

*Přemysl Bar*

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9579-4509>  
Masaryk University

## THE GENERAL PROCURATORS OF THE TEUTONIC ORDER TOWARDS THE POLISH-TEUTONIC CONFLICT\*

### Abstract

The article deals with the activities of the General Procurators of the Teutonic Order regarding the Polish-Teutonic dispute in the first thirty years of the fifteenth century. Based on their dispatches sent to Marienburg, it can be assumed that the Procurators were not passive executors of the Grand Master's orders. Their frequently occurring disagreements resulted not only from their distinctive personal qualities but also from their different perspectives on assessing what was in the best interest of the Teutonic Order. The Grand Masters lacked professional knowledge not only of law (especially canon law) but also of how the Roman curia functioned.

**Keywords:** General Procurators; Teutonic Order; Polish-Teutonic Order conflict; dispatches; Roman curia; Council of Constance and Basel

### I INTRODUCTION

Since the time of the Prussian historian and archivist Johannes Voigt (1786–1863), the significance of the office of the General Procurator [*procurator generalis*] has been appreciated in scholarship on the history of the Teutonic Order. The General Procurator represented the whole Order and the Grand Master at the papal court (the Roman curia) and played an essential role not only for the Order as a religious corporation but also in the internal and foreign policy of the Order's

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\* This article was supported financially by the Czech Science Foundation [Grantová agentura ČR] within the project EXPRO 19-28415X 'From Performativity to Institutionalization: Handling Conflict in the Late Middle Ages (Strategies, Agents, Communication)'. The article was originally written at Masaryk University.

State in Prussia.<sup>1</sup> A fundamental breakthrough for research occurred after the Second World War when Kurt Forstreuter (1897–1979) initiated publishing a source collection containing the reports and letters of the General Procurators (up to 1436).<sup>2</sup> He was then director of the State Archive Depository in Göttingen [Staatliches Archivlager Göttingen], where the historical records of the evacuated State Archive of Königsberg [Preußische Staatsarchiv Königsberg] were stored. In the first volume of the edition, Forstreuter published a study of the origins of this office, which is still relevant today.<sup>3</sup> The results of his research were followed up by Jan-Erik Beuttel's comprehensive

<sup>1</sup> Johannes Voigt, 'Stimmen aus Rom über den päpstlichen Hof im fünfzehnten Jahrhundert', *Historisches Taschenbuch*, iv (1833), 45–184. There were additional details to Voigt's findings provided by Hermann Freytag, 'Die Geschäftsträger des Deutschen Ordens an der Römischen Kurie von 1309 bis 1525', *Zeitschrift des Westpreussischen Geschichtsvereins*, xlix (1907), 185–220. The nature and function of the office of General Procurator in the context of the genesis of modern diplomacy has already been considered by William Urban, 'The Diplomacy of the Teutonic Knights at the Curia', *Journal of Baltic Studies*, ix, 2 (1978), 116–28.

<sup>2</sup> Due to the wide agenda of the matters conducted by the General Procurators, a lot of remarkable information may be found in their reports not only for the history of the Teutonic Order, but also for other countries, persons or institutions, which maintained more or less intensive relations with the religious corporation, see *Die Berichte der Generalprokuratoren des Deutschen Ordens an der Kurie* (hereinafter: BGDO), i: *Die Geschichte der Generalprokuratoren von den Anfängen bis 1403*, ed. Kurt Forstreuter (Göttingen, 1961); ii: *Peter von Wormditt (1403–1419)*, ed. Hans Koeppen (Göttingen, 1960); iii, 1–2: *Johann Tiergart (1419–1428)*, ed. Hans Koeppen (Göttingen, 1966–71); iv, 1–2: *(1429–1436)*, ed. Kurt Forstreuter and Hans Koeppen (Göttingen, 1973–6); *Personen- und Ortsindex sowie Ergänzungen zum 4. Band (1429–1436)*, ed. Bernhart Jähniß and Jan-Erik Beuttel (Köln et al., 2006). Contrary to the original editorial plans, further volumes have so far not been published. Several accounts of the Procurator Jodocus Hogenstein (1448–68) were published by Christiane Schuchard, see fn. 13. Regarding the quotation from BGDO, the following remark should be noted: the editors have published the procurator's reports partly *in extenso* keeping the original script, partly summarising, and rendering the content in modern German. Due to source fidelity, I have preserved the editors' rule of type: modern German is written in italic type, while medieval German in the antiqua. It does not apply to the reports written in Latin. On the technical and formal features of the edition see Christiane Schuchard, 'Die Berichte der Generalprokuratoren des Deutschen Ordens an der Kurie', in Matthias Thumser, Janusz Tandeci, and Dieter Heckmann (eds), *Edition deutschsprachiger Quellen aus dem Ostseeraum (14.–16. Jahrhundert)* (Toruń, 2001), 281–7.

<sup>3</sup> BGDO, i, 7–169.

monograph, which attempted to organise the information scattered in this extremely interesting source material. His book deals with issues such as the recruitment and background of the General Procurators, their tasks and agendas, support staff, housing conditions and financing. The author presents in his work a chronological framework from the beginning of the fifteenth to the beginning of the sixteenth century. Still, due to the accessibility of sources and a decisive period in the history of the Teutonic Order, special attention has been given to the first half of the fifteenth century.<sup>4</sup> More recently, the reports and letters of the General Procurators have been analysed in the context of source studies, communication science, diplomacy and epistolography.<sup>5</sup>

Despite many years of previous research, only certain aspects concerning the activity of the General Procurators have either been debated or so far not studied at all. The origin of the office, which indirectly resulted from the reform of the papal chancery during the pontificate of Innocent III (1198–1216), seems to be indisputable. According to the principles of this reform, the various legal cases or processes of each petitioner should be handled by attorneys. Many religious orders and corporations took advantage of this facility and appointed their permanent representatives (procurators) at the papal court from the thirteenth century onwards. There was additionally a cardinal protector assigned to them.<sup>6</sup> The General Procurator of the Teutonic

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<sup>4</sup> Jan-Erik Beuttel, *Der Generalprokurator des Deutschen Ordens an der römischen Kurie. Amt, Funktion, personelles Umfeld und Finanzierung* (Marburg, 1999); for a summary of the monograph, highlighting certain controversial issues, see *id.*, ‘Priesterbrüder des Deutschen Ordens als Diplomaten. Das Beispiel der Generalprokuratoren’, in Udo Arnold (ed.), *Priester im Deutschen Orden. Vorträge der Tagung der Internationalen Historischen Kommission zur Erforschung des Deutschen Ordens in Wien 2012* (Weimar, 2016), 19–39.

<sup>5</sup> Gabriela Annas, ‘Die Berichte der Generalprokuratoren des Deutschen Ordens an der Kurie des 14. und 15. Jahrhunderts. Überlegungen zu den Quellen’, in Jessika Nowak and Georg Strack (eds), *Stilus – modus – usus. Regeln der Konflikt- und Verhandlungsführung am Papsthof des Mittelalters: Rules of Negotiation and Conflict Resolution at the Papal Court in the Middle Ages* (Turnhout, 2019), 293–314.

<sup>6</sup> Beuttel, *Der Generalprokurator*, 4; *id.*, ‘Priesterbrüder’, 20. Remarkably, the provision for a permanent representative of religious corporations to the Pope did not appear in canon law until the 1917 edition, see *Codex iuris canonici Pii X pontificis maximi iussu digestu Benedicti papae XV auctoritate promulgatus*, ed. P. Gasparri (Neo-Eboraci, 1918), 149 (can. 518 § 1): “Quaevis virorum religio iuris pontificii

Order thus represented the religious corporation, but his role and significance underwent certain transformations over the centuries.

Two phenomena had a considerable impact on these changes. Firstly, the increasingly evident dual role of the Grand Master, who from 1309 onwards acted not only as the head of the whole Order but also as the territorial ruler of Prussia; and secondly, the emancipatory tendencies of the *Deutschmeister* (he was the *Landmeister* of the Holy Roman Empire, i.e., Germany and some parts of Italy), and the *Landmeister* in Livonia towards the authority of the Grand Master.<sup>7</sup> Putting it somewhat simplified, we can say that from the initial deputy of the whole Order at the papal court, the General Procurator gradually transformed into the diplomatic agent of the Grand Master as the territorial ruler of Prussia.<sup>8</sup>

As a rule, members of the Order who were ordained priests [*Priesterbrüder*] were appointed to the office of the General Procurator by the Grand Master. However, exceptionally there were also lay people [*Ritterbrüder*].<sup>9</sup> Increasingly, great importance was attached

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procuratorem generalem habeat, qui, secundum constitutiones designatus, negotia propriae religionis apud Sanctam Sedem pertractet". A cardinal-protector can be described as a spokesman of the Order, see fn. 31.

