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PRIESTS IN THE MILITARY ORDERS.

A PROSOPOGRAPHICAL SURVEY OF THE PRIEST-BRETHREN IN
THE UTRECHT BAILIWICK OF THE TEUTONIC ORDER (1350-1600)¹

Introduction

The most important mission of military orders was to fight heathens and those with other religious beliefs in the Holy Land, on the Iberian Peninsula or in the Baltic region. Many people therefore tend to view the weapon-bearing knight-brethren as their only real members. Apart from the fact that the military orders did not just admit knights but also took on sergeant-brethren («frères sergeants») who were not members of the nobility for both military work and goods management, nearly all of the military orders also had a number of priests in their midst: the priest-brethren. This is understandable because without them they never have been able to combine their military existence with a spiritual way of life.

The particularly dual identity of the military orders - military and spiritual under one roof - manifested itself in all three of the great military orders: the Knights Templar, the Knights of St John and the Teutonic Order. We find both sorts of brethren among them, although the relationship between them could vary greatly per order. Whereas the Knights Templar only had very few priest-brethren or order chaplains, something that came to light somewhat embarrassingly after the arrests of 1307², the Teutonic Order had nearly two priest-brethren for each knight-brother in the bailiwicks (the or-

¹ This article is a translation and revision of R.J. STAPEL, «*Onder dese ridderen zijn oec papen*» *De priesterbroeders in de balijs Utrecht van de Duitse Orde (1350-1600)*, in «Jaarboek voor Middeleeuwse Geschiedenis», 11 (2008), p. 205-248, which was based on my doctoral thesis. The article has been translated by: University Translation and Correction Service, University of Groningen Language Centre. I would like to thank the editorial staff of the *Jaarboek*, Udo Arnold and Hans Mol for their useful advice and comments. The list - in Dutch - of the priest-brethren included in this study is available at <http://depot.knaw.nl/5007>.

² The lack of priests in the Templars was apparent in, for example, the absence of sufficient priestly control over the admission of new members, the problem of lay confession and the lack of priestly guidance after the arrests. For the trial of the Templars, see M.C. BARBER, *Trial of the Templars*, Cambridge 2006 (2nd edition).

ganizational structure at a provincial level) in the German Empire in 1451³. The Knights of St John did not have any knight-brethren at all in the houses that were subordinate to Utrecht. Both orders had their origins in caring for the sick, which undoubtedly had a positive effect on the duties and presence of the priest-brethren. In the course of their existence, both orders also acquired a number of patronage rights from parish churches, which meant that, in due course, they could appoint their own priest-brethren as pastors. As so many laypeople (knights and sergeants) who could not generally be expected to have been well educated were members of the military orders, it must have been the priest-brethren who assumed the main responsibility for the administrative records and, above all, cultural and spiritual life. Without the priest-brethren of the Teutonic Order, for example, a «Deutschordensliteratur» would never have flourished⁴.

Furthermore, the priest-brethren had access to a number of different and important offices. The bailiff or province ruler of the Knights of St John in Utrecht, for example, was always a tonsured member of the order, and the priest-brother commanders were always in the majority in the Utrecht bailiwick of the Teutonic Order. And despite a growing awareness among the knight-brethren of their noble heritage, which led to them demanding that the income from the bailiwicks be used for looking after their own circle, the priest-brethren retained their numerical prevalence in Utrecht, for example, when it came to the distribution of offices⁵. This makes it even stranger that so little is known about this large group of order members.

The works that give an overview of military orders do cover the priest-brethren for form's sake, but they do not allocate them any more than a few clichéd comments⁶. In his reference book about the Teutonic Order (which

³ F. BENNINGHOVEN, *Zur Zahl und Standortverteilung der Brüder des Deutschen Ordens in den Balleien um 1400*, in «Preußenland» 26 (1988), p.1-20, there p. 17.

⁴ For example G. WARNAR, *Augustijnken in Pruisen. De drieffveren van een Middelnederlandse dichter en literatuur binnen de Duitse Orde*, in «Jaarboek voor Middeleeuwse Geschiedenis» 8 (2005) p. 101-139, there p. 119-120. For that matter, the term *Deutschordensliteratur* is not completely uncontroversial. For an overview of the discussion, see E. FEISTNER, M. NEECKE and G. VOLLMANN-PROFE, *Krieg im Vistier. Biblepik und Chronistik im Deutschen Orden als Modell korporativer Identitätsbildung*, Tübingen 2007 (Hermaea. Germanistische Forschungen neue Folge 114) p. 21-22.

⁵ K. MILITZER, *Die Geschichte des Deutschen Ordens*, Stuttgart 2005, p. 180-181.

⁶ A. FOREY, *The Military Orders. From the twelfth to the early fourteenth centuries*, London 1992, p. 174-188; MILITZER, *Geschichte*, cit., p. 90; J. SARNOWSKY, *Der Deutsche Orden*, München 2007, p. 52; H. BOECKMANN, *Der Deutsche Orden. Zwölf Kapitel aus seiner Geschichte*, München 1999 (4th edition), p. 111; J.S.C. RILEY-SMITH, *Hospitallers. The history of the Order of St John*, London 1999, p. 64-66; H.J. NICHOLSON, *The Knights Hospitaller*, Woodbridge 2001, p. 80-82; Id., *The Knights Templar*, Stroud 2004, p. 119 and 128. Even

primarily focuses on Prussia), Boockmann, apparently mainly inspired by the description of the role of the priest-brethren in the statutes, noted that: «Der Orden hat zwar Priesterbrüder, aber deren primäre Aufgabe war die religiöse Versorgung der Ordensbrüder selbst»⁷. Moreover, although he indicates in the introduction that lack of space caused him to leave out the spiritual and cultural-historical aspects of the order, this should not be a reason for completely ignoring the priest-brethren⁸. In other works, the statutes and other official documents also appear to have been used as the main source for describing the priest-brethren. Furthermore, the role of the priest-brethren is often judged by their contribution, which tended to be limited, in the supraregional organization of the order⁹.

Helen Nicholson rightly comments that: «Little is known of the everyday lives of the priest-brethren of the [Hospitalier] Order in the medieval period, apart from the Order's regulation»¹⁰. These scholars cannot be blamed for the lack of attention they pay to priest-brethren: overview works are a reflection of the latest state of historiography and the harvest of works about the priest-brethren from the military orders is extremely poor. The general literature about the military orders, therefore, does not help us much further. The little information that we have is mainly based on assumptions: in contrast to the knight-brethren, there are almost no prosopographical studies available about the priests who were members of the military orders¹¹. Klaus

the article by Ewald Volgger that specifically focuses on priest-brethren does not offer much more - partly because of the absence of prosopographical material - insofar as the piece relates to the Middle Ages at all: E. VOLGGER, *Die Priester im Deutschen Orden*, in *Der Deutsche Orden in Tirol. Die Ballei an der Etsch und im Gebirge*, ed. H. NOFLATSCHER, Bozen/Marburg 1991 (Quellen und Studien zur Geschichte des Deutschen Ordens 43) p. 43-82.

⁷ BOOCKMANN, *Deutsche Orden*, cit., p. 111.

⁸ Ivi, 15.

⁹ Sarnowsky refers to the marginal role of the priest-brethren in the Teutonic Order: their place was in the houses, where they were needed for liturgical activities or pastoral care. Only a very few became commander. Militzer also points to the limited role of the priest-brethren in the Teutonic Order's organization and argues that the majority of the priests of the order, as far as can be traced, were of an urban background. SARNOWSKY, *Deutsche Orden*, cit., p. 52; MILITZER, *Geschichte des Deutschen Ordens*, cit., p. 90.

¹⁰ NICHOLSON, *Knights Hospitaller*, cit., p. 81.

¹¹ As regards the knight-brethren, the Teutonic Order is still the best researched. See the studies *Ritterbrüder im livländischen Zweig des Deutschen Ordens*, ed. L. FENSKE and K. MILITZER, Köln 1993 (Quellen und Studien zur baltischen Geschichte 12, ed. P. KAEGBEIN and G. VON PISTOHLKORS); K. SCHOLZ, *Beiträge zur Personengeschichte des Deutschen Ordens in der ersten Hälfte des 14. Jahrhunderts. Untersuchungen zur Herkunft livländischer und preußischer Deutschordensbrüder*, Münster 1969/1971; D. WOJTECKI, *Studien zur Personengeschichte des Deutschen Ordens im 13. Jahrhundert*, Wiesbaden 1971 (Quellen und Studien zur Geschichte des Östlichen Europa III, ed. M. HELLMANN). A limited amount of proso-

Scholz already noted this absence in 1969, as Karol Górski did again in 1980¹². However, these calls did not receive much publicity.

It is only recently that there has been some change with the appearance of thorough prosopographical studies of the priest-brethren in the Prussian chapters of Pomesania (Marienwerder) and Sambia (Königsberg) by Mario Glauert and Radoslaw Biskup respectively¹³. These studies are part of a growing interest in cultural-historical aspects of the military orders and the significance of their convents and ruling centers in the Western world, which has resulted in an increasing thirst for knowledge about the priest-brethren.

This article aims to provide this to some extent by specifically focusing on the priest-brethren in the bailiwicks of the German Empire. The aim is to give an impression of the priest-brethren: what was their social background, what kind of education did they have and what was their position in the organization? I realize that it is not always possible to answer all these questions fully. Sometimes this is due to a lack of specific sources and sometimes to a lack of comparative material. In addition, the results often cause new questions to arise. This study can therefore be no more than a first important initiative aimed at gaining an insight into the life and work of the priest-brethren of the military orders and consequently also into the military orders themselves. For this prosopographical study, we will focus on the priest-brethren of the Teutonic Order in the bailiwick of Utrecht. Two considerations form the basis for this choice. The first is that of all the archives of Teutonic Order bailiwicks in the German Empire, the archive of this pre-

graphical information about the priest-brethren can be found in, inter alia, K. GÓRSKI, *Das Kulmer Domkapittel in den Zeiten des Deutschen Ordens. Zur Bedeutung der Priester im Deutschen Ordens*, in *Die Geistlichen Ritterorden Europas*, ed. J. FLECKENSTEIN and M. HELLMANN, Sigmaringen 1980 (Vorträge und Forschungen XXVI) p. 329-337.; K. MILITZER, *Der Deutsche Orden in den großen Städten des Deutschen Reichs*, in *Stadt und Orden. Das Verhältnis des Deutschen Ordens zu den Städten in Livland, Preußen und im Deutschen Reich*, ed. U. ARNOLD, Marburg 1993 (Quellen und Studien zur Geschichte des Deutschen Ordens 44); S.-J. AHN, *Die Kölner Johanniterkommende Sankt Johann und Cordula im Spätmittelalter*, Köln 2006 (Kölner Schriften zu Geschichte und Kultur 28, ed. G. MÖLICH); J.A. MOL, *De Johanniters fan Snits: nammen, komôf en karrières*, in *Friezen. In bondel stúdzjes oer persoansnammen*, ed. R.A. EBELING, K.F. GILDEMACHER and J.A. MOL, Ljouwert 1996, p. 117-152; H.J. DORN, *Die Deutschordensballei Westfalen von der Reformation bis zu Ihrer Auflösung im Jahre 1809*, Marburg 1978 (Quellen und Studien zur Geschichte des Deutschen Ordens 26, ed. U. ARNOLD).

¹² SCHOLZ, *Personengeschichte*, cit., p. 376; GÓRSKI, *Kulmer Domkapittel*, cit., p. 329-330.

¹³ M. GLAUERT, *Das Domkapitel von Pomesanien (1284-1527)*, Toruń 2003 (Prussia Sacra. Historische Beschreibung der Kirche im Deutschordensland in Preußen 1, ed. H. FLACHENECKER and A. RADZIMIŃSKI); R. BISKUP, *Das Domkapitel von Samland (1285-1525)*, Toruń 2007 (Prussia Sacra. Historische Beschreibung der Kirche im Deutschordensland in Preußen 2, ed. N. KRUPPA and A. RADZIMIŃSKI).

fecture has, relatively speaking, best withstood the ravages of time. It could even be called rich for the fifteenth and sixteenth century. It is still (or to put it better, once again) in its own medieval complex of the bailiwick organization, which became Protestant for good in 1618, on the Springweg in Utrecht.

A second reason was that some preliminary work that is required has already been carried out for the Utrecht Teutonic Order. At the end of the 1990s, Menno Koopstra, for his unfinished thesis research, collected a great deal of information about members of the order, which we can make use of. I have managed to increase considerably and further adapt his material - based on about half of the more than three thousand documents in the bailiwick archive - for my own research question. In order to have access to not just quantitative but also qualitative data, I also reviewed the administrative correspondence relating to the different commandries in the bailiwick (more than five hundred folios). This series of sources is not easily accessible and has therefore hardly been used at all. I have incorporated a small selection of the letters from and about the commanders in this article. I did not systematically search through archives other than those of the Teutonic Order in Utrecht.

The source materials determined the period investigated. Until about 1350, the priest-brethren are mentioned so sporadically that there is no point in applying a prosopographical method here. As regards the ending date, the last priest-brother of the bailiwick died in 1604. The period in between (for the sake of convenience this runs from 1350 to 1600) therefore forms the period of time that I researched. In addition, I chose to leave out the priest-brethren who only appeared in the Frisian commandries of the bailiwick (Nes and Schoten)¹⁴. The information about the Frisian brethren (almost all of whom were priests) generally follows different patterns from that about the other brethren in the bailiwick in, for example, the fields of university education, career and origin. In addition, the Frisian order brethren from Nes and Schoten were not included in any of the visitation reports, which makes it difficult to reconstruct their numbers. It is only for 1361 that it cannot be said with complete certainty whether the Frisian brethren were absent; although Hans Mol suspects that this visitation was no different from any oth-

¹⁴ The Frisian order brethren are included, where possible, in the doctoral thesis that is the basis of this article: R.J. STAPEL, «*Onder dese ridderen zijn oec papen*» *Een prosopografische studie naar het functioneren van de priesterbroeders van de Duitse Orde in de balije Utrecht, 1350-1600*, Leiden 2007 (MA Thesis Leiden University, Institute for History), passim. Hans Mol's dissertation is about the Frisian commandries in general and their special position in the bailiwick: J.A. MOL, *De Friese huizen van de Duitse Orde. Nes, Steenkerk en Schoten en hun plaats in het Friese kloosterlandschap*, Leeuwarden 1991.

ers on this point¹⁵. Udo Arnold has meanwhile suggested that this was because the German Master delegated the visitation of the Frisian circuit to the Utrecht land commander, most probably because it was originally set up as a proto-bailiwick, which, through lack of sufficient expansion, was finally placed under Utrecht¹⁶. The visitation reports that were handed over for Friesland at the beginning of the sixteenth century do appear to have been written by the Utrecht brethren. Be that as it may, the Frisian houses of the order form an exception and require a separate approach.

