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THE RELIGIOUS IDENTITY OF THE TEUTONIC ORDER BAILIWICK OF UTRECHT, 1560–2006

KEYWORDS

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ABSTRACT

The radical amendments to its statutes in 2006 notwithstanding, the Teutonic Order Bailiwick of Utrecht is still defined by its Protestant outlook and its roots in ancient nobility, an identity that dates back nearly four centuries. Between 1615 and 1640, despite having remained Catholic over a remarkably long period, it had broken with the central order in Germany, becoming an institution for Reformed, married noblemen. The admission requirements were four noble quarters and membership of the Reformed church. In this way, the order fitted seamlessly within the structures of the Dutch Republic. In the revolutionary period after 1795, the order sought to survive by keeping a low profile. In 1811 Napoleon dissolved the Bailiwick. After the restoration of Dutch independence, this measure was reversed by King William I. In the new kingdom, adherence to the old admission criteria demarcated the old nobility not only from the new aristocracy, but also from the old Catholic nobility in the South. After the rupture of the kingdom in 1830 and the introduction of the liberal constitution in 1848 – which introduced a parliamentary system, abolished the rights of the aristocracy and brought equality of religions – the Protestant nobility assumed a leading role in the defence of traditional values. Into this picture fits the reinforced Protestant identity of the Bailiwick of Utrecht. In the twentieth century, this identity expressed itself through the increasing importance of its donations policy.

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It is not easy to become a member of the Knightly Teutonic Order, Bailiwick of Utrecht. Not only are members required to be “of a Protestant family or affiliation”, they must also submit their patents of nobility: “one paternal noble quarter and one maternal noble quarter, in which the paternal quarter should belong to a lineage whose nobility predates 1795”.¹ Before its statutes were amended in 2006, matters were even stricter, requiring four quarters of old nobility and membership of a Protestant denomination. These requirements are at the heart of the identity of the Bailiwick of Utrecht as an organisation of Protestant nobles in the Netherlands. Today, the website formulates the order’s charitable objectives in the following words: “Guided by a Protestant vision, the fund benefits a range of target groups and projects, such as prevention, social projects and individual assistance.”²

In this article, which is based on two lectures I gave in September 2017, I show how this institution of Protestant nobles in the Kingdom of the Netherlands developed from a Catholic Military Order in the Holy Roman Empire.³ By following events from the mid-sixteenth century to the beginning of the twenty-first, I was able to identify long-term trends. This approach is relevant to various areas of research. The first area is the history of Military Orders such as the Order of St John and the Teutonic Order in the period after the Reformation, which has been explored relatively little. While much has been published on the origins and golden age of these orders of the time of the Crusades and in the three subsequent centuries, there is much less on the period after 1600. A second domain is the history of the aristocracy, especially in the Netherlands. By following an aristocratic organisation over a longer period, such study can provide greater insight into the composition of the Dutch elite. The image of the Netherlands as a bourgeois, urban society has long been debated, one aspect being the much underestimated importance

¹ Akte van Statutenwijziging Ridderlijke Duitse Orde, Balije van Utrecht, 2006, Utrecht, Archief Ridderlijke Duitse Orde – Nieuw Archief (From 1811) (henceforth as ARDO-NA), no inv. number, art. 8-2a, p. 4; see also *Nederlands Adelsboek 2006–2007*.

² *RDO Balije van Utrecht*, Ridderlijke Duitse Orde, last modified 2018, accessed 21 February 2018, <http://www.rdo.nl/>

³ The first lecture entitled “Calvinists only! The religious admission policy of the Teutonic Order Bailiwick of Utrecht, 1615–2006” was presented at *Piety, Pugnacity and Property*, Military Orders Conference 7 in Museum of the Order of St. John, St. John’s Gate (London), 7–10 September 2017; the other one, “Die religiöse Identität der Ballei Utrecht des Deutschen Ordens, 1560–2006”, was given at the conference *Die Ritterorden in den regionalen kirchlichen Strukturen (Diözesen, Pfarreien, andere geistliche Institutionen): XIX Ordines Militares*, Colloquia Torunensia Historica, at the Nicolaus Copernicus University (Toruń), 20–23 September 2017.

of the aristocracy.⁴ Part of this project is my current research into members of the Bailiwick of Utrecht.

To follow these developments over the long term, I take a chronological approach that first outlines how the Bailiwick of Utrecht changed its religious identity from a Catholic Military Order in 1560 to a club comprised of married Protestant nobles who had broken with the Grand Master in 1640. In the subsequent period, which ends in 1795, I examine the position of the Bailiwick in the Dutch Republic, a state in which the religion was officially Dutch Reformed, but in which other denominations were tolerated. The period that followed was one of revolution and restoration, in which the aristocracy and the churches that had dominion lost their positions of privilege, only partially to regain them once more. The final period started in 1848, the year of European revolutions, when the Netherlands gained a liberal constitution that abolished aristocratic privileges and put all denominations on an equal footing. With regard to the Bailiwick of Utrecht, I establish how an organisation that was so much part of the pre-revolutionary establishment maintained itself in modern times, and examine the adaptations it underwent. The end point is 2006, when the current statutes were established and the criteria for membership were reformulated.

