions against local threats is not only based on concerns for territorial security. Sometimes non-participants profit from a network without contributing to the costs of these networks. Transforming networks into territories helps to secure their support and eliminate these free riders.

3. Regional Territorial Defence Against Other Regions

Regions are not only used for protection against internal threats coming from the local level. They may also be useful to protect local stakeholders against external threats from competing regions. Local stakeholders have some influence over the running of their region. In order to avoid becoming part of a region on which they have less influence, local stakeholders tend to cooperate to defend their region. In contrast to the network-based cooperation of specific local stakeholders, the strategy to defend a regional territory focuses on mobilising as many different types of local stakeholders as possible. Whereas merchants can operate inter-local networks, the defence of the regional territory depends on the mobilisation of the whole population. This territorial defence may range from the use of military force, to mobilising support against administrative re-divisions or an unwanted influx of migrants. This type of spatial strategy is used both at the national level where states compete against other states, and at the regional level where regional administrations and their allies
compete within a state. This spatial strategy can be linked to other scales, for instance through alliances between local stakeholders and the national state to protect their region against the ambitions of their neighbouring regions.

4. Scalar Politics Against Supra-Regional Control

Regions are also used to keep central authorities at a distance. Local stakeholders are too weak to defend their position against centralising powers individually. Mobilising on a regional level to protect regional autonomy against the centralising state is the fourth strategy we identify. History is frequently invoked to legitimise the defence of primordial regional rights against what is framed as the illegal attempts of central authorities impose their rule on regions. These strategies can for instance focus on ancient taxation rights or on the right to democratic self-determination. Although this is also a defensive strategy for which the mobilisation of the whole population within the regional territory is important, these relations across scale are fundamentally different from the previously discussed relation across borders between regions of the same level. Contrary to the horizontal relations with competing regions which can be stopped at the border, regions have always important vertical relations with the state to which they belong.

The Relation Between The Four Spatial Strategies

The scope of these four spatial strategies varies from small to large. The first two have an internal focus, while the last two focus on external relations. Table 1 systemises the fundamental differences between the four spatial strategies outlined above. Whereas the more internal strategies are bottom-up, the last strategy is linked to the top-down political processes of state formation. Strong and well-established regions are mostly the result of specific combinations of these four spatial strategies, as will become clear when we the use this typology of spatial strategies to analyse the current and medieval use of regions by local stakeholders to promote their local interests.

Table 1 Relations Between the Four Spatial Strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPATIAL STRATEGY</th>
<th>ASPECT</th>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Actor Focus</th>
<th>Relations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Internal</td>
<td>Economies of scale</td>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>Cooperation</td>
<td>Similar individuals</td>
<td>Within networks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal</td>
<td>Sub-regional threats</td>
<td>Intra-regional</td>
<td>Protection</td>
<td>Competitors</td>
<td>Outside networks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External</td>
<td>Territorial defence</td>
<td>Inter-regional</td>
<td>Protection</td>
<td>Population</td>
<td>Within and between territories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External</td>
<td>Scalar politics</td>
<td>Extra-regional</td>
<td>Protection</td>
<td>Central authorities</td>
<td>Across scales</td>
</tr>
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In the remainder of this paper we apply this framework to the use of regions by specific groups of local stakeholders in two very different settings. The first case study analyses how contemporary bulb growers in the Western part of the Netherlands use the Bollenstreek in their spatial strategies to promote their economic interests. The second case study analyses the use of regions by the medieval merchant elite in Nijmegen, a city in the Eastern part of the Netherlands. These case
studies are obviously far apart in time and space. Of course social practices have changed over time, and the scope and scales of the economic and political frameworks in which these stakeholders were active have grown enormously. It is however exactly the difference in historical context between these two cases that enables us to explore the usefulness of our local stakeholder-based perspective on the construction of regions. In our view, the application of this framework is not limited to stakeholders of a modern era; the same spatial strategies can be discerned in the actions of individuals and groups in the past as well. The approach may thus be used to re-interpret the construction and reconstruction of regions in the past from an actor perspective, even if they appear in various forms in various ages. For the case of medieval Nijmegen this perspective entails a shift away from the more traditional, territorially fixed conceptions of regions that still abound in the historiography of the medieval and early modern period.