In this article, only those priest-brethren are included who were active in the bailiwick of Utrecht and who were housed at least once in a commandry other than Nes or Schoten. The result is a list that is still growing but now contains 656 names, 616 of which, at a closer look, were actually part of the Utrecht bailiwick. This total figure can be divided into 124 knight-brethren, 190 brethren about whom it is unclear whether they were knight-brethren or priest-brethren, 24 priest-brethren who were active in or before the year 1350, 1 priest-brother from 1514 whose first name and surname are both unknown, 69 priest-brethren who only stayed in the Frisian commandries of Nes and/or Schoten and 208 other priest-brethren between 1350 and 1600: these 208 brethren form our research group¹⁷. Too much data is missing to make it possible to analyze the age structure of the order members in this file thoroughly.

We can argue, however, with some reservations, that the priest-brethren were mostly in their early twenties at the time of their initiation (although, strictly speaking, the ordination of a priest could only take place from the age of 25) and on average about 35 before they were first appointed as pastor and/or commander. It is also important to acknowledge that the first years of their membership are badly documented. The fifty brethren whose exact year of initiation we know do not appear for a second time in the sources until eight years later, on average. If this group is an example for the rest of the brethren, it means we generally miss the first eight years of their membership of the order¹⁸.

Before we look at the priest-brethren of the Utrecht Teutonic Order, it is important to consider the term priest-brother first. A priest-brother was, of course, a member of the order who was ordained as a priest¹⁹. He took the

¹⁵ Ivi, p. 375 (note 14).

¹⁶ Oral communication at Alden Biesen congress, 8 December 2007.

¹⁷ This is not much fewer than the priest-brethren who once belonged to the bailiwick Utrecht. A rough estimate (excluding Friesland) for the period of 1350-1600 gives us a number between 158 and 292. STAPEL, *Onder dese ridderen* (MA Thesis), cit., p. 37.

¹⁸ Ivi, p. 18.

¹⁹ MILITZER, *Geschichte*, cit., p. 212.

same vows at initiation - always in adulthood - as a knight-brother: those of chastity, poverty and obedience. The accolade bestowed upon every knight-brother at the ceremony marking his taking of the habit, however, was obviously lacking from that of the priest-brethren. The need that military orders had for priests stemmed partly from the need for pastors for their own brethren and - for the Knights of St John and the Teutonic Order - partly from their original role in caring for the sick. In the order hospitals, spiritual care was more important than physical care, and only priests could provide it.

After their official recognition as military orders, the Order of St John and the Teutonic Order still needed priests for caring and spiritual duties²⁰. The priest-brethren did not have to be able to demonstrate that they were of knightly descent²¹. The last part of the prologue of the Middle Dutch translation of the earliest known statutes of the Teutonic Order describes the virtuous task of the priest-brethren under the heading «Among these knights are also priests»²². In times of peace it was their responsibility to make sure that the lay brethren (the knights and sergeants, therefore) behaved according to the rules of the order, visited mass and received the sacraments. In battle, the priest-brethren were supposed to «strengthen the brothers for battle», and remind them of the fact that «God suffered death for them on the cross». Finally, the priest-brethren were supposed to pray for the healthy and the sick. They were supposed to carry out all these duties with «gentle spirit». If we go by the statutes, the role of the priest-brethren was primarily supportive compared with that of the other brethren.

The *Croniken van der Duytscher Oirden* or the *Jüngere Hochmeisterchronik*, a late fifteenth-century chronicle about the order and the bailiwick of Utrecht that was written in Utrecht, summarizes the rules of the order regarding the priest-brethren as follows: «Dat die priesterbroeders leven souden ende een licht ende exempel wesen souden in der oirden, dair die ridder broeders exempel aennemen ende merken souden ende besterct soude bliven tot eenen godtliken leven»²³.

Formally and in practice, however, they were full members and not by definition subordinate to the knight-brethren. There was, of course, a difference in status between both sorts of brethren; most of the priest-brethren

²⁰ Ivi, p. 87-90.

²¹ Ivi, p. 90.

²² M. PERLBACH, *Die Statuten des Deutschen Ordens nach den ältesten Handschriften*, Halle a.d. Saale 1890 (reprint Hildesheim/New York 1975), p. 26.

²³ «That the priest-brethren should be a shining example in the order, upon which the knight-brethren can mirror themselves and feel strengthened in leading a godly life»; *Jüngere Hochmeisterchronik*, ed. TH. HIRSCH, Leipzig 1874 (*Scriptores Rerum Prussicarum* V, ed. TH. HIRSCH, M. TÖPPEN and E. STREHLKE), p. 1-172, there p. 151; compare c. 7.

were not members of the nobility, after all. The order priests, however, were not inferior to the knight-brethren who were members of the nobility when it came to the extent of the inauguration gifts, as we will see later. The priest-brethren could also possess considerable wealth or family wealth.

Numbers

To be able to form a good picture of the priest-brethren of the Teutonic Order in Utrecht we must first determine their numbers. The most informative sources for this are the visitation reports. For the visitations, an emissary of either the Grand Master or the German Master visited the bailiwicks and commandries and generally noted the number of members in the order. A number of such reports, which describe the whole bailiwick or almost all of it, have been preserved: 1361²⁴, 1410/11²⁵, 1416/17²⁶, [1432/33], [1433/34], [1434/35], [1437/38], [1438/39], [1439/40], [1440/41]²⁷, 1451²⁸ and 1539²⁹. In addition, there are a number of reports from individual commandries and there is an overview report of the state of the bailiwick in 1577, which enables us to work out the number of brethren in the bailiwick³⁰.

As already mentioned, the Frisian priest-brethren are missing from the reports. There is yet another problem with the visitation reports. A number of different causes, from sabotaging commanders to the outbreak of epidemics, often meant that not all of the commandries were included. In order to be able to compare the figures with the number of order members in our files, we have supplemented the visitations with the visitation reports from other years for the missing commandries. These indicative additions have been incorporated per commandry into the table (Table 1). If we only look at

²⁴ M. BISKUP, and I. JANOSZ-BISKUPOWA, *Visitationen im Deutschen Orden im Mittelalter*, Marburg 2002-2008 (Quellen und Studien zur Geschichte des Deutschen Ordens 50 (3 vols.)), ed. U. ARNOLD, vol. I, p. 26.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 62-67; BENNINGHOVEN, *Zahl und Standortverteilung*, cit. p. 1-20.

²⁶ Archive of the Order of Teutonic Knights, bailiwick of Utrecht (ARDOU) inv. no. 335-1; BISKUP and JANOSZ-BISKUPOWA, *Visitationen I*, cit., p. 71-81.

²⁷ ARDOU, inv. no. 335-2, 335-3, 335-4, 335-5, 335-6, 335-7, 335-8. It is unclear if these are visitation accounts from the Grand Master or German Master or bailiwick accounts that have been drawn up with a similar structure.

²⁸ BISKUP and JANOSZ-BISKUPOWA, *Visitationen II*, cit., p. 135-136; MOL, *Friese huizen*, cit., p. 259-261.

²⁹ Deutschordenszentralarchiv (DOZA) Vienna, Utrecht 383/2, f. 278r-290v; BISKUP and JANOSZ-BISKUPOWA, *Visitationen III*, cit., p. 168-182.

³⁰ ARDOU, inv. no. 139; MOL, *Friese huizen*, cit., p. 204.

the visitation reports, we can see that until 1451 about fifty order members were staying in the bailiwick. In 1539 that number appears to have shrunk drastically to sixteen (and one more so-called 'knight-expectant'), which is equal to the year 1577. How this decrease came about exactly is unclear because we do not have any data for the second half of the fifteenth century and the beginning of the sixteenth century. Based on the data from a few studies of the commandries, Hans Mol suspected that the decline had already begun around 1500³¹.

If we place these results alongside the data from our file, we can see that the visitation reports provide the best information by far until 1451. This is because only a small percentage of the order members who were present according to the visitations are also included in our file for those years. In addition, these older reports display extremely constant numbers. The usefulness of these visitation reports changes after 1451.

The frequency of the visitations, or those that have been preserved at least, has clearly decreased and, in addition, it is questionable whether the three reports from 1451, 1539 and 1577 have much to say at all. After all, as Table 1 shows, in those years more order members can be found in our sources than are mentioned on paper. We will go into the report from 1539 in detail straightaway and study these problems more closely. Luckily, the data from our database for these later decades becomes increasingly useful. The general problem with the data in this respect is that it is greatly influenced by the availability of source material, some of which is sporadic. The source material for these later decades is better and the results are therefore more reliable.

We need to make a number of comments about the last section of the graph above (from 1451). First, there is a noticeable peak in the 1450s, particularly for the knight-brethren and unknown brethren (the majority of whom were probably knight-brethren). The number of knight-brethren decreases sharply after this and stays at a constantly low level (under ten people) from about 1480. The number of priest-brethren also peaks in the 1450s but stays more or less at the same level in the sixteenth century. It is only after about 1560 that an unmistakable decrease in their numbers begins, because no new priest-brethren joined after that. As already mentioned, the last priest-brother of the bailiwick died in 1604.

This decline in the numbers of priest-brethren is also apparent if we divide them into periods of twenty-five years, according to the method that

³¹ J.A. MOL, *Een toevluchtsoord voor de «arme» adel. Veranderingen in de toelating van ridderbroeders tot de Duitse orde in de vijftiende eeuw*, in «Virtus» 5 afl. 2 (1998) p. 33-47, there p. 36-37.

Arnoud-Jan Bijsterveld used in his dissertation *Laverend tussen kerk en wereld* about the pastors in the Liège deaneries of Hilvarenbeek, Cuijk and Woensel between 1400 and 1570. This method of working does entail the odd individual who was active in more than one period being counted twice³². The number of order priests remained constant until well into the sixteenth century (Table 2). And that leads to the unavoidable conclusion that the decrease in the number of priest-brethren in the Utrecht bailiwick has been dated too early so far. We could observe above that this decrease only began in around 1560. This is confirmed by other information, such as the data from the different commandries and the sixteenth-century initiation frequencies. In addition, the most important argument against a later decrease, the visitation report from 1539 in which only nine priest-brethren are named, has been convincingly defused. These aspects will now be discussed.

An estimate of the number of priest-brethren based on entrance frequencies has never been made for the bailiwick of Utrecht. Three periods in the sixteenth century qualify for such a reconstruction. The first period comprises fourteen years, 1505-1518, and is formed by ordination lists of the diocese of Utrecht that Gisbert Brom published at the end of the nineteenth century³³. The second period runs from 1531 to 1533 and, because of the short time span, can only be used as comparison material for the two longer periods. The sources used consist of a number of accounts from the sacristan of the Teutonic House in Utrecht, which mentions donations from brethren entering the order³⁴. The last series of priest-brethren entering the order dates from 1544-1560. The most important source is a series of written vows that prospective priest-brethren had to take before Albrecht van Egmond van Merestein, the land commander³⁵.

³² A.-J.A. BIJSTERVELD, *Laverend tussen kerk en wereld. De pastoors in Noord-Brabant 1400-1570*, Amsterdam 1993, p. 21-22. Choosing to split the data into periods also made it possible to compare data and indicate developments in our file of priest-brethren (such as the percentage of academically educated priests) in a simple way.

³³ G. BROM, *Naamlijst der priesters, die in het bisdom Utrecht gewijd zijn van 1505-1518*, in «Archief voor de geschiedenis van het Aartsbisdom Utrecht» 23 (1896), p. 386-471; Id., *Naamlijst der priesters, die in het bisdom Utrecht gewijd zijn van 1505-1518 (vervolg)*, in «Archief voor de geschiedenis van het Aartsbisdom Utrecht» 24 (1897), p. 1-85. Compare R.R. POST, *Kerkelijke verhoudingen in Nederland vóór de Reformatie van ±1500 tot ±1580*, Utrecht/Antwerpen 1954, p. 158-159; p. 165-167.

³⁴ ARDOU, inv. no. 641-2 (1531/1532), 641-3 (1532/1533).

³⁵ ARDOU, inv. no. 304; J.J. GEER VAN OUDEGEIN, *Archieven der ridderlijke Duitsche orde balie van Utrecht*, Utrecht 1871 (2 vols.), vol. II, nos. 445, 447 and 448. An account of the sacristy has also been used in this series: ARDOU, inv. no. 641-8 (1543/44).

The entrance frequencies have been multiplied by an estimate of the duration of the career as priest-brother in order to attain the total size of the group. The median of the duration of the career of the few priest-brethren whose age and time of initiation and death we know is 34. The data from *Kerkelijke verhoudingen* by R.R. Post points to a duration of 35 years³⁶. This figure therefore seems to form a real basis for further calculations. The results are, of course, no more than estimates. The two longer periods, however, show extremely consistent results so that, with some reservations, we can assume that both figures give a good indication of reality.

With the number of ordinations of Teutonic Order brethren per year (0.93, see Table 3), we come to a total of about 32.5 priest-brethren for the period of 1505-1518³⁷. We need, of course, to take a large margin into account but even then the number of priest-brethren is reasonably stable with regard to the number mentioned in the visitation report of 1451 (34). Priests from dioceses other than Utrecht (as few as that may be) were not ordained in Utrecht and are therefore not included in the calculations. We also see a comparable picture for the years between 1544 and 1560, although the number of priest-brethren joining per year was somewhat lower then (0.76, see Table 4). This would cause the total size of the group of priest-brethren to be around 26.8. Once again, a large margin must be taken, but we can conclude that there probably was not a great reduction in the number of priest-brethren.

As many as six priest-brethren received the habit in the shorter period in between (April 1531 up to and including June 1533). This period is too small to be able to determine reliably the number of priest-brethren based on an average inauguration frequency. The data does show however that a significant number of new priest-brethren were still taken on in the period between 1505-1518 and 1544-1560.

The question that now arises is how we should interpret the visitation report of 1539. After all, it only mentions nine priest-brethren. The report consists of fifteen standardized interviews with members of the order from the bailiwick, in which the functioning of the bailiwick in a broad sense was central. Two brethren were not interviewed but were only mentioned in the interviews. The Frisian brethren are missing completely again. The answers are sometimes very interesting but they are somewhat less relevant to our

³⁶ POST, *Kerkelijke verhoudingen*, cit., p. 165-167.

³⁷ The Knights of St John function as the control group here: according to the frequency of 1.71, their number should come to about 59.9. This is more or less equal to the number that Post calculated (62) from the visitation reports: POST, *Kerkelijke verhoudingen*, cit., p. 165.

theme. We are concerned, after all, with the number of members that are mentioned and - above all - those who are not to be found in the text but must have been members in 1539. There are as many as eight, all priest-brethren, who do not appear in the report³⁸.

If we look at the positions mentioned, we can see that a few are missing among them. It is unclear whether some of the offices were assumed by a priest-brother or by a secular priest. It is also possible that some of them were not held any more. However, it is very likely that many other positions were also held by priest-brethren in 1539. Twelve to twenty-seven positions are missing in total: this is such a wide range mainly because the number of places for convent members and chaplains (assistant pastors) is difficult to determine for most of the commandries.