<sup>7</sup> These and other similar phenomena have long been acknowledged and outlined in comprehensive studies of the history of the Teutonic Order, for example, see Hartmut Boockmann, *Der Deutsche Orden. Zwölf Kapitel aus seiner Geschichte* (München, 2012<sup>5</sup>); Klaus Militzer, *Die Geschichte des Deutschen Ordens* (Stuttgart, 2012<sup>2</sup>); Roman Czaja and Andrzej Radziwiński (eds), *Zakon krzyżacki w Prusach i Inflantach. Podziały administracyjne i kościelne w XIII–XVI wieku* (Toruń, 2013); Marian Biskup and Roman Czaja (eds), *Państwo zakonu krzyżackiego w Prusach. Władza i społeczeństwo* (Warszawa, 2009).

<sup>8</sup> This has been explicitly stated by Beuttel, *Der Generalprokurator*, 2: "Wesen und Eigenschaft des Generalprokuratorenamtes an der Kurie sind von der Territorialisierung des Ordens nicht unbeeinflusst geblieben. Aus dem anfänglichen Mandatar einer über etliche Länder verstreuten geistlichen Korporation bei ihrem Oberherrn in Rom wurde im Verlaufe des 14. Jahrhunderts mehr und mehr ein diplomatischer Repräsentant des Hochmeisters und seines preußischen Staates am päpstlichen Hof".

<sup>9</sup> On the dilemma of the Grand Masters whether to appoint a lay brother or a clergyman to the office of the General Procurator, see *id.*, 'Priesterbrüder', 25–31. For a detailed discussion of the social and geographic background and nomination procedure, see *id.*, *Der Generalprokurator*, 63–123. In the first half of the 15th century people of burgher background (especially from Gdańsk) predominated, see *id.*, 'Priesterbrüder', 30–2.

by the Order's leadership to those with a university degree in canon or civil law studies. Despite financial support for some students, above all at Italian universities and, at the same time, the lack of a university germane to the Order's State, it was not easy to attract such highly qualified persons within their own religious corporation.<sup>10</sup> There were certainly some criteria not without significance, such as knowledge of the diplomatic habits, previous service within the Order's structures (for example, in the chancery of the Grand Master) or the Prussian dioceses, as well as the eloquence or personal qualities of individual candidates. The nomination of a new procurator was certainly greatly influenced by the Grand Master's close circle, his councillors, chaplains, chancery staff and/or the outgoing Procurator, although the final decision of course rested with the Grand Master himself.<sup>11</sup> In general, it can probably be said that the process of nominating the General Procurators was not regulated in a particularly rigid manner.<sup>12</sup>

## II BACKGROUND AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE GENERAL PROCURATORS

Although the General Procurators are considered as a specific professional group in this article, it should be noted that they did not constitute a homogeneous social group; moreover, they also differed from one another on the level of personal qualities. The sources allow us to take a closer look at the profiles of individual procurators, particularly from the turn of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries onwards.

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<sup>10</sup> *Id.*, *Der Generalprokurator*, 79–93. On the unsuccessful efforts to establish a university in Chełmno [Kulm], see Brygida Kürbis, 'Die mißlungene Gründung einer Universität in Kulm (1386)', *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte*, xlvi (1964), 203–18; Zenon Hubert Nowak, 'Starania o założenie uniwersytetu w Chełmnie w XIV i XV w.', *Zapiski Historyczne*, xxxi (1966), iv, 7–36; for the German translation of the article, see *id.*, 'Bemühungen um die Gründung einer Universität in Kulm im 14. und 15. Jahrhundert', in Udo Arnold and Marian Biskup (eds), *Der Deutschordensstaat Preußen in der polnischen Geschichtsschreibung der Gegenwart* (Marburg, 1982), 189–217.

<sup>11</sup> Beuttel, *Der Generalprokurator*, 108–9.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 101, where, regarding the nomination process of the General Procurators, attention was drawn to the fact that his function was not formally embedded in the hierarchical structure of the Order, nor was it enshrined in the Statutes of the Order.

This concerns their reports and accounts of their activities on behalf of the Order sent to the Grand Master. Though this extraordinarily valuable source material must be analysed critically, it is possible to derive some noteworthy information not only on the individual officeholders but also on daily life in Rome and the work of the Roman Curia.<sup>13</sup> Historiography has already made partial use of this material, based on which sometimes very unambiguous judgements were made about the General Procurators. Let us recall the profiles of some of them based on the current state of research.

Johann von Felde served as the General Procurator of the Teutonic Order between 1393 and 1403, in which year he died. He probably came from the Prussian chivalric estate, which was quite unusual for the members of the Order. Although he did not hold a high office, he took his place in the Malbork [Marienburg] castle milieu (with the office of *Pferdemarschall*). Felde was appreciated particularly because of the positive outcome of the dispute over the archbishopric of Riga (1393), which was incorporated into the Order during his tenure. However, towards the end of his life (1402), he had to justify himself on suspicion that he had tried to use his influence to obtain the bishopric of Kulm [Chełmno] for his nephew.<sup>14</sup>

Some of the most well-known and investigated figures among the Order's procurators is Peter von Wormditt [Orneta], who acted as Procurator between 1403 and 1419, a crucial period for the Teutonic Order in many aspects. Hans Koeppen regarded him without any doubt as the most outstanding and capable General Procurator in the Order ever.<sup>15</sup> In scholarship, his performance in office, his attitude and his achievements became a kind of ideal pattern for other procurators to follow. It cannot be denied that Peter von Wormditt, of burgher origin, a graduate of the law faculty in Prague and former notary

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<sup>13</sup> Though only to a certain extent, cf. Christiane Schuchard, 'Rom und die päpstliche Kurie in den Berichten des Deutschordens-Generalprokurators Jodocus Hogenstein (1448–1468)', *Quellen und Forschungen aus italienischen Bibliotheken und Archiven*, lxxii (1992), 54–122.

<sup>14</sup> See Freytag, 'Die Geschäftsträger', 200–1 and BGDO, i, 146–58.

<sup>15</sup> Hans Koeppen, 'Peter von Wormditt. Gesandter des Deutschen Ordens am päpstlichen Hof 1403–1419', in Bernhart Jähnig (ed.), *Das Preußenland als Forschungsaufgabe. Eine europäische Region in ihren geschichtlichen Bezügen. Festschrift für Udo Arnold zum 60. Geburtstag, gewidmet von den Mitgliedern der Historischen Kommission für Ost- und Westpreussische Landesforschung* (Lüneburg, 2000), 17–36.

in the Grand Master's chancery, probably had above-average organisational skills, was well acquainted with the various complexities of the chancery and bureaucratic system existing in the Roman curia and provided very precise information to Marienburg. In addition, he was diligent in his work, as far as can be judged from many his official reports. In short, he seemed to prove himself in the responsible position entrusted to him. On the other hand, it should be noted that the positive evaluation is based largely (if not exclusively) on his letters to the Grand Master, in which Peter von Wormditt did not miss the opportunity to emphasise his considerable significance and diplomatic skills.<sup>16</sup>

Wormditt, who died on 24 August 1419 in Florence, was succeeded by Johann Tiergart, who came from an influential burgher family in Danzig [Gdańsk]. At the time of his appointment as the General Procurator, which he probably accepted without enthusiasm, he had already completed his studies in Prague, Bologna, and Leipzig. He was perhaps more interested in gaining some significant ecclesiastical benefice as an educated lawyer. An appointment to the Bishopric of Kurland in 1425 apparently did not satisfy his ambitions, but he had to reconcile to this fact. Besides, the Grand Master bore a grudge against him (we do not know whether it was justified or not) because