We should note however that our cases examine two particular types of stakeholders - the modern bulb growers of the Bollenstreek and the commercially-oriented urban elites of Nijmegen - with rather specific interests at stake. Of course these groups were not the only political and economic stakeholders in the regions concerned, and moreover not all stakeholders are necessarily part of an (economic) elite. Yet, the rationale for our choice of case studies rests on the ability of these stakeholders to act within and shape their respective spatial spheres, which shows a large degree of similarity. Both in contemporary Bollenstreek and in medieval Nijmegen, local stakeholders were involved in the creation of favourable conditions for economic activities (trade, transport, distribution and to a lesser extent production), on different regional scales.

**BULB GROWERS: FROM THE BOLLENSTREEK REGION TO THE GREENPORT NETWORK**

The large-scale production of tulip bulbs and other flower bulbs started at the end of the nineteenth century in the Western part of the Netherlands between Leiden and Haarlem. Innovative farmers started to produce tulips and other bulbs on an area of poor sandy soils created by digging off the dunes to provide sand for the expanding nearby cities like Leiden and Amsterdam. The growing demand for bulbs and the need for larger and more efficient fields caused the bulb production to spread to other areas in the Netherlands. Today only 10% of Dutch bulbs are produced in this area which is still widely known as the ‘Bollenstreek’, even though it has no long history, no clear borders, nor a political administration. The expansion of nearby cities since the Second World War eroded the area used for bulb production in the Bollenstreek. Young and starting bulb growers in particular felt increasingly threatened by urbanisation and individually powerless to defend their fields. With the help of the local branch of the main agricultural organisation, they started to cooperate with similar stakeholders from the end of the 1980s. This informal agricultural network expanded and included other local stakeholders when the threat of urbanisation intensified. In the 1990s the threat of incremental urbanisation from existing towns within the region was surpassed by the central government’s plans for a huge new town. The declining importance of the bulb fields made the Bollenstreek look empty from a national perspective, an obvious potential location to relieve the growing urbanisation pressures from the nearby booming Schiphol-Amsterdam airport area and the city of Leiden. This motivated other local stakeholders including municipalities, residents’ groups, environmentalists, and the local chamber of commerce, to join up with the local bulb growers’ network. What started out as a strategy to control the sub-regional threats of local urbanisation through regional cooperation was thus augmented by other spatial strategies involving other stakeholders to avert the external threat of the construction of a new town.

Many inhabitants of the Bollenstreek protested against the proposed large new town in their back yards. They were supported by the municipalities in the Bollenstreek who already cooperated in a functional network to achieve economies of scale in the provision of public services. The area covered by this local municipal cooperation and whose borders largely coincided with the borders of the province Zuid-Holland, thus became an instrument used for both territorial defence and for a scalar politics against the imposition by central government of its urbanisation plans of the
Bollenstreek. The bulb and flower sector was crucial for the successful opposition to the proposed new town. The initial opposition to local urbanisation pressures came from local farmers. Now the bulb growers in the Bollenstreek, whose importance for Dutch bulb production has declined to 10%, were supported by the much more powerful trading companies in the Bollenstreek which control 80% of the world trade in flower bulbs. Urbanisation now threatened not only individual bulb growers, but the entire bulb industry in the Bollenstreek. Although the old bulb fields are no longer important for the production of bulbs, the agribusiness complex needs room for the expansion of offices, distribution centres and other facilities. The planned large new town would hinder this.