If we try to reduce the range, I estimate that at least seventeen positions for priest-brethren are missing in the visitation report. Eight of these places must therefore have been taken by people in our database. At least nine were in the hands of other priest-brethren. These were probably not nine new names but rather priest-brethren whom we do know but not yet or still in 1539. In summary, there were therefore not nine priest-brethren in 1539 but more likely twenty-six (nine plus seventeen). If we then look at the visitation report literally, it does not mention anywhere that the priest-brethren interviewed were the only nine: it was just that no more than nine priest-brethren were interviewed. This is different with the knight-brethren. It is frequently mentioned that there were eight knight-brethren, of whom one had just joined and one had been accepted as a 'knight-expectant'. In addition, six families had been promised a place as knight-brother for a young family member³⁹. The attention paid to the knight-brethren and the healthy increase of their numbers, and the lack of interest in the number of priest-brethren is pronounced and was no coincidence. From the above it is clear that some pieces of the puzzle are still missing and that these need to be found if we want to determine the size of the group of priest-brethren.

All the data points in the same direction, however: that there was no dramatic decrease in the number of priest-brethren before 1560. The global data from the individual commandries confirms this picture of an intact priest population until far into the sixteenth century: Leiden still had four priest-

³⁸ Two of these eight were mentioned up to or from 1539. Theoretically, they were therefore part of the bailiwick until, respectively, just before or just after the visitation report.

³⁹ DOZA Vienna, Utrecht 383/2, f. 280r. In the database we can find five knight-brethren, one associate brother and three unknown order brethren. These were probably all knight-brethren, which means we arrive at nine. This, however, includes Otto van den Boetzelaer, the commander of Schoten who may already have died.

brethren in 1527 and three still in 1539, while the main house in Utrecht accommodated five priest-brethren in 1533, 1536 and 1539, and six even in 1537 and 1561, the same as a century earlier in 1451. Straight after 1561, however, not a single priest-brother can be found in the house of Utrecht any more⁴⁰. That the group of priest-brethren was still at full strength around 1560 links up with what we know about the Order of St John in the diocese of Utrecht. It was noted in 1561 that they had managed to attract enough new members up to that point. In addition, there were still 12 brethren in the Catherijneconvent in Utrecht, just as in the fifteenth century⁴¹. That would mean that both military orders came through the first half of the sixteenth century relatively unscathed in comparison with most of the other monastic orders.

The monastic orders were confronted with a serious fall in the number of regulars in around 1530: this is the picture that Post paints in *Kerkelijke verhoudingen*, at least⁴². The causes that he came up with for this were, for example, a growing aversion to the restricted life that was partly inspired by Luther, a decrease in productivity for the monasteries that was linked to this, and economic problems as a result of the encroachment on the exemption from tax liability by the secular authorities. The decrease in the willingness of the believers to make donations, and acts of war in some regions also posed a problem to the monastic orders.

The studies on the situation in the Netherlands by Koen Goudriaan and Annemarie Speetjens are more recent. Goudriaan proposed that there was a general culture change in around 1520 and that the break in the trend of late-medieval religious behaviour and the quick reception of Luther's message were symptoms of this. He based his argument on, inter alia, the rapidly decreasing numbers of monks in the Low Countries around 1520⁴³. Speetjens nuances this picture by referring to a wide development in religious behaviour, which sped up around 1520: «It appears that the various changes in devotional attitude took place in the period between 1450 and 1550 with, however, a remarkable but not exclusive concentration around 1520»⁴⁴.

⁴⁰ STAPEL, *Onder dese ridderen* (MA Thesis), cit., p. 32-33.

⁴¹ A.H.L. HENSEN, *Hendrik Berck, de laatste baliër der Sint Jansheeren te Utrecht*, in «Archief voor de geschiedenis van het Aartsbisdom Utrecht» 35 (1909), p. 1-77; POST, *Kerkelijke verhoudingen*, cit., p. 155.

⁴² *ivi*, p. 180-185.

⁴³ K. GOUDRIAAN, *Het einde van de Middeleeuwen ontdekt?*, in «Madoc. Tijdschrift over de Middeleeuwen» 8 nr. 2 (1994) p. 66-75, there p. 70, 73.

⁴⁴ A.J. SPEETJENS, *A quantitative approach to Late Medieval transformations of piety in the Low Countries. Historiography and new ideas*, in *Pieties in transition. Religious practices and experiences, c.1400-1640*, ed. R. LUTTON and E. SALTER, Aldershot/Burlington 2007, p. 109-126, there p. 126.

However, it is not the case that both of the military orders remained completely insensitive to the results of the Reformation. A visitor of the Knights of St John reported, for example, that the rise of Luther's ideas caused the income from cash offerings and donations to fall in the churches. There was hardly any money left for candles⁴⁵. In a letter to the land commander that aimed to get the message across to him and, above all, to the German Master that the income of the commandries had fallen drastically, the commander-pastor of Doesburg Johan Worms wrote in 1558: «... want ick die macht nijet en heb the contribuijren, die Lutheri heeft uns verdorven. Het geven ys gans gedaen, hoe langer hoe quader, als een yder pastoir die kercken bedyent wael bekennen kan, ende die sich den offer geneeren moet genuchsaen belyden moet. Mynen wyl weer wael guet, dan mijn macht ys kleijn, gelijk die schemel wedue die twe munten werp in den stock des tempels»⁴⁶.

The financial situation in the bailiwick of Utrecht in the sixteenth century is still awaiting some good research, which unfortunately is beyond the scope of our study. If we go only by the reports from the correspondence, the situation was serious. Dozens of administrative letters report the difficult financial circumstances in which the commandries found themselves. However, we must consider the possibility that these letters were exaggerated in order to be taxed less by the German Master. Whatever the case may be, a possible reduction in income and an increase in outgoings that affected almost all the monasteries did not directly lead to a decrease in the number of priest-brethren in both the military orders; at the most, it took more effort than before to recruit them⁴⁷. This meant that the military orders in the diocese of Utrecht stayed much more in line with the general developments that the secular clergy was going through. According to Post, numbers in the secular clergy only fell dramatically after 1566: much later than the drop in the number of regular clergy after about 1520 or 1530⁴⁸.

An important change took place in the Utrecht bailiwick in 1560: land commander Albrecht van Egmond van Merestein died and was succeeded

⁴⁵ POST, *Kerkelijke verhoudingen*, cit., p. 183.

⁴⁶ «... since I am not able to help with the contribution. The Lutherans have ruined us. Nobody makes donations any more, and it is getting worse, as any pastor who serves a church can confirm. Whoever relies on offerings has to undergo this. My will is great but my power is small, like the poor widow who threw two coins into the temple treasury»; ARDOU, inv. no. 24-17 (4 October 1558). The last sentence is a reference to Mark 12, 41-44. Compare also ARDOU, inv. no. 27-5 (12 August c. 1547-1555).

⁴⁷ Compare ARDOU, inv. no. 24-13 (3 December 1556); STAPEL, *Onder dese ridderen* (MA Thesis), cit., p. 35-36.

⁴⁸ POST, *Kerkelijke verhoudingen*, cit., p. 40-41.

by Frans van der Loe. Where Albrecht van Egmond had still taken on many priest-brethren, as the list of vows from 1544-1560 demonstrates, Frans van der Loe resolved straightaway, even before his appointment as land commander had been officially confirmed, not to admit any more priest-brethren. After consulting with some of the Utrecht knight-brethren («as his most faithful friends»), he asked the German Master for permission - and received it too - to appoint secular priests in the order's churches. According to Van der Loe, there was nothing with which the bailiwick had been «so uncommonly and exceptionally troubled and burdened [...] as with taking on and maintaining priests». He wrote that the priest-brethren were «too careless, unsuitable and incompetent» to be able to serve the churches of the order well, that they refused to pay their contribution and, after abusing their office and now drowning in debt, they then demanded generous upkeep and care at the expense of the bailiwick⁴⁹. Van der Loe's campaign was a success: only an occasional priest-brother could, as an exception, secure a place in the bailiwick. That the picture painted by Van der Loe still needs to be nuanced is clear from the letters from the commander of Schoten in Friesland, Melchior de Groote, that Hans Mol studied. They suggest that the land commander and his fellow knight-brethren (it was not without reason that the land commander called them his «most faithful friends») treated the priest-brethren as second-class order members. De Groote refused to agree to the small pension that was offered him and also pointed to the bad treatment of some of his fellow priest-brethren in the convent in Utrecht. There is no reference anywhere to the so-called incompetence of the priest-brethren⁵⁰. Other priest-brethren were also at odds with Van der Loe, such as Johan Adriaansz van der Goude, who was sent as a kind of interim manager to Schoonhoven to put affairs into order. Once he arrived, he was forced to assume personally the debts of the former commander who, in addition, was still demanding the fruits of the commandry. He made it clear with a sneer that Van der Loe could take care of the debts with his own savings⁵¹.

If we consider, in addition, that Van der Loe's successor (Jacob Taets van Amerongen) rejected the appointment of a secular priest, «because the order priests (being competent) should be preferred to other priests», we should seriously consider the scenario that the personal preference of the land com-

⁴⁹ DOZA, Utrecht 384/1 (unnumbered folios; 8 Juli 1560). There is a conclusion in DE GEER, *Archieven I*, cit., p. cv-cviii.

⁵⁰ MOL, *Friese huizen*, cit., p. 205-206; ARDOU, inv. no. 33 (16 September 1570; 23 March 1571; 30 May 1571).

⁵¹ ARDOU, inv. no. 32-4 (2 May c. 1578-1579), also compare 32-3 (Whit Sunday c. 1579).

mander played an important part in implementing a stop in the recruitment of new priest-brethren after 1560⁵². During Frans van der Loe's period of office, however, a great deal of attention was paid to attracting new knight-brethren. The notes from the chapter assembly of 1565 show that a place was reserved for five new sons from the nobility. This was so many that further recruitment could be put on hold. «Furthermore, it was emphatically decided that no more knights would be taken on or promised a place in the next four years given that more places have already been promised than there are»⁵³. But as soon as the agreed time was over, recruitment was resumed. Almost exactly four years later places were promised to no fewer than 11 sons of the nobility, which could be redeemed when the sons reached adulthood⁵⁴. It most certainly cannot be said, therefore, that the recruitment of new knight-brethren in this period was modest. However, together with the whims of Frans van der Loe - who it is sometimes suspected sympathized with the body of thought of Protestantism⁵⁵ - the spirit of the times also played a part in the decision to stop recruiting new priest-brethren. From comments made by Aernout van Buchel - a few decades later - about the Order of St John, whom he called the «swine from the herd of Epicurus», one can taste the legacy of the strongly anti-papal climate in the Netherlands with which the priest-brethren of this military order were confronted⁵⁶. It was precisely because the gentlemen of the Teutonic Order could emphasize their knightly character, in contrast to the Utrecht Order of St John, that the continuity of the bailiwick in the years of Revolt could be safeguarded⁵⁷. In addition, even if Van der Loe had not decided only to ap-

⁵² ARDOU, inv. no. 493 (7 January 1579). Which, by the way, does not mean that the behaviour of Van der Loe, although unique, was completely isolated; compare, for example, the later land commander of the bailiwick of Westphalia, who complained in 1565 about the high maintenance costs of the priest-brethren in the convent of Münster. DORN, *Westfalen*, cit., p. 198.

⁵³ ARDOU, inv. no. 11, f. 8r (22 May 1565).

⁵⁴ ARDOU, inv. no. 11, f. 8r (22 May 1565).

⁵⁵ J.A. MOL, *Trying to survive. The Military Orders in Utrecht, 1580-1620*, in *The military orders and the Reformation. Choices, state building, and the weight of tradition*, ed. J.A. MOL, K. MILITZER and H.J. NICHOLSON, Hilversum 2006, p. 181-207, there p. 186. The recently defended, but as yet unpublished, dissertation by Daniela Gröger-Schiemann seems to challenge this assertion: *Die Deutschordensballei Utrecht während der Reformationszeit* (personal communication).

⁵⁶ A. VAN BUCHEL (BUCHELIUS), *Monumenta passim in templis ac monasteriis Traiectinae urbis atque agri inventa*, ed. K. SMIT (Facsimile, transcriptie en vertaling), Utrecht 1990-2002 (<http://www.hetutrechtsarchief.nl/collectie/handschriften/monumenta>), fol. 88v.

⁵⁷ In this respect, it is characteristic that the commandry of Schoten, which was entrusted to a knight-brother twice in the sixteenth century, could finally be safeguarded by sequestration by the States of Friesland but the purely priestly convent of Nes could not: MOL, *Friese huizen*, cit., p. 231.

point secular priests, it was to be expected that the number of priest-brethren would be affected shortly afterwards by the troubles in the Netherlands and the effect of these on the inflow of clergymen⁵⁸.

Unfortunately, it is difficult to compare this last assertion with the situation in which the Order of St John, who did carry on appointing new priest-brethren, found themselves: we can take a snap-shot of their size in 1561, 1594 and 1603 but this is difficult for precisely the turbulent period between 1561 and 1594 because of the lack of source materials. However, we can assert that the decrease can said to have been clear but not drastic: there were still 12 brethren in the whole bailiwick in 1594 and 1603⁵⁹.

Origin and provenance

It is a known fact in the historiography of the Teutonic Order that the origins of the order brethren in the bailiwicks in the German Empire should primarily be sought close to the commandries. In the bailiwick of Thuringia in the thirteenth century, for example, 95 percent of the order members came from that area⁶⁰.

The data about the priest-brethren of the Utrecht bailiwick proves to correspond with this. Of the priest-brethren whose origins are known, nine out of ten came from the diocese of Utrecht: the same diocese in which all the commandries were located⁶¹. Only 17 priest-brethren came from other dioceses and then it was primarily from places directly bordering it, such as Nijmegen (archbishopric of Cologne) or 's Hertogenbosch (diocese of Liège). However, there is somewhat more to say about where the Utrecht priest-brethren came from.

Firstly, how were the places of origin traced? We only very rarely find mention of where a priest-brother was born. Information about the families of priest-brethren is just as scarce, which makes it very difficult to be able to say anything about their social background. To be able to determine a priest-brother's place of origin anyway, we have a number of sources at our disposal. For example, benefaction certificates were handed over concerning land that a priest-brother or his family transferred at their initiation, which enables us, with a little caution, to localize the people concerned geographi-

⁵⁸ POST, *Kerkelijke verhoudingen*, cit., p. 40-41.

⁵⁹ MOL, *Trying to survive*, cit., p. 184; 194-195.

⁶⁰ MILITZER, *Geschichte*, cit., p. 92-93; WOJTECKI, *Personengeschichte*, cit., p. 79-80.

⁶¹ The regrouping of the dioceses in 1559 has not been taken into account in this breakdown: the old borders of the diocese have been taken as the basis.

cally⁶². Other sources are the university matriculation registers and - last but not least - the brethren's surnames, mainly derived from a toponym.

With this analysis, we are venturing on thin ice, of course: a toponym as surname can already have been petrified a number of generations before and kept when the family settled somewhere else. About 40 percent of the places of origin can only be determined from the toponym. A further 10 percent of the places of origin are not fully reliable for other diverse reasons. These two groups together are defined as 'uncertain' in the study. When using the data, however, we did opt to use the total of the 'certain' and 'uncertain' identifications because these categories delivered results that hardly differed at all. This means, of course, that we must settle for some - but acceptable - extent of uncertainty.

