

The Dynamics of Economic Culture in the North Sea- and Baltic Region

in the Late Middle Ages and Early Modern Period

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Uitgeverij Verloren, Hilversum 2007

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Habsburg and Hanseatic diplomacy during the Sound controversy of 1532

At several occasions during the first decades of the 16th century, the struggle for free access to the Baltic markets provoked war between the County of Holland and the Wend cities under the leadership of Lübeck.¹ With Lübeck's control over the main commercial currents along the east-west axe through the Sound at stake, the town deployed her naval force in 1510-1514 and in 1522-1524 against Holland's merchant shipping through the Sound.² Military alliances with the Wend and eastern Baltic towns in one case and with Denmark and Danzig in the other were built in order to interrupt Holland's commercial traffic through the Danish waters. Whilst trying to secure its trading interests in the Baltic, in which grain imports from Prussia and Livonia played a vital role, Holland invoked the help of the Habsburg government in order to resolve the conflicts both by arms and diplomatic means. Although relaxation of the Sound blockades was realized during conferences in Bremen in 1514 and Copenhagen in 1524, commercial tensions between Lübeck and the County of Holland provoked a new closure of the Sound in the years 1532-

- 1 Research for this article was made possible by a Post-Doc Grant from the Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research (NWO).
- 2 A useful introduction to the topic remains: L. Lahaine, 'Die Hanse und Holland von 1474 bis 1525', *Hansische Geschichtsblätter*, 24 (henceforth *HGbl.*) (1918) pp. 227-279. Habsburg military action during the conflicts is analysed in L. Sicking, *Zeemacht en onmacht. Maritieme politiek in de Nederlanden 1448-1588* (Amsterdam 1998) pp. 106-122. (translated as: *Neptune and The Netherlands: state, economy and war at sea in the Renaissance* (Leiden 2004). A summary is offered in: Idem, 'Die offensive Lösung. Militärische Aspekte des holländischen Ostseehandels im 15. und 16. Jahrhundert', *HGbl.*, 117 (1999). The role of Holland's Estates in the Baltic conflicts is analysed in J. Tracy, *Holland under Habsburg rule 1506-1566. The formation of a body politic* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, Oxford 1990) pp. 105-114 and more specific for the period 1510-1514 in J.P. Ward, *The Cities and States of Holland (1506-1515). A participative system of government under strain* (unpublished doctoral thesis, Leiden 2001) pp. 198-202. The Habsburg-Danish constellation in the conflicts is treated in L.V.G. Gorter-van Royen, 'Denmark and Habsburg: the Netherlands between dynastic and European policies in the beginning of the sixteenth century', in J.Ph.S. Lemmink, J.S.A.M. van Koningsbrugge (eds.) *Baltic affairs. Relations between the Netherlands and North-Eastern Europe 1500-1800* (Nijmegen 1990) pp. 75-85 [Baltic Studies, I].

1534.³ This case study goes into the diplomatic resolution of the first phase of the conflict, which was characterized by Lübeck's efforts to forge an anti-Hollandish alliance with Denmark. The analysis of two conferences in Copenhagen in the course of 1532, allow a deeper insight in how Holland's towns and Estates activated the Habsburg administration for its own commercial interests in the region. The theme fits within the larger context of the emerging antagonism between the rising sovereign state and the Hanseatic League on the one hand and the subsequent changing balance of power in Baltic trade in the early 16th century on the other.

The origins of the conflict

The Sound Blockade of 1532 is directly related to the forced exile of King Christian II in Holland during the period 1523-1531. The combined forces of Frederick, Duke of Holstein, Lübeck, Danzig and the Swedish rebel Gustav Wasa, forced the Danish King to flee his country.⁴ Weary of living eight years in exile and frustrated by his failure to obtain support from his Habsburg family-in-law to re-conquer his kingdom, he finally opted for an offensive approach. In 1530, Christian II assembled some 8000 armed forces in East-Frisia and invaded the Low Countries. Pillaging the countryside and even threatening the cities of Delft and The Hague, he appeared before Amsterdam in the autumn of 1531.⁵ Under pressure of military

- 3 See for Habsburg involvement in the Bremen conference H. Brand, 'Habsburg Diplomacy during the Hollando-Wend War of 1510-1514', in H. Brand (ed.) *Trade, diplomacy and cultural exchange. Continuity and change in the North Sea area and the Baltic (ca. 1350-1750)* (Hilversum 2005) pp. 113-135 [Groninger Hanze Studies, 1].
- 4 L.V.G. Gorter-van Royen, *Maria van Hongarije, regentes der Nederlanden* (Hilversum 1995) pp. 197-210. Sicking, *Zeemacht en onmacht*, pp. 110-111. J.C. Beyer, 'King in exile: Christian II and the Netherlands 1523-1531', *Scandinavian Journal of History*, 11/1 (1986) pp. 211-224. See for developments in Denmark preceding and after Christian's flight: M. Venge, *Christian 2.s fald. Spillet om magten i Danmark januar-februar 1523* (Odense 1972) [Odense University Studies in History and Social Sciences vol. 6] and M. Venge, "Når vinden følger sig...". *Spillet om magten i Danmark marts-december 1523* (Odense 1977) [Odense University Studies in History and Social Sciences, vol. 47].
- 5 Literature on this episode is abundant. See a.o. J. ter Gouw, *Geschiedenis van Amsterdam*, IV (Amsterdam 1884) pp. 208-214. R. Häpke, 'Der Untergang der hansischen Vormachtstellung in der Ostsee (1531-1544)', *HGBll.*, 18 (1912) pp. 92-93. Häpke, *Die Regierung Karls V.*, pp. 138-150. More recent accounts in Gorter-van Royen, *Maria van Hongarije*, pp. 210-212. Idem, 'Denmark and Habsburg', pp. 81-84. Beyer, 'King in exile', pp. 224-225. Sicking, *Zeemacht en onmacht*, p. 114. Tracy, *Holland under Habsburg rule*, p. 107. J.C.A. De Meij, 'Oorlogsvaart, kaapvaart en zeeroof', in G. Asaert, J. van Beylen en H.P.H. Jansen, *Maritieme geschiedenis der Nederlanden*, I (Bussum 1976) p. 321. See also the contemporary report on the events by Holland's secretary mr. Aert van der Goes: *Register gehouden by Aert van der Goes ... van alle die dachuaerden by deselvs Staten s'Landts van Holland gehouden mitsgaders die resolutiën, propositiën ende andere gebesogneerden in voisz dachuaerden gedaen, 31 jan. 1524-28 dec. 1543* (s.d., s.l.) pp. 170-171. (henceforth Van der Goes, *Dagvaarten*) who deplores the emperor's inactivity in the matter. The Amsterdam secretary Andries Jacobszn. found himself in Brussels at the time but reported later. Municipal Archives (henceforth MA) Amsterdam inv. 29 Protocol van Andries Jacobszn. 1528-1539 (henceforth Protocol AJ) (film nr. 6656) pp. 218-219.

force and the prospect that Dutch trading interests in the Baltic might be hurt, Holland's Estates and the emperor Charles V provided Christian with 12 armored ships and 18,000 guilders in bare. As a reward he promised Amsterdam and Holland free access through the Sound in case his campaign bore fruit.⁶ The exiled King left Holland in October for a winter campaign in Norway. The enterprise turned into a disaster as it ended with Christian's capture and his life time imprisonment in July 1532.⁷