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<sup>16</sup> Such as, for example, in Constance shortly after 15 July 1415, when at the final audience before Sigismund of Luxembourg's departure from the city on a diplomatic mission through the countries of Western Europe, Andrzej Łaskarzyc appealed for the execution of the arbitration award of August 1412 in Buda regarding the matters of the Włocławek Church. At that time, according to the Procurator's words, there was no one in the room who would stand up for the interests of the Grand Master but Peter von Wormditt, see BGDO, ii, no. 121, 252: "Und uff die czeit, als dy rede geschogin, des was nymand von des ordens wegin doby wenne ich. Also stund ich off und sprach ..."; on the correspondence between Wormditt and Grand Master Michael Kuchmeister, see Mats Homann, 'Der Blick des Deutschen Ordens auf das Konstanzer Konzil. Die Briefe des Generalprokurators Peter von Wormditt und des Hochmeisters Michael Kuchmeister', in Helmut Flachenecker, Tobias Baus, and Katharina Kemmer (eds), *Der Deutsche Orden auf dem Konstanzer Konzil. Pläne – Strategien – Erwartungen* (Ilmtal-Weinstraße, 2020), 55–88; cf. Koeppen, 'Peter von Wormditt', 33; cf. Freytag, 'Die Geschäftsträger', 201; Paul Nieborowski, *Der Deutsche Orden und Polen in der Zeit des größten Konfliktes* (Breslau, 1924<sup>2</sup>). The content of the publication is perhaps better reflected in the title of the first edition of 1915 "Peter von Wormdith. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Deutschen-Ordens". Some of Nieborowski's theses, however, deserve some corrections.

of his not entirely diligent pursuit of his duties as the Procurator. He certainly did not achieve any significant success. The Order even lost the case of the archbishopric of Riga and the chapter, which in 1428 solemnly ‘threw off’ the religious robe of the Teutonic Order and returned to the Augustinian rule they held initially. In the same year, Johann Tiergart asked the Grand Master to dismiss him from the position of the General Procurator, also for health reasons.<sup>17</sup>

For his post, Tiergart proposed the law student from Bologna Kaspar Stange von Wandofen (1429–33), who, like Johann von Felde, came from the Prussian chivalric estate. He joined the Order on his appointment as the General Procurator, but may have remained a lay knight [*Ritterbruder*], although procurators predominantly belonged to the clerical status.<sup>18</sup> Tiergart, in his recommendation, praised Wandofen’s erudition, eloquence, refinement, modesty and venerable life, which he is said to have already led during his studies in Bologna. On the other hand, there was some information about his promiscuous lifestyle, which was a thorn in the eye of Grand Master Paul von Rusdorf (1422–41) in particular, who was striving for the moral and spiritual renewal of the Order. Moreover, procurator Wandofen had many enemies and behind the criticised ‘promiscuity’ may be hidden a new and attractive lifestyle at the time (especially in Italy), i.e., that of the Renaissance knight.<sup>19</sup> Source testimony indicating that the Order’s Procurator may have had violent tendencies is nevertheless problematic. He died in unexplained circumstances sometime after 13 September 1433.<sup>20</sup> Before this, he managed to appoint his deputy

<sup>17</sup> Jan-Erik Beuttel, ‘Johann Tiergart (OT) († 1456). 1425–1456 Bischof von Kurland’, in Clemens Brodtkorb and Erwin Gatz (eds), *Die Bischöfe des Heiligen Römischen Reiches 1198 bis 1448. Ein biographisches Lexikon* (Berlin, 2001), 320–1; BGDO, iii, 1, 29–45; Freytag, ‘Die Geschäftsträger’, 202–3.

<sup>18</sup> Yet his legal status (whether clerical or lay person) is still unclear, cf. Beuttel, ‘Priesterbrüder’, 25–8.

<sup>19</sup> See in particular the severe denunciation by the papal notary Andreas Schonau of 1 April 1431 (Rome) sent to the Grand Master (BGDO, iv, 1, no. 217, 270–2). The denunciation includes accusations of sexual promiscuity and of begetting an illegitimate child. The mutual hostility of the two men, Schonau and Wandofen, is, however, a well-founded fact. By contrast, see the positive testimony about the General Procurator (*ibid.*, no. 320, 361–3) and his own defence against the accusation (*ibid.*, no. 321, 363–4).

<sup>20</sup> Urban, ‘*The diplomacy*’, 124–7; Beuttel, *Der Generalprokurator*, 66–7; *id.*, ‘Priesterbrüder’, 25–8; BGDO, 4/1, 2–18; Carl A. Lückerrath, ‘Wandofen, Kaspar Stange v.’,



Johann Niklosdorf (1433–7) while still absent. He did it against the will of the Grand Master, who eventually had to come to terms with the decision.<sup>21</sup> Niklosdorf served as deputy of the General Procurator until the summer of 1437 (after an unsuccessful attempt to appoint a procurator in 1434), when Johann Crowel, nominated by the Grand Master, took office.<sup>22</sup>

The first half of the 1430s was a particular period. The Grand Master appointed his envoys to the Council of Basel (Andreas Slommow, Andreas Pfaffendorf) despite the functioning of the General Procurator at the Roman curia (Wandofen or, in his stead, Niklosdorf).<sup>23</sup> The duality of Teutonic diplomacy at that time is to be explained by the understandably cautious (and consequently indecisive) position of Grand Master Paul von Rusdorf towards the tense relations between the Council and Pope Eugene IV.<sup>24</sup>

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in Norbert Angermann *et al.* (eds), *Lexikon des Mittelalters*, viii: *Stadt (Byzantinisches Reich) bis Werl* (München, 1997), col. 2027–8; Freytag, 'Die Geschäftsträger', 203–5.

<sup>21</sup> BGDO, iv, 1, 17–8.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>23</sup> Andreas Slommow, while an envoy to the Council of Basel in 1432 (autumn) and 1433, was for many years the rector of the parish church of St Mary in Gdańsk (1398–1438), cf. Otto Günther, 'Andreas Slommow und Johannes Zager in den Handschriften der Danziger Marienbibliothek', *Zeitschrift des Westpreussischen Geschichtsvereins*, lvii (1917), 141–59 and Marcin Sumowski, *Duchowni diecezjalni w średniowiecznym Toruniu. Studium prozopograficzne* (Toruń, 2012), 110–3. In the following years, i.e., 1433–6, his place in Basel was taken by Andreas Pfaffendorf, who also served as a parish priest in several city parishes (Kulm, Old Thorn and Danzig). According to the reasoning given by Jan-Erik Beuttel, Pfaffendorf also served as the General Procurator at the Council of Basel, see Beuttel, *Der Generalprokurator*, 57, fn. 172, where he argues against the claims of K. Forstreuter and H. Koepen.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 54–62; cf. Ludwig Dombrowski, *Die Beziehungen des Deutschen Ordens zum Baseler Konzil bis zur Neutralitätserklärung der deutschen Kurfürsten (März 1438)* (Bromberg, 1913, diss.) and Johannes Helmuth, *Das Basler Konzil 1431–1449. Forschungsstand und Probleme* (Köln–Wien, 1987), 268–70. On the wavering policy of Grand Master Paul von Rusdorf towards the Council of Basel and the Roman Curia, see Carl A. Lückner, *Paul von Rusdorf. Hochmeister des Deutschen Ordens 1422–1441* (Bad Godesberg, 1969), 103–22. On the activities of the Teutonic delegation in Basel from a Polish perspective, see Krzysztof Ożóg, *Uczni w monarchii Jadwigi Andegaweńskiej i Władysława Jagiełły (1384–1434)* (Kraków, 2004), 254–7.

### III PROCURATORS TALKING ABOUT AND DEALING WITH THE TEUTONIC-POLISH ANTAGONISM

A closer look at the General Procurators seems also to be justified because they do not have a special position in the classic work on Order's diplomacy. Klaus Neitmann mentions some procurators in the chapter on clerics and scholars who served in the Order's diplomacy as members of its delegations. He considers their significance only due to their legal education (this also applies to other clerics). Indeed, this became increasingly necessary and not only because of their involvement in Polish-Teutonic disputes.<sup>25</sup>

In this study, I would like to give some examples from the work of the General Procurators at the Roman curia showing their position towards the Polish-Teutonic dispute. This aspect represents only a specific fragment of their work. Yet precisely from this perspective, at least one more general topic can be highlighted, which in scholarship, as far as I know, has not yet been explored more in-depth. The topic can be distilled simply into the following question: Was the General Procurator merely a passive executor of judicial and diplomatic matters, or did he express his own opinions on the policy of the Grand Master, the Pope, or other lords? Furthermore, it is questionable whether he even tried to have an impact on it.