A SLOW PATH TO PROTESTANTISM (1560–1640)

In the third quarter of the sixteenth century, radical change came to the territories where the Bailiwick of Utrecht had its possessions. The Northern Netherlands were part of the Burgundian Circle in which Charles V had united his lands on the North Sea. Some areas had been brought under Habsburg control just shortly before. The incorporation of the Duchy of Guelders in 1543 brought all the Utrecht commanderies under the authority of a single ruler. Until the middle of the sixteenth century, Utrecht was an integral part of the Teutonic Order under the Grand Master and the German Master. The Bailiwick thus shared in the fluctu-

⁴ Paul Brusse and Wijnand Wilhelmus Mijnhardt, *Towards a New Template for Dutch History: De-urbanization and the Balance between City and Countryside*, trans. Beverly Jackson (Zwolle: Waanders, 2011), 63–99; *Investment behaviour, political change and economic growth in the Netherlands 1780–1920*, O.C Gelderblom, Research project NWO (2017–2013), last modified 2018, accessed 9 April 2018, <https://www.nwo.nl/onderzoek-en-resultaten/onderzoeksprojecten/i/74/28074.html>. In this article the words nobility and aristocracy are being used as synonyms as a translation for the Dutch word “adel”. In Dutch, “aristocratie” is simply a synonym for “adel”. Egbert J. Wolleswinkel, *Nederlands Adelsrecht. Wettelijke adel als historisch gegroeid instituut* (The Hague: Nederlandsche Leeuw, 2012), 11–17.

ating tendencies of development and recovery. Its structure was the classical one of knight-brethren and priest-brethren.⁵ Religious identity was part of the order's tradition.⁶ As in the other bailiwicks, the original ideals – fighting for the faith and caring for the sick and wounded – faded away. Increasingly, the order served the needs of its members and became a “hospice of the German nobility”.⁷ In the mid-sixteenth century, the Bailiwick of Utrecht was affected by abuses such as drunkenness, luxurious lifestyles, the breaking of celibacy and the sale of offices. Two land commanders – Albert van Egmond van Merestein and Frans van Loo – openly conducted relationships with women. Van Loo, who was suspected of Protestant sympathies, also ended the recruitment of priests.⁸

Protestantism, which was then emerging mainly in its Calvinist variant, was persecuted by Philip II, who, in 1555, succeeded his father Charles V in both the Netherlands and Spain. The dissatisfaction caused by his policy was expressed particularly by the nobility led by William the Silent, stadtholder of Holland, Zeeland and Utrecht. Due to their social background, the Teutonic knights found themselves aligned with the political opposition. Tensions escalated rapidly, coming to a head in a wave of iconoclasm in the summer of 1566, which reached Utrecht at the end of August. While the church of the Teutonic Order was spared, considerable damage was wrought to the neighbouring Church of St Mary. Profoundly shocked, Philip II appointed his general, the Duke of Alba, governor of the Netherlands, and dispatched him to restore order – which the Iron Duke proceeded to do with the utmost harshness. For a period, Alba directed operations against rebels and Protestants from his headquarters in the *Duitsche Huis*, the seat of the Bailiwick of Utrecht. Countless rebels, actual or alleged, were sentenced by a Council of Troubles.⁹ Many fled, including William the Silent.

⁵ Johannes A. Mol, “Deutschherren und Johannitter im Bistum Utrecht und ihre Pfarreien,” in *Rittenorden und Kirche im Mittelalter*, ed. Zenon Hubert Nowak, *Ordines Militares. Colloquia Torunensia Historica IX* (Toruń: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, 1997), 113–127; Rombert J. Stapel, “Power to the Educated? Priest-brethren and their Education, Using Data of the Utrecht Bailiwick of the Teutonic Order, 1350–1660,” in *The Military Orders*, vol. 5, *Politics and Power*, ed. Peter Edbury (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2012), 337–348.

⁶ The religious identity of the Teutonic Order in the Middle Ages has recently been described, see: Marcus Wüst, *Studien zum Selbstverständnis des Deutschen Ordens im Mittelalter*, *Quellen und Studien zur Geschichte des Deutschen Ordens* 73 (Weimar: VDG, 2013), 32–47.

⁷ Johannes A. Mol, “The Hospice of the German Nobility. Changes in the Admission Policy of the Teutonic Knights in the Fifteenth Century,” in *Mendicants, Military Orders and Regionalism in Medieval Europe*, ed. Jürgen Sarnowsky (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999), 115–130.

⁸ Rombert J. Stapel, “Onder dese ridderen zijn oec papen. De priesterbroeders van de Duitse Orde in de balije Utrecht (1350–1600),” *Jaarboek voor Middeleeuwse Geschiedenis* 11 (2008): 218–220.

⁹ Henry Kamen, *The Duke of Alba* (New Haven–London: Yale University Press, 2004), 75–96.

The partially successful uprising in Holland and Zeeland in 1572 cut off the land commandery from the commanderies of Maasland, Leiden, Katwijk, Schelmuinen, Schoonhoven and Middelburg, whose possessions had been gravely affected by the hostilities. The command of the Bailiwick of Utrecht reported on this to the Grand Master in Mergentheim. The uprising also led to divisions within the chapter of the Bailiwick. While Land Commander Frans van Loo and coadjutor Albert van Egmond van Merestein – who had been charged with the day-to-day management of the Bailiwick 1570 – both inclined to Protestantism, the sympathies of most commanders were strongly Catholic and Royalist. However, when the Spanish troops were expelled from Utrecht in February 1577, the properties of the Bailiwick lay once more within a single administrative area, in which the religious climate was relatively tolerant. In Utrecht it was even formally permitted for different religions to co-exist, a situation that lasted until the summer of 1580, when open Catholic worship was forbidden. From that point on, Calvinism was the official religion, with the Reformed Church serving as public church (*publieke kerk*).¹⁰ However, the public church was not the same as the state church. No one was forced to become a member. According to the Union of Utrecht, the de facto constitution of the new Dutch Republic from 1579, the freedom of conscience was guaranteed, unlike freedom of worship.