The regional opposition against the national plan for a new town did not use a purely defensive strategy. This would not fit with the growth orientation of the bulb growers’ network. It also would have reduced the bargaining position of the Bollenstreek towards the growth-oriented national government. Their spatial strategy was not to block national urbanisation plans but to transform them in alignment with the interests of the local stakeholders to create new opportunities for regional development. Especially by not blocking, but reducing and spreading the number of new houses, they acceded to the demands of the national policy of reducing the housing shortages in this part of the Randstad.

This cooperation between many different local stakeholders made the Bollenstreek region strong enough to defeat the national plans for a large new town in their territory. This strength was the result of the coming together of the spatial strategies discussed before. The initial strategy of local bulb growers was to cooperate at the regional level to defend their interests against unwanted urbanisation coming from within the region. This was augmented by a territorial defensive strategy against the external threat of large-scale urbanisation and by a strategy against the imposition by the central government of plans which would fundamentally alter the character of their region. The territorial strengthening of the Bollenstreek was thus the result of the temporary convergence of different strategies. The successful averting of the threat to the Bollenstreek by this large new town however reduced the necessity for local stakeholders to focus their spatial strategies on the territory of the Bollenstreek.

In 2004 the cooperation network of the municipalities in the Bollenstreek merged with another – that of HollandRijnland. Membership of a larger functional network covering a larger territory would improve the efficiency of the provision of municipal public services like public transport and waste collection. This reduction of spatial strategies to realising economies of scale by expanding the scope of functional networks is also taking place through the Greenport Duin- en Bollenstreek, which is now the main regional network of the agribusiness industry. It links the network of concerned local bulb growers, which was already taking shape in the 1980s in the Bollenstreek, with the agribusiness industry outside this region. Greenport is a recently formulated concept in central Dutch planning. A Greenport is an agribusiness complex which like the Mainports Schiphol/Amsterdam airport and the Rotterdam harbour is important for the Dutch economy and its global competitiveness. The central government stimulates the development of Greenports by easing planning regulations, improving infrastructure and stimulating cooperation between companies to innovate. Local stakeholders within the Bollenstreek link up with this planning concept from the central government to promote the collective interests of the different local stakeholders in the agribusiness sector within the Bollenstreek.

In the Bollenstreek the importance of the four spatial strategies has shifted over time. Public support for the Bollenstreek as a separate region was strongest when it was threatened. With the elimination of these threats the importance of distinct and separate territorial organisation for this region waned. The local stakeholders narrowed their focus to bulb growing and became less attached to a distinct territory, focussing their spatial strategy more on the wider regional network of bulb growers in order to realise economies of scale and promote their interests at the scale of the central authorities.
The widely different contexts of these case studies will help to test the usefulness of our focus on different spatial strategies used by local stakeholders. The comparison between these periods of concentration and of fragmentation of state power gives an extra relevance to our case studies. 50 Before we analyse the development of the spatial strategies of local stakeholders, however, we need briefly to situate Nijmegen in its historical and spatial context.

Early medieval Nijmegen, a former Roman military settlement, gained significance in the early Middle Ages as a pults; one of the temporary seats of power of the Holy Roman Emperor. Several members of the Carolingian dynasty, including Charlemagne, held court at Nijmegen during the eighth and ninth century and the ties of the town with the Emperors continued during the rest of the Middle Ages, albeit with varying intensity. By the thirteenth century Nijmegen had developed into the largest and economically most important town between Utrecht and Cologne. It would hold that position during the late Middle Ages: with an estimated 10,000 inhabitants around 1450 Nijmegen was one of the largest towns in the Rhine-Meuse basin. 51 Initially Nijmegen and its immediate rural surroundings (known as Rijk van Nijmegen) fell under the direct jurisdiction of the German kings; Nijmegen therefore received its town charter in 1230 directly from king Henry VII. In 1247 the German king decided to give Nijmegen to Otto II, count of Guelders. This transaction was meant to be temporary, but proved to be lasting. Nijmegen became integrated into the territorial framework of Guelders and as a consequence, the town became more involved with that region, and less with the more abstract entity of the Empire, although the ties to the Empire were never severed and Nijmegen did not hesitate to appeal to its status as Free Imperial City when its local autonomy was threatened by centralizing powers.