Immediately after the arrival of Christian's troops in Norway, the Danish king Frederick I of Holstein and Sweden's ruler Gustav Wasa turned to Lübeck for military assistance. During Diets in Neumünster and Copenhagen, Lübeck and Danish delegates decided to close the Sound for all mercantile traffic. Lübeck also wanted the Hanseatic towns in the eastern Baltic to interrupt their westborne trade in order to prevent that military supplies reached Christian II.⁸ Warships set sail to Copenhagen and to the Northsea where vessels from Holland were captured and a village on the isle of Texel plundered in the early spring. Denmark arrested ships in the Sound region and the Elbe river, but the coalition partners left vessels from Brabant and Zealand unmolested.⁹

The attacks were justified with the argument that Holland's support to Christian II represented a violation of the treaty of Copenhagen of 1524. During the war with Denmark of 1522-1524, Lübeck had closed the Sound for strategic reasons, but the blockade also served as a means to interrupt Holland's advance into the Baltic and in Scandinavia.¹⁰ Trying to reduce the volume of Dutch shipping through the Sound and Belts, Lübeck, Hamburg and the Wend towns proposed the introduction of a quota system. The plan, however, failed due to fierce opposition from Lübeck's coalition partners King Frederick I of Denmark and the Prussian town Danzig. The latter, being the second largest harbour in the Baltic, owed its position largely to trade with the Habsburg Low Countries and quite logically had no intention to curtail Dutch shipping. Frederick's I refusal to endorse the plan was the result of his free trade policy which should pose a counterweight to Lübeck's dominant position in Scandinavia. The Danish-Hanseatic alliance was unable to hide its internal divisions for the Habsburg delegates, negotiating the relaxation of the Sound blockade during a Diet at Copenhagen in July 1524. They witnessed a crucial diplomatic defeat for both Lübeck and Hamburg as the Hanseatic delegation

6 See for the treaty: National Archives The Hague (henceforth NA) Ambtenaren Centrale Regering (henceforth ACR) inv. 1059.

7 G.A. IJssel de Schepper, *Lotgevallen van Christiern II en Isabella van Oostenrijk, koning en koningin van Denemarken; voornamelijk gedurende hunne ballingschap in de Nederlanden* (Zwolle 1870) pp. 214-216, 361-365. K. Fritze, G. Krause, *Seekriege der Hanse: das erste Kapitel deutscher Seekriegsgeschichte* (Berlin 19792) pp. 162-163.

8 G. Waitz, *Lübeck unter Jürgen Wullenwever und die europäische Politik*, I (Berlin 1855) pp. 129-130.

9 Hüpke, *Die Regierung Karls V.*, p. 155. Idem, 'Der Untergang', p. 94.

10 See for a detailed account of this conflict: Lahaine, 'Die Hanse und Holland', pp. 264-276. Hüpke, *Die Regierung Karls V.*, pp. 123-125. Hanno Brand, 'The Low Countries and the Sound question during the Danish-Wend war of 1522-1524', forthcoming.

granted Holland's merchants free access to the Baltic on the sole condition that the County of Holland refrained from delivering support to Christian II.

Since then, anti-Hollandish sentiments in Lübeck increased. The Hanse's leading city intended to exploit the war against Christian II to crush economic competition of foreign powers in the west, as well as to contain increasing competition of cities like Danzig, Riga and Reval (Tallinn) in the east. But measures were primarily directed against the County of Holland which was seen as the main force behind the change in the balance of commercial power at the detriment of the Northern German Hanse towns. Local outcries for the restoration of Lübeck's former leading position grew louder, as protestant bourgeois circles took over power from the more liberal catholic patriciate in 1531. It allowed the rise of the populist Jürgen Wullenwever, who quickly manifested himself to be the champion of anti-Dutch trading policies.¹¹

The Lübeck-Danish alliance

Lübeck's attempts to forge an anti-Hollandish alliance between Denmark and the Wends failed from the very beginning. Lübeck sent an embassy to Gottrop on January 2nd 1532, where it insisted on a Danish war declaration in case Holland decided to come to the aid of Christian.¹² Despite Denmark's dependency on military support from Lübeck, the king refused to engage a military conflict that extended the duration of the military campaigns against Christian II. Such a policy was bound to hurt good relations between the King and the Holstein nobility which was engaged in direct trade with the Hollanders through the Northern-German make shift harbors.¹³ Also the Danes argued during a second Diet in Neumünster on 22-24 January, that they could not afford a prolonged interruption of salt imports from France in which the Dutch had a large share.¹⁴ Such dependencies explain the reconciling tone in the letter to Amsterdam of January 13th, in which Frederick I announced the implementation of a Sound blockade. The king emphasized that relaxation of the blockade was to be expected at Quasi Modo 1532 (7 April) and promised the Dutch free access to the Sound and the Baltic as soon as the war with Christian II had ended in his favor. Requests to interrupt commissioning of trade to foreign merchants sailing in westward direction in order to prevent possi-

11 R. Postel, 'Auf dem Weg zum letzten Tagfahrt (1520-1669)' in J. Bracker, V. Henn und R. Postel, *Die Hanse. Lebenswirklichkeit und Mythos* (Lübeck 1993) pp. 170-171. J. Schildhauer, K. Fritze, W. Stark, *Die Hanse* (Berlin 1975) pp. 227-230. See also K. Friedland, 'Das wirtschaftspolitische Erbe Jürgen Wullenwevers', *HGbl.*, 89 (1971).

12 H. Handelmann, *Die letzten Zeiten Hansischer Übermacht im Skandinavischen Norden* (Kiel 1853) p. 189. W.-D. Hauschild, 'Frühe Neuzeit und Reformation: Das Ende der Großmachtstellung und die Neuorientierung der Stadtgemeinschaft', in A. Graßmann (ed.) *Lübeckische Geschichte* (Lübeck 1993) p. 393.

13 Tracy, *Holland under Habsburg rule*, p. 108.

14 Waitz, *Lübeck unter Wullenwever*, I, pp. 131-132.

ble support to Christian II were sent to the Baltic cities, whilst Danzig was convinced to detain all Dutch ships in it's harbour during winter.¹⁵

Talks in Neumünster (22-24 January 1532) where Denmark should be convinced of the necessity of a prolonged war against Holland, ended therefore inconclusive. The Danish delegation refused to take an official standpoint but finally committed to a secret agreement, which implied that a war declaration against Holland was to be issued in case it violated the blockade.¹⁶ Frederick I nonetheless insisted that negotiations with Holland should take place in Hamburg on April 7th, 1532.¹⁷ In the follow-up to the Neumünster Diet, Lübeck's attempts to rally the Wend towns behind it's cause met strong opposition from Hamburg, Lüneburg and Wismar. Only Stralsund and Rostock were prepared to prolong the Wend alliance, but insisted that military force should only be used to prevent the restoration of Christian II.¹⁸

The Danish-Wend alliance was discussed again during a Diet in Copenhagen which started on April 1, 1532 with separate talks between Lübeck and the Wend cities Stralsund and Rostock. The Lübeck delegation carried instructions which linked sustained military support against Christian II to Denmark's commitment to implement a harsh policy against the County of Holland.¹⁹ The odds seemed favorable to such a bargain. The Danes had captured five ships from Holland making part of Christian's fleet in Norse waters on March 21st, which reinforced allegations of Dutch assistance to the disposed king. Furthermore, Amsterdam had sent letters to Frederick I, confirming that it was about to resume its shipping through the Sound and prepared to use violence when needed. It also announced not to attend the proposed Hamburg Diet. Amsterdam's decision was to be overruled by the regent and the emperor later, but at that specific moment the letter determined the course of the negotiations in Copenhagen.²⁰

Again Lübeck's attempts to gain support for a policy geared to long-term curtailment of Dutch commercial influence met profound resistance. The delegacies from Stralsund and Rostock were not allowed to sign an anti-Dutch alliance. Their mandates concerned exclusively the restoration of their trading privileges in Denmark, as was promised during the negotiations in Neumünster earlier that year.

