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of Change and Crisis



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HANS MOL (Leeuwarden/Leiden)

CRISIS IN PRUSSIA, CRISIS IN THE BAILIWICKS? THE CASE OF UTRECHT, 1443–1469

The focus of this paper is on the north western part of the German Empire, on the bailiwick of Utrecht, which had its central house in the cathedral city of Utrecht. It was one of the eight bailiwicks in the Empire that were subject to the German master who resided at Horneck castle in Southern Germany. Compared to the large and populous bailiwicks of Franconia on the one side and the small Westphalian and Austrian districts on the other, it could be qualified an average bailiwick, with its fourteen dependent commanderies and about sixty brethren, three-quarter of which were priests.¹

Unlike most of the other bailiwicks² it was a relatively prosperous and well ran organisation in the decades of the fifteenth century up to 1440. Several accounts and visitation reports show us that both the Utrecht main house and its dependent settlements were doing very well by then. The report to the German master of 1418 records an enormous expense of 1400 Rhenish guilders in support of the Prussian expedition of the land-commander of Biesen and yet the total amounts of receipts and expenditure are exactly in balance: 6183 guilders on both sides.³

¹ *Visitationen im Deutschen Orden im Mittelalter*, hrsg. v. M. Biskup und I. Janosz-Biskupowa, und red. v. U. Arnold, T. 1: 1236–1449, und T. 2: 1450–1519 (Marburg 2002/2004), p. 66 (1410) and pp. 71–81; R. J. Stapel, *Order dese ridderen zijn oec papen. Priesterbroeders in de balije Utrecht van de Duitse Orde (1350–1600)*, *Jaarboek voor Middeleeuwse Geschiedenis* 11 (2008), 212. In the visitation reports of the fifteenth century the number of Utrecht bailiwick members fluctuates between 45 and 50; in these figures however, the brethren (10 to 15) of the Frisian houses are always left out

² On the economical difficulties most bailiwicks had to face in the period 1380–1420, see K. Militzer, *Auswirkungen der spätmittelalterlichen Agrardepression auf die Deutschordensballen*, in: *Von Akkon bis Wien. Studien zur Deutschordensgeschichte vom 13. bis zum 20. Jahrhundert*, hrsg. v. U. Arnold, (Marburg 1977), p. 62 ff.

³ *Visitationen* I, pp. 72–73.

In 1434 the Utrecht bailiwick was rich enough to take over the commandery of Dieren from the bailiwick of Biesen for the considerable sum of 3750 Rhenish guilders.⁴ There were no deficits and the stores were as full with grain as they could be. This all sounds through in a passage of the Utrecht bailiwick chronicle on Herman van Keppel, who was land-commander in the period 1421–1442, that he left a big sum of money when he died.⁵ Of course, this prosperity was not only his merit but also – or even more so – of his predecessors Gerrit Splinter van der Enghe, Bernard van Opbuiren and Johan van den Sande. Driven by a new religious fervour as adherents of the Modern Devotion they had succeeded to restore the discipline of their brethren and had improved the administration as well.⁶ The result was that the Utrecht house had attracted a lot of new donations and had paid of all its debts in the period 1380–1420.

THE SUCCESSION CONFLICT OF 1443–1444

After the death of Herman van Keppel in November 1442 however, things went wrong. Firstly, there rose a heated conflict on his succession. It turned out that most members of the bailiwick preferred to be led by another man than the tipped candidate, the Utrecht *schaffenaar* or procurator Dirk van Enghuzen, who had been Keppel's close assistant in the last years of his administration. Van Enghuzen had been appointed stadholder by the German master at the 29th of June, for the time being.⁷ According to the late fifteenth century Utrecht bailiwick chronicle, he had not made himself popular with his fellow brethren by his sharpness and arrogant behaviour.⁸ It was rumoured that Van Enghuzen had taken possession

⁴ J. J. Geer tot Oudegein de, *Archieven der Ridderlijke Duitse Orde, balie van Utrecht*, vol. 2, Utrecht 1871, II, nr. 479.

⁵ *Ende als hij offghynck, leverden hij voel gelts inder scefferie ende voel coerns opten solre ende voel somme van geldes, diemen den huse sculdich was* (As he went into retirement he left a lot of money in the *schaffenaars'* treasury, plenty of grain in the loft and many loans that had been set out): De Geer, *Archieven I* (as n. 4), p. 255.

⁶ On the remarkable spiritual and economical revival of the bailiwick at the end of the fourteenth century, see J. A. Mol, *De Friese huizen van de Duitse Orde. Nes, Steenkerk en Schoten en hun plaats in het Friese kloosterlandschap*, Leeuwarden 1991, pp. 99–100.

⁷ De Geer, *Archieven II* (as n. 4), nr. 357 (this happened in Aachen at St. Peter and Pauls day).

⁸ *Mer hij was seer eenpassich van synne ende en ghelovende nyemant dan hem selven, Ende hij was seer bitter ende strenghe daer hij over woude wesen. Aldus werd hij mer ontsien om sijnre wretheit, dan van mynnen der oirden; ende altoes hadde hij den enen off den anderen van der oirden voir, daer hij voel moetwils over dreff, alsoe dattet then lesten den ghemeyn heren verdroet* (But he was very distinct in his preferences and he did not put trust in anyone but himself. And he was very hard and severe for all people who were subject to his authority. In this way, he was rather

of the personal inheritance of the deceased land-commander to buy the support of some influential city authorities for his candidature.⁹ He needed this, because his party conviction in the regional politics seems not to have matched that of the Utrecht magistrate. His rival to the land-commandership was the irreproachable commander of Dieren, Wouter de Gruter, who had the backing of most brethren. Van Enghuzen's most outspoken and most influential opponent however, was the former land-commander of both Westphalia and Utrecht, Sweder Cobbing, at that moment commander of Tiel. This assertive knight brother probably came from the region Twente, where he had started his career as commander of Ootmarsum (1404–1406). He was land-commander of Westphalia in 1411,¹⁰ managed as such to attach the house of Ootmarsum temporarily to the Westphalian bailiwick in 1417, secured the position of land-commander of Utrecht in 1419 but had to resign already three years later, for which he was compensated with the commandership of Tiel.¹¹ In 1443 – it is not clear whether this was before or after the death of Herman van Keppel – he was appointed stadholder of Westphalia, which bailiwick he thereafter tried to enrich anew with the Utrecht commandery of Ootmarsum, while he kept his hands on the Utrecht house of Tiel as long as possible. It would not go too far to style him as an intriguer. He did not hesitate to denounce Enghuzen as being only noble for half a quarter, and even that along a bastard line.¹²

obeyed because of his harshness than for his love of the order; furthermore, he was moody in his favoritism, which in the end distressed all the common brethren): De Geer, *Archieven I* (as n. 4), 256. This fairly negative view on Dirk van Enghuzen is probably written down on behalf of the later land-commander Johan van Drongelen, who as a junior knight brother has been one of Van Enghuzen's opponents in 1454.