The interdiction of Catholic worship had far-reaching consequences for many religious institutions. Monasteries were closed one by one. The position of the powerful and immensely rich collegiate churches – the chapters – was more complex.¹¹ Most canons, who had been consistent supporters of the Revolt, now followed the Reformation. But radical Calvinists demanded the abolition of the collegiate churches and confiscation of the goods *ad pios usus*, to pay the salaries of Reformed ministers and to support Reformed poor relief. In this they were unsuccessful: the noble and patrician families – from which the canons were drawn – dominated the Provincial States of Utrecht to an extent that safeguarded the interests of the organisations that were under threat.¹² The same applied to the

¹⁰ Jonathan I. Israel, *The Dutch Republic. Its Rise, Greatness and Fall* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 397–413; James C. Kennedy, *A Concise History of the Netherlands* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 151–153.

¹¹ The Dutch word *kapittel* (chapter in English), can refer to both the board of the Bailiwick of Utrecht and to the five collegiate churches in Utrecht. To avoid confusion, I use the word chapter only for the Teutonic Order.

¹² Benjamin J. Kaplan, *Calvinists and Libertines. Confession and Community in Utrecht 1578–1620* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 113–116; Jan de Vries, “Searching for a Role: The Economy of Utrecht in the Golden Age of the Dutch Republic,” in *Masters of Light. Dutch Painters in Utrecht during the Golden Age*, ed. Joneath A. Spicer and Lynn Federle Orr (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), 53–54.

Teutonic Knights and the Hospitallers, whose principal seat in the Netherlands was also in Utrecht. However, both organisations could be reproached for having loyalties to a foreign leader – the former in Mergentheim, the latter in Malta – and for being of a Catholic persuasion, all while the collegiate churches were moving towards Protestantism.

With the Teutonic Order, the opposite happened: convinced Catholics seized power. In late 1576, coadjutor Van Egmond van Merestein was forced to resign. He was succeeded by Jacob Taets van Amerongen, a convinced Catholic who was faithful to the king and the Grand Master. Next to come under pressure was the position of the land commander. After repeated entreaties to take a back seat, Van Loo agreed, and left the order in early 1579.¹³ The chapter of the Bailiwick chose Taets van Amerongen to replace him. Taets vigorously set about tightening discipline and the performance of religious duties at the Bailiwick. He appointed priests to conduct services properly, and restored traditions that had lapsed, such as the washing of feet on Maundy Thursday. His appointment as land commander received the immediate recognition of the Grand Master. Philip II, the sovereign, was quick to follow suit – an indication of the extent to which the new land commander's sympathies lay with the allies of the Spanish. As an explicit expression of solidarity with the Crusader tradition, Taets commissioned a series of portraits of all land commanders since 1231.¹⁴ The Catholic nature of the project was stressed by the phrase *Godt hebbe de ziel* – literally, “May God receive his his soul” – under each man's name.

The abjuration of Philip II as Lord of the Netherlands by the rebellious States-General in 1581 also meant that he no longer had sovereignty over Bailiwick of Utrecht, a role that was now assumed by the States of Utrecht – which, despite the land commander's obvious Spanish sympathies, maintained its policy of tolerance towards the Bailiwick. The latter responded by accepting convinced Catholics as knights and by celebrating the Mass in its church. The ban on open Catholic worship was circumvented by bribing the sheriff. In the other provinces,

¹³ Johannes A. Mol, “Trying to survive. The Military Orders in Utrecht, 1580–1620,” in *The Military Orders and the Reformation. Choices, State Building and the Weight of Tradition*, ed. Johannes A. Mol, Klaus Militzer, and Helen Nicholson (Hilversum: Verloren, 2006), 198; *Archieven der Ridderlijke Duitse Orde Balije van Utrecht*, vol. 1, ed. Jan Jacob de Geer van Oudegein (Utrecht: Kemink, 1871), cx; J.H. de Vey Mestdagh, *De Utrechtse Balije der Duitse Orde. Ruim 750 jaar geschiedenis van de Orde in de Nederlanden* (Utrecht–Alden Biesen, 1988), 43; Daniela Gröger-Schiemann, *Die Deutschordensballei Utrecht während der Reformationszeit: die Landkommende zwischen Rebellion und Staatsbildung*, Quellen und Studien zur Geschichte des Deutschen Ordens 68 (Weimar: VDG, 2015), 150–151.

¹⁴ Daantje Meuwissen, *Gekoesterde traditie: de portretreeks met de landcommandeurs van de Utrechtse Balije van de Ridderlijke Duitse Orde* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2011), 84–106.

the focus of the commanderies did not lie on maintaining Catholicism: the order's churches in Holland and Zeeland had introduced Dutch Reformed rites in the period after 1572. In Schelluinen the order even had to contribute to the stipend of the Reformed minister.¹⁵ In Guelders, the parish church in Doesburg became Reformed. Rather than becoming discouraged, Taets van Amerongen attempted to recover losses the Bailiwick had incurred outside Utrecht. With the support of the States of Utrecht, he even succeeded in regaining some possessions that had been confiscated in Frisia. This did not apply to the use of churches, however.