The increased political and economic interaction with its surrounding regions did not lead to a clear-cut urban policy, but rather to a set of different spatial strategies that Nijmegen’s town elite could deploy in different situations. The urban franchise of 1230, which gave the community a considerable amount of self-government, confirmed more than initiated Nijmegen’s autonomous position which was based on its economic strength. Still, the rulers of Guelders kept a close watch on the town’s administrative affairs. For instance, they exerted their power to influence the composition of the board of aldermen, a body that was responsible for public administration, legislation and the administration of justice. A number of these representatives were of noble or ministerial origin. The board of aldermen was presided by the burggraaf (viscount) or richter (judge) of Nijmegen, which were both offices in the service of the count. 52 The town’s non-noble citizens organized themselves into a ‘communitas’, consisting of prominent men, among whom merchants probably had a strong position. The communitas elected the board of councillors and the burgomasters. These played an important political role next to and alongside the aldermen in governing the town. 53

The Shifting Spatial Strategies Of The Urban Elite

The diverse interests of the members of Nijmegen’s medieval elite resulted in the simultaneous pursuit of different spatial strategies. In the surrounding countryside, the inhabitants of Nijmegen as well as religious institutions from the town had important interests in the protection of their landed property. 54 One instrument for the protection of these urban interests was the board of aldermen, whose jurisdiction extended over the nearby rural area of the ‘Rijk van Nijmegen’.55 The urban administration therefore nurtured good relations with both higher and lower nobility in other nearby regions of the Betuwe, ‘het Rijk van Nijmegen’ and ‘het Land van Maas en Waal’. They for instance included them as ‘buitenburgers’ (‘citizens from outside’) into the privileged urban community. This is likely to have given them better access to market privileges. They may also have benefited like the
‘buitenburgers’ in Cologne from an annual rent from the town. Some noblemen even took up residence in town. The urban and the local elites in this area cooperated to protect their landed properties and mercantile interest against both internal and external enemies. Internally they cooperated to protect themselves against robbers and to secure their privileges against the tenants working on their farms. External threats came from for instance the counts of Guelders. This spatial strategy of the local elite enhanced the regional cohesion of this area, but its boundaries were unclear. During the fourteenth century the area would gradually become more visible and eventually was institutionalised as the Quarter of Nijmegen, one of the four administrative territories used by both the dukes of Guelders to rule their territory and by the local elites to defend their interests against the central authorities.

Nijmegen also had to protect the larger commercial networks of its merchants. River trade and transport played a crucial role in the urban economy of Nijmegen. The transit trade along the Rhine between the German hinterland around Cologne and the coastal areas of the Netherlands were very important for Nijmegen. Skippers and merchants from Nijmegen were particularly involved in downstream wine trade and the upstream trade in salt and fish. Not only wine traders were an important part of the urban elite, but also members of the administrative and noble elites regularly invested in the wine trade and at times also traded in wine themselves. These urban elites not only cooperated to realise economies of scale and scope, but also to protect their trading interests against sub-regional threats.

These commercial activities of the town elite led to an urban policy of safeguarding Nijmegen’s interests along the most important trade routes, especially the route along the Rhine. The city’s expanding trade went hand in hand with the expansion of political influence. The council obtained commercial privileges and toll reductions for its citizens in several towns and territories. Just like other towns along the Rhine, Nijmegen entered into many bilateral agreements, for instance in 1266 with the counts of Cleves, with Cologne in 1278 and with Mainz in 1316. These collective agreements not only reduced commercial transaction costs, but also gave individual merchants from Nijmegen some protection against brigandage and robbery outside the direct sphere of influence of their home town. This cooperation along the Rhine not only created economies of scale and security for citizens of Nijmegen, but also created de facto a larger diplomatic and commercial network of merchant towns in this region based on the shared interest in the Rhine trade. This Rhine trade and shipping network consisted of the inhabitants of a few dozen towns and settlements along the Rhine, but it was clearly dominated by first and foremost Cologne and also by Duisburg, Wesel, Emmerich, Nijmegen, Deventer and Kampen. Though this network did not become a fully-fledged commercial institution in its own right, it did protect the collective interests of its participants when these were threatened by outside intervention. For instance when the town of Dordrecht, a crucial staple market at the mouth of the Rhine and the Meuse, in 1441 raised the tariffs on upriver goods, the affected commercial towns in Guelders, Cleves and the Rhineland quickly organised themselves against Dordrecht. Their spatial strategy not only focussed on cooperation within the network, but they also successfully turned to their respective dynastic princes to persuade Philip the Good, count of Holland, to take action against his subjects in Dordrecht.