⁹ De Geer, *Archieven I* (as n. 4), 256. According to Sweder Cobbing, Dirk van Enghuzen was said to have promised to pay 4000 to 5000 Rhenish guilders to people who would endorse his candidature: De Geer, *Archieven II* (as n. 4), nr. 357.

¹⁰ De Geer, *Archieven II* (as n. 4), nr. 345.

¹¹ Cobbing was not liked in the city of Utrecht because of his pro-Guelders party conviction. Compare: A. J. Hoven van Genderen, *Op het toppunt van de macht (1304–1528)*, in: R. E. de Bruin e.a. (red.), *'Een paradijs vol weelde'. Geschiedenis van de stad Utrecht* (Utrecht 2000), s. 162–163, and F. Meijer, *De broedertwist. Een internationaal opvolgingsconflict in nationaal perspectief. De balije Utrecht der Ridderlijke Deutsche Orde in het midden van de vijftiende eeuw*, MA-thesis Medieval History Rijksuniversiteit Groningen, 1998, pp. 22–25.

¹² Although it is difficult to fit our man exactly in the Enghuzen lineage, there is no reason to doubt his birth from the Guelders *ministeriales* family with that name, who maintained good relations with the Order. A carnal brother of Dirk, Jan van Enghuzen, and a certain Herman van Enghuzen, possibly a nephew, were members of the Livonian branch of the Order in the middle of the fifteenth century: Meijer, *Broedertwist* (as n. 11), pp. 19–20. A century earlier, a namesake, Dietrich van Engelhusen, held high positions in the Order in Prussia as *Pfleger* of Insterburg (1348–1353) and *Vogt* of Samland (1357–1359): J. Voigt, *Namen-Codex der Deutschen Ordens-Be-*

The problem was how the votes and voices of the chapter members had to be weighed by the German master, since the statutes of the Order did not provide in a free election by the bailiwick. The master was supposed to fathom the inclination of the brethren, but a Teutonic Order's house was not a Benedictine convent. If he liked to push through his own choice, he could do so. The brethren knew this and, led by Sweder Cobbing, they decided to send a request to the grand master, in which they asked him to exert his influence on the German master to support the majority candidate of the bailiwick.¹³ This request was accompanied by a similar one of the city council of Utrecht.¹⁴ Interestingly, both letters – dated at August 30 and 27 respectively – were personally brought to the grand master in the Marienburg by brother Willem van Ingen Nuland, who bore the title of commander of Schoonhoven, in the company of an unnamed priest brother.

As one can imagine, nothing would come out of this. The reform minded grand master Konrad von Erlichshausen,¹⁵ who was elected 12 April 1441 to replace Paul von Rusdorf, was not a man with sympathy for brethren insisting on their right to vote. Besides, he did not intend to make trouble with the German master Eberhard von Saunsheim by lending his ear to members of the order in one of Saunsheim's districts. Since Saunsheim had greatly been at odds with the former grand master, it seemed wise for Erlichshausen not to worsen relations for the present by interfering in the German master's affairs.

Saunsheim for his part, acted very cautiously after he had received the news about the dissent between the Utrecht brethren, because he decided in the end of the year to replace Dirk van Enghuzen as stadholder by Albrecht Förtsch, commander of Frankfurt.¹⁶ As an interim manager the latter can not have been very active in Utrecht. On May 15 1444 several Utrecht commanders asked the new German master Eberhard von Stetten – Saunsheim had died 27 December 1443 – to appoint a new land-commander since they feared that Förtsch could not stay any longer because of his other functions.¹⁷ Not long after this, the German master chose of his own accord for Dirk van Enghuzen.

It took some time before Enghuzen was accepted by most of his opponents. At August 28 Bishop Rudolf van Diepholt gave his support to the new land-commander, promising him to protect the bailiwick and to keep Sweder Cobbing

amten, Hochmeister, Landmeister, Grossgebietiger, Komthure, Vögte, Pfleger, Hochmeister-Kompane, Kreuzfahrer und Söldner-Hauptleute in Preussen, Königsberg 1843, p. 76, 87.

¹³ De Geer, *Archieven* II (as n. 4), nr. 357.

¹⁴ De Geer, *Archieven* II (as n. 4), nr. 356.

¹⁵ K. Militzer, *Die Geschichte des Deutschen Ordens*, Stuttgart 2005, pp. 150–151.

¹⁶ This can be concluded from the Utrecht chronicle: De Geer, *Archieven* I, p. 256.

¹⁷ De Geer, *Archieven* II (as n. 4), nr. 359.

and one of his Westphalian allies out of the country.¹⁸ Three days later, Wouter de Gruter and most other brethren agreed to obey him as their land-commander.¹⁹ Sweder Cobbing was not amongst them, because he belonged to another bailiwick and therefore was not obliged to accept Dirk van Enghuzen. The only Utrecht brethren who continued to offer resistance were the already named Willem van Ingen Nuland and his carnal brother Goderd. In the spring of 1443 when the first election had been held, they had taken hold of the Teutonic house of Schoonhoven and had used its income to endorse the candidature of Wouter de Gruter. They now demanded compensation for all the debts they had made. There is ample evidence that Willem had usurped the commandership – being only a private knight brother in Dieren shortly before.²⁰ But it appeared hard to drive him and his brother out of Schoonhoven. It took the new land-commander two years to reach an agreement with both men. Van Enghuzen promised to seek a suitable and honourable position for Willem and Goderd, either in the Utrecht bailiwick or in the bailiwicks of Biesen or Koblenz.²¹ As far as I can see, Goderd first took up residence in the commandery of Dieren in 1447; later he moved to the house of Tiel which he administered as commander in 1451.²² Willem's trace is more difficult to follow, but he can have been sent to the remote house of Bunne in the province of Drenthe, where in 1451 beside the commander a certain knight brother *Wilhelm* was living, according to the well known visitation report of that year.²³

ATTEMPTS TO MANSLAUGHTER, REBELLION AND STRIVING FOR POWER AND AUTONOMY 1454–1457

The peace that had returned, was suddenly broken in the late summer of 1454, when Willem and Goderd van Ingen Nuland tried to kill the land-commander Dirk

¹⁸ S. Muller Fzn, *Regesten van het archief der bisschoppen van Utrecht (722–1528)*, 4 vols., Utrecht 1917–1922, regist 3267. He also promises to maintain the bailiwick in its possession of the house of Ootmarsum.