15 *Ibidem*, pp. 127-133. K. Lanz (ed.) *Staatspapiere zur Geschichte des Kaisers Karls V. aus dem Königlichen Archiv und der Bibliothéque de Bourgogne zu Brüssel* (Brussels 1845) p. 79. Van der Goes, *Dagvaarten*, p. 177.

16 G. Wentz (ed.) *Hanserezesse. Vierte Abteilung. Hanserezesse von 1531-1560. Erster Band 1531- 1535 juni* (Weimar 1941) nr. 54. (henceforth HR IV/1)

17 Waitz, *Lübeck unter Wullenwever*, I, pp. 132-133.

18 HR IV/1, nr. 54.

19 R. Häpke, 'Die Sundfrage und der Holländisch-Lübische Konflikt auf der Tagung zu Kopenhagen (April 1532)', *Zeitschrift des Vereins für Lübische Geschichte und Altertumskunde*, XIV (1912) p. 97. The leading envoys of the delegation were the Lübeck councillor Nikolaus Bardewick and Jürgen Wullenwever, representative of the Lübeck burghers. W.-D. Hauschild, 'Frühe Neuzeit und Reformation', p. 393.

20 Waitz, *Lübeck unter Wullenwever*, I, pp. 134-135. Häpke, 'Die Sundfrage', pp. 101, 109. Lübeck wrote Rostock on April 1 that Amsterdam had rejected the invitation to attend the Hamburg Diet. Also Frederick I accused Amsterdam of having done so. HR IV/1, nrs. 87, 94.

Nonetheless, they agreed to support Lübeck during its military campaigns against Christian II.²¹ Since only Lübeck could show instructions to negotiate an alliance with Denmark, the Wend cities stayed away from the conference room.²²

Negotiations between Lübeck and Denmark were largely determined by the message sent by the Amsterdam council, which left no doubt about the emperor's support to the Dutch case. Intimidated by the letter's content, the king's German chancellor Wolfgang von Utenhoffen pointed to the risks of war at several fronts against Denmark. Such a danger seemed imminent since also Danzig, Riga, Reval and several other Baltic towns were opposed against the interruption of Dutch trade in the Baltic. A coalition between Holland and their Baltic trading partners might come about, as was an alliance with the duke of Brunswick or other princes who might attack Denmark from the south. The chancellor also argued that the emperor was likely to support his subjects in Holland seen his dependence on the financial means of the County's major towns.²³ The Danes preferred also further negotiations with Holland during a Diet in Copenhagen, scheduled for June 24th. Until that time the Sound would remain closed for all traffic from the Low Countries and for all transport from Danzig to Holland.²⁴ Under threat of retreat of Lübeck's military support, Frederick I finally also agreed to undertake military action in case Holland refused to attend the announced Copenhagen Diet or resumed its eastbound trade before the fixed date had expired.²⁵ Although the result did not satisfy Lübeck's high expectations, such commitments left room for some hope that in case a prolonged closure of the Sound was put in place, Holland would be obliged to give way to the coalition's demands. In the meantime, the negotiations in Copenhagen, which lasted until May 6th, had prevented the organization of the proposed Diet in Hamburg, implying that the Sound blockade was to last until the planned meeting in Copenhagen in summer.²⁶

Deliberations took a remarkable turn as the Lübeck delegate Jürgen Wullenwever linked naval support to the restoration of the League's traditional staple policy and the introduction of a quota system. Wullenwever arguments are revealing, since they underpin the failure of traditional Hanseatic policies within Lübeck itself. A new staple policy was needed because even Lübeck traders circumvented the

21 HR IV/1, nr. 69 § 5. Häpke, 'Die Sundfrage', pp. 99-100, 107, 111.

22 HR IV/1, nr. 69 § 9.

23 Häpke, 'Die Sundfrage' pp. 101, 109-110. Waitz, *Lübeck unter Wullenwever*, I, pp. 134-135. HR IV/1, nr. 69 § 4.

24 Häpke, 'Die Sundfrage', p. 113. Waitz, *Lübeck unter Wullenwever*, I, pp. 135-136. HR IV/1 nrs. 91, 102-105. Danzig enjoyed Danish privileges allowing her to continue its shipping through the Sound even in war time, but these were now suspended. A Danzig delegation was in Hamburg in April and May in order to obtain relaxation of the Sound blockade. As nothing was accomplished there, the delegates decided to travel to Denmark and were finally granted audience on May 30th. The King honoured Danzig's request but made an exception for shipping towards the Low Countries and to Zealand in particular. In a letter to the Danzig magistrate, the delegates advised their council to express its gratitude, though not by granting military support to Denmark, but by sending money.

25 Häpke, 'Die Sundfrage', p. 102.

26 Häpke, *Die Regierung Karl V.*, p. 155.

town staple and sent their commissionaires to the Prussian and Baltic cities, from where they traded directly with western partners.²⁷ For the merchants it was a matter of cutting transaction costs with the result that capital flew from Lübeck to the east and west without any return in taxes and tolls for the Trave staple.²⁸ The negative spin-off was reinforced as direct English and Dutch trade through the Sound expanded. With the introduction of a staple policy through the Trave river, Lübeck hoped to redirect the downward spiral. The delegacy stressed that the staple policy concerned all regions involved in the Sound trade and did not envisage Holland in particular. The plan highlighted also the economic competition in the North Sea and Baltic region and reactivated the old debate on the issue of free and direct trade. The quota system was on the other hand explicitly designed to curtail Holland's commercial expansion in the Baltic region²⁹.

The plans were unrealistic, not in the least because neither Lübeck nor Denmark possessed the military means to secure the implementation of a combined staple- and quota policy. Denmark declined because only the County of Holland and Amsterdam in particular, and not the Habsburg Low Countries as a whole, were accused of having supported Christian II. In the east such measures could be taken against Riga, Reval or Pernau, but not against Königsberg or Prussia which had delivered several ships to Frederick's fleet. Also Danzig's privileges in Denmark, which allowed the city's merchants to trade on certificate with France and England, even in war time, had to be respected. The Danish king clearly mistrusted Lübeck's intentions related to its trading relations with its Dutch competitors. But as Denmark refused to adhere to the quota proposals, the Lübeck delegation threatened to leave the conference.³⁰

In an atmosphere, which was, according to chancellor Von Utenhoffer determined by distrust and lack of credibility, a compromise between the delegations was reached.³¹ Arrests against vessels from Holland sailing through the Sound was continued and the staple policy was to be implemented for a period of ten years in case the Low Countries violated the Sound blockade or refused to attend the scheduled Copenhagen Diet. Plans regarding the introduction of the quota system were, however, abandoned. With regard to the war against Christian II, which seemed to reach its final stage, the military alliance was to be re-enforced.³² Frederick I, however, refused to ratify the agreement and degraded the concept-treaty into a working document without clear commitments.³³ Once again, Lübeck's attempts to bring about an anti-Dutch alliance with Denmark had failed. Still, the concept offered prospects for a stronger implementation of Lübeck's policies in the near fu-

27 HR IV/1, pp. 38-39, nr. 69 § 6-13. Waitz, *Lübeck unter Wullenwever*, I, p. 138. Häpke, 'Die Sundfrage', p. 115. Idem, 'Der Untergang', pp. 98-100. Fritze, Krause, *Seekriege der Hanse*, p. 163. Hauschild, 'Frühe Neuzeit und Reformation', p. 393-394.