The fidelity of Taets van Amerongen to Grand Master Maximilian of Austria became apparent when he had Utrecht knights serve against the Turks. He also implemented the 1606 amendments to the order's statutes in the Bailiwick of Utrecht. But questions of loyalty were made more acute by the fact that he maintained close links with the Biesen Bailiwick, which had considerable possessions in the Spanish Netherlands. Things could not continue to go well. After his death in 1612, Taets was succeeded by another Catholic, Diederik Bloys van Treslong, whom Taets had put forward as coadjutor. When, in 1615, Bloys tried to arrange his own succession by a Catholic, he was blocked by the States of Utrecht, which demanded that a new coadjutor should adhere to *de heylige christelijcke gereformeerde religie* – the holy Reformed faith.¹⁶ The post went to Jasper van Lynden, whose religious profile was not entirely explicit, although he was certainly not Catholic. His assumption of the post of land commander after Bloys' death in May 1619 brought an end to Catholic leadership of the Bailiwick. Later, this came to be seen as a turning point in its history: resolutions concerning the organisation's identity referred consistently to 1619.

It was not Van Lynden who guided the process whereby Bailiwick became Protestant: he died within a year. Like the earlier portraits in the series, his bears the words *Godt hebbe de ziel*.¹⁷ It was the last portrait to do so. But one last attempt was made to re-Catholicise the Bailiwick. Grand Master Charles of Austria nom-

¹⁵ Huib J. Zuidervaart, *Ridders, Priesters en Predikanten in Schelluinen. De geschiedenis van een Commanderie van de Ridderlijke Duitse Orde, Balije van Utrecht* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2013), 105.

¹⁶ Mol, "Trying to survive," 201.

¹⁷ Here, Meuwissen mistakenly concludes that Van Lynden was Catholic. In fact, Van Lynden's position was probably more intermediate, possibly as a "lover of the Reformed religion", someone who conformed to the Reformed church without being a member. Gröger–Schiemann goes to the opposite extreme, seeing Van Lynden as "der erste protestantische Landkomtur". In this, she follows De Geer van Oudegein, who describes Van Lynden as a professed Calvinist. Meuwissen and Gröger–Schiemann base themselves excessively on a view of Catholicism and Protestantism as diametric opposites, without seeing the diffuse middle group researchers have described in recent decades. Mol assumes this group, and places Van Lynden in this category.

inated a Catholic land commander, but to no avail. The new land commander appointed by the Bailiwick's chapter in April 1620 was Hendrik Casimir van Nassau, a boy of eight. Behind this move was stadtholder Maurits of Orange, son of William the Silent, who had tightened his grip on the States of Utrecht in 1618 and ended the policy of religious tolerance. With the outbreak of the Thirty Years' War and the imminent expiry of the Twelve Years' Truce in 1621, it was enormously important to have a loyal Protestant organisation under the leadership of a member of the stadtholder's family. Acting as the land commander's tutor was his father Ernst Casimir, who had collaborated on Maurits' seizure of power in 1618, and who also took office as stadtholder of Frisia in 1620.

Led by the Nassaus, the Bailiwick of Utrecht was now firmly anchored in the struggle against Spain. It could now be properly Protestantised.¹⁸ This was work that Hendrik Casimir continued once he had been declared to have reached the age of majority, and after he had succeeded his father – fallen at Roermond – as stadtholder of Frisia. One problem, however, was that some of the knights were still loyal to the old faith. Even though new members were supposed in principle to conform to the public church, they did not always do so. In this respect, the Bailiwick of Utrecht followed the same pattern as the Utrecht collegiate churches and the knightships – assemblies of nobles – in the various provinces, who were allowing the old practices to dwindle as their adherents died.¹⁹ By this time, most nobles adhered to the Reformation, either out of conviction, or to retain political power. In some cases the process of religious choice could cut straight through a family, as it did with the Taets van Amerongen in the east of the province, where relatives of the devoutly Catholic land commander introduced Protestantism around their castles. The choices were made over a period of some seventy years, from 1560 and 1630. From then on, the relative patterns and distributions of faiths were largely fixed. Noble families that remained loyal or returned to the old church played an important role in upholding the Catholic infrastructure.²⁰

Archieven, 1, ed. De Geer van Oudegein, cxiii; Gröger-Schiemann, *Die Deutschordensballei*, 184; Meuwissen, *Gekoesterde traditie*, 136; Mol, "Trying to survive," 202.

¹⁸ Mol, "Trying to survive," 201.

¹⁹ The last Catholic canon died in 1680. Bertrand Forclaz, *Catholiques au défi de la Réforme. La coexistence confessionnelle à Utrecht au XVIIe siècle* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2014), 43, 46–48, 50, 61–62, 120 and 122; Genji Yasuhira, "Civic Agency in the Public Sphere. Catholics' Survival Tactics in Utrecht, 1620s–1670s" (PhD Diss., Tilburg University, 2019), 45 and 117.

²⁰ Conrad Gietman, "Katholieke adel in een protestants gewest, 1621–1795," in *Adel en ridderschap in Gelderland. Tien eeuwen geschiedenis*, ed. Coen O.A. Schimmelpenninck van der Oije and Jacob Donkers (Zwolle: WBooks, 2013), 177–209; Jaap Geraerts, *Patrons of the Old Faith. The Catholic Nobility in Utrecht and Guelders c. 1580–1702* (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 190–249.