¹⁹ De Geer, *Archieven II* (as n. 4), nr. 362 (August 31, 1444).

²⁰ On August 8 1443 the priest brother Nicolaes van Rensborch is named as commander of Schoonhoven and as rector of the Schoonhoven parish church: *Memorialen Rosa IX*. Nr. 84. Ten days later, he is only called parish minister of Schoonhoven, when he has to defend himself against *Willem Uutgheennuwelände*: *Memorialen Rosa IX*, nr. 90. In 1444 (the exact date is unknown), Albrecht Förtsch, temporary stadholder of the land-commandership of Utrecht, asks the city magistrates of Schoonhoven to admit Reynsborch again as commander: De Geer, *Archieven II*, nr. 360.

²¹ De Geer, *Archieven II* (as n. 4), nr. 363 (April 22, 1446).

²² *Visitationen II* (as n. 1), p. 135

²³ *Ibidem*, p. 136.

van Enghuzen. According to a private report of Sweder Cobbing, this happened on the public road in the south eastern part of the province of Utrecht between the bishop's castle of Horst and the town of Rhenen, where the Order possessed a small commandery.²⁴ The Ingen Nuland brothers are said to have attempted the murder with the help of seven Teutonic Order knights who had returned from Prussia. Details on how the event exactly took place are missing. But fortunately for Dirk van Enghuzen, the marshal of the bishop was not far away at the moment. The two main assailants were caught and thrown into the prison of the bishops stronghold. After three months they were tried by delegates of the German master and sentenced to the loss of their Order cross and to eternal imprisonment in the Teutonic House in Utrecht.²⁵

So far so good, one could say, and convent life could have retaken its normal course, had not in January 1455 a rebellion broke out in the city of Utrecht which led to a reversal of the balance of power.²⁶ The guilds and several other parties seized power and threw the bishop out of the town. This in its turn, ignited the second and major fire within the bailiwick. When in the following riots, at January 25, the Teutonic house was stormed and plundered, the land-commander Dirk van Enghuzen, who was considered to be a supporter of the bishop, had to fear for his life and fled out of the city. Two attempts of homicide were too much for him. The already mentioned chronicle states that if the mob would have found him at that moment, they would surely have torn him to pieces.²⁷ At the same time the Ingen Nuland brothers were freed from prison.

Two days later, on the Sunday after St. Pauls, two unknown visitors who apparently were already in Utrecht to inspect the house, and Sweder van Diepenbroek, who had succeeded the retired Sweder Cobbing as land-commander of Westphalia, met with the house-commander Jacob Horreman to see what should be done. They were informed by the *schaffenaar* Jacob Peuyt that Dirk van Enghuzen had given up his land-commandership and that he had asked Nicolaas van der Dussen, commander of Gemert in the bailiwick of Biesen, to replace him temporarily. Thereupon, the brethren at Utrecht, who had been called together by these men, decided – according to a later statement of March 7 – to accept Van der Dussen

²⁴ De Geer, *Archieven* II (as n. 4), nr. 379 (October 14, 1455). The exact date of the attempt is not known. The brothers are said to have stayed three months in the bishops prison before they were tried and thrown in the dungeon of the Teutonic House in Utrecht, from which they were freed at January 25, 1455.

²⁵ De Geer, *Archieven* II (as n. 4), nrs. 379

²⁶ J. E. A. L. Struick, *Het bewind van de gilden en de strijd om het bisdom in de stad Utrecht*, in: *Postillen over kerk en maatschappij in de vijftiende en zestiende eeuw*, Utrecht/Nijmegen 1964, pp. 89–91.

²⁷ *Sij hadden hem bij aventueren aen stuecken gheslagen*: De Geer, *Archieven* I (as n. 4), p. 256.

as stadholder, on condition that his appointment would only last until Shrove Tuesday (February 28). Before that date all chapter members of the bailiwick were expected to come together to vote for a new stadholder or land-commander.²⁸ In the meantime the German master Jost von Venningen commanded all brethren of the bailiwick to obey Dirk van Enghuzen.²⁹ As for Nicolaas van der Dussen, who seems to have been one of the visitators, he left Utrecht without any notification before the chapter meeting took place. In the vacuum of power thereafter, some sort of assembly was arranged at which Willem van Ingen Nuland, who had reorganised his backing, managed to be chosen as land-commander by the Prussian brethren and a few others on whom he could count.³⁰ Apart from the 'Prussians', his supporters came from the same group who had supported Wouter de Gruter in the competition for the land-commandership in 1443. Wouter de Gruter himself however, did not take sides with Van Ingen Nuland. At April 12, he and seven other commanders, who later denied to have participated in the election, declared that they had been summoned to Schoonhoven by Dirk van Enghuzen, who had shown them a letter³¹ of the German master in which all brethren of the bailiwick were commanded to stay loyal to him. Convinced by this they made a strong appeal to all princes, lords, knights etc. to restore Dirk van Enghuzen in power, and asked the supporters of Willem van Ingen Nuland to comply with Van Enghuzen again.³² For the time being, this had little effect, since Willem van Ingen Nuland continued to act as land-commander, residing in Utrecht.³³ Dirk van Enghuzen stayed in the nearby commandery of Schoonhoven, in the territory of Holland, until he was appointed commander of Middelburg in the autumn of 1457.³⁴

Whether or not the majority of the brethren had given their support to Willem van Ingen Nuland, the German master Ulrich von Lentersheim, who had succeeded Von Venningen, could not accept his election, since the procedure was contrary to the rule and tradition of the Order. The only thing he could do

²⁸ This is recorded in a later statement (of March 7, 1455): *Ibidem* II, nr. 370.