Nijmegen’s position in the Hanseatic League was also characterised by this interaction between spatial strategies. The Hanseatic League was an association of trading towns from the north and west of the German empire aimed at obtaining commercial privileges from rulers of foreign territories, such as the king of England, the Scandinavian kings or the count of Flanders. In bargaining for their privileges the cooperating towns took advantage of their strength in numbers and the scope of their network. Based on their privileges the Hanseatic towns had established during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries a dominant trading network in an area stretching from Novgorod in the east to Bergen (Norway) in the north, to Bruges and London in the west. This functional network was of particular interest for the merchants of Nijmegen because it could provide the sort of privileged access to the markets of Flanders and England that they might not have obtained on their own. Nijmegen’s actions within the League were not solely based on cooperating in networks with other merchants to facilitate trade relations which were beyond the capacity of individual merchants.
and on territorial defensive strategies. Nijmegen’s position in the regional territorial framework of duchy of Guelders was also important. The formal admittance of Nijmegen into the Hanseatic League in 1402 was the result of a bargaining process that had already begun in 1387. Although Nijmegen rightfully claimed that its citizens belonged to the privileged Hanseatic community earlier in the fourteenth century, the formalization of its membership was speeded up considerably when the duke of Guelders wrote a letter of recommendation to Lübeck and the other Hanseatic towns. This served not only the intraregional commercial interests of Nijmegen, but also indirectly the fiscal interest of the dukes. During the fifteenth century, faced with the rising power of emerging states in Northern Europe, the League gradually tried to transform itself from a rather loosely-built interest community into a more formal territorial organisation. Regional subdivisions based on existing political territories were part of this reorganisation of the League. Nijmegen’s role within the League changed accordingly: it became one of the formal capital cities of the Cologne Quarter. This change was not only induced by the commercial importance of Nijmegen within the Hanseatic League – compared to Cologne and Lübeck, Nijmegen’s role within the League was relatively modest – but was also founded on its political importance within the duchy of Guelders. The organisational structure of the extra-territorial commercial network thus intermingled with intra-territorial political and institutional structures.

To protect the interests of the urban elites, the administration of Nijmegen used different strategies resulting in its active involvement in different but related regions at different scalar levels ranging from dominating its own Quarter to participating in international commercial networks. The position of Nijmegen in both its surrounding countryside and its international networks was linked to its active participation and support from the duchy of Guelders. Focussing on Guelders not only helped the local and international position of Nijmegen, but its fortunes became increasingly intertwined with that of Guelders as a political territory. The focus of the spatial strategies of Nijmegen’s elites shifted from the territorialisation of functional networks, to the controlling of sub-regional threats and later to the territorial defence of the duchy of Guelders and the opposition to centralising powers.