28 Häpke, 'Der Untergang', p. 98.

29 Handelsmann, *Die letzten Zeiten*, p. 190.

30 Häpke, 'Die Sundfrage', pp. 105, 121.

31 Ibidem. pp. 105, 123-125.

32 Waitz, *Lübeck unter Wullenwever*, I, p. 143. Häpke, 'Der Untergang', p. 100.

33 Handelsmann, *Die letzten Zeiten*, pp. 191-192.

ture. The city failed, however, to create an anti-Dutch alliance, not only because of fierce resistance from the Danish King, but also from the Wend cities, including Hamburg. None of the cities was prepared to take the risks of war with Holland or to link its fate to a cause they considered as serving only specific Lübeck interests.

Dutch preparations for the Copenhagen Diet (May-June 1532)

Initially, the closure of the Sound had not provoked much turmoil in the Low Countries, since it was limited to the winter season and was supposed to be lifted at the beginning of the Diet on April 7th in Hamburg. In February the Estates of Holland agreed to send a messenger to the towns of Danzig, Riga and Reval with letters written by Amsterdam in order to establish their position in the conflict. Holland's Council was informed about actual developments through Amsterdam's contacts in the Baltic maintained by the Fugger factor Poppius Occo and the Amsterdam council member Cornelis Benninck.³⁴ By the end of March, Holland's Stadholder Van Hoogstraten was able to inform the regent Mary of Hungary that the Prussian and Baltic towns had declined King Frederick's invitation to join the war against Christian II and were ready to resume trading contacts with Holland.³⁵ The reassuring message implied that building of an anti-Dutch coalition of all Hanseatic towns in the Baltic region was not to be expected. The Estates even asked the regent to issue a general prohibition on shipping through the Sound and towards Norway as a clear signal of non-support to Christian II.³⁶ Amsterdam's initial plans to enforce the passage through the Sound by violence and its intention not to participate in the Hamburg Diet, had therefore been overruled. Both Holland's Estates and the Habsburg government opted for a diplomatic resolution of the conflict. On request of Holland's Estates, which feared the damaging effects of the Sound Closure on grain prices, the regent ordered the composition of an embassy. It was to be headed by a member of the Brabantine Council as a representative of the regent and representatives of Holland's main towns.³⁷

34 Tilly, *Holland under Habsburg rule*, p. 108 and footnotes 58-60. For Poppius Occo, see O. Nubel, *Pompejus Occo 1483 bis 1537. Fuggerfaktor in Amsterdam* (Thübingen 1972). Cornelis Benninck upheld friendly contacts with Frederick's trusted councillor Melchior Rantzau, but it is unclear to what extent these contacts influenced the course of the events of 1532. J.E. Elias, *De Vroedschap van Amsterdam 1578-1795*, I (Amsterdam 1963) p. 143.

35 R. Häpke (ed.) *Niederländische Akten und Urkunden zur Geschichte der Hanse und zur Deutschen Seegeschichte. Erster Band: 1531-1557* (Munich, Leipzig 1913) (henceforth NAU I) nr. 30.

36 Van der Goes, *Dagvaarten*, pp. 176-178. In February the Amsterdam secretary Andries Jacobsz. traveled to Brussels in order to obtain a letter of excuse on behalf of Lübeck and Frederick I for the support delivered to Christian II and in order to obtain news concerning the blockade and its consequences for shipping through the Sound. MA Amsterdam inv. 5014-2 (1532) fo. 28. Amsterdam also co-operated to implement the prohibition on all eastward shipping through the Sound. Placards were published in the Watercities on costs of Amsterdam and a skipper from one of the Watercities who tried to circumvent the prohibitions was arrested by officials from Amsterdam. Ibidem, fo. 45vo.-46.

37 NAU I, nrs. 28 footnotes 1 and 2, 29, 31.

In relation to Hanseatic procedures, it is interesting to see that explicit measures were taken to prevent that diverging points of view emerged during the negotiations. The Habsburg representative was ordered to travel to The Hague to discuss the matter with the Estates, and to get informed of the exact content of the 1524 treaty. He also received orders to check the urban mandates on contradictions, which then were to be corrected by the Council of Holland. Also the ambassador's instructions excel in clarity. Regent Maria of Hungary underpinned that support to Christian II was enforced and that she intended to adhere to the 1524 treaty. Prolongation of the Sound closure could not be discussed and threats with violence were to be added in case the well being of Holland's subjects was not respected.³⁸

As the Dutch delegates arrived in Hamburg on April 18th, they received a confidential letter from Danzig indicating that the Danish King had decided to prolong the Sound's Closure.³⁹ It then took several days of waiting before the Habsburg delegacy finally received the message that the Conference had been cancelled and postponed to June 24th in Copenhagen. The embassy, composed of the imperial councillor Joost Aamszn. van der Burch, Heiman Jacobsz. van Ouderamstel⁴⁰ and Cornelis Benninck⁴¹, respectively burgomaster and treasurer in Amsterdam, left Hamburg immediately for the Low Countries.

- 38 NAU I, nr. 28. The Amsterdam secretary Andries Jacobsz. traveled to The Hague in order to inform the Council of the arrival of five or six vessels from Hamburg in Veere and requested to proceed with their arrest in order to put pressure on the negotiations. MA Amsterdam inv. 5014-2 (1532) fo. 28vo.-29.
- 39 See for a detailed account of the preparations and costs of the Amsterdam delegation to Hamburg and Copenhagen: MA Amsterdam inv. 5014-2 (1532) fo. 28vo., 38-39vo.
- 40 Heiman Jacobsz. van Ouderamstel was elected five times burgomaster of Amsterdam between 1528 and 1535. He was one of the pre-reformist protégées of Jan Benninck (see below) who dominated the Amsterdam Council in the 1520's and 1530's. In 1528 he was, together with Cornelis Benninck and burgomaster mr. Pieter Conlijn, summoned before the Council of Holland in order to withstand accusations of favouring Lutheran tendencies. Being nominated sheriff in 1534, he maintained his tolerant policies, now at the benefit of the Anabaptists and was held responsible for dissident riots in 1534-1536. H. van Nierop, 'De eenheid verbroken' in M. Carasso-Kok (ed.) *Geschiedenis van Amsterdam. Een stad uit het niets tot 1578* (Amsterdam 2004) pp. 317, 326-328, 335-339, 350-356.
- 41 Cornelis Benninck was a nephew of Jan Benninck, the former Amsterdam sheriff and present councillor in the Court of Holland. Jan Benninck had been a member of the Dutch delegation negotiating with the Wend cities in 1504 and maintained friendly contacts to Christian II. Cornelis Benninck was a brewer, ship owner and grain merchant and fulfilled the functions of treasurer and burgomaster in the Amsterdam council. Benninck was inclined towards the reformation and was dismissed with several other council members in 1538 after allegations of having favored the Anabaptist rising in Amsterdam. Accusations of having stolen 32.000 Philipguilders from the Amsterdam treasury, maybe combined with sufferings from insanity, might have provoked that he committed suicide in 1547. Hüpke, *Die Regierung Karl V.*, p. 164. Ter Gouw, *Geschiedenis van Amsterdam*, IV pp. 279-284. Van Nierop, 'De eenheid verbroken' pp. 317-318, 350-356, 389-390. Lübeck resented him for his mocking remarks during negotiations in Bergen in 1532. Waitz, *Lübeck unter Wullenwever*, I, pp. 368, 397.

The report, delivered by Van der Burch on May 18th in The Hague provoked a drastic reorientation of the regent's cautious diplomatic course.⁴² After intense consultation of the local and regional councils, the regent adopted a strategy which was based on three starting points: 1. augmentation of pressure on the Danish-Wend allies by the threat of military violence and confiscation of Wend commodities in the Low Countries; 2. invoking active participation of the emperor in the resolution of the conflict 3. lifting the issue from the limited Hollandish scale to a topic of general concern by invoking unconditional support of all provinces in the Habsburg Low Countries.