²⁹ *Ibidem* II, nr. 368 (February 21).

³⁰ This meeting must have taken place before April 12 – see the next note –, when Willem van Ingen Nulands opponents asked the disobedient brethren to be loyal to Dirk van Enghuzen.

³¹ Probably the above mentioned text of February 21.

³² The subscribers were, besides Wouter de Gruter (Dieren): Johan van Haafte (Tiel), Jacob van der Woerd (Leiden), Jacob Symonsz (Schoonhoven), Johan van der Borch (Middelburg), Johan Koenen (Doesburg), Dirk Walensdorp (Katwijk) en Jacob de Witte (Maasland). De Geer, *Archieven* II (as n. 4), nr. 372 (April 12).

³³ *Ibidem* II, 373 (June 4, 1455).

³⁴ Archief Ridderlijke Duitse Orde balije van Utrecht (ARDOU), inv.nr. 2612 (account of the house Schoonhoven); P. A. Henderikx, *Middelburg en het Duitse Huis in de middeleeuwen*, in: J. Dekker, P. Don and A. Meijer (red.), *Een bijzonder huis op een bijzondere plek. Het Van de Perrehuis in Middelburg en zijn omgeving*, Middelburg 2000, pp. 46–47.

was to appoint a new stadholder as soon as possible.³⁵ His choice fell upon the academically trained commander of Tiel, Johan van Haaften, whose father Otto, lord of Haaften and Herwijnen, had been councillor to the duke of Guelders.³⁶ As Willem van Ingen Nuland by no means wished to follow the orders of the German master, a severe and long lasting fight started between him and Johan van Haaften for the control of the bailiwick. It would take too much space to go into detail on what each of them did to get supporters and allies.³⁷ Suffice to say that up to the middle of 1457, the bailiwick was a theatre for a continuous struggle between two rivalling groups of brethren, in which a number of other parties participated as well. Apart from the German master, the main interfering powers were the council and representatives of the city of Utrecht and Duke Philip of Burgundy who at that time tried to dominate the bishopric which had become vacant in the course of 1455. Harmony, peace and religious spirits evaporated. And lots and lots of money were lost to bribes and presents to rulers, buyouts of aggressive brethren and payments to lawyers.³⁸

With the help of Duke Philip of Burgundy and his bastard son David, who at August 3 1456 was appointed elect-bishop of Utrecht, Johan van Haaften managed in the end of that year to take up residence in the Teutonic House of Utrecht. The next year he got himself obeyed by all the members of the bailiwick, even by Willem van Ingen Nuland, with whom a treaty was negotiated. But he did not prove able to repair the damage and restore the discipline amongst the brethren. On the contrary, he only augmented the deficits and encouraged loose behaviour by his luxurious way of living. And thus, he was forced to resign in 1463, living further as a squandering commander of Tiel until his death in 1474.³⁹ Unfortunately, his next two successors, Nicolaas van der Dussen (1464–1466) and Hendrik van Hakvoort (1466–1469), were not any better. The restoration of the bailiwick could only be given a start in 1469, when the energetic Johan van Drongelen accepted the appointment as land-commander. The Utrecht chronicle, which most likely has been written under the authority of Van Drongelen, says that upon his arrival in Utrecht he found nothing but empty stores; only the treasury was full,

³⁵ Already at June 8, Johan van Haaften was appointed as such: De Geer, *Archieven* II (as n. 4), nr. 374.

³⁶ Meijer, *Broederstrijd* (as n. 11), p. 45.

³⁷ For the following, see De Geer, *Archieven* I, pp. lxxxvi–xc.

³⁸ Illuminating are the expenditures recorded in the account of Johan van Haaften over the years 1455–1457: ARDOU, inv.nr. 330.1, edited in Meijer, *Broedertwist*, pp. 58–67.

³⁹ In a *post mortem* letter of the land-commander Johan van Drongelen to the city magistrates of Tiel Johan van Haaften is qualified as a ‘learned man of large gesture, who did not know shame or remorse; who wasted his life with his wives, and who pitifully brought ruin upon the bailiwick’: ARDOU, inv.nr. 2714 (October 9, 1474).

not with money but with debts up to 3700 Rhenish guilders, which was more than the yearly income of the house. Under his administration the bailiwick would slowly recover from its wounds, by entering a new phase as a *Spital* or maintenance institute for a small part of the lesser Utrecht and Guelders' nobility.⁴⁰

This crisis in the Utrecht bailiwick has been analysed before, *inter alios* by Werner Reese and Rudolf ten Haaf.⁴¹ They both interpreted the chain of events as part of a process of 'Territorialisierung'. Behind all movement, they detected regional rulers and sovereigns who tried to bring the houses of the military orders under their control, especially by claiming a say in the appointment of dignitaries and new members. It cannot be denied that the duke of Burgundy, the bishop of Utrecht and the Utrecht city magistrates interfered very deeply in the affairs of the bailiwick. It is also undisputed that they profited from the internal disorder by tightening their political and fiscal grip on the bailiwick. But who looks more closely at their roles, will discover that they have only been drawn in when matters already had run out of hand. The fire was not kindled by them but by the brethren themselves.

Not all these brethren however, were members of the bailiwick chapter. Since we know that brethren who had returned from Prussia had joined the rebellion of 1454, the question arises as to how damaging and decisive their role has been. This requires us to consider the position of the Dutch knights in Prussia in comparison to other groups up to that time, and subsequently to analyse its change and the motives behind their returning to Utrecht.⁴²

THE PRUSSIAN BACKGROUND OF THE INGEN NULAND BROTHERS

The first interesting fact is that not only the seven brothers who supported Willem and Goderd in 1454 and 1455 had a Prussian past but also the two Ingen Nuland

⁴⁰ J. A. Mol, *The "Hospice of the German Nobility"; Changes in the Admission Policy of the Teutonic Knights in the Fifteenth Century*, in: J. Sarnowsky (red.), *Mendicants, Military Orders and Regionalism in Medieval Europe*, Aldershot 1999, pp. 128–129.