That the majority of the priest-brethren were from the diocese of Utrecht does not mean in any way that they were evenly distributed over the diocese. The great majority came from a much more limited region, namely, the Dutch river area of the Rhine or Old Rhine, Waal and Lek. It is no coincidence that most of the commandries of the bailiwick were located there: Dieren, Doesburg, Rhenen, Tiel, Utrecht, Schelluinen, Schoonhoven, Leiden, Katwijk and Maasland. It was a relatively densely populated area of the Northern Netherlands. In this area, the priest-brethren mainly came from towns, which confirms earlier suspicions⁶³.

About two-thirds of all the priest-brethren came from a place with town privileges. We should also mention here that almost 60 percent of the domiciles in the bailiwick for priest-brethren were to be found in the towns⁶⁴. If we look at the places of origin, it is noticeable that hardly any priest-brethren came from the vicinity of the commandries like Bunne, Ootmarsum and Middelburg, although these order settlements did provide shelter to priest-brethren. The Frisian commandries did draw many local - Frisian - brethren, but all of these were active exclusively in Friesland⁶⁵. It is also noticeable that hardly any priest-brethren came from some other densely popu-

⁶² M. KOOPSTRA, «Weest ritter ende guet man ende hout ridderlijcke oerde» *Portretten van broeders uit de balije Utrecht van de Duitse Orde*, Utrecht 2002, p. 15.

⁶³ J.A. Mol, *Deutschherren und Johanniter im Bistum Utrecht und ihre Pfarreien*, in *Ritterorden und Kirche im Mittelalter*, ed. Z.H. Nowak, Toruń 1997 (Ordines Militares - Colloquia Torunensia Historica IX), p. 113-127, there p. 119; MILITZER, *Deutsche Orden in den großen Städten*, cit., p. 211.

⁶⁴ STAPEL, *Onder dese ridderen* (MA Thesis), cit., p. 44-45.

⁶⁵ It is known that many of the Frisian brethren were Frisian - based on their name or language use, for example - but not which place they came from. Hans Mol has indicated whether the Frisian brethren were Frisian or not: MOL, *Friese huizen*, cit., p. 318-324.

lated areas. The current province of North Holland, for example, is under-represented and one would search in vain for brethren from, for example, Zeeland, the city of Groningen and the towns on the IJssel River (except Doesburg, where a commandry was located).

If we divide the priest-brethren according to area, it gives us the data shown (Table 5). It is immediately obvious that Holland towers way above the rest, also relatively with regard to the number of positions to be filled for priest-brethren in this area. If we consider that only six priest-brethren came from the current province of North Holland, with towns such as Amsterdam, Haarlem and Alkmaar, the density of places of origin was mainly high in the southern part of the province. The County of Holland also proves to be one of the few areas in which priest-brethren were distributed somewhat equally over several places: for example, Leiden, Delft, Gouda, Oudewater, Schoonhoven and Naaldwijk all produced a significant number of members (between four and eight). In the Bishopric of Utrecht, the town of Utrecht, above all, was well represented with twelve order brethren, whereas the other places did not provide more than two. In Gueldres, only one town towered above the rest as well: Tiel (13 priest-brethren, with the surrounding villages included as many as 21) followed, at a great distance, by Doesburg (with three members). In Brabant, most of the priest-brethren were recruited in 's Hertogenbosch.

We therefore see an extremely unequal distribution of places of origin, both at a regional and at a local level. We can also see the unequal distribution if we set the places against time. This becomes clear in the detailed map of South Holland below, which shows the places of origin per century (Figure 2). Compare, for example, the places close to Naaldwijk (mainly popular in the fifteenth century) with Delft (with an emphasis on the sixteenth century). We encounter clusters of priest-brethren from a specific period everywhere. It is not a phenomenon from the later centuries because we also find the concentrations in the fourteenth century, for example, round Utrecht and Tiel and in Schoonhoven⁶⁶.

This cluster formation cannot be based upon chance. Is it possible that recruitment campaigns of some size were organized here and there? It is

⁶⁶ It is particularly noticeable that the town of Schoonhoven already provided four brethren for the order in the second half of the fourteenth century, although it was only in 1395 that the count of Blois granted the parish church in the town the right of patronage, which meant that a commandry could then develop. The priest-brother Gerard van Vliedervoven, who came from Schoonhoven or that area, became the first pastor in Schoonhoven for the order. Did the many priest-brethren from this town play a role in this donation? 304; DE GEER, *Archieven II*, cit., nos. 678-679; ARDOU, inv. no. 2597.

known that the order functionaries were sent to recruit brethren in the Netherlands for the Livonian branch of the Teutonic Order in 1411 and possibly later as well (1434)⁶⁷. Unfortunately, we are a lot less well informed about the recruitment of the brethren in the bailiwick. Whether there were ever such campaigns can be called doubtful at the least. If they had already been held, this would not help explain why the concentrations were of priest-brethren who were not always from the same generation. For example, four brethren came from Gouda, all in the sixteenth century, but they were not members at the same time. The data show that there was some overlapping, with one arriving after the other. This creates the possibility of a second, in my opinion better, explanation for the cluster formation: that the priest-brethren made use of their own networks - consisting of, for example, family or fellow townsmen - to recruit suitable brethren. It has already been known for some time that the knight-brethren were recruited from a limited number of families⁶⁸. The family ties of the priest-brethren are very difficult to reconstruct, whereas it is still possible to reconstruct those of many knight-brethren who came from the nobility⁶⁹. We can therefore no longer verify whether the priest-brethren were related to each other. The concentrations of priest-brethren from towns or regions in specific periods, nonetheless, do point to there possibly having been some form of patronage in the distribution of available places in the bailiwick. The recruitment of the priest-brethren, therefore, would hardly differ from that of the knight-brethren.

Somewhat more can be said about the situation in Tiel. It was not simply the case that many priest-brethren came from Tiel and the surrounding area, but that many of them also actually worked in the commandry there. This situation can be compared with the area surrounding the commandry of Maasland, where just as many priest-brethren came from. The brethren from Maasland, however, dispersed over the whole bailiwick after their initiation without ending up in Maasland particularly often. On average, the distance

⁶⁷ J.A. MOL, *Nederlandse ridderbroeders van de Duitse orde in Lijffland: herkomst, afkomst en carrières*, in «Bijdragen en mededelingen betreffende de geschiedenis der Nederlanden» 111 afl. 1 (1996) p. 1-29, there p. 14-16. The area in which knight-brethren were recruited for Livonia was further to the east (mainly Gueldres and the 'Oversticht' region) than that of the priest-brethren of the bailiwick: *ivi*, 11.

⁶⁸ MOL, *Friese huizen*, *cit.*, p. 206-207; DORN, *Westfalen*, *cit.*, p. 160-165.

⁶⁹ We can assume that there were possibly family ties between the three sixteenth-century priest-brethren Frans Worms, Johan Worms and Willem van Elderen. What is also particularly noticeable is the concentration of priest-brethren from the area of Naaldwijk, in the County of Holland, who were able to dominate the ranks of the commandry of Leiden during the fifteenth century and who, in addition, were remarkably often from a knightly background: STAPEL, *Onder dese ridderen* (MA Thesis), *cit.*, p. 43-44.

as the crow flies between the brother's place of origin and the place where he worked was fifty-seven kilometres. The distance was the smallest for the Tiel commandry: twenty-eight kilometres. In 1328, the Teutonic Order bought the complex of the commandry in Tiel from the St Walpurga Chapter, which moved to Arnhem because of a disagreement with the town. It is possible that the town stipulated at the handover that the magistrate or the citizens of the town would be able to nominate a number of new members - who came from the town - to the land commander. This would have meant that the town kept some kind of hold over the donations that its citizens had made over the years and could provide a number of its sons the prospect of a good career. The chapter had possibly also filled such a function for the town before 1328. The situation in Tiel shows some similarity to the chapter of Kulm (Chełmno) in Prussia. This chapter was set up in the early thirteenth century as part of the establishment of a diocese; however, shortly after this its priest-brethren from the Teutonic Order had taken all the places, at the expense of the local clergy. The locals complained more and more about this at the beginning of the fourteenth century until a compromise was finally reached. For each free place, the chapter would be able to choose a candidate from the region, who would be put forward to the Grand Master of the Teutonic Order. If this candidate were accepted, he would then be initiated into the order. If he was not found suitable, the chapter could propose a new candidate. This presentation system was also employed in a few other places in the Baltic region⁷⁰.

We must emphasize that we do not know of any such agreements for the commandry of Tiel. The fact that so many more priest-brethren from the region itself could be found in this commandry than was customary elsewhere in the bailiwick cannot be put down to pure chance. We do not know if the order and town had made fixed agreements about this or whether it was a habit that developed over the course of the years: perhaps the land commander started it at some point to keep the town happy. After all, it was not as if the old chapter was on good terms with the town and just decided to leave but rather that it left after a dispute that had dragged on for years. The Teutonic Order would have to avoid ending up in the same boat⁷¹. Apart from the Tiel commandry, the commandries of Utrecht and Leiden also had a remarkably local supply of brethren, although somewhat less pronounced than in Tiel. With other commandries, however, it is hardly possible to make a link between the idea suggested above of priest-brethren approaching their networks to recruit new brethren and the later distribution of these brethren

⁷⁰ GÓRSKI, *Kulmer Domkapitel*, cit., p. 330-331.

⁷¹ DE GEER, *Archieven II*, cit., nos. 570-573.

over the different commandries. Further research into the situation in these commandries would throw more light upon this question.

Therefore, although it is possible to determine, to some extent, the origins of the priest-brethren, it is a lot more difficult to determine their social background. We only have very few sources at our disposal for this, which means that we certainly do not have a complete picture. We can determine from their names or a seal bearing their coats of arms that a handful (eight) of priest-brethren were of a knightly background. Even if we include all the doubtful cases, we do not come any further than fifteen people. That is only slightly more than 5 percent of the research population. It is noticeable here that the majority of these knightly priest-brethren can be found in the prestigious commandry in Leiden, where the order could grant the office of pastor of the Sint-Pieterskerk (St Peter's Church)⁷².

The university matriculation registers, which we will cover in more depth below, help us here somewhat. The students were placed into different social categories, which determined the amount of their registration fee. Roughly speaking, these categories can be divided into three groups: the students who paid the normal registration fee, those who were exempt, or partially exempt, from this because they were not provided with an income (the *pauperes*) and the group of *nobiles* (the nobility) who paid a higher registration fee⁷³. There are no *nobiles* among our group of priest-brethren with a university education. More than a fifth (fifteen individuals) were defined as paupers, although we must understand pauper to be an extremely relative term. We cannot say for sure that this group received fewer opportunities of a successful career in the bailiwick. Of the fifteen *pauperes*, six held one or more commander's offices at some time: as a percentage, about the same number of them were commanders as in the total research population, somewhat more even. One of them even made it to commander-pastor of Leiden. A clear link between the careers of the priest-brethren and their definition as *pauperis* cannot therefore be found.

On the basis of the current data, I am consequently inclined not to attach too much value to this categorization at the moment. That we cannot dismiss the priest-brethren as having been a group without much in the way of financial means, particularly during the transition to the early modern period, is

⁷² STAPEL, *Onder dese ridderen* (MA Thesis), cit., p. 46.

⁷³ H. DE RIDDER-SYMOENS, *Rich men, poor men: social stratification and social representation at the university (13th-16th centuries)*, in *Showing status. Representation of social positions in the Late Middle Ages*, ed. W. BLOCKMANS and A. JANSE, Turnhout 1999 (Medieval texts and cultures of Northern Europe 2), p. 159-175, there p. 161; E. DE MAESSCHALCK, *De criteria van de armoede aan de middeleeuwse universiteit te Leuven*, in «Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire» LVIII nr. 2 (1980), p. 337-354, there p. 353.

clear from, for example, a document that recently surfaced in the Doesburg archive⁷⁴. It is a standardized list of all the donations that a priest-brother had to make when he joined the Teutonic Order, dating from the years that Frans van der Loe was the land commander (1560-1579)⁷⁵. This list was probably meant for the personal use of a brother, judging by the fact that he has noted here and there that he had already made a donation. The total of all the donations was 210 guilders. The amount of the donations that two Utrecht priest-brethren made in the fifteenth century on joining the order is known (a hundred guilders each). The family of at least one of them would donate the same amount to the order on the death of this brother⁷⁶. Such documents are very rare because of the Church's rules on simony, so it is very difficult to say whether their content is representative⁷⁷.

The donation or *dos* made at the time of joining was not an unknown phenomenon in medieval monasteries, as for instance Esther Koch demonstrated in her study of nunneries that were for the nobility. However, she only found a few mentions of the minimum 'voluntary' joining donation. For the nunnery of Ter Hunnepe near Deventer she discovered a figure of 300 guilders and for the nunnery of Zennewijnen in Tielerswaard 100 Philips emblems (although in this case it is not totally clear if this was a *dos*). She found more references to the sum expected for the admission ceremony and comparable affairs⁷⁸. Such costs also appear in the aforementioned list of donations for a priest-brother. We can conclude that both the sixteenth-century priest-brethren and those from the fifteenth century, or one of them at least, possessed assets, or family assets, that were great enough to be able to raise about two hundred guilders when they entered the order. This is perhaps somewhat lower than the *dos* for the Cistercian nunnery of Ter Hun-

⁷⁴ Streekarchivariaat De Liemers en Doesburg, Oud Archief Doesburg, inv. no. 4408.

⁷⁵ This dating is based on the writing and a comment that the servants of the land commander stayed in Dieren, the fixed location of Frans van der Loe. How this list of the donations made by a priest-brother upon joining the order is linked to the aforementioned recruitment stop by land commander Van der Loe in 1560 is not completely clear. It can be established, however, that a - very limited, by the way - number of priest-brethren still managed to obtain a position in the bailiwick after 1560.

⁷⁶ For unclear reasons, Menno Koopstra identified these brethren as knight-brethren although he correctly categorized them in his own work file: KOOPSTRA, *Weest ritter...*, cit., p. 15-19.

⁷⁷ Sarnowsky contends that the entrance donations for the Teutonic Order were roughly between 60 and 130 guilders, without further references, however. SARNOWSKY, *Deutsche Orden*, cit., p. 54.

⁷⁸ E.M.F. KOCH, *De kloosterpoort als sluitpost? Adellijke vrouwen langs Maas en Rijn tussen huwelijk en convent, 1200-1600*, Leeuwarden/Mechelen 1994 (Maaslandse Monografieën 57), p. 183-186.

nepe but, nonetheless, cannot be called insignificant. In addition, it is noticeable that the Doesburg list of donations concurs almost to the letter with comparable lists for knight-brethren (who, by definition, were of knightly descent) from this period. Only a wooden coat of arms at the front in the church is missing⁷⁹. Priest-brethren must therefore have had considerable assets: most of them cannot have been from a simple background.