The earliest information on Polish-Teutonic issues appears in the Procurator's agenda after 1320 in connection with the dispute over Gdańsk Pomerania [Pomorze Gdańskie/Danziger Pommern].<sup>26</sup> The amount of surviving information generally increased from the end of the fourteenth century and most information is contained in sources from the first thirty years of the fifteenth century. The spectrum

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<sup>25</sup> Klaus Neitmann, *Die Staatsverträge des Deutschen Ordens in Preußen 1230–1449. Studien zur Diplomatie eines spätmittelalterlichen deutschen Territorialstaats* (Köln–Wien, 1986), 39–51.

<sup>26</sup> It is the region between the Łeba and Wisła [Vistula] rivers in early modern Poland. Initially an independent duchy, at the end of the thirteenth century it became part of the restored Kingdom of Poland. From 1308 it was occupied by the Teutonic Order. See Biskup and Czaja (eds), *Państwo*, 110–2. For more on the trials and witness testimonies, see Helena Chłopocka, *Procesy Polski z zakonem krzyżackim w XIV wieku. Studium źródłoznawcze* (Poznań, 1967) and Paul Milliman, “*The Slippery Memory of Men*”. *The Place of Pomerania in the Medieval Kingdom of Poland* (Leiden, 2013), 139–95, who analyses witness testimony from the perspective of collective memory.

of matters dealt with by the General Procurator was vast, even if we limit our view only to Polish-Teutonic issues. For it was not only about the basic dispute, which appears intensively in the Procurator's reports, especially when the case was before the papal court, such as the Roman trial (1421) brought after an announcement of the arbitration award in Breslau [Wrocław], or at the Councils of Constance or Basel. Relatively little news comes from the period of the so-called Great War of 1409–11, caused by the fact that Peter von Wormditt, the then General Procurator, was in Prussia at that time.<sup>27</sup>

The General Procurator also dealt with cases that were not directly related to the Polish-Teutonic conflict. For example, the dispute of Andrzej Łaskarzyc about the Teutonic Knights withholding his income when he was provost of the Włocławek chapter.<sup>28</sup> Or the long-running dispute over the destroyed brick residence of the Bishop of Włocławek, Jan Kropidło, Duke of Opole, in Biskupia Górka near Gdańsk.<sup>29</sup> For these and other similar detailed cases, as a rule, the General Procurator required special empowerment from the Grand Master, the Prussian bishop or another representative from Prussia or Livonia.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Peter von Wormditt left Italy sometime in the winter/spring of 1410 and returned to the Roman curia in February or March of the following year, cf. BGDO, ii, no. 52–60, 115–25, no. 62, 130; cf. Sławomir Józwiak, Krzysztof Kwiatkowski, Adam Szweda, and Sobiesław Szybkowski, *Wojna Polski i Litwy z zakonem krzyżackim w latach 1409–1411* (Malbork, 2010), 464–5, 649, 679, 686, 730.

<sup>28</sup> This topic has not yet been studied thoroughly, cf. Paweł Dembiński, Tomasz Gidaszewski, Tomasz Jurek, Adam Kozak, Jerzy Łojko, and Paulina Łojko-Wojtyński, *Andrzej Łaskarz. Dyplomata, duchowny 1362–1426* (Kraków, 2014); Marian Frontczyk, 'Andrzej Łaskarz z Gosławic herbu Godziemba biskup poznański', *Nasza Przeszość*, xxx (1969), 125–70; Jadwiga Krzyżaniakowa, 'Andrzej Łaskarz – "patron" polskich konciliarystów', in Wojciech Iwańczak and Stefan K. Kuczyński (eds), *Ludzie, Kościół, wierzenia. Studia z dziejów kultury i społeczeństw Europy Środkowej (Średniowiecze – wczesna epoka nowożytna)* (Warszawa, 2001), 265–78; Krzysztof Ożóg, 'Udział Andrzeja Łaskarzyca w sprawach i sporach polsko-krzyżackich do soboru w Konstancji', in Krzysztof Ożóg and Stanisław Szczur (eds), *Polska i jej sąsiedzi w późnym średniowieczu* (Kraków, 2000), 159–86.

<sup>29</sup> See the letter of Peter von Wormditt in BGDO, ii, no. 225, 435–9; cf. Antoni Liedtke, *Walka księcia Jana opolskiego „Kropidły“ z krzyżakami w obronie majątkowych praw diecezji włocławskiej* (Toruń, 1932), 72, fn. 1.

<sup>30</sup> The general powers of attorney [*procuratorium generalis*] empowered the Order's Procurator to represent the Order in all matters concerning it, but he could not, on its basis, bring charges on behalf of the Order or the Grand Master. For this,

It would seem to be a matter of course that the key moment for the successful settlement of an issue was access to a papal audience. It was generally the case that the Procurator would apply for a papal audience with a cardinal, usually the so-called cardinal-protector, who was the spokesman for the Teutonic Order within the Collegium of Cardinals.<sup>31</sup> Sometimes the General Procurator had to content himself with discussing certain matters only with a cardinal, who then decided whether the matter would also be discussed in the presence of the Pope. An interesting case occurred in 1322 when the Procurator Konrad Bruel (1310[?]-24) justified why he could not settle the matter of the *Denarii Sancti Petri* and the judgment on Pomerania because he was supposedly not allowed into the papal palace. Because of this incident, the Procurator ordered a notarial instrument to be issued, which reads that the papal palace gatekeeper did not open the door to the Procurator.<sup>32</sup>

The Grand Master expected that the General Procurator would have such contacts in Rome that would enable him to promote the Teutonic point of view on the conflict with the King of Poland. In the earliest preserved letter of Grand Master Luther von Braunschweig addressed to Dietrich Goldenhaupt, the General Procurator is asked to promote the Teutonic version of information not only about the battle of Płowce (27 September 1331) but in general about the previous Polish-Teutonic conflict.<sup>33</sup>

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special powers of attorney [*mandatum specialis*] were needed. For a delineation of the meaning of the two powers of attorney, see Beuttel, *Der Generalprokurator*, 111–23.

<sup>31</sup> Alfred A. Strnad, 'Die Protektoren des Deutschen Ordens im Kardinalskollegium', in Klemens Wieser (ed.), *Acht Jahrhunderte Deutscher Orden in Einzeldarstellungen. Festschrift zu Ehren Sr. Exzellenz P. Dr. Marian Tumler O. T. anlässlich seines 80. Geburtstages* (Bad Godesberg, 1967), 269–320 (was not available to me).

<sup>32</sup> BGDO, i, no. 73, 225: "Cui [i.e. to the Procurator] Johannes de Montagniaco portarius respondit et dixit, quod non erat tempus intrandi ad dominum papam, et ipsum procuratorem non permisit intrare".

<sup>33</sup> Letter from the Grand Master, whose original is preserved in the Deutschenordens-Zentralarchiv in Vienna, Urkunden, sign. 1596, see [monasterium.net, URL </mom/AT-DOZA/Urkunden/1596/charter>](http://monasterium.net, URL </mom/AT-DOZA/Urkunden/1596/charter>) [Accessed: 19 May 2020] or BGDO, i, no. 91, 238: "Fratri Theodorico de Aureo Capite, procuratori in curia Romana magistri et fratrum de domo Theutonica". – "Frater Theodorice, sciatis et cui placuerit, referatis, quod taliter se habuit bellum nostrum". The letter has no dating, but I take the dating after U. Arnold as year 1332, see Udo Arnold (ed.),

Obviously, the Procurator and the Polish delegation tried to get the chance to attend the audience, especially when one of the opposing sides was presenting its reasoning. In March 1402, the Procurator Johann von Felde reported that King Władysław II Jagiełło and Grand Duke Vytautas had sent their envoy to Rome. Because their letter was read to the Pope privately, the Order's Procurator could not find out what was in it. Allegedly even the cardinals did not know it. That is at least what they said to the Procurator Felde, who tried to find out what had happened.<sup>34</sup>

Such problems were perhaps not experienced by the Procurator Peter von Wormditt, who would often let the Grand Master know that the Pope not only listens to him but also appreciates his views. In June 1414, Pope John XXIII was concerned that the spectre of another Polish-Teutonic war was on the horizon.<sup>35</sup> He, therefore, offered to send envoys or papal letters. Peter von Wormditt explained that if the Poles acted by the terms of the arbitration award announced in Buda (24 August 1412),<sup>36</sup> there would be no need to send envoys or papal letters. If, however, the Polish King declared war, this would be

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*Die Urkunden des Deutschenordens-Zentralarchivs in Wien – Regesten*, ii: Februar 1313 – November 1418 (Marburg, 2007), 502. Cf. Max Hein (ed.), *Preußisches Urkundenbuch. Politische Abteilung*, ii: (1309–1335) (Königsberg, 1939), 748; Eduard G. von Pettenegg (ed.), *Die Urkunden des Deutsch-Ordens-Centralarchives zu Wien* (Prag–Leipzig, 1887), 1086, 284; *Scriptores rerum Prussicarum*, ii, eds Theodor Hirsch, Max Töppen, and Ernst Strehlke (Leipzig, 1863), 6–7, fn. 1.