⁴¹ W. Reese, *Gesamtdeutsche und territoriale Zusammenhänge in der Geschichte des Deutschritterordens der Niederlande*, *Blätter zur Deutsche Landesgeschichte* 83 (1936/1937), pp. 251–260; R. ten Haaf, *Deutschordensstaat und Deutschordensballeien*, Göttingen 1951, pp. 34–37.

⁴² I would like to thank Frank Meijer for providing me his data on the 'Prussian' brethren from Utrecht. Cf. F. Meijer, *"Pruyscher saken". Utrechtse Duitse Orde-ridders en Pruisen*, in: D. E. H. de Boer, G. Gleba and R. Holbach (red.), *"... in guete freuntlichen nachbarlichen verwantnus und hantierung..." Wanderung von Personen, Verbreitung von Ideen, Austausch von Waren in den niederländische und deutsche Küstenregionen von 13. – 18. Jahrhundert*, Oldenburg 2001, pp. 241–267.

brothers themselves. There is a comment on Goderd van Ingen Nuland, dating from around 1444, that he has no place in the bailiwick.⁴³ It is stated that he had come from Prussia with a written permission from the grand master. It is not clear where he actually had been living in the east. We know of a Goderd van Ingen Nuland who resided in the castle of Weissenstein in Livonia in 1438 as ‘alter Hauskomtur’.⁴⁴ His name is exactly identical to our Goderd, but since we can trace the later Goderd up to 1469 when he was still living in the Utrecht commandery of Dieren, it is unlikely that they were one and the same person, when we accept that the position of ‘former house commander’ was something for a brother at the end of his career. Another argument to suppose that they were different persons is that the Livonian Goderd was subject to the Livonian master and not to the grand master. Both Goderds, of course, will have been related to each other.

As for Willem, he must have been in Prussia in January 1438. This is apparent from a letter addressed to him by the Utrecht land-commander Herman van Keppel registered in the archives of the grand master.⁴⁵ The content is somewhat vague but the writer points at the opposition he has met of the German master at a chapter meeting in Frankfurt; and at some intrigues of Sweder Cobbing, who was commander of Tiel and former land-commander of Westphalia by then.⁴⁶ It probably hints at the problematic exchange transaction on the houses of Ootmarsum and Tiel between the bailiwicks of Westphalia and Utrecht. The land-commander puts his hopes at the grand master in Prussia whom he refers to as a ... *vasten onderstant*, which could be translated as ‘a firm point of support’. The grand master at that time was Paul von Rusdorf, who favoured the men from the Rhineland, as he was a Rhinelander himself. At any case, Willem van Ingen

⁴³ ARDOU, inv.nr. 184: ‘heer Godevaert vanden Nuwelande en heeft gheen plaitze om te wonen ende is wt Pruyssen gecomen by brieven vanden homeester’.

⁴⁴ L. Fenske, and K. Militzer ed., *Ritterbrüder im livländischen Zweig des Deutschen Ordens*, Weenen 1993, nr. 635.

⁴⁵ E. Joachim and W. Hubatsch (ed.), *Regesta Historico-Diplomatica Ordinis S. Mariae Theutonicorum 1198–1525*, Vols. 1 and 2 (Göttingen 1948–1973), nr. 7429; Staatsarchiv Königsberg, Berlin, Ordensbriefarchiv, nr. 7429.

⁴⁶ *Ibidem*: ‘Leve her Willem ..., wy u nyet nyges en wethen to scryven dan her Cobbinck onser vaste gedacht hadde ons to hinderne; so wes wij dem comptuer van Grudens to geseget hadden, dat hadde her Cobbinck alinck gescreven dem mester van Duytschlande ende noch meer dat to ons gerne to hinderne. [...] Item leve her Willem, wy verdeynen geynen danck an dem meister van Duytschlande daromme so ist noet dat ons onse hoefft to Pruesen een vaest onderstant ommer sij.’ (Dear her Willem ..., we don’t have anything new to write, except that her Cobbinck has the firm intention to hinder us; for instance, all we had said to the commander of Graudenz, her Cobbinck completely revealed it to the German master, and still more, to impede us with pleasure. [...]. Furthermore dear her Willem, we do not deserve any gratitude of the German master, and therefore it is necessary that our head in Prussia constitutes a firm point of support for us).

Nuland is addressed as a confidant by the land-commander – and he is asked to bring greetings to the commander of Christburg, Walter Kerskorf, to a certain Dutch brother Van der Wayen who stayed in the Danzig convent, and furthermore to all other acquaintances of the land-commander;⁴⁷ by which probably the Utrecht brethren in the diverse Prussian commanderies are meant. The impression we get is that Willem did not stay in Prussia as delegate or a messenger, but that he was living in one of the convents there, possibly in the Marienburg, and that he tried to maintain relations there with his fellow countrymen from the Utrecht and Guelders' territories. That would explain why exactly he was asked to deliver Cobbing's request to the grand master: he was familiar with both the place and the right persons.

THE OTHER DUTCH PRUSSIAN AND THE CHANGES IN THEIR POSITION

That means that he must have known most of the seven brethren who supported him in 1454. Their names are given in a letter written in 1459 to the grand master by Williams' rival and land-commander by then, Johan van Haaften.⁴⁸ It is made clear that they, like many others, had been driven out of Prussia and had fled because of the war. The aged Sweder Cobbing, who in October 1455 gave his support to Van Haaften, was furious on their behaviour. He qualifies them as 'disobedient brothers who don't belong to the bailiwick and therefore have no right on a vote'.⁴⁹ In his letter of 1459 the land-commander asks the grand master to call them back as soon as possible, because he cannot afford to maintain them any longer in his poor bailiwick, which is severely burdened with all kinds of taxes. Three of them can be identified in documents of the Prussian administration. Johan van Ghent, originating from Guelders (*us Gelren*), resided in 1437/1438 in the commandery

⁴⁷ Ibidem: *Ende gruet ons ommer onsen leven heren ende guden vrunde, sunderlinge dem computer van Kersborch ende Van der Waden ende all onse leve vrunden. Van der Waden* was probably the same as the Rhineman Evert van der Wayen, who stayed in the Danziger Konvent in 1438/1451: B. Jähnig, *Der Danziger Deutschordenskonvent in der Mitte des 15. Jahrhunderts. ein Beitrag zur Personengeschichte des Deutschen Ordens*, in: B. Jähnig and P. Letke-mann (red.), *Danzig in acht Jahrhunderten*, Münster 1985, pp. 174; P. G. Thielen, *De Verwaltung des Ordensstaates Preussen*, Osteuropa in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart 11, Köln/Graz 1965, pp. 136.