Even after 1615, the knight-brethren of the Bailiwick of Utrecht had been committed to the vow of celibacy, as in the Protestant bailiwicks in Germany. In 1635, Albrecht van Duvenvoorde, a Catholic knight, resigned his position as commander because he wished to marry. Abolition of celibacy was to cause a break with Mergentheim, towards which Hendrik Casimir steered, laying careful plans with the States of Utrecht. In 1637, to ensure continuity, the States appointed his brother, Willem Frederik, coadjutor.²¹ Next, they proposed the abolition of celibacy, to which the Bailiwick's chapter agreed on 10 November of the same year. It took the States over two years – until 8 May 1640 – to ratify this decision.²² Although this put the Bailiwick of Utrecht in a wholly new position, Hendrik Casimir could no longer give guidance: two months later he was mortally wounded during a clash with the Spanish on the coast of Flanders. He was succeeded both as stadtholder and land commander by Willem Frederik. In the series of portraits of the land commanders, his portrait was the first to lack the words *Godt hebbe de ziel*, which were no longer consistent with Reformed doctrine on the attainment of salvation.

To Mergentheim, the abolition of celibacy was unacceptable. Nonetheless, like the Grand Masters, successive land commanders of Biesen continued to regard the Bailiwick of Utrecht as part of the order, and made various attempts to achieve reunification.²³ For symbolic reasons, Utrecht's seat in the chapter-general remained empty. It is nonetheless questionable whether the break of 1640 can be seen as the outcome of a long process of disengagement. Although, in her dissertation, Daniela Gröger-Schiemann is emphatic that this was the case, Hans Mol takes the view that the Bailiwick of Utrecht long maintained its ties with the central order, as the policies of land commanders Jacob Taets van Amerongen and Diederik Bloys van Treslong were totally at odds with disengagement.²⁴ Instead, the break was the result of external factors, in which a crucial role was played by the States of Utrecht. While they initially gave it scope to maintain its Catho-

²¹ *Archieven*, 1, ed. De Geer van Oudegein, cxiv.

²² *Ibid.*, cxiii; De Vey Mestdagh, *De Utrechtse Balije*, 44.

²³ De Vey Mestdagh, *De Utrechtse Balije*, 44; Udo Arnold and Bernhard Demel, "Die kalvinistische Ballei Utrecht," in *800 Jahre Deutscher Orden. Ausstellung des Germanischen Nationalmuseums Nürnberg in Zusammenarbeit mit der Internationalen Historischen Kommission zur Erforschung des Deutschen Ordens*, ed. Udo Arnold and Gerhard Bott (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann, 1990), 252; Bernhard Demel, "Die Deutschordensballei Utrecht in der Reichs- und Ordensüberlieferung von der frühen Neuzeit bis in die Zeit Napoleons," in *Unbekannte Aspekte der Geschichte des Deutschen Ordens*, ed. Bernhard Demel (Vienna–Cologne–Weimar: Böhlau, 2005), 9–92; Udo Arnold and Maïke Trentin–Mayer, *Deutscher Orden 1190–2000. Ein Führer durch das Deutschordensmuseum in Bad Mergentheim* (Bad Mergentheim: Deutschordensmuseum, 2004), 79.

²⁴ Gröger-Schiemann, *Die Deutschordensballei*, 28–65; Mol, "Trying to survive," 202–205.

lic identity, they later allowed the admission only of Protestant knights, and imposed the abolition of celibacy. The prime reason was their fear of loyalty to enemy powers.

A PROTESTANT INSTITUTION IN A PROTESTANT STATE, 1640–1795

By 1640, the foundations of the Bailiwick of Utrecht as a Military Order had fallen away. Although it was some time before the last Catholic died, the Bailiwick was now a secular institution for married Protestant nobles. On a few occasions after 1615, dispensation was granted for the accession of Catholics, the last being Willem de Wael van Vronesteijn in 1640.²⁵ The Bailiwick had become Protestant to allow its incorporation into the Dutch Republic. Its members sat in the meetings of the provincial states, or served in the army. Various members were explicit champions of the Protestant cause, first against the Spanish and later against the armies of Louis XIV. Some paid for it with their lives, not only Hendrik Casimir I, but also commander Andries Schimmelpenninck van der Oije and two land commanders, Count Hendrik Trajectinus van Solms Braunfels and Hendrik Casimir II. Both of the latter fought with King-Stattholder William III in the Southern Netherlands against the French, such as at Neerwinden, where another participant was Godard van Reede, the next land commander, who had been a particular confidant of William III since the desperate struggle against the French invaders in 1672. Van Reede also played an important role in the Irish campaign against the men of James II, for which he was awarded the title 1st Earl of Athlone.

In Mergentheim and Biesen it was abundantly clear that political loyalty was the key factor in the change to Protestantism at the Bailiwick of Utrecht and thus in the break with the central order. It was hoped that the international recognition of the Dutch Republic brought by the signing of the Peace of Westphalia would take the sting out of matters. From 1666, the then Grand Master, Johann Kaspar von Ampringen, attempted to restore Utrecht to its former position in the order. Indicating to land commander Floris Borre van Amerongen that the circumstances had now changed, he invited the Utrecht commanders to reunite with “the body of the order”, to recognise the Grand Master as their leader, and to pay their

²⁵ *Wapenboek der Ridders van de Duitse Orde Balije van Utrecht sedert 1581*, ed. Willem Jan d’Ablaing van Giessenburg (The Hague: Van Doorn, 1871), vii.