<sup>34</sup> BGDO, i, no. 259, 368 (25 March 1402, Rome): “Ouch habe ich vornomen, das der konig von Polen und Wytold vor vasnacht czwer ym lande czu Rewsen bey nander gewest seyn und dornoch czu hant wart der bote úsgericht, der dy brife yn den hof brocht hát, und dy brife seyn dem bobiste heymelich geentwert yn seyne camer, das ich eygentlich noch nicht kan wissen, was dy brife ynne halden. Ouch habe ich myt ethlichen cardinaln dovon geret, dy haben mir gesaget, das sy noch nicht do von vornomen haben, und also ich uwirn genoden czuschreybe, das yst myr czu wissen wurden von eyme, der meyn guter frunt ys und ouch des ordens frúnt ys. Ouch sprechen dy Polen ym hofe, das der orden mit dem konynge von Polen eynen frede gemacht hót uff fúnf jor, und das tûn sy dor úmme, das sy yren willen deste bás behalden mogen yn dem hofe”.

<sup>35</sup> The war came eventually to pass. On the so-called ‘Hunger War’, see Jerzy Goździelewski, ‘Wojna polsko-krzyżacka 1414 r., tzw. “Wojna Głodowa”’, *Studia i materiały do historii wojskowości*, xvi (1970), ii, 19–61; Marian Biskup, *Wojny Polski z zakonem krzyżackim 1308–1521* (Oświęcim, 2014), 112–29.

<sup>36</sup> Erich Weise (ed.), *Die Staatsverträge des Deutschen Ordens in Preußen im 15. Jahrhundert*, i: (1398–1437) (Marburg, 1970<sup>2</sup>), no. 94, 96–9.

necessary. The Pope was to reply that he would act following the Procurator's suggestion.<sup>37</sup> The Pope's reaction, however, was probably due to him being undecided on how to proceed. This is confirmed by the Procurator himself in his letter of 2 July 1414. Based on a letter from the King of Poland read in the audience, he understood that war was inevitable. He, therefore, asked the Pope not to arrange a solemn papal delegate until an envoy is dispatched with a letter threatening both the Grand Master and the King with a curse [*banne*] unless they avoid a potential struggle.<sup>38</sup> The Pope, however, seemed to be undecided. The Procurator saw the Pope's approach as hesitating to irritate King Władysław II Jagiełło with the threat of a curse, but he also did not want to spend money on an expensive envoy.<sup>39</sup>

It seems that even direct intervention by the Order's Procurator's face-to-face with the Pope did not always result in the desired effect. Procurator Johann Tiergart was particularly desperate when Pope Martin V, because of the Polish delegation led by Paweł Włodkowic, came to the conviction that peace could not be achieved without the Order giving up certain territories to Poland. Besides, the Pope kept pointing out the fact that no original copies of the privileges for his Order had been presented, but only the transumps, which was also confusing to the Grand Master's delegation. In a letter from 29 April 1421 to the Grand Master, Johann Tiergart expressed his personal feelings after the meeting: "God alone knows in what mood I returned home when I heard that no attention was paid at all to law and justice for our Order" (author's translation).<sup>40</sup> He further articulates in his

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<sup>37</sup> BGDO, ii, no. 101, 210 (26 June 1414, Bologna): "Do sprach ich: welden die Polen czu rechte geen mit dem orden vor dem romisschen konige, so weres nicht notdurft, boten czu senden oder czu schriben. Aber welde sie aber ein krig ansloen, des ich noch nicht enwuste, so weres grosse notdurft. Do sprach her: wes dich gut dunket, das ich thun sulle, das will ich gerne thun".

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 103, 213: "*Wenn der Papst ernsthaft handeln wolle, müsse er unverzüglich durch einen reitenden Boten dem HM und dem König bey dem banne und bey andern forchtsamen bussen befehlen, das sie das swert nyderlegen und nicht kriegen*".

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 103, 214: "Den entwerte der bobst, her muste sich dorumb mit seynen cardinaln besprechen. Und also steet es noch. Ich vorsehe mich, das die schelunge an den czweien sachen steet, die eyne, das her ungerne dem konige gebutet bey dem banne, das ander, das her ungerne czerunge den boten gibt".

<sup>40</sup> BGDO, iii, 1, no. 66, 177: "Got weis, mit was gemutte ich heim qwam, so ich hort hette, das unsirs ordens gerechtikeit also gar wenig geachtet wart".

writing that despite the letters from King Sigismund of Luxembourg and the imperial prince-electors in support of the Order having no effect at all, he would continue to try to make sure that the Pope forbids the King of Poland and the Duke of Lithuania to invade the Order's territory.<sup>41</sup>

A few years earlier, Grand Master Heinrich von Plauen (1410–13) had shown his dissatisfaction with the activities of his Procurator by sending another solemn legation to the Pope, although Peter von Wormditt had not advised him to do so. His justification can be expressed as follows: the Grand Master's special solemn delegation is usually very expensive and yet is not able to achieve more than the Order's Procurator in his daily work. We know this justification thanks to the warning that the Procurator addressed to von Plauen's successor, Michael Kuchmeister (1414–22), who wanted to act like his predecessor.<sup>42</sup> In this regard, it should be noted that Peter von Wormditt generally disagreed with the policy of Kuchmeister's predecessor and publicly made no secret of his satisfaction at von Plauen's removal from the position of the Grand Master.<sup>43</sup>

The perception of the long-term Polish-Teutonic controversy from the perspective of the Order's Procurator on the one hand and the Grand Master residing in Marienburg on the other could apparently not overlap. The reason was that the former was familiar with the negotiations at the papal court or the councils, while the latter was not. This divergence can sometimes be observed in the General Procurators' reports.

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<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 177: “Die Briefe des Römischen Königs und der Kurfürsten nützten nichts. Auch auf die Bitte, das vom Kardinal s. Marci begonnene iudicium nicht durch die Polen interrumpiren zu lassen, habe der Papst nicht geantwortet. Trotzdem werde man nicht ablassen, ihn zu bitten, den polnischen König und Witold zu ersuchen, den Orden nicht zu oberfallen, sondern sich am rechte genügen zu lassen”.

<sup>42</sup> BGDO, ii, no. 94, 199 (8 May 1414, Bologna): “Euwer vorfar schreip mir von vil sach[en], die do nicht woren usczurichten. Wenn ich denn schreip, das es nicht mochte gesyn, so sante her denn eyne<n> sunderliche botschaft her und lies ims faste kosten. Die schufen denn als vil als ich und quomen mit ledigem butel wider heym”.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 87, 185 (15 Jan. 1414, Venezia): “Es ist, gote sey gedankt, wol gescheen [i.e. Plauen's dismissal – author's note], und man hette vor den orden czu deßer czit nicht bessers mocht haben gethon. Und weres auch nicht gescheen, es were des ganczen ordens vorterpnuß gewest, wend her nymant wolde volgen denne synem bozem synne”.

This issue is most apparent in the letters of Peter von Wormditt mentioned above. He warned the Grand Master more than once not to be the first to declare war on the Polish-Lithuanian side.<sup>44</sup> In the opposite case, the Order could be accused (as was eventually the case) of renegeing on the agreements. The Order's Procurator also disagreed that the Grand Master considered dismissing the Archbishop of Riga, Johann von Wallenrode, as an Order's envoy at the Council of Constance.<sup>45</sup> Michal Küchmeister argued that the Order was handing over large sums of money to the rich prelate without receiving anything in return. For in the Grand Master's perception, the archbishop, as a courtier, councillor, and diplomat of King Sigismund of Luxembourg, defended the King's interests more than those of his own Order. The polemic of the Procurator with his superior was caused by the fact that Johann von Wallenrode was an influential prelate, and therefore, it would have been against the very interests of the Order to make an enemy of him by dismissing him.<sup>46</sup>

Peter von Wormditt did not hesitate to use a historical analogy in the case of the dispute over the nomination of the Warmian bishopric (after the expulsion of Heinrich IV Heilsberg von Vogelsang, who

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<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 84, 180 (18 Oct. 1413, Bologna): "Und dorumb sehet uch vor, das ir [Grand Master Michael Küchmeister] yo die ersten nicht syt, die den krieg heben".