It must be stressed that Holland's major towns took the initiative for such a policy, which was then endorsed by the Estates, the Stadholder and the regional Council in Holland. Initially the Baltic matter bore a regional stamp because the emperor had charged Holland's stadholder Van Hoogstraten with the dossier and Amsterdam privately corresponded with the Baltic cities, Lübeck and the Danish king. Such a limited scope fitted well into both Lübeck's policies, who hoped to exploit Holland's isolation by playing it out against the other provinces in order to enforce commitments that suited Wend military and commercial objectives. For that reason, Holland's towns, the nobility and the regional Council of Holland preferred to treat the conflict as an imperial matter. They jointly appealed for action that comprised all provinces with trading interests in the Baltic.

Already during a Diet of the Estates on May 7-8 in The Hague, Amsterdam had proposed to enforce access to the Baltic by the formation of forty warships, which should protect the commercial fleet, attack the enemy and close the Trave river for all traffic. It was immediately emphasized that the enterprise did not serve Holland's interests in particular but these of all regions in the Low Countries. Only such a line of argument could justify the claim that the emperor should cover 50% of the costs, whilst Holland, Zealand, Brabant and Flanders were jointly to furnish the other half. The proposal also implied confiscation of all commodities of the Wends in the Low Countries as a means to cover at least a part of the campaign costs.⁴³ Equally, reports from the pensionaries from Leiden, Haarlem and Amsterdam show that the city councils shared the opinion that the conflict had to be treated as an imperial – and not as a regional matter.⁴⁴

As information reached Holland that the Wends were increasing their naval force, Amsterdam introduced a second concept which comprised the enlargement of the fleet up to 60 warships and 8000 men, to be financed by the emperor, Holland's merchants and the County. The Estates and the Stadholder voted against the plan, since it put too much emphasis on the County of Holland and insisted on

42 HR IV/1, nrs. 91, 102-105. NAU I, nrs. 45, 48. Gorter-van Royen, 'Denmark and Habsburg', p. 85. NAU I, nr. 31. The regent acted according to directives of the emperor who had insisted on keeping friendly relations with Lübeck.

43 NAU I, nr. 39-1, 2. Häpke, *Die Regierung Karls V.*, p. 156.

44 NAU I, 27-29 nr. 39-1, 2. Municipal Archives Haarlem, Vroedschapsboek Reg. B (1513-1532) fo. 271-274. Regional Archives Leiden, inv. 384 Vroedschapsboek 1522-1553, fo. 29-32. Prot. AJ, II, fo. 112-113.

measures in the emperor's name and on behalf of the Dutch provinces in general.⁴⁵ In an extensive memoir of over 50 articles designed for the regent, the Stadholder produced convincing arguments justifying involvement of both the emperor and his provinces. Lübeck's and Denmark's attempts to limit the conflict to Holland, was in his view to understand as an attempt to divide the country and to provoke internal unrest. He even suggested, quite unrealistically, to bring Copenhagen and Helsingør under the emperor's control in order to safeguard Dutch trading interests in the future. Confiscation of all commodities of the Wends in the Low Countries was required to enhance pressure. Still the diplomatic course should not be abandoned. Letters from the regent to Frederick I might be useful and should contain apologies for the support to Christian II, a request to resume the Sound trade and the offer to refrain from all support to his rival in Norway in return. Also a delegacy was to be sent to the Copenhagen Diet, scheduled for 24th June.⁴⁶

As the regent drafted a letter to Frederick I, which nonetheless emphasized the regional focus of the conflict, her concept met severe criticism from mr. Pierre de St. Pierre, secretary in the Council of Holland. He recommended to address the king again and inform him about the emperor's support and the involvement of the Low Countries. His comments also referred to the disappointment among Holland's Estates on the regent's decision not to approve to proceed with the confiscations, and recommended to do so. Measures should be directed against the Wends but not against Danzig, Bremen and Ditmarschen who were still providing the Low Countries with grain supplies. He agreed with the Amsterdam concept but only in order to put pressure on the imminent talks in Copenhagen and warned against provoking a war. He also called upon the emperor to help to cover the costs and to mobilize the financial support of all provinces in the Low Countries. With regard to the mission to Copenhagen, St. Pierre suggested an ingenious move. The delegacy should see to arrive in Copenhagen before the Wends did, in order to start preparing negotiations with Frederick alone, which might provoke Lübeck's isolation.⁴⁷

45 NAU I, nr. 42-1,2. Van der Goes, *Dagvaarten I*, 180-182. Sicking, *Zeemacht en onmacht*, pp. 114-116. Compare: Gorter van Royen, *Maria van Hongarije*, pp. 212-213. De Meij, 'Oorlogsvaart, kaapvaart en zeeroof', p. 321. De Mey suggests that Amsterdam's proposal to equip a fleet, implied that the town still supported Christian II. Compare: Beyer, *King in exile*, pp. 213-215 who argues that among merchant circles in Amsterdam support for Christian II still could be found. During a Diet in Utrecht (July 26th) Van Hoogstraten declared to be well informed about the fact that Amsterdam allowed it ships to set sail to Norway or to get them captured by Christian II in order to support his case. Because of the political risks involved, the stadholder demanded appropriate action. Van der Goes, *Dagvaarten*, pp. 182-184.

46 J.J. Altmeyer, *Histoire des relations commerciales et diplomatiques des Pays-Bas* (Brussel 1840) pp. 207-223. NAU I, nr. 44. For a Dutch version of the instruction, drafted on May 14th for mr. Abel van der Coulster, councillor in Holland's Council "Hof van Holland" and its secretary Pierre St. Pierre, see NA ACR inv. 1191. See also Häpke, *Die Regierung Karls V.*, pp. 156-157. In a letter to the regent, sent on May 18th., Van Hoogstraten also proposed to start negotiations with Hanseatic merchants in Bruges. NAU I, nrs. 46-47.

47 Altmeyer, *Histoire*, pp. 223-237. NAU I, nr. 49. Pierre St. Pierre made his proposals on May 22nd and recommended mr. Gerard Mulaert, member of the Grand Council in Malines and mr. Joost van der Burch as imperial delegates in the Copenhagen embassy.

Convinced of the devastating consequences of a prolonged closure of the Sound, the regent wholeheartedly endorsed St. Pierre's and Van Hoogstraten's advise. Both had pointed out that the conflict would cause starvation as a result of lacking grain imports and widespread unemployment in the many economic sectors dependant on the Baltic trade. Social uprisings on a much larger scale than those who already had occurred in Enkhuizen several weeks before were to be feared. The emperor approved the project in the course of June, promised to cover 50% of the costs for building up the fleet, agreed to further negotiations and ordered to proceed with the arrest of Wend commodities to enhance pressure on the talks in Copenhagen. Finally, he agreed to the extremely detailed instruction, the regent had dressed up for the Copenhagen embassy, which left no doubt about the intentions of the emperor to defend the interests of his subjects. He explicitly confirmed that the matter regarded all his provinces and that it had to be treated as such.⁴⁸ On June 11th, the emperor informed Frederick I on the Habsburg standpoint and emphasized that in case an agreement remained out of reach, retaliations were to be expected.⁴⁹

It was exactly the support of the emperor and with it the financial and coercive means he was able to mobilize, which might determine the outcome of the negotiations. Lübeck, the Wend cities and Denmark had already witnessed the effectiveness of the Habsburg diplomatic machinery in this respect. Despite fundamental contradictions within the Low Countries, the Habsburg diplomatic mission towards Bremen in 1514 put an end to a four years lasting trading conflict and with it a Sound blockade directed against Holland. In 1524, a Habsburg embassy forced Lübeck into the defensive as it for a second time successfully negotiated the relaxation of new closure of the Sound. In both cases, the Habsburg delegacy carefully exploited the clashes of economic interests among the Danish and Hanseatic coalition partners which contrary to the Habsburg embassy, caused the delegations to drift apart.⁵⁰ It is against such a background, that Holland's Estates and with it the Habsburg government insisted on the dressing of diplomatic instructions which despite the economic controversies breathed political unity and determination.