contributions once more.²⁶ They would be allowed to maintain their faith and to recognise the States of Utrecht as their sovereign. Ampringen referred to the Bailiwick of Saxony, a Lutheran organisation that occupied a full and uncompromised position in the order.²⁷ Regarding the thorny questions of confession and celibacy, consultations with the papal nuncio had indicated that some flexibility could be shown.²⁸ The States of Utrecht were fully and expressly included in the negotiations, which were conducted by land commander Edmond Godfried von Boholz from Biesen. Borre van Amerongen was interested in reunification, but referred the matter to the States of Utrecht. After a decision had been postponed several times, it was finally referred to the States-General, as any reunification of the Bailiwick of Utrecht with the Teutonic Order in the Holy Roman Empire was a question that concerned the Republic as a whole. Matters were still unresolved when Utrecht was occupied by the troops of Louis XIV in June 1672. Hoping to capitalise on events, Boholz attempted, through the French authorities, to prompt the States towards an accord. When he failed, the question of reunification was tainted with the suspicion of collaboration, which put a speedy end to his second attempt, in 1685. This second proposal was also less attractive to Utrecht than the first had been: it put reintroduction of celibacy back on the agenda, but would allow sitting members to remain until their death.²⁹ It is also the question whether any exemption from vows of celibacy would have had Rome's blessing.

The transformation of the Bailiwick of Utrecht into a body comprised of married nobles also had far-reaching consequences for the organisation's internal structure. The knights no longer lived in the commanderies, but with their families in their castles and, in winter, their residences in town. The houses of the commanderies thus stood empty and fell into disrepair. One by one, they were sold or demolished. Only the *Duitse Huis* in Utrecht remained in use – for meetings

²⁶ Briefwisseling gevoerd tussen de administrator van de hoogmeester, de landcommandeur van Alden Biesen en de stadhouder van de Balije van Lotharingen met de landcommandeur van Utrecht over hereniging van de Balije van Utrecht met de D.O., 1662–1805, Utrecht, Archief Ridderlijke Duitse Orde – Oud Archief (1200–1811) (henceforth as: ARDO-OA), inv. no. 131; De Vey Mestdagh, *De Utrechtse Balije*, 49; Demel, “Die Deutschordensballei,” 60–61.

²⁷ De Vey Mestdagh, *De Utrechtse Balije*, 49; Demel, “Die Deutschordensballei,” 62. Some years later, in 1680–1681, Ampringen established the triconfessional (Lutheran-Calvinist-Catholic) identity of the Bailiwick of Hessen, see: Winfried Irgang, “Johann Caspar von Ampringen (20.3.1664–9.9.1684),” in *Die Hochmeister des Deutschen Ordens 1190–1994*, ed. Udo Arnold, Quellen und Studien zur Geschichte des Deutschen Ordens 40 (Marburg: N.G. Elwert Verlag, 1998), 228.

²⁸ Demel, “Die Deutschordensballei,” 62–63.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 79–80.

and as a pied-à-terre for the land commander. The churches of the commanderies were taken over by the local Reformed congregations; that of the land commandery stood empty until its collapse during the great storm of 1674, which swept across the country and also destroyed the nave of Utrecht's cathedral.³⁰ While the knights derived prestige and lucrative addition income from their membership of the Bailiwick of Utrecht, few worked towards its continued existence. A first attempt at restoration was undertaken by Godard van Reede, the man involved in the Irish campaign, who became land commander in 1697. To involve members in the Bailiwick, he convoked more frequent meetings of the chapter, and also decided to add new portraits to the series of land commanders, for which no new work had been commissioned after Hendrik Casimir I. Van Reede had portraits painted of his predecessors, and also of himself.³¹ It goes without saying that none bore the legend *Godt hebbe de siel*. Nonetheless, the series was saved, and has been continued to this day.

After Van Reede's death in 1703, decline set in once more. His successors did little to halt it. The management of the order's goods became even more chaotic. Revenues from the Bailiwick's farmlands – which were already falling due to the agricultural crisis – reduced farmers' ability to cover their lease. At the chapter meeting of 1753, the newly appointed coadjutor Unico Wilhelm van Wassenaer gave a sombre report on the state of affairs at the Bailiwick. He was instructed to propose reforms. After close consultation with the States of Utrecht, these were implemented between 1756 and 1762.³² Their most important components were estate management by a professional steward, the automatic succession of the land commander by the coadjutor, and a construction whereby a commander could be relieved of his duties, accepting a lifelong stipend in compensation. The admission of new members, which until then had taken place under the authority of the States of Utrecht, was devolved to the Bailiwick itself, which would then inform the States. On this, one condition was imposed: checks on noble descent and Reformed religion would be sharpened. As had long been the case, admission to the chapter was possible only on the basis of four noble quarters. Unlike the central order, the Bailiwick of Utrecht had not raised the requirement to sixteen quarters. Potential members were put forward as children; when a place became available through decease, the expectant – nominee – who was next on the list was permit-

³⁰ Gerard van der Schrier and Rob Groenland, "A reconstruction of 1 August 1674 thunderstorms over the Low Countries," *Natural Hazards and Earth System Sciences* 17, no. 2 (2017): 157–170.

³¹ Meuwissen, *Gekoesterde traditie*, 146–156.

³² Renger E. de Bruin, "Eine gelungene Neuordnung. Die Ballei Utrecht des Deutschen Ordens, 1753–1795," *Ordines Militares Colloquia Torunsia Historica. Yearbook for the Study of the Military Orders* 21 (2016): 189–220.

ted to submit his patents of nobility and confirmation of his membership of the Dutch Reformed church.