<sup>45</sup> For a recent study of the archbishop's activities at the Council, see Bernhart Jähnig, 'Johannes von Wallenrode und das Konstanzer Konzil', in Helmut Flachenecker, Tobias Baus, and Katharina Kemmer (eds), *Der Deutsche Orden auf dem Konstanzer Konzil. Pläne – Strategien – Erwartungen* (Ilmtal-Weinstraße, 2020), 107–25.

<sup>46</sup> BGDO, ii, no. 160, 330–1 (28 May 1416, Constance): "... aber es scheine ihm nicht gut, daß der HM dem Erzbischof also stümplich absage, im nicht me czu geben; der HM möge lieber zunächst abwarten, wie sich uwer sachen wellen machen. Und dornoch moget ir syn mit güten ledig werden; her mochte uch sust gros schedelich werden. Es wäre besser gewesen, wenn sich der HM doheyme mit dem Erzbischof geeinigt hätte"; *ibid.*, no. 167, 345 (15 July 1416, Constance): "[Peter von Wormditt – author's note] Bittet, dem Erzbischof von Riga für sein Entgegenkommen zu danken und es anders mit ihm zu bestellen, worauf er schon oft hingewiesen habe: ir [Michael Küchmeister – author's note] sullet im [Johann von Wallenrode – author's note] ofte uwer briffe schriben und fruntlichen und gute wort geben, und ouch eczwas geldes erwegen, im czu geben, als lange bis das deße sache mit den Polan ein ende gewynne. Ir moget das selber wol merken, sintdemmole das die sache in des romisschen konings hant steet, den her mechtlich und alle andere fursten des ordens frunde hat noch synem willen. So ist uch nicht gut, das her an uwern briffen, Worten oder czerunge erkenne, das ir im nicht wol wellet; es kumpt uch czu schaden. Hinge die sache in geistlichem gerichte, so wurde sie wol entricht ane in".



was charged with disloyalty).<sup>47</sup> For the Procurator advised the Grand Master not to appoint his own candidate to this post against the will of the King of the Romans and especially the will of the Pope. Peter von Wormditt warned Michael Kuchmeister that he was coming into conflict with papal prerogatives by appointing the candidate to the episcopal sees. This could provoke a negative reaction from the Pope and his hostile attitude towards the Teutonic Order. At the same time, the very essence of the Order's existence, the Procurator reminded him, was based on papal and imperial privileges. Peter von Wormditt tried to focus the Grand Master's attention on the unfortunate fate of the Order of the Knights Templar, which the Pope had dissolved during a single consistory!<sup>48</sup>

It can be stated in general that Peter von Wormditt very often advised the Grand Master to make far-reaching concessions to the demands of the Polish side unless his own side's arguments could be based on some privileges or legal provisions.<sup>49</sup> Even the Procurator Kaspar

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<sup>47</sup> Even before his dismissal, Grand Master Heinrich von Plauen managed to appoint Count Günther von Schwarzburg as administrator of the Diocese of Warmia, see Jan Kopiec, 'Heinrich Vogelsang (von Heilsberg) (um 1360–1415). 1401–1415 Bischof von Ermland', in Brodtkorb and Gatz (eds), *Die Bischöfe*, 185; Hans Schmauch, 'Ermland und der Deutschorden während der Regierung des Bischofs Heinrich IV. Heilsberg (1401–1415)', *Zeitschrift für die Geschichte und Altertumskunde Ermlands*, xx (1926), 465–98; Franz Fleischer, 'Heinrich IV. Heilsberg von Vogelsang, Bischof von Ermland (1401–1415)', *Zeitschrift für die Geschichte und Altertumskunde Ermlands*, xii (1899), 1–134.

<sup>48</sup> BGDO, ii, no. 84, 181–2 (18 Oct. 1413, Bologna): "Ir [the Grand Master – author's note] schribet ouch, ir wellet den von Swarczpurg in das bischtum setzzen, es gee uch dorumb, wie got welle etc. Ich rote uch in ganzzen truwen, das irs nicht thut. Ir komet in die busse umb des konigs usspruch wille und thut wider den bobst, das ir im in syn lehen griffet. Ir wisset wol, das von bobstlicher bestetunge dem orden vorlegen ist, ... Dorumb ist ouch moglich, das ir uch in syne lehne nicht enstoßet ane synen willen. Thut irs ... ober, ir moget uweren orden in sulche umbequemkeit brengen, do her bey unsern cziten nymmer uskumpt. Her mag in eynem consistorio mit eyner bullen alle des ordens privilegia, friheit und gnade widerrufen, do her nochmols villichte nymmerme were wider so ganz czu komen. Habt ir nicht gehort, wie die Tempelherren von des bobstes gebote an eynen tagen vil, noch alle in allen landen wurden vortylget? Dorumb weget eynen bobst nicht czu geringe und griffet im nicht in das syne".

<sup>49</sup> For instance, see the case of Andrzej Łaskarzyc, Bishop of Poznań, in Přemysl Bar, *Diplomacie, právo a propaganda v pozdním středověku. Polsko-litevská unie a Řád německých rytířů na kostnickém koncilu* (Brno, 2017), 92–9.

Wandofen, in his report of 3 January 1432, explained to the Grand Master that the arguments given in his letter about the reasons why the Order's armies attacked the Polish lands were not sufficient. It is not clear from them that the Grand Master took such action because of a higher necessity, but only because of his alliance with Švitrigaila (he received the name Bolesław after a Catholic baptism), the Grand Duke of Lithuania.<sup>50</sup> It was mainly tactical advice on how to draft a correct justification that the Order was forced to denounce the peace treaty and invade Polish-Lithuanian territory. According to the Procurator, all evidence of the material damage caused by the Polish-Lithuanian side should have been listed in the first place, but definitely not the alliance with the Duke of Lithuania.<sup>51</sup>

Nevertheless, one may describe this approach as more conciliatory. Therefore, it is worth comparing with one of the Order's envoys at the Council of Basel. Andreas Pfaffendorf makes no secret of his outrage and shock at the conclusion of the Polish-Teutonic truce in September 1433, of which the Procurator learned from a Polish envoy in Basel. He could not even believe that the news was true.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> BGDO, iv, 1, no. 323, 365–6 (3 Jan. 1432, Rome). On the Grand Duke's attitude towards the Council, see Lidia Korczak, 'Wielki książę litewski Świdrygiello wobec soboru bazylejskiego i papieża Eugeniusza IV', in Janusz Smołucha, Anna Waško, Tomasz Graff, and Paweł Nowakowski (eds), *Historia vero testis temporum. Księga jubileuszowa poświęcona prof. Krzysztofowi Baczkowskiemu w 70. rocznicę urodzin* (Kraków, 2008), 339–48. It is worth noting here that from a certain moment Andreas Pfaffendorf at the Council and Johannes Niklosdorf at the Roman Curia acted as the procurator of the Lithuanian Duke Švitrigaila, see the powers of attorney for Pfaffendorf in BGDO, iv, 2, no. 497, 530–1; cf. Korczak, 'Wielki książę', 347, fn. 43. The background for the negotiations at the Council was the rebellion of Švitrigaila in Lithuania in 1431–5, see Сергей Полехов, *Наследники Витовта. Династическая война в Великом княжестве Литовском в 30-е годы XV века* (Москва, 2015), 176–409.

<sup>51</sup> BGDO, iv, 1, no. 323, 365: "... so rothen ..., das ir vorgebit, das umme gedrenckniße wille, als ir irczelt habit, euch must irweren kegin den Polen unde sy euch mit krigen angefertigt haben, und dorumme so habit ir yn must kriges flegen, unde wir mogen is allhir anders mit eren nicht vorgeben, unde louwt nicht wol, das wir umme eines gemachten bundes [the Lithuanian Duke Švitrigaila – author's note] willen einen ewigen frede hetten gebrochen. Is ist nicht notdorfft, off das erste den bunt vorzubringen".