48 NAU I, nr. 57 (10 June 1532).

49 Rigsarkivet Copenhagen (Henceforth RC) inv. 301 Tyske Kancelli. Spanske Nederlande: A I Brevveksling mellem Statholderne og det danske Kongehus 1. 1508-1567: ... so mag dein liebdt wol er-messen das uns nit geburen wil gedach te unser underthanen zu beschutzen und in handhaben zu un-terlassen. Wie dan dein liebdt solchs alles durch die genant unser kuntliche liebe schwester und stathal-terin weiter vernemen wirdt...

50 Lahaine, 'Die Hanse und Holland', pp. 271-276. and F. Vollbehr, *Die Holländer und die Deutsche Hanse* (Lübeck 1930) pp. 65-66.

Conflicting interests in the Low Countries

Holland's and Habsburg attempts to forge a territorial unity for the sake of its foreign economic policy did however not reflect the actual situation in the Low Countries. Both the southern and eastern provinces had difficulties in accepting economic policies which primarily served Holland's interests. Flanders dependency on its Hanseatic staple market in Bruges and the predominant passive trading structures in both Antwerp and Bruges, where considerable numbers of Hanseatic merchants resided, made that good relations with Lübeck and its Wend allies had to be preserved.⁵¹ In the east, the economies of Hanseatic towns like Kampen and Deventer heavily relied on the preservation of their Hanseatic trading privileges abroad. Despite the inclusion of the province of Overijssel, where the most important Dutch hanseatic towns were situated, into the Habsburg empire in 1528, the German Hanse still influenced economic policies in the region. Conflicting interests existed also within the borders of the County of Holland.⁵² With Amsterdam still on the rise as Holland's main port towards the Baltic, considerable numbers of Hanseatic vessels landed in the harbours along the Scheldt estuary in Zeeland. Between 1536 and 1550 50% of all Hanseatic trade was focussed on Arnemuiden, Veere, Middelburg and Zierikzee, which functioned all as satellite harbours for the Antwerp market.⁵³ The decentralization of Hanseatic trade created a situation in which town councils, merchants and entrepreneurs in the various regions refused to implement Habsburg policies as formulated during the Diets organized the Hague.

Such an attitude offered Lübeck welcome opportunities to exploit the contradicting interests at her benefit. In March 1532, Lübeck undertook action in order to revive the grain trade towards Bruges. The Bruges council had requested the Danish King to deliver passports enabling a limited number of grain ships to sail through the Sound and to set sail to Bruges. Lübeck thereupon confirmed to possess such passports and emphasized its willingness to support Bruges in other matters providing that its council continued to safeguard the interests of the Hanseatic merchants in Flanders.⁵⁴ A complaint dressed by Middelburg in April 1532, reveals that vessels charged with grain also continued to land in Veere. Despite a general interdiction on exports in order to limit grain shortages in the Low Countries, Veere's merchants were accused to re-export Baltic grain towards England, France and beyond. Such practices had the blessing of the regional waterbailiff who in turn acted according orders of Adolph of Burgundy, lord of Veere. The position of Adolph of Burgundy is revealing since he was admiral of the Habsburg fleet in the

51 See for example P. Stabel, B. Blondé and A. Greve (eds.) *International trade in the Low Countries (14th-16th centuries). Merchants, organization and infrastructure* (Leuven, Apeldoorn 2000).

52 See for example Tilly, *Holland under Habsburg rule*, pp. 52-60.

53 M. van Tielhof, *De Hollandse graanhandel 1470-1570. Koren op de Amsterdamse molen* (The Hague 1995) pp. 129-138, 152-156 [Hollandse historische reeks, 23].

54 NAU I, nr. 43.

Low Countries and thus expected to implement official policies instead of serving the particular interests of his main power basis in the country.⁵⁵

Trading activities in Veere itself were focused on re-export of Hanseatic commodities coming from the east and therefore benefited from good relations with Lübeck and its allies. It explains why the confiscation of Hanseatic commodities, as ordered by both the regent and the emperor, met severe resistance. As the Habsburg official Joris van Espleghem tried to lay his hands on the cargoes of 18 Hanseatic ships which had landed in Veere, it was Adolph of Burgundy himself who refused to come his aid. His claims that he had obtained the regent's special permission to allow Hanseatic trading activities in the region, seriously undermined Habsburg efforts to enhance pressure on Lübeck and its Wend allies.⁵⁶ Be it as a result of bad preparation or not, Van Espleghem's mission turned into a failure as also in Antwerp, Bergen-op-Zoom, Bruges and elsewhere local authorities and entrepreneurs vented their pro-Hanseatic sentiments while refusing to co-operate.⁵⁷ Private merchant interests also offered Frederick I opportunities to circumvent the Habsburg interdiction on export towards the east. According to a report dressed by Van Hoogstraten on behalf of the emperor, the Danish king had managed to charter six Antwerp vessels in order to secure salt imports from Bretagne into Denmark. Resenting the acts of the involved Antwerp merchant, the Stadholder added that such practices were exclusively based on self interest 'sans avoir regard au général' and were aimed to provoke discords among the provinces in the Low Countries.⁵⁸

Tensions also rose in the Dutch hanseatic towns, as the Amsterdam Council refused to allow a Kampen vessel, destined for Hamburg, to leave its harbour. The prohibition almost triggered a social rising in Overijssel, where the measure was interpreted as a violation of Hanseatic privileges and a threat to economic welfare. The episode is revealing because it shows that the political incorporation of Overijssel in the Habsburg empire did by no means imply acknowledgement of the emperor as the region's main representative abroad when economic matters were at stake. In fact, the treaty of 1528 which confirmed Overijssel's annexation specifically stipulated that its main towns were entitled to preserve their Hanseatic privileges abroad.⁵⁹ It implied a recognition of their membership of the Hanse and with it the continuing existence of economic divisions within the Low Countries. What however tipped the scale to the advantage of a united Habsburg diplomatic offensive, was the country's dependency on Baltic grain imports and the fear of social unrest caused by the threat of rising prices and increasing unemployment.

55 NAU I, nr. 36. See also Sicking, *Zeemacht en onmacht*, p. 118.

56 NAU I, nr. 58. Sicking, *Zeemacht en onmacht*, p. 118.

57 See for Van Espleghem's report and Van Hoogstraten's estimations on the failure: NAU I, nrs. 50, 58 and 68. Also Gorter-van Royen, *Maria van Hongarije*, p. 214.