In 1740 the requirements for this were laid down in regulations that made reference to the decisions dating from 1619. It was stipulated with regard to religion that an expectant with a church certificate would be able to prove his adherence to the *waare christelyke gereformeerde religie* – the true Dutch Reformed faith³³ – both baptism and confession. This also applied to German expectants, who had to be adherents of a *Reformierte Kirche*. Lutherans need not apply: “those of the Augsburg Confession and other persuasion are excluded”.³⁴ This was strictly enforced. It was thus that the application of Carl Friedrich von Mauswitz was rejected in 1765 for his “being of the Lutheran Confession”.³⁵ Clearly, a Catholic in the chapter was now out of the question. Neither could Catholics qualify for the list of expectants. After all, a man could convert. Next to the name of Joseph von Sachsen Gotha Hildburghausen, a note has been added to the list: “gone over to Rome”.³⁶ He had gone into imperial service, which was clearly worth a Mass or two. The focus on religion did not stop at the application procedure: members had to continue to demonstrate their devoutness. The regulations required “a commander who departed from the Reformed faith to be demoted from his rank, and to be stripped of the signs of the order”.³⁷ In practice, this never happened; problems at admission arose only in the case of German expectants. In the eighteenth century, Dutch nobles who were not Catholic were always Reformed: their Lutheran peers in the provinces of Guelders and Overijssel had already converted in the previous century.

In the final quarter of the eighteenth century, the nature of the Bailiwick of Utrecht as a Reformed institution was key to two new attempts towards reunification. In 1775, the then Grand Master, Charles Alexander of Lorraine, took an initiative to restore the links with Utrecht. As it had a century before, the line of communication ran through Biesen,³⁸ where the land commander, Caspar Anton von der Heyden genannt Belderbusch and his Alsatian colleague Baron Beatus Con-

³³ Afschriften van resolutiën van de D.O. Balije van Utrecht aangaande het vaststellen van enige statuten ordonnantiën en artikelen deze balije betreffende, (1608–1805), ARDO-OA, inv. no. 8; Resolutiën van de landcommanderij van Utrecht, 4 vols, 1561–1827, ARDO-OA, inv. no. 11–3, fol. 64r.

³⁴ Derde serie van de resoluties (sept.–dec. 1760), 1 October 1760, Utrecht, Het Utrechts Archief, 233 Staten van Utrecht, inv. no. 234–92.

³⁵ Resolutiën van de landcommanderij [...], 1561–1827, see above (note 33), fol. 135.

³⁶ Namen van de leden van de D.O. Balije van Utrecht, met hunne kwartieren en wapens, 1634–ca, 1750, ARDO-OA, inv. no. 192.

³⁷ Derde serie van de resoluties, September–December 1760, see above (note 34).

³⁸ Demel, “Die Deutschordensballei,” 83.

rad Philipp Friedrich Reuttner von Weyl had contacts with the Utrecht knight Count Johan Walraat van Welderen, an experienced diplomat and a confidant of Stadtholder William V. The Grand Master and the land commander in Biesen were sympathetic to Utrecht's position regarding the Reformed faith and the question of celibacy. Unlike his fiercely Catholic predecessor Clemens August, Charles Alexander was a moderate man. The plan that emerged from their deliberations included recognition for the authority of the Grand Master, annual dues, and a resumption of Utrecht's participation in the chapter-general in Mergentheim. Respect for the Reformed religion and the role of the Netherlands' government institutions was a concession, and it was a considerable step that *une vie chretienne et chaste même dans le mariage* – a life that was Christian and chaste, even in marriage – was sufficient.³⁹ At the Utrecht chapter, the proposals met with suspicion. After consulting a confrère at Hessen Bailiwick, Commander Jacob Hendrik van Rechteren van Westerveld warned of the risks: the cost, possible consequences to rights of succession, and conflicts with the States of Utrecht.⁴⁰ The objections were convincing and the chapter did not consider the proposal. However, it did consider the second proposal, that of 1791, in which Van Welderen – promoted by now to coadjutor – was involved once more. Although the then Grand Master, Maximilian Francis of Austria was also a moderate man, the religious concessions proposed for Utrecht went less far. Taking the tri-confessional Hessen Bailiwick as a model, it was proposed that the installation of new members would be performed by a Roman Catholic priest, but “without prejudice to the Reformed faith”.⁴¹ It was not specified how that would be done. The greatest problem with the proposal was the reintroduction of celibacy, if only for new members. The Utrecht chapter abruptly rejected this demand. Once again, reunification was not to be.

The proposal that installation should be performed by a priest went to the heart of a profound cultural difference. When staying in Bonn at the court of Grand Master Clemens August of Wittelsbach some forty years earlier, Unico Wilhelm van Wassenaer had been amazed by the lengthy Catholic rituals accompanying the installation of new members of the order. In Utrecht this was a much more sober affair – consistent, of course, with the Calvinist approach to life. A new member was installed during the next meeting of the chapter. He simply signed an undertaking that he would fulfil the resolutions of the States of Utrecht that applied to the order, and that he would defend the order's rights.

³⁹ Briefwisseling gevoerd tussen [...], 1662–1805, see above (note 26), 51.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 51.

⁴¹ Ibid., 53.

The land commander shook his hand, and hung the order's cross round his neck.⁴² There was no religious element: no clergyman, no prayer, and no oath. This lack of ritual was characteristic for the secular nature of the Bailiwick. Protestantism functioned primarily as an admission criterion. After all it was introduced to meet the demands of the States of Utrecht. In a way, the whole Dutch Republic was a secular state, at least compared to other European countries in the Ancien Régime.⁴³ Although the Reformed church had a privileged position, it was not a state church. The Union of Utrecht granted freedom of conscience, whereas worship of other denominations, including Catholics, was increasingly tolerated. The implementation of a full secular state, including equality of religions, had to wait until the revolutionary era.