Education

Very little is known about the education and training of the members of the order⁸⁰. The early years of the order members - during which their training was generally completed - are badly documented, but little is noted afterwards either about any studies they may have completed. The fact that direct sources are missing from the order archives still cannot explain, however, why there has been so little interest in the historiography for the education of the members of military orders⁸¹. One could argue that the order members' education does not constitute an obvious research field for an order that was concerned with the physical battle against the heathens. It is probably also relevant that the order did not establish any requirements in its statutes regarding its members' education, in contrast to, for example, other religious establishments such as chapters⁸². Without doubt, both aspects have prevented people who would potentially be interested from looking in-

⁷⁹ DE GEER, *Archieven I*, cit., no. 193, r 0262-263; *Veteris ævi analecta seu vetera monumenta hactenus nondum visa. Quibus continentur scriptores varii...* V, ed. A. MATTHÆUS, Den Haag 1738 (2nd edition), p. 914-915.

⁸⁰ In general, see also my contribution: R.J. STAPEL, *Power to the Educated? Priest-brethren and their Education*, using Data from the Utrecht Bailiwick of the Teutonic Order (1350-1600), in *The Military Orders 5: Politics and Power*, ed. P. EDBURY, Farnham 2012, p. 337-348.

⁸¹ The article by Boockmann about 44 law students of the Teutonic Order forms an exception: H. BOOCKMANN, *Die Rechtsstudenten des Deutschen Ordens. Studium, Studienförderung und gelehrter Beruf im späteren Mittelalter*, in *Festschrift für Hermann Heimpel zum 70. Geburtstag am 19. September 1971* 2, ed. Th. Schieder a.o., Göttingen 1972, p. 313-375. Arnoud-Jan Bijsterveld also included 14 priests from the Teutonic Order in his prosopographical study of North Brabant pastors, in which their studies were also researched: BIJSTERVELD, *Laverend*, cit., p. 163. Finally, Karol Górski made a brief note of whether the priest-brethren in the Kulm (Chelmo) chapter had studied: GÓRSKI, *Kulmer Domkapitel*, cit..

⁸² BOOCKMANN, *Rechtsstudenten*, cit., p. 363. The decree regarding the admission of knight-brethren to the Utrecht bailiwick, in which a four-year period of study (or time spent at court) that they would finance themselves was made compulsory is notable in this respect. The date of the document has not yet been traced. It is possibly seventeenth century: MATTHÆUS, *Analecta* V, cit., p. 915-916.

to this theme. In addition, such research can only be carried out if a prosopographical file is available. And, as already mentioned, much groundwork needs to be done here for the military orders in general.

Although the statutes did not set requirements for the brethren's education, it does not mean that there was not a need in the order for well-educated clergymen: in practice, the priest-brethren were usually mainly pastors, and it was preferred that pastors - just like prelates - had at least had a university education⁸³. The other large military order in Utrecht, the Order of St John, certainly considered a thorough education to be an important condition for holding the important offices, as different interviews with its members in 1561 show⁸⁴. As by no means every clergyman had been to university, we can hardly consider it a requirement. However, the number of academics among the clergymen increased during the Middle Ages, which meant that such an education was increasingly taken for granted⁸⁵.

Almost nothing is known about the education that the order brethren had received before attending university. We only know that the priest-brother Jacob van Lokhorst, who was from the knightly Van Lokhorst family, first attended the school of the Geertekerk in Utrecht and then possibly the Latin school in Zwolle⁸⁶. Judging from the number of university-educated priest-brethren, we can assume that it was normal to attend a Latin school, although not everyone had the opportunity to attend such a renowned institute as that in Zwolle. It cannot be said with any certainty whether the bailiwick of Utrecht was able to tie future priest-brethren to the bailiwick at an early age as choristers, as in the more southerly bailiwick of Alden Biesen⁸⁷. Hardly any of the first names or surnames of the choristers of the bailiwick of Utrecht are known, which means that we cannot identify them later as priest-brethren. In order to trace the university education of the members of the Utrecht order, the matriculation registers and/or graduation registers published by the universities of Cologne, Leuven, Paris, Rostock, Heidel-

⁸³ Compare also: BIJSTERVELD, *Laverend*, cit., p. 135.

⁸⁴ HENSEN, *Hendrik Berck*, cit., p. 44, 48, 53, 63; POST, *Kerkelijke verhoudingen*, cit., p. 351.

⁸⁵ *ivi*, p. 158-161.

⁸⁶ Based on information about Jacob's twin brother, Herman van Lokhorst, the canon of Utrecht cathedral and dean of Oudmunster, and an older brother, who died in Zwolle. A.J. VAN DEN HOVEN VAN GENDEREN, *Heren van de Kerk. De kanunniken van Oudmunster te Utrecht in de late middeleeuwen*, Zutphen 1997, p. 229, 243-244; KOOPSTRA, *Weest ritter...*, cit., p. 51; KOOPSTRA, *Scholing van de priester- en ridderbroeders* (unpublished article).

⁸⁷ *Nieuwen Biesen in Alden Biesen. 5 eeuwen Duitse Orde in Maastricht*, ed. A.H. JEN-NISKENS, Bilzen/Maastricht 1989, p. 70.

berg, Orléans and the most important Italian universities were used⁸⁸. We searched for all members of the Utrecht order in our database; we did further research into the priest-brethren from 1350⁸⁹.

I will highlight a few details about the other members here and there to add some depth to the material. It is important to know that the matriculation registers have in no way been preserved in a complete form. Important universities, such as that of Paris, have a very limited tradition of admission lists. On the basis of his data, Bijsterveld worked out that 22 percent of the pastors in North Brabant with a university education cannot, for whatever reason, be found in the matriculation registers⁹⁰. The figures about admissions at university are therefore always minimum figures. With this fact in the back of our minds, we will look at the research group. If we divide the people from the file into period of time and category, we get the following data (Table 6).

The order brethren with by far the highest academic education prove to have been the priests. However, almost a fifth of the knight-brethren can also be found in the matriculation registers. The composition of this group of academically educated knight-brethren is striking. It consists, for the most part, of land commanders and associate members who - as far as is known - never became full members (and therefore probably pursued another career or died prematurely). It was not previously known that the majority of the fifteenth and sixteenth-century land commanders had an academic education. Without a doubt, this puts the position of land commander in a different light⁹¹.

However, the priest-brethren are the subject of this study. I will return later to the relationship between their education and the positions that they held. If we compare them with the North Brabant pastors Bijsterveld studied for near enough the same period (1401-1575) we can ascertain that the figures correspond well with each other, leaving aside periodic differences (Table 7). With regard to, for example, the canons of Oudmunster in Utrecht, the figures turn out to be significantly lower, about 20 to 30 percent on average⁹².

⁸⁸ A.L. TERVOORT, *The iter italicum and the Northern Netherlands. Dutch students at Italian universities and their role in the Netherlands' society (1426-1575)*, Leiden 2005 (Education and society in the Middle Ages and Renaissance 21). Tervoort found Northern Dutch students in Bologna, Padua, Siena, Ferrara, Pisa/Florence, Rome, Pavia, Perugia, Parma, Turin, Naples and Arezzo.

⁸⁹ For 146 people it was not possible to verify if they studied at a university because their first names or surnames are unknown.

⁹⁰ BIJSTERVELD, *Laverend*, cit., p. 149-150, 154-155.

⁹¹ STAPEL, *Onder dese ridderen* (MA Thesis), cit., p. 57-58.

⁹² VAN DEN HOVEN VAN GENDEREN, *Heren van de Kerk*, cit., p. 248, 250.

As Bijsterveld's study shows, however, the canons were generally more likely to have had a university education than many other clergymen, both secular and regular⁹³. If we look at the scarce data about priest-brethren in the Teutonic Order who were studying, a few sources are available to us. First is the small group of pastors of the Teutonic Order who were included in Bijsterveld's study. Half of these priest-brethren, who were subordinate to the bailiwick of Alden Biesen, definitely studied⁹⁴. The priest-brethren in the Prussian chapters who were researched were greater in number. To begin with, there are the brief details about the priest-brethren in the chapter of Kulm (Chełmno) between 1264 and 1466. Eight percent of the 119 priest-brethren in the chapter had studied, a percentage that mainly picks up after the establishment of the University of Prague in 1348⁹⁵. In the chapter of Pomesania, we can trace a university education for at least 25 of the 150 priest-brethren (17 percent). Around 1400 in particular we can see a concentration of priest-brethren who had studied⁹⁶. We can also see a peak in the number of priest-brethren with an academic education in Sambia around 1400, a peak that repeated itself in the late fifteenth century. Forty-three of the 131 chapter members can be found here in the university matriculation registers (33 percent)⁹⁷. It is very likely that we must assume that a much higher percentage of brethren in the Prussian chapters had a university education, particularly in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

All the names of the members of the Sambian chapter in 1442, 1497 and 1517 have been preserved. If we compare these names with the university matriculation registers, the percentage of educated brethren appears to fluctuate at around 50 to 70 percent. This is still excluding the students who can no longer be found in the matriculation registers⁹⁸. When such a level of education was reached cannot be traced because of the lack of data. This probably occurred around the last quarter of the fourteenth century and the first quarter of the fifteenth century. In any case, it is clear that the data from the bailiwick of Utrecht is not unique within the Teutonic Order.

In the first three periods (until 1426) only three of the fifty-six priest-brethren had studied. Then there is spectacular growth in the years 1426-1450 followed by a steady increase, with a peak in the period of 1501-1525. Only the period of 1476-1500 shows a considerable dip. After 1525 the per-

⁹³ BIJSTERVELD, *Laverend*, cit., p. 167-168.

⁹⁴ *ivi*, p. 163.

⁹⁵ GÓRSKI, *Kulmer Domkapitel*, cit., p. 332.

⁹⁶ GLAUERT, *Domkapitel von Pomesanien (1284-1527)*, cit., p. 283-288.

⁹⁷ BISKUP, *Domkapitel von Samland (1285-1525)*, cit., p. 293-298.

⁹⁸ *ivi*, p. 295-296.

centage of those who had studied falls. The generally ascending line until into the sixteenth century can also be found among the pastors in North Brabant. Apart from that, the progression of priest-brethren with a university education seems to follow another development, which we will further investigate below. If we first look at the choice of university, nothing notable leaps to the eye with regard to the pastors in North Brabant. The universities of Leuven and Cologne together counted for about 90 percent of the students, although the Brabant pastors did opt somewhat more often for their 'own' University of Leuven in comparison with the University of Cologne. More than a third of the priest-brethren attended more than one university; this also correlates with Bijsterveld's results⁹⁹.

The choice of faculty does not provide any real surprises either, although the percentages here do differ somewhat from Bijsterveld's results. The majority of the priest-brethren were registered with the *artes* faculty (60 percent), particularly if we also add the group whose faculty is unknown (29 percent) to the *artes*. About ten percent studied law and only one priest-brother can perhaps be identified with a theology student in Cologne. He does not appear to have graduated. There are no medical students in the population. It is noticeable that the higher faculties (law and theology) were attended only in the fifteenth century. In the sixteenth century we can only see students attending the *artes* faculties¹⁰⁰. In comparison with the Brabant pastors, the priest-brethren of the Utrecht Teutonic Order attended the higher faculties considerably less. Almost four out of ten of the pastors studied law, theology and/or medicine¹⁰¹. Furthermore, the majority of the pastors managed to graduate¹⁰². In contrast, only a quarter of the priest-brethren graduated and only two brethren graduated from a higher faculty¹⁰³. These figures are also disappointing compared with the chapter members in Prussia - priest-brethren too after all¹⁰⁴.

How should we interpret this data? To begin with, we can conclude that the priest-brethren had a considerably high level of education even though

⁹⁹ STAPEL, *Onder dese ridderen* (MA Scriptie), cit., p. 63-66; BIJSTERVELD, *Laverend*, cit., p. 172-173. A case study of those in Leiden who were studying provides other specific characteristics again, but here also the general tendency is the same: TERVOORT, *Iter italicum*, cit., p. 30. In Pomesania and Samia the 'local' universities of Leipzig, Vienna and Prague were very popular: GLAUERT, *Domkapitel von Pomesanien (1284-1527)*, cit., p. 287; BISKUP, *Domkapitel von Samland (1285-1525)*, cit., p. 297-298.

¹⁰⁰ STAPEL, *Onder dese ridderen* (MA Thesis), cit., p. 66-67.

¹⁰¹ BIJSTERVELD, *Laverend*, cit., p. 190.

¹⁰² *ivi*, p. 198.

¹⁰³ STAPEL, *Onder dese ridderen* (MA Thesis), cit., p. 67.

¹⁰⁴ GLAUERT, *Domkapitel von Pomesanien (1284-1527)*, cit., p. 287-288; BISKUP, *Domkapitel von Samland (1285-1525)*, cit., p. 296-297.

relatively few of them studied at a higher faculty or graduated. Although it is true that the percentage that did study is below, for example that of the canons, it compares well with secular and regular pastors. On average, the priest-brethren even studied somewhat more often than most of the other regular pastors (in North Brabant at least)¹⁰⁵. We should note, however, that the level of education in the Low Countries could be said to have been high compared with other parts of Europe¹⁰⁶. In addition, Table 7 shows that big differences in the nature and intensity of the academic instruction could arise between the periods. In order to be able to show the developments in the number of students among the priest-brethren without any delays, we have to arrange them not according to the period in which they were working but the first time they enrolled at university. This has been done in Graph 2 below. The forty-four order members from a study by Hartmut Boockmann can also be found here. These order members received financial support from the order or requested it. Boockmann saw an explicit connection between the academic education of order members and the situation in which the order council and the office of Grand Master in Prussia and Livonia found themselves after the battle of Tannenberg (1410) and the Thirteen Years' War (1454-1466)¹⁰⁷.

It is actually noticeable that almost all of his students can be found between these two events. Boockmann hardly found any cases of grants elsewhere in the order - such as from the German Master or in the bailiwicks. He concluded from this that, in contrast to at the court of the Grand Master, there was hardly any need for university-educated order members in the bailiwicks¹⁰⁸. This conclusion can no longer be upheld, as the data from the bailiwicks of Utrecht and Alden Biesen shows. It is particularly noticeable that we also see a need for members with an academic education in the bailiwick of Utrecht shortly after the battle of Tannenberg, even before the founding of the University of Leuven in 1426 had an effect on the number of students in the Low Countries¹⁰⁹. Both in Utrecht and with Boockmann we can see a slight peak in university attendance on the eve of the Thirteen Years' War (1456-1466). In addition, it cannot be a coincidence that five of the seven priest-brethren who had studied law were all active precisely in this period.

¹⁰⁵ BIJSTERVELD, *Laverend*, cit., p. 163.

¹⁰⁶ *ivi*, p. 156.

¹⁰⁷ BOOCKMANN, *Rechtsstudenten*, cit., p. 372-373.

¹⁰⁸ *ivi*, p. 373-374.

¹⁰⁹ For the North Brabant pastors, the founding of the University of Leuven is an important explanation for the explosive growth in the numbers of them who had studied: BIJSTERVELD, *Laverend*, cit., p. 146 and 165.