58 NAU I, nr. 56.

59 Ibidem, nr. 55.

60 NAU I, nr. 51.

The Copenhagen Diet

The Habsburg instruction for the Copenhagen Diet was drafted on June 4th and focused on both the relaxation of the Sound closure and the allegations concerning Holland's support to the cause of Christian II. Although both matters were intertwined, it fits our purpose to concentrate on the economic consequences of the crisis. The argument of the instruction is built upon the Copenhagen Treaty of 1524, which allowed free access to the Sound and the Baltic on condition of non-support to Christian II. Since Habsburg denied any support to Christian II and argued that the material support delivered by Amsterdam and the County of Holland were granted under pressure, the Habsburg government refused any responsibility. The instruction addressed most and for all King Frederick of Denmark, who was with Lübeck held responsible for the capture of several Dutch vessels in Copenhagen, who were then used as warships in the conflict against Christian II. It also refers to several captures of ships from Leiden, Gouda and Edam, respectively returning from England, Ditmarschen and Dunkirk. Also several fishermen had been seized and indemnities were requested. The request of free access through the Danish waters and to the countries around the Baltic, including Sweden and Prussia, must be seen as the core of the demands formulated in the instruction. Anticipating the installation of a quota system, the instruction emphasized the principle of free trade. The delegates received instruction to point out the benefits of free trade for Denmark and the Baltic regions, whilst Lübeck was reproached to solely defend its own interests. At several instances in the instruction, the role of the emperor and the violation of his rights, as being the overlord of the Habsburg Low Countries, were highlighted.⁶⁰ It provided the delegacy with the justification to present themselves as *orators* speaking on behalf of the emperor.⁶¹

Contrary to the Habsburg mandate, the Wend instructions for the Copenhagen meeting were a demonstration of disunity. The mandates did not cover each other, but highlighted Lübeck's isolated position with regard to the Dutch matter instead. Before traveling to Copenhagen, the delegacies had met on June 11th. Lübeck hoped to convince Hamburg, Wismar, Stralsund and Rostock to conclude a treaty on the basis of the April proposals which aimed at the formation of an anti-hollandish alliance. Again the diverging instructions prevented the coming about of a common standpoint. The Wend cities argued not to dispose of instructions which allowed them to sign a union with Denmark. Hamburg refused arguing that it never had agreed on a war with the Dutch and left the meeting. Rostock maintained not to possess instructions allowing them to subscribe such a treaty.⁶² In the end only Stralsund promised further support in the war against Christian II.

61 The delegation was composed of mr. Gerard Mulaert, councillor at the Grand Council in Malines, Joost Aams van der Burch, member of the Council of Brabant and the Amsterdam representative Cornelis Benninck, NAU I, nr. 62. See for credentials of Cornelis Benninck: RC inv. 301 Tyske Kancelli. Spanske Nederlande: A II Akter og Dokumenter vedr. det politiske Forhold til de Spanske Nederlande. Akter Cornelis Banninck's Hverv (1532).

62 Waitz, *Lübeck and Wullenwever*, I, pp. 158-159. Regarding Rostock, see HR IV/1 nr. 122.

The Lübeck instruction indicated that the town was only willing to compromise on condition that the confiscations in the Low Countries were annulled. It was also prepared to call another Diet if negotiations ended inconclusive but added that under such circumstances the Sound closure would be prolonged. Still it tried to put pressure on Denmark, warning that if the King decided against a coalition against Holland, Lübeck would withdraw its military support. Anticipating probable Danish goodwill towards the Dutch, the delegates had to prevent overruling by the King.⁶³ In fact, it was exactly that what happened during the Copenhagen sessions. After having failed to convince the Wend cities to join the proposed union with Denmark against the Dutch, Lübeck also arrived late. The delay allowed the Habsburg envoys to initiate separate negotiations with the King of Denmark as was suggested in earlier proposals to the regent. The King, however, decided to wait for the Wend delegation to discuss the matter.⁶⁴

Before real negotiations started, Danes, Wends and Dutch assembled in order to line up their mutual reproaches and demands. Habsburg was accused of having violated the Copenhagen Treaty of 1524 and to have delivered support to the pirates Kniphof and Clement, who had raided the seas at the benefit of Christian II in 1525.⁶⁵ Also Holland's support to the Norwegian campaign of Christian II was emphasized as was the distribution of satirical songs at the detriment of Frederick I. Especially Lübeck and the Wends raised protests against the confiscation of Hanseatic commodities in the Low Countries.⁶⁶ After the Habsburg delegation disclosed its view on the events and denied all direct involvement or invoked the argument of force majeure, a separate meeting between the Danish and Wend delegates was organized. De Danes left no doubt about their wish to reconcile with the Habsburg Low Countries because it feared subsequent military support to Christian II in case negotiations failed. The Danish king had also put forward that Lübeck's presence might annoy the Habsburg delegacy and therefore jeopardize the conference. Lübeck then resigned from the conference table until an agreement between Danes and Dutch was reached.⁶⁷ Instead of being a leading partner, Lübeck was now obliged to accept a second rank position.

63 The instruction was read before an audience of 100 burghers from Lübeck, who all endorsed the text by a voting procedure. HR IV/1 nr. 121. Waitz, *Lübeck and Wullenwever*, I, 159 and 332-333 nr. 42.

64 Delegations from Sweden and the Wend towns Wismar, Stralsund and Rostock also joined the Conference, but did not negotiate with the Habsburg ambassadors.

65 See for his episode: Sicking, *Zeemacht en onmacht*, pp. 112-114. Beyer, 'King in exile', pp. 217-224.

66 HR IV/1 nr. 116 § 6-13. A summarized version of the extensive report on the Copenhagen Diet, written by the Lübeck secretary Lambert Becker is published in Waitz, *Lübeck unter Wullenwever*, I, pp. 333-340 nr. 43.

67 HR IV/1 nr. 116 § 14. 'edder dat k.dt. durch etlike orer rede mi tonen allene handelen letem, wente der van Lubeke name were by den luden also hetisch dat ße den nicht mochten nomen horen. De keyserischen wolden wol mit ' k.dt. handeln, denne, sobaldde men de van Lubeck nome, wert alle vorlaren'. Another reason might have been that Lübeck's instruction included directives not to start negotiations with Habsburg as long as the confiscation of Hanseatic commodities in the Low Countries was annulled. Häpke, *Die Regierung Karls V.*, p. 159. Waitz, *Lübeck unter Wullenwever*, I, pp. 159, 331.

Only three days were needed to reach a settlement.⁶⁸ Since Denmark had no intention to be involved in a war with Habsburg as long as Christian II posed a major threat in Norway, and Danzig with the Baltic cities sided with the Dutch, it gave in on all major issues.⁶⁹ The Sound blockade was to be lifted on the sole condition that the Low Countries would refrain from support to Christian II. In order to prevent all attempts to do so, traffic to Norway had to be interrupted, not only from the Low Countries, but also from the Wend cities.⁷⁰ Both parties agreed on a settlement concerning the indemnification of damages caused by the capture of Dutch ships or the alleged support to Christian II by Habsburg. Again the Dutch delegacy had the upper hand, since it was recognized that support to Christian II was not to be treated as an imperial matter, but as the voluntary deeds of some individuals in the Low Countries who had acted without the emperor's consent. Both parties therefore agreed that indemnities were to be granted to private persons and that requests for restitutions were to be treated by the regional courts.⁷¹ The Habsburg delegation only promised to cut short long procedures in the imperial courts of justice, in order to allow both Danes and Wends to return to business as soon as possible. In the final treaty, there is no trace of Lübeck's demand to impose a staple policy or to introduce a quota system. The principle of free trade on the Baltic was acknowledged by the Danes, whilst Lübeck had swallowed all its demands and proposals put forward during the April Conference in Copenhagen.

Initially Lübeck refused to sign the Copenhagen treaty. The course of the negotiations allowed its envoys to consider the results as a bilateral agreement between Denmark and Habsburg. Lübeck's refusal to sign aroused the fury of the Danes delegacy, but the city only gave in after Chancellor Von Utenhoffer declared that the new Copenhagen treaty did not affect former plans and proposals related to the alliance forged in April. Both Lübeck's role at the sidelines of the Conference and its failure to rally Hamburg and the Wends behind its cause emphasized its isolated position in the conflict. The Habsburg delegacy had taken advantage of such weaknesses. The military threat Christian II posed in Norway and the refusal of Danzig and the eastern Baltic cities to join a coalition against Holland, had reinforced its position. It was, also the careful exploitation of actual political circumstances and economic dependencies combined with skilful diplomatic tactics that provoked the rupture of the Danish-Wend coalition.