⁴⁸ Johan van Gent, Willem van der Lawick, Willem van Zandwijk, Johan van Rossum, Herman van Dammasch, Hubrecht Wolf en Hendrik van der Voert: Joachim-Hubatsch, *Regesta* (as n. 43), nr. 15317 (June 15, 1459).

⁴⁹ ... *on gehoorsamen bruderen, die uut Pruyssen gekomen synt, die nycht inden koer noch in die balyen en horen ...*: De Geer, *Archieven II* (as n. 4), nr. 379.

of Christburg as a convent brother without an office.⁵⁰ Herman van Dammasch lived at the same time in Danzig, where he was known to be a Rhineland man.⁵¹ And Willem van Zandwijk was there also a few years later, in 1446, being counted a Rhineland as well.⁵² None of them had an office or a command. They had only two horses and a suit of armour at their disposal.

In this way – if we can call two men a group – there were at different times two groups of brethren that turned their back to Prussia to seek for a secure and honourable position in the bailiwick: the two carnal brothers Van Ingen Nuland shortly before 1443, and the seven fugitives twelve years later, in 1454. The explanation for the move of the latter has already been given. But why did Goderd and Willem van Ingen Nuland leave Prussia for Utrecht already in the early forties?

Willem van Ingen Nuland and probably most other men from Utrecht and Guelders who went to Prussia, had been recruited by the land-commander in Utrecht. In the twenties and thirties, this was Herman van Keppel. As we know for Livonia, sometimes wholesale recruitment campaigns were organised by orders' dignitaries with a mandate from the Livonian master.⁵³ In 1411 for instance the land-commander of Westphalia, Sweder Cobbing, managed to gather no less than 30 men in the Netherlands for the Livonian branch of the order. But this was not the rule. Most men for Prussia were admitted by the respective land-commanders on an individual basis, after negotiations with the family of the candidate-brother.⁵⁴ There are several indications that after around 1440 it became difficult for the dignitaries in the north western bailiwicks to get candidates from their regions placed in Prussia. For the Utrecht bailiwick, at least two clear hints can be given, one of which is found in the accounts of the commandery of Ootmarsum. They list expenses for a hooded cloak and other cloths for the young knight brother Frederik van Beveren for his journey to Prussia in 1439.⁵⁵ But in 1440 Frederick

⁵⁰ *Das Grosse Zinsbuch des Deutschen Ritterordens*, ed. P. G. Thielen, Marburg 1958, 141, p. 37.

⁵¹ *Ibidem*, 330, p. 131.

⁵² 'Willam von Sandewieck, eyn Ryman, hat 2 pferde und seynen harnsch': *Visitationen* I (as n. 1), nr. 125, p. 277.

⁵³ J. A. Mol, *Nederlandse ridderbroeders van de Duitse Orde in Lijffland*, in: *Bijdragen en Mededelingen betreffende de Geschiedenis der Nederlanden* 111 (1996), pp. 15–16.

⁵⁴ Like in 1432, when brother Bernd Scele from Ootmarsum was given a considerable sum of money for his journey to '... Pruesen ... by geheyt des lantkumpturs' (on behalf of the land-commander): ARDOU, nr. 2198: account over the year 1431/1432. Revealing is also the recommendation letter in which the duke of Burgundy ask his 'dear nephew' the grand master (probably Paul von Rusdorf) to assign a good position in Prussia to the son of his loyal Holland servant Eduard van den Boechorst, who had been admitted to the order by Herman van Keppel: Joachim-Hubatsch, *Regesta* (as n. 43), nr. 7882.

⁵⁵ ARDOU, nr. 2298, 1439/1440, f. 3v: 'Item III den selver (= heer Vrederick van Beveren) ume

was back again,⁵⁶ to stay there for good until his death in 1495. And there is the case of a certain Dirck Wulff, who had to be compensated in 1449 by landcommander Dirk van Enghuzen with 25 Rhenish guilders because he was never given the habit and the cross to leave for Prussia, as was promised to him by Herman van Keppel.⁵⁷ The date of this promise is not mentioned, but of course it must have been before 1443, when Van Keppel died.

It seems that after 1440 not only the Utrecht land-commander was confronted with an admission stop for Prussia. As far as can be deduced from the dissertation of Hans Limburg on the bailiwick of Koblenz, no brethren in Koblenz were recruited for Prussia between 1440 and 1454 either. He gives the names of a brother Gielsdorf in 1433, a Von Ast some years later, two carnal brothers Overstolz in 1438, and the brethren Guntersdorf, Scherfchen and Anstel in 1439, but thereafter the sources stay silent.⁵⁸ And as for the bailiwick of Biesen: in a letter to the grand master in 1451, the bishop of Liege Johan Heynsberg, recommended the Brabant knight Hugo van Zevenbergh for admission to the Prussian branch of the Order.⁵⁹ But his request apparently has never been granted, since brother Hugo is found among the commanders of the Biesen bailiwick in 1468.⁶⁰

BACKGROUND: THE BLOOD GROUP PROBLEM AND THE CHANGE OF POWER IN PRUSSIA 1441

I am inclined to link this development in to the rebellion which grand master Paul van Rusdorf had to face at the end of the thirties.⁶¹ A large group of Prussian brethren resented that Rusdorf had only appointed men from the Rhineland and Westphalia as his closest advisors. The South-German brethren, from Franconia, Swabia and Austria, who since Michael Kuchmeister constituted the largest group

ene grawe hoyke daer he mede to Prusen voer.’

⁵⁶ Ibidem, nr. 2298, 1440/1441, f 2v.

⁵⁷ ARDOU, nr. 340*.

⁵⁸ H. Limburg, *Die Hochmeister des Deutschen Ordens und die Ballei Koblenz*, Bonn/Bad Godesberg 1969, pp. 98–99.