On the basis of this data, we can therefore advance the cautious hypothesis that the situation in Prussia and Livonia in the first half of the fifteenth century influenced student numbers in the order as a whole but also in a peripheral bailiwick such as that of Utrecht. After all, it is already known that the ties that the Utrecht bailiwick had with Prussia and Livonia were still relatively strong around this time¹¹⁰. It points to conscious efforts having been made in the early fifteenth century to increase the number of academically educated brethren in the order. It seems doubtful to me that the highest powers in the order would have demanded that such efforts be made. However, in this turbulent period, the need was felt through the whole Teutonic Order to admit well-educated brethren. It is difficult to say whether the Utrecht bailiwick actually needed educated brethren for the kind of diplomatic matters that the holder of the office of Grand Master in Prussia was expected to deal with. Perhaps we should assume instead that there was a certain fear that the problematic situation in Prussia would be a precursor of new times. Whatever it was, this had disappeared towards the end of the fifteenth century and no more brethren who had studied law were recruited. Only *artes* students were responsible for the further growth in the number of university-educated priest-brethren in the bailiwick.

It is true that having studied law was not essential for the daily tasks of the priest-brethren who were active as pastors in the churches of the bailiwick or even in Prussia. Nevertheless, a certain level of education was also seen as an advantage for these priests. In these cases, attending a European *artes* faculty was a tried and tested method, particularly as the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries progressed. The shift that occurred halfway through the fifteenth century is, however, a lot more than just a shift in the choice of faculty.

From the second half of the fifteenth century, we can see that local influences began to play an increasing part in the development of student numbers, whilst possible correlations with worries in Prussia and Livonia can hardly be detected at all. Not a single priest-brother, for example, commenced his studies in the period of 1481-1485, the time of the struggle for power after the death of Duke Charles the Bold of Burgundy (1477) and the resurgence of the Hook and Cod wars. These wars also had repercussions for student numbers in Leuven¹¹¹. The siege of the city of Utrecht in 1483, in

¹¹⁰ Witness, for example, the relatively large number of knight-brethren in Livonia in these years who came from the Northern Netherlands: MOL, *Nederlandse ridderbroeders*, cit., p. 28.

¹¹¹ R.C. SCHWINGES, *Deutsche Universitätsbesucher im 14. und 15. Jahrhundert. Studien zur Sozialgeschichte des Alten Reiches*, Stuttgart 1986 (Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für Europäische Geschichte 123, Beiträge zur Sozial- und Verfassungsgeschichte des Alten Reiches 6), p. 144-145.

which the Teutonic House sustained a lot of damage, would certainly have also played a part¹¹². Half a century later, in the years 1526-1535, there was again a low number of students. This follows the general trend of the numbers of students who came from the diocese of Utrecht and attended the universities of Leuven and Cologne¹¹³.

If we consider that the majority of priest-brethren who were studying were already registered at the universities before their first mention in our sources (only 8 percent were already listed as an order member before they could be found in the university matriculation registers), it is not particularly surprising that the increase in their numbers was generally equal to that of the number of students from the whole of the Northern Netherlands: it was, after all, the pool from which they were mostly recruited. It does not exclude the possibility that internal affairs in the order or the brethren's networks, as suggested above, could have played a role in the recruitment of educated brethren. Judging from the point in their career when they possibly studied, however, I do not consider it probable that the order awarded academic grants to the priest-brethren, all the more because no indication of this can be found in the archives of the Utrecht bailiwick. I therefore suspect that the priest-brethren financed their own education. It is notable, though, that of the knight-brethren who were studying, including many land commanders, the majority (circa 55 percent) actually began studying only after their initiation¹¹⁴.

*Careers*¹¹⁵

Whoever entered the Teutonic Order in the Netherlands as a priest-brother had the prospect of a number of attractive positions. The most important was that of pastor. Although pastoral care did not originally belong to the tasks of the brethren of the Teutonic Order, they soon engaged in this anyway, mainly in order to be able to serve the parish churches that had been donated to the order and thus to be able to secure the revenue from these. In 1237, the order received permission from the pope to appoint their own priest-brethren in parish churches. The conditions under which the priest-

¹¹² DE GEER, *Archieven I*, cit., no. 193, r 0258.

¹¹³ TERVOORT, *Iter italicum*, cit., p. 28.

¹¹⁴ STAPEL, *Onder dese ridderen* (MA Thesis), cit., p. 58, 67-68.

¹¹⁵ A more extensive - and more quantitative - analysis of the careers of the priest-brethren can be found in STAPEL, *Onder dese ridderen* (MA Thesis), cit., p. 69-100.

brethren were allowed to act as pastor were established at the time of the Grand Master Konrad von Feuchtwangen in 1292¹¹⁶.

The order had already been granted the right of the patronage of a number of parish churches by different parties early in the history of the Teutonic Order in the Northern Netherlands, which meant that many priest-brethren could be appointed as pastor, not just in small country churches but also in a number of town parishes such as those of Leiden and Rhenen. For some period of time, the bailiwick of Utrecht was allowed to appoint its own pastor in no fewer than twenty-six parish churches¹¹⁷. In general, there were eighteen churches where a priest-brother was active as pastor and, as far as is known, where they normally also lived. In addition, there were at least seven priest-brethren who acted as commander¹¹⁸. In many cases the position of commander was combined with the pastoral care in the same place, but this was not necessary the rule¹¹⁹. Altogether, the group of commanders of the bailiwick usually consisted of a majority of priest-brethren. There were a few other positions that the brethren could hold apart from those of pastor or commander. Many of these posts were of an occasional nature and the accompanying tasks were not performed every year (the procurer of the commandry of Tiel, for example, whose task was the financial administration); others were permanent, such as the positions of sacristan, procurer and house commander of the main house in Utrecht. Finally, there was a large group of priest-brethren who were linked to a commandry or parish church as conventual or chaplain. We mainly find them in the houses that had developed into priest convents or small priest convents: Doesburg, Leiden, Nes, Rhenen, Schoonhoven, Tiel and Utrecht. Many of these priest-brethren can particularly be traced in the commandries of Utrecht, Nes and Leiden.

Which impression of the priest-brethren' careers does the data generally give? To begin with, the picture is nuanced and there are significant local differences between the commandries. In addition, we must acknowledge again that the early stage of their time as a member of the order is extremely

¹¹⁶ MOL, *Deutschherren*, cit., p. 114-115.

¹¹⁷ *ivi*, p. 127. The number continually changed over the course of the century, particularly when new patronage rights were acquired. It is unclear whether the church of Dieren (bought by the bailiwick of Alden Biesen as its commandry in 1434) can also be counted. There is no evidence to suggest a right of patronage to the parish church of Dieren for the order, but in the period after 1434 a small number of priest-brethren did act as pastor.

¹¹⁸ They are mainly to be found in the typical priest commandries of Doesburg, Leiden, Katwijk, Nes, Rhenen, Schoonhoven and Schoten. We also find priest commanders in Bunne, Maasland, Middelburg, Rhenen and Tiel somewhat regularly. Never was a priest-brother in charge in the commandries of Dieren, Ootmarsum and Utrecht (the land commandry).

¹¹⁹ STAPEL, *Onder dese ridderen* (MA Thesis), cit., p. 72.

badly documented. In that respect, we must once again look to my previous estimate of the average priest-brother having already been a member for eight years before appearing in our sources. We are therefore mainly dependent on qualitative sources. If we may consider the case of the sixteenth-century knight-brother Van Delwich as typical, a new brother had a short probation period in a commandry, in his case Dieren, followed by a short period in the main house in Utrecht where the land commander could take him on probation and then initiate him: «Ende tot Dieren in probatie geweest hebbende, wil ick den selven Delwich by mij tot Utrecht ontbieden ende alhier mede probeeren een tyt lanck, ende daer naer incleeden naer ons oirdens maniere»¹²⁰.

A brother would then be placed as conventual or chaplain in a commandry where a place happened to be vacant. I have not found any direct cause to suppose the existence of a clear rank and/or sequence between the different commandries¹²¹. It did become clear, however, that a few commandries - together with, above all, the Frisian houses of Nes and Schoten - fell, to a greater or lesser extent, outside the regular career circuit. This was the case for Leiden, inter alia, and we will cover this further below.

After a period as a conventual in one or more of the commandries (four of the ten brethren were members of a convent in two or more commandries), the brethren usually had the prospect of being appointed as a pastor, commander or functionary in the main house in Utrecht. When a position of pastor became vacant, the priest-brethren who could be considered for the position and were available were identified. There hardly appears to have been a preconceived fixed path here - not a demonstrable one anyway.

It is my impression, however, that priest-brethren with a university education were appointed as pastor or commander somewhat faster than brethren without such an education¹²². About 60 percent of the research pop-

¹²⁰ «And having had him on probation in Dieren, I wish to summon this same Van Delwich to me in Utrecht and have him on probation for a period of time before initiating him according to the rules of our order»; ARDOU, inv. no. 24-15 (15 February 1558). Also compare ARDOU, inv. no. 23-19 (1556?). Udo Arnold doubts, however, whether this was also customary before the sixteenth century: personal correspondence, 11 October 2008.

¹²¹ Significant differences can be seen between the different offices if, for example, we differentiate according to level of education. Ordering the results according to such criteria can be simply done but proves to be far from a cure-all partly due to conflicting results. It is possible that local differences and causes, which are still unclear at the moment, form the basis of this: STAPEL, *Onder dese ridderen* (MA Thesis), cit., p. 88-91.

¹²² *ivi*, p. 98. In my opinion, the difference is not so great that there is a distortion of the research population where priest-brethren who had studied (who were assigned an office earlier and therefore generally appear earlier in our sources) take on a seemingly larger size in regard to the total number of priest-brethren.

ulation held one or more pastor's offices, almost 40 percent became commander at some point and 6 percent were active as sacristan, procurer or house commander in Utrecht. If we sort the categories according to the amount of experience that the executive brethren had, it is not surprising that the group with the most baggage was also the smallest in size. A procurer in the main house, for example, had held more offices in total (3.7) than the average commander (3.2) or pastor (2.9)¹²³. Finally, at the end of their career as priest-brother only a few brethren 'retired'. The majority carried on working as pastor and/or commander right up to their deaths. What services then were provided by the large dormitory and the equally large infirmary in the main house in Utrecht is unclear.

If we look at the mobility of the priest-brethren, we can conclude that they could change office and/or commandry without too much effort. The average difference between place of origin and the commandries was also high¹²⁴. Of course, a large number of the brethren can only be found in one place, but I suspect that the picture is strongly influenced by a lack of source material¹²⁵. A third of the priest-brethren in the population held - as far as can be demonstrated - three or more positions. A letter that Geert Grote wrote in the fourteenth century to a Carthusian monk, who had exchanged the Teutonic Order for the Monnikhuizen Chasterhouse near Arnhem ten years before, shows that this anonymous monk, who had doubts about his life as a Carthusian, had led the churches of Doesburg, Rhenen, Valkenburg and Schelluinen before he entered Monnikhuizen¹²⁶. He had therefore served no fewer than four churches, which means that we most certainly cannot speak of a limited sphere of activity¹²⁷.

¹²³ *ivi*, p. 82, 86-88.

¹²⁴ This was 57 kilometres as the crow flies, whilst the pastors in North Brabant were active no more than 21 kilometres from home. The differences are also great if we look at the different categories of pastors: the regular pastors (36 kilometres) and the university-educated pastors (22 kilometres). *ivi*, p. 92-94; BIJSTERVELD, *Laverend*, cit., p. 255-256.

¹²⁵ Three-quarters (92 of the 125) of the priest-brethren with only one known position are also mentioned only once in our sources. In addition, we have seen, for example, how the early years in the brethren's careers in particular are missing from our sources. STAPEL, *Onder dese ridderen* (MA Thesis), cit., p. 18, 80.

¹²⁶ R.TH.M. VAN DIJK, *Bemoedigende wenken voor een wankelmoedige kartuizer. De brief van Geert Grote aan Hendrik van Alkemade*, in *Liber Amicorum Jan de Grauwe. Essays over de geschiedenis en het spirituele leven van de kartuizers*, ed. T. GAENS and F. TIMMERMANS, Salzburg 2004 (Analecta Cartusiana 222) p. 429-475, there p. 461.

¹²⁷ In my opinion, the doubting monk was wrongly identified by Van Dijk as Hendrik van Alkemade, a land commander of Utrecht, who is known to have resigned from his position as land commander around 1370 and have left for the Chasterhouse of Monnikhuizen. As land commander, however, Hendrik was a knight-brother; he can therefore never have served in

What is also of significance is the almost playful ease with which five priest-brethren who we researched more fully - all five working primarily as chaplain in the 1550s - were sent from one commandry to the other¹²⁸. Between 1552 and 1558, we can trace as many as nineteen positions back to these five. They also frequently returned to their old haunts. These cases are extremely interesting because they also provide us with a view of how the brethren were appointed - in this case as chaplains. In 1556, the commander of Schoonhoven appears to have had problems with his chaplain, Frans Worms, one of the five aforementioned brethren. When he visited the Teutonic House in Utrecht to take part in a procession commemorating the consecration day of the Cathedral (22 July), he struck a personal bargain with the house commander of Utrecht and the commander of Leiden. His old chaplain, Marcus, who was now working in Leiden and with whom he had been very satisfied at the time, would return to Schoonhoven. This suited the Leiden commander well because, for his part, he was at loggerheads with Marcus. This shows how the personal preference of the commanders could play an important part in the placement of priest-brethren. The land commander only appeared in this whole process to put his seal on it. He warned Marcus that he should behave better than he had done in Leiden because otherwise «[we] will take your mantle away from you»¹²⁹.

Other cases highlight the merely confirmative role of the land commander. For example, Arent Dirksz van der Goude (alias Arent Dirksz Bocken-berg) was nominated by the former commander-pastor of Leiden as his successor. He was still working as a secular chaplain in the Sint-Pieterskerk in Leiden and would be initiated into the order for this purpose. The land commander upheld his nomination and - after the death of the previous commander - the appointment of Arent Dirksz in 1567 as commander-pastor¹³⁰. The

churches himself. The priest-brother Dirk Poelman, who, as far as we know, was pastor of Valkenburg in 1367, pastor in Rhenen in 1371 and commander and/or pastor in Schelluinen from 1373 to 1375, is a much better candidate. We can no longer trace whether he held a position in Doesburg. A certain *Theodoricus Theodorici Puelman, de Arnhem* was awarded the Master's title at the University of Paris: an indication that he - or perhaps another family member instead - was in or near Arnhem at that time? What is more, both a *Theodoricus Poelman de Arnhem* and a *Theodoricus Poelman* can be found among the Carthusians in Monnikhuizen at the end of the fifteenth century: C.M.E. DE BACKER, *De kartuize Monichusen bij Arnhem. Prosopografie samen met de regesten van de zopas ontdekte oorkondenschat*, in *Historia et spiritualitas Cartusiensis. Colloquii quarti internationalis, Acta*, ed. J. de Grauwe, Destelbergen 1983, p. 69-156, there p. 111.

¹²⁸ STAPEL, *Onder dese ridderen* (MA Thesis), cit., p. 69-70.

¹²⁹ ARDOU, inv. no. 32-14 (1 and 3 August 1556). About the visit to Utrecht: ARDOU, inv. no. 32-12 (28 May 1556) and 32-13 (18 July 1556).