68 Only after Dutch and Danes had reached a formal understanding on July 7th, Habsburg initiated a meeting with Lübeck which was geared to the annulment of the confiscations and the liberation of a Wend merchant, held prisoner in Holland. After both parties agreed upon a solution, order was given to dress up the final treaty on July 9th HR IV/1 nr. 17-38.

69 See for the treaty NA The Hague ACR inv. 1193 and NAU I, p. 69-70 nr. 62 It has been maintained that as soon as the news reached Copenhagen that the Dutch were to build up a military fleet, Denmark gave in to the Habsburg demands. Gorter van Royen, *Maria van Hongarije*, p. 214.

70 Later, after the Conference was over, the Danish king indicated that he would never deny a Wend request to sail to Bergen or elsewhere in Norway.

71 Hüpke, 'Der Untergang', pp. 101-102.

The aftermath of Copenhagen

The fundamentals of the treaty were however shaken as soon as the news reached Copenhagen on July 14th that Christian II had been captured. It triggered an immediate change in Lübeck's attitude. Whilst Denmark intended to take its distances from Lübeck, the Trave city re-launched former conditions to her military support. It demanded implementation of its staple policy and insisted on the introduction of a quota system, which would reduce the number of Dutch passages to 200 ships.⁷² Denmark agreed but it managed to prevent that strict numbers were mentioned in a separate treaty with Lübeck. A second treaty, signed at the end of July reaffirms the coming about of a Danish-Wend union, Hamburg included, in order to establish a quota system for a period of ten years in case the Dutch violated the Copenhagen treaty.

Lübeck's next move consisted in finding solid grounds to cancel the Copenhagen treaty.⁷³ These were to be found in the conditions linked to the restitution of Wend property and the assignment of indemnities. In the autumn of 1532 Lübeck managed to convince Denmark to claim further indemnities for Dutch help against Christian II as this appeared from letters seized from the captured King. Arguing that claims of about 300.000 guilders were justified and that, contrary to the Copenhagen treaty, jurisdictional procedures in the Low Countries were still too long, a Danish-Wend delegacy was sent Bergen in Hainault in December to meet the regent. As Mary of Hungary, after having consulted representatives from several seafaring towns and industrial centres in Holland, refused to acknowledge such claims, the delegates tried to drive a wedge between the various provinces.⁷⁴ A new Sound closure should only affect Holland and separate negotiations with Flanders, Brabant and Zealand were due in order to allow them free trade on the Baltic.⁷⁵ Letters produced by one of Frederick's court members indicated that the provinces were indeed ready to act on behalf of their own interests. But as the regent forbid both the foreign ambassadors and the provinces to engage separate negotiations and threatened with a war sustained by the united Low Countries and Spain, Denmark withdrew its claims.⁷⁶ According to Hüpke, the regent succeeded with this firm standpoint to realize some sort of 'Unionspolitik' *avant la lettre*, which doubtlessly had contributed to the success reached in Copenhagen in July and now definitely prevented the coming about of an anti-Dutch alliance between Denmark and Lübeck.⁷⁷

72 Handelmann, *Die letzten Zeiten*, p. 195.

73 NAU I, nr. 77. A letter dressed on Nov. 8, 1532 by Holland's councillor Van Assendelft to Van Hoogstraten vented fears that Lübeck would grab every opportunity to annul the Copenhagen treaty.

74 Van der Goes, *Dagvaarten*, pp. 189-191. Van der Goes mentions delegates from Dordrecht, Haarlem, Delft, Leiden, Hoorn, Enkhuizen, Monnikendam Edam and Rotterdam. The presence of the Amsterdam delegates Jacob Pietersz. Harinck, Cornelis Benninck and the secretary Andries Jacobsz. is confirmed in MA Amsterdam inv. 5014-2 (city accounts 1532) fo. 33. See also NAU I, nr. 78.

75 Gorter-van Royen, *Maria van Hongarije*, pp. 214-215. De Meij, 'Oorlogsvaart', p. 321.

76 Van der Goes, *Dagvaarten*, pp. 189-191. Altmeyer, *Histoire des relations*, p. 238.

77 Hüpke, *Regierung Karl V.*, p. 161.

It was, however, due to Lübeck's determination to continue the struggle that trade through the Sound could not be resumed. In May 1533, Lübeck declared war on Holland and forced it to undertake military action to protect its trading interests. Although the resolution of this conflict lays beyond the scope of this contribution, it must be emphasized that discords among Holland's Estates and the provinces indicate that the 'union' forged at the sake of the Copenhagen Diet in the summer of 1532, still rested on shaky grounds.⁷⁸ Military gains of a sea campaign lead by the Flemish noblemen Van Meekeren were therefore meagre, but the offensive approach probably served Habsburg's intention to resolve the conflict at the negotiation table.⁷⁹ Treaties between Habsburg and Denmark, signed in October 1533, granted Holland's merchants free passage though the Sound and represented a further step towards Lübeck's isolation. In the spring of 1534, a Habsburg delegacy which counted Cornelis Benninck among its members, entered peace talks with Lübeck and eventually agreed on a four years truce.⁸⁰ The treaty, which came about after mediation by Lübeck's former ally Hamburg, coincided with growing opposition against Wullenwever's regime which finally fell in the spring of the very next year.⁸¹ With it a period of particular fierce anti-hollandish trading policies came to an end.

Conclusions

There is no doubt, as Tracy already argued, that pressure from external forces like the Wend Cities and Denmark obliged the cities and Estates in Holland to co-operate.⁸² It were however, Holland's Towns and Estates and the administrative machinery behind it, that dressed the main lines of Habsburg foreign economic policies in the Baltic. They succeeded in creating the fiction of having neutralised internal rivalries between towns and regions in the Low Countries for the sake of diplomatic success. They also convinced the Habsburg government to undertake energetic action at the benefit of the Low Countries general welfare, which as far as it concerned the grain trade, certainly held some truth. More important was however that Holland's Estates, with Amsterdam, the seafaring cities north of it and the main industrial centers, succeeded in activating Habsburg diplomacy to its own advantage. In that sense Holland gained an enormous advantage over its main opponent Lübeck, that in the course of the conflict was alienated from Denmark and its Wend allies and finally fought a battle in almost perfect isolation. The bottom line of the argument presented here is that neither the League nor the Habsburg Low

78 *Ibidem*, p. 162-164.

79 Sicking, *Zeemacht en onmacht*, p. 117.

80 Hüpke, *Regierung Karl V.*, pp. 171-173. Tilly, *Holland under Habsburg rule*, p. 111. Gorter-van Royen, *Maria van Hongarije*, pp. 215-217.

81 Hauschild, 'Frühe Neuzeit und Reformation', p. 396-405. Postel, 'Auf dem Weg', pp. 172-173.

82 Tracy, *Holland under Habsburg rule*, p. 63.

Countries acted as unified bodies at the time. During the conflict the economic interests of the Hanse were reduced to those of Lübeck and its Wend allies. In the Habsburg Low Countries economic contradictions also prevailed, but they did not prevent the coming about of the fiction of political unity for the sake of diplomatic success. Though it was Denmark's refusal to adhere to Lübeck's policy that tipped the scale. It was a major condition for the successful implementation of the Habsburg diplomatic machinery that allowed the County of Holland to exploit the growing distances between Denmark and Lübeck.