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, iv, 2, no. 584, 640 (18 Oct. 1433, Basel): "Dy [the Polish delegation] loßin ufßegeyn eyn geruchte, daz redin hy alle leuthe offenbar, daz euwer gnode mit deme konige von Polin unde den kecczeren eyn beufrede baz czu Wynochtin hat

Pffaffendorf was confident that this truce would become a real catastrophe for the Teutonic Order.<sup>53</sup> For the Procurator, only one piece of news would have seemed more terrible, namely, if he had heard that as Prussia was long and wide, not a single village would have survived!<sup>54</sup> He continues in his report that the Poles or heretics (he means the Hussites) would not stop there. The Order, on the other hand, suffered great damage and on top of that would have to pay large sums of money to the mercenary troops that were practically unused. Although the Order's Procurator knew the Order had been forced into this truce, according to him, the Grand Master would have to rely more on God's help. Besides, the Poles were going to break the truce, in view of which the Grand Master could (and even should) declare war first.<sup>55</sup>

The Order's envoy at the Council was probably aware that his strong recommendations to the Order's leadership in Marienburg, in the face of the weakening position of the Order's state on an international level in the early 1430s, might seem useless. In the letter of 31 October 1433, in which he advised the Grand Master to maintain his alliance with Duke Švitrigaila at all costs, he justified himself that his advice was motivated only by a desire for the prosperity of the Order.<sup>56</sup>

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uffgenommen. Ap daz alzo sy ader nicht, daz weyß Got unde euwer gnode. Got weyß, ich bin ez sere unde groslichin irscrockin etc.”.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 585, 641 (18 Oct. 1433, Basel): “*Andreas Pffaffendorf ... äußert schwere Bedenken gegen den beymfreden des DO mit Polen. Er ist davon überzeugt, daß der HM und alle Gebietiger mit hogistem vliße das gedeygen des DO wollen, ader der vorgedochte byfrede ist eyn gruntlich vorterven unsers ordens*”.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, “*Er [the procurator] hätte mit geryngerem gemüthe vil liber gehört, daß, alzo weyt alz des ordens lant zcu Prusen ist, kein Dorf mehr stünde*”.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 641–2: “*dy kecczere ader dy Polen haben is vorbrant unde dy heren weren sich uß eren huseren unde uß eren steteren. Euwer gnode weyß io wol, daz dy Polen nicht plegen zcu halden. Der Orden hat großen Schaden an Land und Leuten in der Neumark und die Preußen genommen, und Pffaffendorf – author's note] ist sycher, daß der HM den Söldnern eyne hoge große summe geldes bezahlen muß. Nach seiner Auffassung wäre es besser gewesen, man hette zcu der hulfe Gotes gehoffet unde hette mit den boßewichten gestreten. Er ist zwar überzeugt, daß der HM alle dyße sachen gruntlichen erwogen hat. Deswegen fürchtet er, der HM sei czu eyneme sulchen schedelichen byfrede gedrungen worden. Ich byn sycher, dy Polen holden en nicht, und deswegen wäre es besser, mit ihnen Krieg zcu beginnen*”.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 589, 646: “*Gnediger meister, ich bekenne, daz ich viel unnotczere und unweislicher wort ewern gnodin schreibe. Ich thu is dach us trewen und welde gerne, daz is also ginge, zam ich gedencke. Hirumbe bitte ich ewer gnode demutlichich: gerucht mir das czu vorgebin*”.

In the discussions of the Council, Pfaffendorf was more reserved. This is apparent from his reaction to the speeches of the Doctor of Decretals Johann Reve, who was not a member of the Order, but who in Basel represented the *Landmeister* of Livonia. It seems that during Pfaffendorf's absence in Basel in late 1434 and early 1435, Johann Reve acted as a temporary representative of the Grand Master as well. One can conclude this from the fact that it was Johann Reve who made a defence speech in favour of the Order at the beginning of 1435.<sup>57</sup> In the letter dated 6 March of that year, he complained to the Grand Master that the Order had no deputy at the Council with appropriate empowerment, and that was why the Poles took advantage of this for themselves.<sup>58</sup> It was in March that Andreas Pfaffendorf returned to Basel and immediately criticised Johann Reve for speaking too harshly against the Polish delegation, although he did not deny his good intentions.<sup>59</sup>

In fact, the Polish delegation wanted to bring the case of the residence of the Bishop of Włocławek near Gdańsk (Biskupia Górka, see above) to the agenda but did not have the necessary mandate to do so. The arguments of the Polish envoys were based on the idea that they represented the interests of the Crown of Poland in general, within which the Bishopric of Włocławek was situated, and which was suffering great damage by this very fact. Johann Reve was supposed to taunt the Polish envoys that they allegedly only now have the good of the Church at heart, but they lacked this compassion for the Church at the time when the King of Poland's army, together with the Hussite troops, were invading the Order's territory and leaving hundreds of burnt churches behind.<sup>60</sup> Of course, the invective about co-operating with heretics caused outrage and vociferous opposition on the Polish

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<sup>57</sup> Two versions of the defence-speeches have been preserved, see *ibid.*, no. 678–9, 740–9.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 692, 762–3 (6 March 1435, Basel): “Ock, erwerdige gnedige here, so hevet yuwe gnade doch nemende in deme hove to Rome noch hyr, des doch ydermanne verwondert, unde dat merken doch leyder de Polan wal unde schafften vele willen myt giften unde gaven ...”; more on this, see Lückcrath, *Paul von Rusdorf*, 117.

<sup>59</sup> See his letter to the Grand Master of 30 March 1435 already sent from Basel in BGDO, iv, 2, no. 698, 766–70.

<sup>60</sup> Apparently, he is talking about the joint expedition of the Hussite troops and part of the Polish army against the Order in 1433, see Paweł Karp, *Polsko-husycka wyprawa zbrojna przeciw Zakonowi Krzyżackiemu w roku 1433* (Zielona Góra, 2017).

side, and as a result, the Teutonic delegation was forced to apologise publicly and promise not to offend anyone again.<sup>61</sup> The insulting of the Polish delegation was, according to Pfaffendorf, a tactical mistake because the Poles pushed through another public hearing. But this time, it was the Teutonic Order which was insulted and even accused of collaborating with Sigismund Korybut, a well-known Duke of Lithuania. This accusation was particularly delicate because the mentioned Duke was a former ally of the Hussites.<sup>62</sup>

#### IV PRACTICAL ISSUES OF THE PROCURATOR'S WORK

Regarding the topic of the article, several practical aspects of the work of the General Procurators cannot be overlooked that the Grand Master

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<sup>61</sup> BGDO, iv, 2, no. 698, 768: “Dorumb reden wir [Andreas Pfaffendorf – author’s note] ein solche sache von mitleydung und barmherzickeyt wegen. Dorauff entwurte meister Johan von Reve, der doctor von Leyfeland, – allein ers gute hatte gemeynt – ein unbedochte entwurt, dy doch nicht czu beschirmung der sache nůcz was, als mich dünckt, das ich doch secze czu der kentnusse ewern gnaden, und sprach: wy seyt ir Poln alz nu alzo barmherczig wurden und werdet beweget von einer kirchen? Warumb wort ir do nit barmherczig, do dy Poln mit den keczeren im lant czu Prewssen warn und manch hundert kirchen czubrachten? Gnediger meyster, dovon hat sich diser placz gehoben, das dy Poln dy obgeschriben boßen ding haben vůrgegeben, dorumb ist io unser teyl betwungen czu entwurten, uns czu entschuldigen und nymant czu beschemen”. The incorrect words of Johann Reve were repeated by Pfaffendorf in a slightly different manner in the letter dated on 19 April, see fn. 62.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 703, 773 (19 April 1435, Basel): “Referiert ebenfalls noch einmal über den Zusammenstoß mit den Polen bis zu der wiederum als alczu snell und unbedocht bezeichneten Antwort Reves: wy seyt ir nu uber eine kirche als parmherczig wurden? Worumb ward ir do nicht als parmherczig, do ir mit den keczczern in Prewsen wol vir ader funfhundert kirchen vorstóret? Diese Worte besaczten und becezugeten gros vor dem concilio, wy dem kunig gros las[ter], schand und smoheyt von unserm orden gesche etc, und [die Polen] boten vom concilio, das man sy auff [den] nemlichen tag woldet vorhóren. Der tag ward in gegeben. Auff den tag sy von unserm orden vil smoheyt, laster und schande haben gerett, besundern wy wir Sigmun[n]d den keczczcr auff hetten genomen, bey uns hilden, stete und slosser ein hetten gegeben und andere vil schande und laster mit irn gewonten lógen, dy sy denne phlegen czu thun”. In the summer of 1434, Sigismund Korybut became an ally of the Teutonic Order thanks to his contacts with Švitrigaila. He fell at the Battle of Wilkomierz in the following year, see Jerzy Grygiel, *Zygmunt Korybutowicz. Litewski książę w husyckich Czechach (ok. 1395–wrzesień 1435)* (Kraków, 2016), 132–4.