¹³⁰ ARDOU, inv. nos. 2015 (21 July 1564), 2016 (22 January 1567).

appointments in the important town diocese of Leiden show a different pattern from most of the other commandries. As many as 75 percent of the commanders had never worked in other commandries before their appointment in the Sint-Pieterskerk (in Doesburg this was only 36 percent, for example). The Leiden pastors as a group largely fell outside the regular bailiwick circuit and it is tempting to suppose that the town of Leiden was able to exert an influence on their recruitment, nomination and appointment. In Tiel too and, to a lesser extent, in Utrecht we can suspect such external influence, as already discussed.

An extraordinarily frank letter from the Leiden commander-pastor Jacob Martijnsz van der Woerdt to land commander Johan van Drongelen from 1472 illustrates the extent to which the order was faced with external parties all wanting to have their say about appointments. The old pastor of Schipluiden was plagued by the gout and it was not just the Teutonic Order that was actively considering who would be his successor: «Gij sult gemoeyt ende gebeden worden van groten luden als van die abbet van Egmond, van die heeren van Wassenaer ende van Gerijt van Assendelft, u zwager die gij niet gern weygeren soudt»¹³¹. The main cause for the letter was a 'good turn' from Van der Woerdt for one of his close relatives who was eager to be granted the office: «soe mach ic hem hem qualicken weygeren voir hem hoeflicken te scriven, mar ten sel mijn meninge niet weesen, want lieve heer hij is een rap rokeloes man; ic en soude hem die kerck niet dorven geven van conscientien weegen»¹³². He also rejected the suggestion made by the commander of Maasland to initiate an uncle of the old pastor into the order and consequently appointed him as pastor in Schipluiden: «because it smells of simony». The only solution according to Van der Woerdt was to appoint one of the priest-brethren of the bailiwick. Unfortunately, we do not know how this turned out.

The land commander of Utrecht was, without doubt, the one who could decide who was appointed and where. This is clear if we consider that he was always the one written to concerning an appointment in the bailiwick, whether he was buttonholed by a brother of the order or an external party. His approval was always necessary and, apart from a few conflicts with the Frisian brethren, I have not discovered any notable cases in which the land

¹³¹ «Important gentlemen, whom you will not wish to refuse, such as the abbot of Egmond, the lords of Wassenaer and Gerrit van Assendelft, your brother-in-law, will intervene and make requests of you»; ARDOU, inv. no. 486 (26 April 1472).

¹³² «I can hardly refuse to put in a good word for him but I cannot agree with it. Because, dear fellow, he is a wild and reckless man; I would not be able to recommend him to the church with a clear conscience»; *ivi*.

commander was bypassed¹³³. However, as the examples above show, how much he actually interfered at a micro-level with the appointments, particularly if these were chaplaincies and smaller priesthoods, is debatable¹³⁴. As long as his confirmation was always sought in the end, he accepted that the priest-brethren in the commandries enjoyed a great deal of independence and that this extended to the choice of their fellow brethren. Nonetheless, the more free reign the brethren were given, the more they ran the risk of becoming caught up in all sorts of local interests. The area of pastoral care, in particular, was sometimes a quagmire in which one could become stuck. Its importance exceeded that of the order: local third parties also wanted to exert influence or have control over it. If this was made impossible for them, a fierce conflict could arise between the parishioners and their representatives, on the one hand, and the bailiwick, on the other, as happened, for example, a few times in Leiden¹³⁵. In practice, people generally opted for a conflict-avoiding approach in which interested parties were given a say in the choice of a pastor whilst, at the same time, fully recognizing the right of patronage of the land commander. How far this influence, or informal influence, reached cannot be measured. That it was exerted, however, can often be read between the lines.

Interaction between bailiwick and earthly existence

We saw previously that the priest-brethren had to provide a considerable amount of money at their initiation, which, interestingly enough, was the same amount that the knight-brethren had to pay. Large financial investments and a great level of independence may have resulted in the brethren viewing the income from their offices as more than just a simple living. The brethren made the investments at the time of their initiation and sometimes later with the idea in the back of their minds that they would be able to assume a lucrative office. It therefore appears that worldly motives could also play a part in the tasks that the priest-brethren carried out. Of course, we are once again venturing on thin ice here. We must try to view this phenomenon with contemporary eyes. We have various sources at our disposal for this.

¹³³ MOL, *Friese huizen*, cit., p. 207-211.

¹³⁴ How, in this respect, should we view the phenomenon that solely the priesthoods that were directly under the authority of the land commander were served during some periods by secular priests instead of priest-brethren? More research is necessary to be able to explain this sufficiently. STAPEL, *Onder dese ridderen* (MA Thesis), cit., p. 71, 75.

¹³⁵ L.E. LOOPSTRA, *De Leidse commanderie van de Duitse orde in de Middeleeuwen*, in «Leids Jaarboekje» 76 (1984), p. 33-59, there p. 48-49.

A good example is the late fifteenth century *Croniken van der Duytscher Oirden* or *Jüngere Hochmeisterchronik*. The anonymous author stands firmly by the order's original task and its ideal of being the military arm of God. We definitely cannot accuse him of a lack of unselfish call. However, he does not prove to be an advocate of an ascetic life. "On the contrary, he considers a generous maintenance for the brethren useful and necessary. Prelates who provided their brethren with generous portions of food and wine could count on the author's praise¹³⁶. In addition, we can detect no sign of indignation whatsoever when he says that a prelate resigned after a number of years and retired to a house belonging to the order, enjoying a princely gratuity¹³⁷.

Another important source consists once more of a letter from the Leiden commander Jacob van der Woerd¹³⁸. This text, from 1467 or shortly before, also shows Van der Woerd's open style and his great feeling for detail. The letter is about who will serve the parish of Katwijk aan Zee and is written to Johan Poyt, procurer in Utrecht, and Willem van Zandwijk, commander of Dieren. The contents show that Van der Woerd had discussed matters with the commander of Katwijk, who sided with him. What was the problem? In 1460 or 1461 the church of Katwijk aan Zee, as daughter church of the church of Katwijk aan de Rijn, where the bailiwick had been allowed to appoint the pastor for a longer period of time, was promoted to the position of independent parish church. The order received the right of patronage in Katwijk aan Zee as well. Priest-brother Gerrit van Beverwijk was most probably the first pastor there and his death in, or just before, 1467 gave rise to a number of events. As Gerrit had left heavy debts (about 130 guilders), there was the question of whether his successor would and could be burdened with them. The proposed new pastor, Hendrik van Oosterwijk, certainly did not intend to act as personal guarantor for the payment of these debts¹³⁹. Van der Woerd and his supporters (amongst whom were the inhabitants of Katwijk aan Zee, the lord of Wassenaar (who's fiefdom included Katwijk), the commander of Katwijk, the sheriff of Katwijk and the provost of Utrecht Cathedral who held the office of archdeacon) were not pleased with this arrangement. They thought that although it was true that Gerrit had

¹³⁶ DE GEER, *Archieven I*, cit., no. 193, r0252 and no. 254-255.

¹³⁷ *ivi*, no. 253; HIRSCH, *Jüngere Hochmeisterchronik*, c. 340.

¹³⁸ ARDOU, inv. no. 26-2 (30 November, in or just before 1467).

¹³⁹ «And the good Hendrik does not want to spend even a single penny of his own money to appease the creditors or come to an agreement with the creditors about payments. He is doing more bad than good because the way he is behaving is completely against our order»; *ivi*, lines 7-11.

left many debts he had also realized a lot of improvements and structural alterations to the vicarage and its contents that matched or even surpassed the amount of debt. They therefore had little time for the point of view of Hendrik, whose behaviour, apparently, was not up for discussion for the first time¹⁴⁰. Van der Woerdt and his associates therefore wanted the land commander to instate another brother at the head of the parish: Jan van den Briel. Van der Woerdt consequently asked the two esteemed men if they could recommend Van den Briel to the land commander. Van den Briel was popular in the village and seemed to be willing to borrow money from friends and family members to meet the creditors. The commander of Leiden did not consider a third candidate, a certain Berwout, suitable. He was often away from home, which meant that he could not always be in church on Sundays. Above all, he could not preach: he was more of a man of the sea (probably a fisherman, although that is not mentioned explicitly anywhere)¹⁴¹.

Jan van den Briel became pastor of Katwijk aan Zee in 1467 in any case. Land commander Hendrik van Hackfort gave him permission in that year to undertake a number of measures to purge the debts of Gerrit van Beverwijk¹⁴². We can assume that Van den Briel did, as announced, use his own money to eliminate the debts. Because he was prepared to invest money himself and Hendrik van Oosterwijk was not, Van den Briel was appointed pastor. To promise money to receive an office comes unpleasantly close to simony. However, this is not the direct association that the writer of the letter made. What is more, it was Hendrik van Oosterwijk who was accused of only wanting to receive the rewards and interest. That Van der Woerdt could worry a great deal about simony is apparent from the letter from 1472 quoted earlier that he wrote to the land commander. In it, he resisted a plan from the commander of Maasland to appoint a secular priest as pastor of Schipluiden and to initiate him for this straight away¹⁴³.

Van der Woerdt apparently thought that you could not be admitted to the order purely to assume an office. Once you were a member, however, you

¹⁴⁰ «If we set one against the other, Gerrit left more and invested more in the house than the debts he left behind. But Hendrik wants to keep the estate and to manage the usufruct and interest as he also did in Katwijk aan de Rijn. I wish that he was in heaven and his money at the bottom of the sea, because our order will never stand to gain from his money»; *ivi*, lines 24-29.

¹⁴¹ «The good Berwout is a good man for going to sea with and for drinking with the seafolk»; *ivi*, lines 46-47.

¹⁴² ARDOU, inv. no. 1945 (13 December 1467).

¹⁴³ «In my opinion it is not right and God would not allow it as it smells of simony, because he only wishes to become a member of our order so as to become pastor of Schipluiden»; ARDOU, inv. no. 486 (26 April 1472).

could promise money in order to be appointed somewhere. It shows how fluid the dividing line could be in the behaviour of the priest-brethren. This ambiguity is clearly visible in the comments made about the personal belongings of Gerrit van Beverwijk. In his will, he proved to have donated an annual sum of money to the parish of Katwijk aan Zee. The churchwardens wanted to deduct this money and use it for paying off the amounts that were due. Van der Woerd and his fellow commander in Katwijk brought the legality of the churchwardens' behaviour into doubt, in view of the fact that the land commander usually had to grant permission for drawing up a will¹⁴⁴.

Hendrik van Oosterwijk, who - once again - did not want to bear the costs probably saw, however, a possibility to be rid of the debts without much cost and therefore came up with another response to the neighbours at Katwijk aan Zee. It was true, he claimed, that Gerrit, as an order brother, was not allowed to draw up his own will, but as pastor of the village he was legitimately allowed to do this, just as a secular priest could. Given that his debts were greater than the property he left behind, Hendrik found it justified to pay off his debts and not to carry out his will strictly to the letter¹⁴⁵.

Van der Woerd defended himself against these claims by pointing to the not inconsiderable investments that Gerrit van Beverwijk had made in the house and its contents. His debts were therefore less excessive if they were viewed in context. He did not react to Van Oosterwijk's comments about the legality of the will, so we can assume that he did not have any objection to that part of the reading. An order brother, therefore, could not draw up a will because he could not have any possessions in that function. The same brother, however, could draw up a will in his own name, which meant that he could collect and keep personal possessions.

The letter that Jacob van der Woerd wrote in or shortly before 1467 is unique in its form and details but not in the message that filters through.

¹⁴⁴ «For example, the good Gerrit has left three pounds to the church of Katwijk aan Zee and the churchwardens want to deduct that money from the money that the good Gerrit still owed them. But the commander of Katwijk and I think that he should not have drawn up a will at all without permission from his superior»; ARDOU, inv. no. 26-2 (30 November, in or shortly before 1467), lines 11-14.

¹⁴⁵ «The good Hendrik said once more in public to the inhabitants of Katwijk aan Zee: the good Gerrit was not allowed to draw up a will as a brother of the order, but he was allowed to do this as pastor of the church of Katwijk aan Zee. Seeing as the good Gerrit was pastor of Katwijk aan Zee, he could therefore draw up a will. If he had been a secular priest and had drawn up a large will when his debts were higher than the possessions he left behind, the law states that these debts can be paid rather than carrying out his will to the letter»; *ivi*, lines 14-20.

Many more messages have been passed down that show the importance attached to the brethren's personal investments. What also comes to the fore is that these investments - at least during the life of the brethren - were made more for their own personal benefit rather than to add to the collective property of the order. Personal possessions were not taboo, neither for the knight-brethren nor for the priest-brethren. When someone died, their property went, in principle, to the order, after deducting personal bequests. This only became a problem when illegitimate children were involved and demanded part of the inheritance at the cost of the bailiwick.

However, only a few such cases are known and they concern knight-brethren rather than priests¹⁴⁶. From our research data, unfortunately, we cannot determine whether there were any developments in how the personal property and estate of the brethren were dealt with, and how this was possibly influenced by amortization legislation, as Esther Koch, for example, demonstrated with professed women from the nobility in the Meuse-Rhine area¹⁴⁷. Friction could therefore arise between the local, secular world in which the priest-brethren were working daily, on the one hand, and the strongly hierarchical world of a religious order, or military order for which the members had to take the solemn vows of obedience, chastity and poverty, on the other hand. The title of Arnoud-Jan Bijsterveld's dissertation, *Lavend tussen kerk en wereld* [Steering between the Church and the world], captures the interaction between the spiritual and religious world and the earthly existence and the sometimes conflicting loyalties between them particularly well. On closer examination, the situation of the Utrecht priest-brethren of the Teutonic Order did not differ much from that of the North Brabant pastors. They too had the religious authority of the bishop and archdeacon on one side, and the secular environment of the village and region that they were caught up in on the other.

Conclusion

This observation returns us to our point of departure. We began by highlighting a gap in the historiography about military orders. In the statutes, the priest-brethren were only assigned the supporting role of holding a mirror up to the faces of the knight-brethren; in the historiography their role remained equally limited. Whether this was intentional or not, the result of this has

¹⁴⁶ STAPEL, *Onder dese ridderen* (MA Thesis), cit., p. 102.

¹⁴⁷ KOCH, *Kloosterpoort*, cit., p. 183-198.

been that the historians of the orders also presumed that the priest-brethren actually had a modest role. Acquiring more knowledge about their work seems essential for a better understanding of life in the houses of the military orders in Western Europe, where the physical battle against the heathens simply was not part of daily life.

We must conclude that whoever aspired to a career as a priest-brother in the Teutonic Order had to be prepared to make substantial investments and have the means at their disposal to make these investments. Priest-brotherhood must therefore have been very attractive and possibly even very lucrative. The following all point to this having been the case: the high sums at the time of joining, which were equal to the kind of initiation donations expected from the knight-brethren, the personal investments in the houses of the bailiwick, and the expenditure on their own education and possibly a university education. In addition, although few priest-brethren graduated and the priest-brethren seldom attended the higher faculties, their level of education was generally high. We also find the land commanders in the matriculation registers, which is surprising. In order to become a priest-brother one did not just have to make the necessary investments, but one also had to be prepared to travel as a priest-brother.