⁵⁹ Joachim-Hubatsch, *Regesta*, nr. 10897.

⁶⁰ He was commander of Siersdorf between 1462 and 1491. Van der Eycken, ‘Ridders, priesters en zusters van de balije Biesen’, p. 122.

⁶¹ K. E. Murawski, *Zwischen Tannenberg und Thorn. Die Geschichte des Deutschen Ordens unter dem Hochmeister Konrad von Ehrlichshausen*, Göttingen 1953, pp. 32–35; C. A. Lückcrath, *Paul von Rusdorf. Hochmeister des Deutschen Ordens*, Bonn/Bad Godesberg 1969, pp. 184–205; M. Burleigh, *Prussian Society and the German Order. An aristocratic corporation in crisis c. 1410–1466*, Cambridge 1984, pp. 127–133.

within the Prussian branch of the order, asked for a better representation in the highest offices. And they – that is the chapters of the ‘Niederländische’ convents of Königsberg, Balga and Brandenburg which were dominated by them – rebelled against Rusdorf. The often analysed conflict ended in a compromise, and thereafter in the resignation of Rusdorf, followed by his death, and the removal of the whole of his group of high officeholders.

With the election of the Swabian Konrad von Ehrlichshausen as successor to Rusdorf, the wind veered to the other side. Ehrlichshausen could have continued Rusdorf’s policy of encouraging the lower German bailiwicks in their opposition to the German master, but he did not. We already saw that he did not even answer the already mentioned request of the Utrecht brethren of 1443 to persuade the German master to accept their majority candidate for the vacant land-commandership. A complaint of the stadholder of Westphalia in 1447 – the often mentioned Sweder Cobbing – that the age old election right of the bailiwick chapter members had been cancelled by the German master, and that the latter and his officeholders from Southern Germany unjustly dominated the northern bailiwicks, was dismissed by him.⁶² Since he kept closely to the statutes, he must have seen the idea of free election in the bailiwicks as a horrible innovation. He did not interfere with the business of the German master. As a result the contacts with the north western bailiwicks became less and less frequent.

We do not know of a written decision or measure taken by him on blocking the admission of men from the Rhenish territories. But it is certain that during his regime the Prussian brethren originating from the Rhineland lost their access to the important offices and functions within the order; which tended to be reserved for the South Germans again. There were several cases of brothers leaving their convents with or without permission to seek their luck in one of the bailiwicks in the West.⁶³ Klaus Murawski links the phenomenon to the measures of disciplinary and religious reform Ehrlichshausen enforced in the Prussian convents immediately after his election. It seems more likely however, that most of these *apostates* were driven by the lack on career perspectives in Prussia. One could say that the men from the Rhenish bailiwicks, to which Utrecht was reckoned, were doubly handicapped in this aspect. They suffered blockades not only in Prussia but also in Livonia, where all interesting and lucrative offices were occupied by Westphalians after 1438.⁶⁴

⁶² Murawski, *Zwischen Tannenberg und Thorn* (as n. 61), p. 47.

⁶³ *Ibidem*, p. 63–64. Compare J. Voigt, *Geschichte des Deutschen Ritter-Ordens in seinen zwölf Balleien in Deutschland*, Berlin 1857, p. 318: complaint by the land commander of Biesen concerning brothers who had come back to his bailiwick with permission of the grand master (1449).

⁶⁴ Mol, *Nederlandse ridderbroeders in Lijfland* (as n. 53), pp. 21–23.

In this context I would like to zoom in on a passage in the prologue to the fifteenth century Utrecht Chronicle of the Teutonic Order. This work is probably better but incorrectly known under the title of *Jüngere Hochmeisterchronik*.⁶⁵ However, it does not only contain biographies of the grand masters, but is complemented, or better it constitutes a whole with a similar series of *gesta* of the Utrecht land-commanders.⁶⁶ It is being researched by Mr. Rombert Stapel, who also prepares a new commented edition. Without anticipating too much on his results it can be assumed that the chronicle was written by a Utrecht priest under the land-commandership of Johan van Drongelen, in two phases: the first part in the early eighties and the second in the nineties of the fifteenth centuries. The fragment that should interest us here is on the South German dominance of the Order in Prussia under Konrad von Ehrlichshausen. This dominance is pointed out as one of the main causes for the troubles that resulted in the Civil War. Because of its biased character it seems worth while to give a long quotation:

‘In the years of master Konrad, there was a secret party in the order in Prussia, that caused a lot of harm and mischief both for the order and the land of Prussia, although it began long before Konrads reign, when they deposed the good master Heinrich von Plauen and threw him into prison. And they forced master Paul von Rusdorf because of the pride of some (of his advisors) to resign, although his government and that of Heinrich von Plauen had been very beneficial for the order. But the men from the Rhineland, Thuringia, Meissen, Saxonia, Westphalia, Cleves, Marck, Berg, Jülich, Guelders, Brabant, Holland, Flanders, Lotharingia, Limburg, Valkenburg and other countries and bishoprics that can be called Rhenish or Netherlandish could not get access to significant or important commands or offices, as was commonly known in Prussia and in other countries. But the Swabians, Franconians, Bavarians and Austrians cooperated with one another, and they acquired the largest territories and most lucrative offices in Prussia. And they wanted to govern it all to their liking. And they were haughty and arrogant toward the people. Which annoyed the towns and the people in the country, because the Prussians said and stated publicly that when the brethren from the Rhineland or the Netherlands, who are counted among the Rhenish, governed, they governed more lenient, well and friendly with both the native people and those coming from the outside than the Swabians or Franconians did.’⁶⁷

⁶⁵ U. Arnold, *Jüngere Hochmeisterchronik*, in: K. Ruh, *Verfasserlexikon. Die deutsche Literatur des Mittelalters* 4 (Berlijn 1982), pp. 922–923.

⁶⁶ R. J. Stapel and G. Vollmann-Profe, *Cronike van der Duytscher Oirden*, in: G. Dunphy et al. (Red.), *Encyclopaedia of the Medieval Chronicle*, Leiden 2010; to be published: ‘Priesterbroeders in de balije Utrecht’, *Jaarboek voor Middeleeuwse Geschiedenis* 11 (2008).