could hardly overestimate. For instance, usually, during the Council sessions (at Constance or Basel), the Procurators or their deputies wrote to Marienburg that the Order's delegation on the spot was not very representative and needed to be strengthened, suggesting which concrete individuals should be dispatched for the Council.<sup>63</sup> The Grand Master, however, did not always listen to the recommendation of his subordinates. During the Council of Basel, Grand Master Paul von Rusdorf, despite the suggestion of the delegates of the Order, refrained from sending a procurator with empowerment for several months not only to the Council but also to the Roman curia as well.<sup>64</sup>

However, the presence of the Procurator near the papal court or at the site of the Council could have been of considerable significance to the Grand Master in terms of obtaining secret information. In the autumn of 1419, the Procurator Johann Tiergart, together with Kaspar Schuwenpflug, provost of Frauenburg in Warmia, and the Italian lawyer Ardicino della Porta de Novara, employed by the Order's authorities, had to face the allegations that the Grand Master did not want to accept Sigismund of Luxembourg as an arbitrator in the Polish-Teutonic dispute. While the Polish delegation was absent, this Order's approach to the person of the King of the Romans was challenged by his courtier, the Bishop of Lubusz, Johann Borsnitz, who is said to have sworn that he had already seen a royal arbitration award drafted in the Grand Master's favour!<sup>65</sup>

<sup>63</sup> Bar, *Diplomacie*, 47–8.

<sup>64</sup> Lückcrath, *Paul von Rusdorf*, 116–9.

<sup>65</sup> BGDO, iii, 1, no. 2, 53–4: "... *habe der Bischof von Lebus (Labws) den Ordensvertretern Vorwürfe wegen ihrer Haltung gegenüber dem Römischen König gemacht, der nur das Beste für den Orden wolle, und sprach, swerende uff seiner brust, her hette itczunt das gescreben orteil und awsproch geseen, den der konig wolde gegeben haben in der sachen czwischen deme polonischen konige und dem orden, und were dem orden wert 100 000 gulden, das is itczunt gescheen were. Er (der OP) selber habe dann die Haltung der Ordensvertreter vor dem Bischof verteidigt: man habe nicht über den Römischen König geklagt, sondern man habe dem Papst, falls er von anderen unrichtige Informationen erhalte, lediglich deutlich gemacht, daß ein hindergang des HMs an den König nicht erfolgt sei. Der Bischof habe zornig erwidert: der romische koning were des ordens beste [frunt] y und y gewesen. Man solle sich ihn lieber als Freund erhalten als zum Feind machen*". The bishop obviously had in mind the later Wrocław's arbitration award (6 Jan. 1420). On its genesis and efforts for revision, see Zenon H. Nowak, *Międzynarodowe procesy polubowne jako narzędzie polityki Zygmunta Luksemburskiego w północnej i środkowowschodniej Europie (1412–1424)* (Toruń, 1981), 81–123;

Another practical skill of the General Procurators was the knowledge of the law, especially canon law, although not all of them were lawyers by training, and they were not usually the authors of legal expertise in Polish-Teutonic trials. On the contrary, these were usually worked out by extraneous lawyers hired by the Order. Despite this, the Procurators were familiar with the proper drafting of various documents and their relevance in trials conducted at the Roman Curia. Peter von Wormditt, for example, wrote to the Grand Master as early as July 1414 to prepare written evidence for the forthcoming Council, even though Michael Kűchmeister might not have yet made the final decision to send a delegation to Constance.<sup>66</sup> Likewise, Johann Tiergart alone appreciated the necessity and significance of privileges and documents for the Teutonic Order so much that he decided to travel from Rome to Prussia in the second half of 1421. He wanted to participate personally in preparing transumpt of the relevant documents.<sup>67</sup>

## V CONCLUSIONS

In my study, only some of the vast number of examples and issues related to the topic are presented. It cannot be denied that even the sources restricted to the edited documents up to 1436 offer much more, not to mention the unedited sources from the period beyond. But some cases, like Peter von Wormditt's report on the trial proceedings against Johann Falkenberg, are omitted intentionally.<sup>68</sup> Firstly, the trial of the litigious Dominican friar is well recognised

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cf. Přemysl Bar, 'A Tortuous Path to Reconciliation and Justice. Sigismund of Luxembourg as Arbiter in the Dispute between the Teutonic Knights and Poland (1412–1420)', *Zeitschrift für Ostmitteleuropa-Forschung*, lxvi, 1 (2017), 3–40.

<sup>66</sup> BGDO, ii, no. 105, 215–6 (18 July 1418, Bologna): "Rät dem HM, die sachen wedir die Polan, die er auf dem Konzil vorbringen wolle, unverzüglich schriftlich fixieren zu lassen und sie dem päpstlichen Legaten vorzulegen, da dieser vermutlich bald wieder zur Teilnahme am Konzil abreisen werde".

<sup>67</sup> BGDO, iii, 1, no. 71, 184–6; see Adam Szweda and Anna Adamska, 'Notariusz przy pracy. Akcja transumowania dokumentów krzyżackich jesienią 1421 roku', in Grażyna Rutkowska and Antoni Gąsiorowski (eds), *Memoria viva. Studia historyczne poświęcone pamięci Izabeli Skierskiej (1967–2014)* (Warszawa–Poznań, 2015), 487–501.

<sup>68</sup> BGDO, ii, no. 258, 490–7 (13 May 1418, Constance).

in the scholarship.<sup>69</sup> Secondly, von Wormditt's report mentioned above would deserve a separate study. On the other hand, other omitted examples could eventually show the same situations and contribute only little to comprehending the functioning of the Order's Procurator at the Roman Curia.

Nevertheless, based on the examples, it might be concluded that the General Procurator of the Teutonic Order was not a passive executor of the Grand Master's orders. He usually conducted legal processes or diplomatic missions with remarkable commitment, without sparing recommendations or instructions to his superior in Marienburg. Differences of views between the Procurator and the Grand Master arose from different perspectives in assessing what was in the best interests of the Teutonic Order. It was caused by the fact that the Grand Master in Prussia was not sufficiently or at all aware of the extent to which the prestige of his Order had suffered a severe rupture in Western Europe at that time. At the same time, the Procurators perceived it very often and tangibly. Therefore, they often sent tactical recommendations on how to behave or proceed toward Polish-Lithuanian demands, in general, when to take a hard line and when a more conciliatory approach. However, the Procurators cannot be suspected of disloyalty to their superior, even considering the Prussian burgher background of some of them. The Procurator's almost partner-like approach towards the Grand Master may also have arisen from his expert knowledge of canon law and how the Roman curia functioned. This gave him a certain authority over his superior, who lacked such competencies.<sup>70</sup>

*proofreading Sylwia Szymańska-Smolkin*

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<sup>69</sup> Hartmut Boockmann, *Johannes Falkenberg, der Deutsche Orden und die polnische Politik: Untersuchungen zur politischen Theorie des späteren Mittelalters; mit einem Anhang: Die Satira des Johannes Falkenberg* (Göttingen, 1975), 263–96.

<sup>70</sup> The General Procurator Jodocus Hogenstein put it very clearly in 1455 that the Knights of the Teutonic Order are “laicos et rerum curialium ignaros” and therefore dependent on the expert advice of educated persons, see Schuchard, ‘Rom’, 75.



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**Přemysl Bar** – medieval studies, late medieval charters, diplomacy, the reign of Sigismund of Luxembourg, Polish–Teutonic conflict; assistant professor at the Department of Auxiliary Historical Sciences and Archive Studies, Masaryk University; e-mail: bar@phil.muni.cz