The differences between the commandries were considerable, however, and a nuanced picture emerges; see, for example, the exceptional positions occupied by the commandries of Tiel, Leiden and Utrecht. Nevertheless, we can generally conclude that the mobility of the brethren was great.

The geographical range of the priest-brethren was certainly greater than that of the North Brabant brethren between 1400 and 1570 and more, in particular, than that of the regular pastors in North Brabant from that period as well. For those who undertook to become a priest-brother, the role was therefore not a second choice but a desired career. This means that the priest-brethren wanted to keep the lucrative places within their own ranks. Just as the new knight-brethren were mainly sought in a select number of families, we may suspect, based on the data about the geographical origins of the priest-brethren, that they also approached their own networks to recruit new brethren. That there was great interest in this is clear from the fact that the recruitment of priests hardly faltered at the time of the reformation in the diocese of Utrecht, both by the Teutonic Order and by the Order of St John. The intake of new priest-brethren in the Teutonic Order only began to stagnate after land commander Frans van der Loe announced a recruitment stop in 1560; numbers would rapidly fall subsequently. Van der Loe's personal preference possibly played an important part in this decision. Some of these conclusions are unsurprising, whereas others are completely new. With this article, I hope to have laid the basis for further advancing our knowl-

edge of the priest-brethren of the military orders. The priest-brethren should not be considered to have been marginal members of the military orders but fully-fledged brethren with a high level of independence. Although they rarely had a knightly background, their power was not inconsiderable. In addition, most of them could boast a solid education, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries at least. Overall, they were essential as a group for the bailiwick to be able to operate. This demands a reconsideration of their role in the historiography of the military orders.

Table 1: Number of order members in the regular and supplemented visitation reports and data file, excluding the Frisian brethren and ‘knight-expectants’ (KB: knight-brethren PB: priest-brethren Unkn.: unknown)^{148 149 150 151}.

	Additions				(Visitation) reports, incl. additions				Members in data file				Percentage of visitation		
	Commandry	KB/PB	KB	PB	Tot.	KB	PB	Unkn.	Tot.	KB	PB	Tot.	KB	PB	Tot.
1361					52	2	2	1	5						10%
1410		3/1	[15]	[36]	[51]	2	7	2	11				13%		22%
1416/17		3/1	[18]	[41]	[59]	3	8	3	14				17%		24%
1432/33		3/1	[19]	[35]	[54]					11	9	7	58%	26%	50%
	Tiel	2/6													
	Utrecht	5/8													
1433/34		2/6	[19]	[32]	[51]	10	7	4	21				53%	22%	41%
	Tiel	5/8													
	Utrecht	5/8													
1434/35		2/6	[18]	[32]	[50]	10	6	5	21				56%	19%	42%
	Tiel	5/8													
	Utrecht	5/8													
1437/38		2/6	[19]	[34]	[53]	13	7	8	28				68%	21%	53%
	Schelluinen	1/1													
	Tiel	2/6													
	Schelluinen	1/1													
1438/39		0/4	[21]	[33]	[54]	14	7	10	31				67%	21%	57%
	Rhenen	0/4													
	Schoonhoven	0/4													
	Katwijk	1/2													
1439/40		2/6	[22]	[31]	[53]	14	6	6	26				64%	19%	49%
	Schelluinen	1/1													
	Tiel	2/6													
1440/41		1/1	[23]	[31]	[54]	13	6	7	26				57%	19%	48%
	Schelluinen	1/1													
	Katwijk	2/1													
1451			15	34	49	21	30	6	57				140%	88%	116%
1539			7	9	16	4	17	3	24				57%	189%	150%
1577			9	7	16	9	9	0	17				100%	129%	106%

¹⁴⁸ As many commandries do not note whether the brethren are knight-brethren or priest-brethren, it is difficult to divide them into categories. According to the data from 1416/1417, there were between 13 and 17 knight-brethren and 34 to 38 priest-brethren. The distribution was most probably 15 and 36.

¹⁴⁹ The commandry of Dieren, which originally belonged to the Koblenz bailiwick, is included in the visitation reports from here.

¹⁵⁰ Excluding an unknown «Graumantler» (sergeant-brother) who was in Utrecht in 1451.

¹⁵¹ This is the first real visitation report in which Ootmarsum is no longer included. The commandry permanently became part of the Westphalia bailiwick in 1452.

Table 2:

Classification of the priest-brethren in periods of 25 years (excluding the Frisian brethren).

	Number (n=208)
1351-1375	13
1376-1400	15
1401-1425	14
1426-1450	27
1451-1475	37
1476-1500	16
1501-1525	34
1526-1550	30
1551-1575	33
1576-1604	4
Total	223

Table 3: Number of members of the Teutonic Order (TO) and the Order of St. John (OSJ) ordained as priests between 1505 and 1518 in the diocese of Utrecht.¹⁵²

	'05	'06	'07	'08	'09	'10	'11	'12	'13	'14	'15	'16	'17	'18	Tot.	Avg.
TO	2	2	1	1	0	0	0	2	1	1	3	0	0	0	13	0,93
OSJ	0	1	2	1	6	3	2	1	2	0	3	1	0	2	24	1,71

¹⁵² BROM, *Naamlijst (vervolg)*, cit., p. 54-55.

Table 4:

Table 4: Number of priest-brethren joining between 1544 and 1560¹⁵³

	'44	'45	'46	'47	'48	'49	'50	'51	'52	'53	'54	'55	'56	'57	'58	'59	'60	Tot.	Avg.
2	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	1	1	0	0	1	2	0	2	13	0,764705882

¹⁵³ ARDOU, inv. no. 304, 641-8 (1543/1544); DE GEER, *Archieven II*, cit., nos. 445, 447 and 448. It is not clear whether one order brother who is included in 1544 was a priest-brother; it is, however, probable; Lucas van Inghen. He might possibly be the same person as Lucas Woutersz Verhuyt who took his entry vows with the land commander thirteen days later.

Table 5:

Origins of priest-brethren (excluding the Frisian brethren), divided into areas, and the distribution of the number of priest-brethren over the commandries in the bailiwick in 1451, per area. Percentages of the total.

	Certain	Uncertain	Total	% (incl. unkn.)	% (excl. unkn.)	Distribution PB's 1451	
Holland	29	47	76	37%	49%	11	25%
(North)	(1)	(5)	(6)	(3%)	(4%)	(0)	(0 %)
(South)	(28)	(42)	(70)	(34%)	(45%)	(11)	(25 %)
Gueldres	18	18	36	17%	23%	10	23%
Friesland	0	0	0	0%	0%	± 10	23%
Nedersticht (Utrecht)	13	14	27	13%	17%	10	23%
Brabant	3	2	5	2%	3%	0	0%
Oversticht (Overijssel)	0	2	2	1%	1%	1	2%
Zealand	3	0	3	1%	2%	1	2%
Other	1	5	6	3%	4%	1	2%
Unknown			52	25%			
Total	67	88	207	100%	100%	± 44	100%

Table 6: Number of university-educated members of the order in the bailiwick of Utrecht with column percentages (categories: A. no identification in the matriculation registers; B. one identification; C. two or more identifications possible)

	1350-1600		Priest-brethren		Before 1350		Knight-brethren	Unknown	Total	
			Friesland							
A	116	56%	61	88%	22	92%	102	169	470	76%
B	67	32%	6	9%	2	8%	21	19	115	19%
C	25	12%	2	3%	0	0%	1	3	31	5%
Total	208	100%	69	100%	24	100%	124	191	616	100%
B + C	92	44%	8	12%	2	8%	22	22	146	24%

Table 7:
Percentages of priest-brethren (excluding the Frisian brethren) with a university education per period of 25 years, compared to the North Brabant pastors (for the categories, see Table 6).

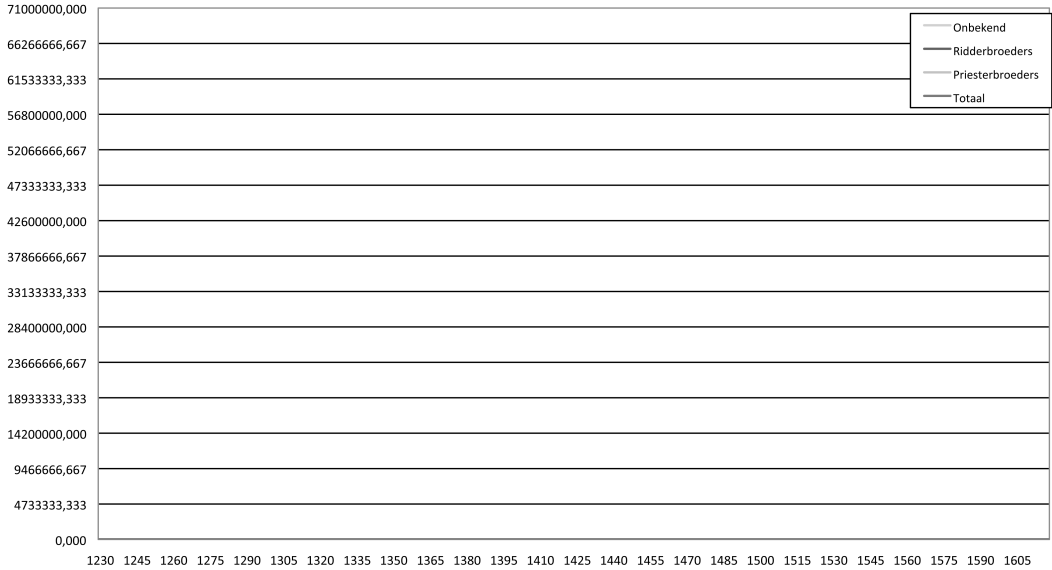
Period	Number of priest-brethren	Category B	Categories B en C	Pastors North Brabant, academic education ¹⁵⁴	
	Total (n=208)	Total (n=67)	Total (n=92)	Certain	Certain and uncertain
1351-1375	13	0%	0%		
1376-1400	15	13%	13%		
1401-1425	14	7%	7%	17%	20%
1426-1450	26	31%	50%	28%	37%
1451-1475	37	43%	54%	38%	49%
1476-1500	16	31%	44%	36%	49%
1501-1525	33	42%	73%	40%	51%
1526-1550	29	48%	62%	46%	52%
1551-1575	34	38%	38%	47%	56%
1576-1604	4	50%	50%		
1350-1600 ¹⁵⁵	221	34%	45%		
1401-1575	189	38%	51%	36%	45%

¹⁵⁴ BIJSTERVELD, *Laverend*, cit., p. 158. N.B. the period that Bijsterveld researched was 1400-1570 rather than 1401-1575.

¹⁵⁵ This total is somewhat distorted by the fact that some priest-brethren who were active in several periods have been counted twice (see description with Table 2).

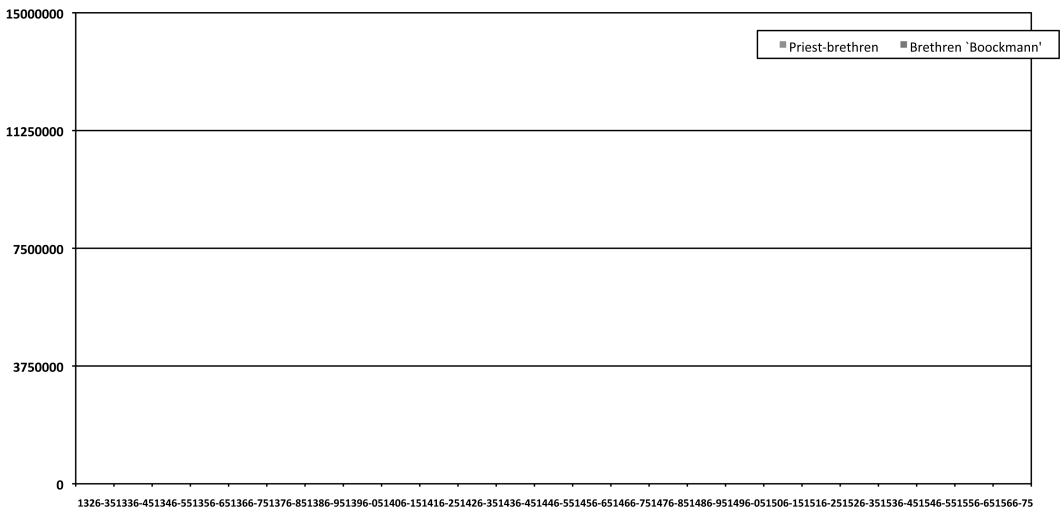
Graph. 1:

Total number of order brethren in the data file from 1230 to 1620, excluding the Frisian brethren and 'knight-expectants'



Graph. 2:

Number of priest-brethren or future priest-brethren from the bailiwick of Utrecht and order brethren from Boockmann, 'Rechtsstudenten', enrolling at university¹⁵⁶.



¹⁵⁶ BOOCKMANN, *Rechtsstudenten*, cit., p. 320-361.



Fig. 1. Two priest-brethren and two acolytes sing divine office. Miniature from a breviary of the Teutonic Order, possibly commissioned by the Utrecht land commander Johan van de Zande (1409-1419) (Hochschul- und Landesbibliothek Fulda, Aa 122, f. 56v).



Fig. 2. Origins of priest-brethren in South Holland, distributed per century. With commandries.

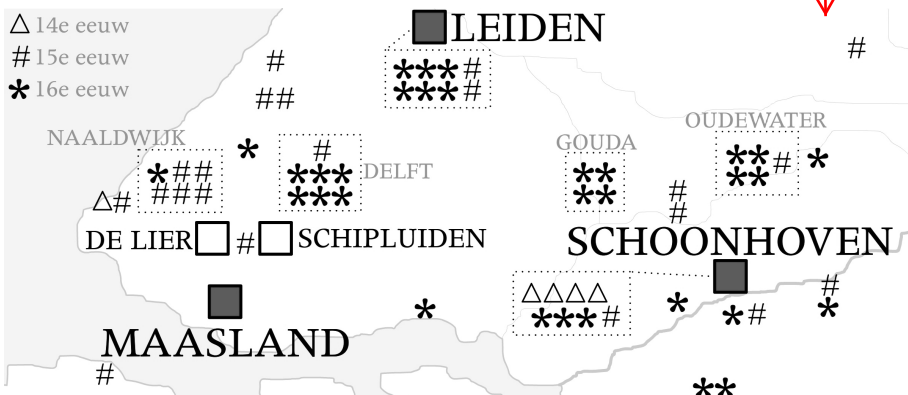


Fig. 5. Seal of Jacob Martijnsz van der Woerd: SIGILLU(m) JACOBI MARTINI P(re)SB(ite)RI¹⁵⁷.

¹⁵⁷ J.H. DE VEY MESTDAGH and J.A. DE BOO, *Liber sigillorum. De zegels in het archief van de ridderlijke Duitse orde, balije van Utrecht, 1200-1811*, Utrecht 1995, vol. I, nr. 2034***** (5 January 1469).