Already during the thirteenth century Nijmegen, like other Guelders towns, had been consulted by the duke on a voluntary basis in certain political matters, such as taxation or warfare. The rising expenditures of the duke, mainly to finance his wars, forced him to turn to his subjects for support. In return for this fiscal support, the nobility and towns acquired a crucial position in the rule of the duchy. Over time, the political developments within Guelders compelled Nijmegen to further shift its spatial strategies to the level of Guelders by cooperating with other stakeholders in Guelders to control sub-regional threats. Striking examples of this are the destructive wars of ducal succession in Guelders in 1343 and 1371 which invoked and deepened the strife between two parties of noblemen and towns, gathered around the noble families of the Bronkhorsten and the Heekerens. These succession struggles showed an instability of the ducal reign that was clearly at odds with Nijmegen’s (and other town’s) concern for peace and administrative stability. It compelled Nijmegen to participate in the gradually evolving Estates of Guelders, consisting of the most important towns and noblemen that had grown out the earlier ducal consultation of his most important subjects. The Estates thus developed into the institution where the most important stakeholders of Guelders promoted their interests. In practice the dukes of Guelders could hardly rule without the backing of at least a large part of the Estates. The political support for Guelders gradually shifted from the dynastical ruler to the local stakeholders. The Estates, and especially the towns within the Estates, became the prime bearers of a sense of the ‘common good’ of the land. The private dynastical force was kept in check and manipulated by the members of the Estates. In a sense, they embodied Guelders as a whole more than its dynasts, since the latter’s concern with the land was still mainly of a personal nature.

The increasing involvement of Nijmegen in Guelders was based on a combination of different spatial strategies. The involvement in internal political strife and the restraining of dynastical powers were part of a strategy to avert sub-regional threats and to defend local autonomy against the central authority of the dynasty within Guelders. This tendency became manifest when, after
another succession crisis, the Burgundian dynasty occupied Guelders from 1473 to 1477 and from 1481 to 1492. This occupation was met by a fierce opposition headed by Nijmegen. In 1492, the pro-Gueldrian independence party succeeded in ousting the Burgundians and installing their own candidate, Charles of Egmond. The choice for Egmond proved to be a mixed blessing. Although he battled vigorously to ward off the Habsburg armies, his military actions and the related fiscal demands were a constant source of friction with his subjects. The towns and nobility constantly complained about the duke’s autocratic actions, resulting in violence, insecurity and the infringements on long-standing privileges. In the case of Nijmegen, the duke tried to curtail the town’s jurisdictional rights in the surrounding Rijk van Nijmegen and to interfere in its internal affairs and its magistrates. This brought Nijmegen and the duke on the brink of war, but they were appeased in 1530. When seven years later the duke, who was heirless, intended to sign a treaty with the French king Charles VIII, naming him heir to the duchy, the Guelders Estates deposed Charles of Egmond. In the interest of the population of Guelders the towns and nobility chose William II, duke of Cleves, Jülich and Berg and count of Mark and Ravensberg, as his successor in 1538. Guelders joined this conglomerate of territories to be in a stronger position against the mounting Habsburg threat. However, in 1543 the Habsburg emperor Charles V defeated Duke William II of Egmond in a show of force and subsequently had to be accepted by the Guelders Estates as their new overlord. Interestingly, the Guelders towns successfully defended their hanseatic status in the Treaty of Venlo that sealed the incorporation of Guelders into the Habsburg domain. They demanded that the change of lordship should not affect their rights as hanseatic towns and this wish was granted.

After the defeat of their strategy to defend the regional territory against external threats, local stakeholders shifted to a spatial strategy to protect their autonomy against centralising powers. This not only resulted in the participation of Guelders and Nijmegen in the Dutch revolt and its incorporation as a province in the Netherlands, but also in the further institutionalisation of its ‘Kwartier van Nijmegen’ as an administrative region within this province.

CONCLUSION

Our discussion of the spatial strategies used by the merchant elite in medieval Nijmegen and the bulb growers in contemporary Bollenstreek showed significant similarities. Despite the huge differences between medieval Guelders and modern Bollenstreek, the political circumstances under which these regions became significant as vehicles for the promotion of the interests of local stakeholders were remarkably similar. Regions were used to mobilise support from other local stakeholders whose interests were also linked to these regions. Our case studies suggest that these defensive territorial strategies build on older forms of cooperation to averting more sub-regional threats. Later external threats and the fear of being subordinated to a central authority further strengthen the involvement of local stakeholders with their region.