⁶⁷ *In dessen meisters Coenraets tyden soe was een heymelicke parthie in Pruyssen in den oirden, daer*

This passage runs parallel to similar observations, in the *Danziger Ordenschronik* and the *Danziger Chronik vom Bunde*, that as long as men from Westphalia, the Rhineland, Hildesheim, Münster, Braunschweig and Saxonia were recruited to administer the territories and properties of the order, everything went well in Prussia; and that the problems arose when ‘high tongued’ brethren (hogenn czungen) from Southern Germany were entrusted with the important offices.⁶⁸ With their haughtiness, pride and greed they only brought unrest, discord and violence in the country. It could well be, that the Utrecht author has been familiar with these chronicles from Danzig. But his text also permeates a genuine Utrecht frustration, from the side of Utrecht brethren who had to turn their come back to Prussia because of a lack of perspectives and possibilities. Therefore, it lies at hand that he also based his opinion here on the experiences of some Prussia-veterans who were still living in the bailiwick when he was gathering material for his text. At the same time however, he must have kept them at a certain distance, because at another place in his chronicle he disqualifies the fugitives of 1454 by saying that some of them, who secretly left, without consent of the master, could had taken refuge at the Marienburg if they had wanted, and that they generally had

den oirde ende den lande van Pruysen voel quaets off ghecomen is, hoe wael dat se voir desen hoichmeisters tyden began, doe sy den gueden meister Henrick van Plauwen van den meisterscappie brochten ende in ghevangnisse hielden. Ende daer nae meister Pauwels van Reesdorp omder soemigher hoemodicheit ende parthie dronghen, dat hy die hoichmeisterscap over gaff ende nam syn ghemaeck, daer nochtans dese twe hoichmeisters eerliche tot nutte ende oirbaers des oirdens gheregiert hadden. Mer die Rynlander, Doringhen, Myssen, Sassen, Westvelinghe, Cleefs, Marcks, Berchs, Gulikers, Ghelresche, Brabander, Hollander, Vlaminghen, Lotrikers, Limborchs, Valckenboirchiere ende ander landen ende bisdomers of stichten, diet hieten all Rynlande ende Nederlander, dese en mochten niet off weynich in beveel off regement comen, dat van werden was, als die ghemeen sprack in den lande van Pruysen ende in anderen landen ghinck. Mer die Zwaven, Francken, Beyersche, Oisterriker ende mer ander, die daer aen hielden, dese hielden hem the samen ende toghen malcanderen op, ende hadden meest alle die groetste ghebieden ende ampten in den landen the Pruysen, ende dese woldent all regieren nae horen syn ende waren seer hoemodich ende hoeverlich thegens den volck. Ende diet verdocht den steden ende dat volck in den lande, want die Pruysenaers seiden ghemeynlick in den steden ende buren apenbaerlick: als die Rynlander off Nederlander, die men aen den Rynlander telt, regierden, soe regierden sy ghenedelicker, duechtelicker ende vruntelicker myt den volck van bynnen ende van buten dan die Zwaven off Francken off die ander deden. ed. Th. Hirsch, *Die jüngere Hochmeisterchronik*, in: *Scriptores rerum Prussicarum. Die Geschichtsquellen der preussischen Vorzeit bis zum Untergange der Ordensherrschaft*, ed. Th. Hirsch, E. Strehlke and M. Töppen ed., V, Leipzig 1874, 127.

⁶⁸ *Die Danziger Ordenschronik*, ed. T. Hirsch, in: *Scriptores rerum Prussicarum. Die Geschichtsquellen der Preussischen Vorzeit bis zum Untergange der Ordensherrschaft IV*, ed. Th. Hirsch, E. Strehlke and M. Töppen Leipzig 1870, p. 366 ff; *Die Danziger Chronik vom Bunde*, in: ebd., p. 412 ff.

brought no good to the bailiwicks where they had shown up.⁶⁹ Looking at the experiences in the bailiwicks of Utrecht, Koblenz and Biesen this conclusion can only be underlined.

CONCLUSION

The request of the Utrecht land-commander to the grand master in 1459 to take back the Prussian fugitives and provide them with new places, was not granted, as we can understand. The seven brethren and both brothers Van Ingen Nuland had to be fed on the income of the bailiwick. We can trace five of them after 1454 in different commanderies in Utrecht, Holland and Guelders, mostly as private brothers without an office.⁷⁰ So they did reach their goal. It will be clear that – apart from their violent behaviour in 1454 – by their arrival they disrupted the system in so far as they blocked the admission for newcomers in the bailiwick for a long time. Since candidate knights could hardly enter the order in Utrecht anymore for a place in Prussia and Livonia, this meant that the families who used to present new candidates for the order long time were faced with a *numerus fixus*. Which consequently meant that the order must have lost a part of its support amongst the lesser nobility of the Northern Low Countries.

More important however, was that the means and the pressure by which they tried to reach their goal, being led by ambitious and ruthless men like Willem van Ingen Nuland, did cause so many cracks in the moral and corporative fabric of bailiwick life that the whole institution lost a lot of its status, prestige and cohesion. I would not go as far as saying that its very existence had been at stake, but the bailiwick did at least shudder at its foundations. In this way the shockwaves of the crisis in Prussia, in its diverse shapes, were strong enough to reach far away bailiwicks like Utrecht with a considerable power.

⁶⁹ ‘Ander oirdensbroeders, die op Marienborch hadden connen comen, syn doorgegaen ende syn heymelick uyt den landen sonder orlof getogen in andere balyen in Duytschen landen. Daer sy tot vele plaetsen niet veel deuchden in den balyen gedaen en hebben, als men hem in dien landen overseyt’: *Jungere Hochmeisterchronik* (as n. 67), 139.

⁷⁰ Johan van Ghent: private brother in Utrecht (1456–1458) and *schaffenaar* in Tiel (1465–1468); Willem van der Lawick: private brother in Tiel (1471–1474); Willem van Zandwijk; *schaffenaar* / house-commander in Utrecht (1463–1467) and commander of Dieren (1468–1476); Herman van Dammasch: private brother in Maasland (1463–1464), Middelburg (1466–1468) and Rhenen (1469–1471). See the accounts over the recorded years for the separate houses in it ARDOU.