Although we made an analytical distinction between these different spatial strategies, the analysis of the case studies showed that these strategies are frequently intertwined, reinforcing the involvement of local actors with these regions. The discussion of the case studies also made clear that one cannot focus simply on individual and separate regions. The spatial strategies of local stakeholders never focussed on only one region, but on a patchwork of related and nested regions and areas formed by spatial networks. Rather than focussing simply on the evolution of specific regions, it is therefore important to compare why local stakeholders shift their support for many partially overlapping regions to secure and promote their local interests. Our case studies showed that although there is no simple evolutionary continuity of regions, the strongest regions used by local stakeholders tend to have strong historical links to similar regions in the past. Spatial continuity of basic elements of regional structure - including settlement patterns, trade routes and land use - create similar spatial interests in different periods. Together with the establishment of regions in the collective memory of the population, this helps to explain why quite similar regions are used over
and over again by subsequent local stakeholders, even when in other respects there is little continuity in the regions as a societal entity.

Our analyses also highlighted the interplay between different stakeholders at different spatial scales. Although we applied a bottom-up perspective on the emergence of regions, our case-studies showed the interplay between our four spatial strategies by local stakeholders and the political actions and interests of central authorities. The strength of a specific region at a specific time depends thus on the interplay between political forces at the levels below and above that region. These scalar politics have over the last decades moved away from the dominance of state formation of a centralising nation state towards a rescaling of political relations linked to globalisation and regionalisation. The current renegotiation of scalar relations gives an extra relevance to historical comparisons with the situation in the Middle Ages when also the position of the central state was challenged. This interaction between these bottom-up and top-down strategies by different but layered territories needs further research.

History helps us to understand the social construction of current regions, as our analysis of the institutionalisation of the Dutch province of Gelderland showed. But this alone is not sufficient to analyse regions in the past. Comparing regions between different historical periods is very problematic as they are social constructions linked to specific historic social structures. Instead of comparing regions over time, it is more useful to compare why regions are constructed in different periods. This paper has shown that history and geography can be successfully linked when the focus is less on regions as discrete historical subjects and spatial objects in their own right, than on the reasons why social actors construct regions in the first place. Historical analysis of the reasons why actors sometimes use regions to promote their specific interests helps us to understand why, especially when the role of the central state changes, some regions become important social constructions.
**FOOTNOTES**


4. See for further information: www.cuius-regio.eu. It profited greatly from the discussions within this network. We want to thank especially Dick de Boer, Maarten Duijvendak, Maarten van Driel & Raymon Middelbos.


23 Keating, *The New Regionalism in Western Europe*; MacLeod, New regionalism reconsidered.
27 Terlouw, Regions in geography, 77.


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J. Kuys, Bestuur en politiek, in: Bots and Kuys, Nijmegen, 251-252.


Kuys, Bestuur en politiek, 249-250.


J.M. van Winter 1963, Ministerialiteit en ridderschap in Gelre en Zutphen, Groningen, 1962, 184, n. 44 lists a number of families of 14th- and 15th century aldermen that were active in (wine) trade; P.H.M.H. Offermans, Arbeid en levensstandaard in Nijmegen omstreeks de reductie (1550-1600) 62-64 shows the direct stakes of the leading townsmen of 16th century Nijmegen in the trade in wine; More general on Nijmegen wine trade: Weststrate, Kielzog, passim., and J. Weststrate, ‘Eyn ieder schyff us den lande van Gelre’. Het Gelderse aandeel in het laatmiddeleeuwse verkeer op Rijn en Waal, Bijdragen en mededelingen Gelre 99, 97-106.

H.D.J. van Schevichaven, Bijdrage tot de handel van Gelre vóór 1400 en zijn betrekking tot de Hanze, Bijdragen en mededelingen Gelre 13 (1910).


70 For reasons of space, the present discussion of the spatial strategies used by Nijmegen’s elite ends with the demise of Guelders as an independent state.