REVOLUTION AND RESTORATION, 1795–1850

The outbreak of the French Revolution in 1789 was a serious threat to the Military Orders: its ideals of liberty, equality and fraternity were directed particularly against church and nobility, and thus, in essence, against the heirs of the Crusades. The commanderies of the Teutonic Order were confiscated, first in Alsace and Lorraine, and later in the areas west of the Rhine that were overrun between 1792 and 1794. The order's members were driven out. The commanderies of the Order of St. John underwent the same fate; not even their headquarters in Malta were spared. When the Dutch Republic crumbled in early 1795 and the Batavian Revolution was proclaimed, the Bailiwick of Utrecht also seemed to have entered the danger zone. The revolutionary provincial governments that had been set up after the deposition of the provincial States directed their efforts against bastions of the old institutions, partly for their wealth. In Utrecht, the targets were the former collegiate churches and the Teutonic Order, which defended themselves by furiously denying their clerical nature and appealing to their property rights.⁴⁴ By resorting

⁴² Vragen, met de antwoorden daarop, in het Nederlands en Frans, betreffende de plechtigheden te vervullen bij het aanstellen van een commandeur, ca. 1800, ARDO-OA, inv. no. 199. Since the States of Utrecht are mentioned here, this document must have been written before 1795.

⁴³ Yasuhira, "Civic Agency," 13–14; Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, 709–720; Kennedy, *A Concise History*, 151–153, 165–167 and 236–242; Willem Frijhoff, *Embodied Belief: Ten Essays on Religious Culture in Dutch History* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2002), 61–64; Benjamin J. Kaplan, *Divided by Faith. Religious Conflict and the Practice of Toleration in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2007), 172–197.

⁴⁴ Remonstrantie van decanen en capitularen van de vijf capitulen binnen deze stad aan het Provinciaal Bestuur's Lands van Utrecht, 1797, Utrecht, Het Utrechts Archief, 233 Staten van Utrecht, inv. no. 1146 Lappen-notulen van het Provinciaal Bestuur, (1796–1798), 4.

to this sort of judicial sleight-of-hand and by keeping a low profile, they managed to get through the years of revolution.⁴⁵

The chapter of the Bailiwick of Utrecht did not meet again until August 1802. When they did, an important item on the agenda was the dwindling number of members: the chapter had not met for eleven years, and in the meantime six members had died. As it had in the years before 1795, the appointments procedure worked in order through the list of expectants, testing each on the basis of noble quarters and their membership of the Dutch Reformed church. The abolition of social privileges and the religious demands determining membership of the various government institutions, which remained in force after the revolution, did not apply to the Bailiwick of Utrecht, which stressed its status as a private institution. Nonetheless, the criteria were interpreted in a way that would exclude a counter-revolutionary exile in London; with a German prince as land commander and another counter-revolutionary exile in London as coadjutor, the situation was already complicated enough.

The discussions about money were much more pleasant. Just as in the years before 1795, the Bailiwick's finances were flourishing. Revenues from leases were steadily increasing, with most of the surpluses going to the commanders in the form of salaries and profit sharing. The staff benefited, too. But for charity there was much less scope: about 3% of expenditure – round 1300 guilders – was intended for this, most of it, naturally enough, Reformed in nature.⁴⁶ This spending was derived from old commitments, such as the stipend of the minister at Schel-luinen.

After several relatively uneventful years, the threats returned once more. In late 1807, Louis Napoleon – the French emperor's brother, who had been appointed king of Holland – expropriated the Utrecht land commandery. The capital was being moved to Utrecht, and he needed buildings for his ministries. Eventually, a military hospital was installed there. The Bailiwick of Utrecht was paid compensation and moved to The Hague. The land commander, Volkier Rudolph Bentinck van Schoonheten – who had just taken office – was able to bring the situation to a satisfactory conclusion. But a few years later the organisation as a whole faced a new threat, as the Kingdom of Holland had in the meantime been incorporated into the French Empire. Believing the territory to contain enormous riches, Napo-

⁴⁵ Renger E. de Bruin, "Hidden in the Bushes: The Teutonic Order of the Bailiwick of Utrecht in the 1780–1806 Revolutionary Period," in *The Military Orders*, vol. 5, ed. Edbury, 349–361; Renger E. de Bruin, *Bedreigd door Napoleon. De Ridderlijke Duitse Orde, Balije van Utrecht, 1753–1838* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2012), 221–282.

⁴⁶ Generale rekeningen van de van de rentmeesters-generaal van de D.O. van alle commanderijen, 1762–1811, ARDO-OA, inv. no. 337.

leon hoped to skim off finances for his military campaigns. His measures included raising proceeds from taxation and reducing payments to reduce the public debt. An additional option was the confiscation of church property of the sort carried out in France over twenty years before. Seizing the property of the Teutonic Order in occupied territories and dissolving the order in the states of the Confederation of the Rhine in 1809 were both consistent in this earlier model, which sought to combine revolutionary zeal against a Catholic institution with attempts to cover the costs of the war.⁴⁷

On 27 February 1811, Napoleon signed a decree in which *biens d'origine ecclésiastique* in the Dutch *départements* were to be liquidated.⁴⁸ It referred explicitly to the five former collegiate churches in Utrecht and also to a number of former convents that provided noblewomen with a living. I.J.A. Gogel, the *Intendant-Général des Finances et du Trésor Impérial en Hollande*, the author of the project to dissolve the ecclesiastical properties, wrote to land commander Bentinck that the decision also applied to the Bailiwick of Utrecht.⁴⁹ While the collegiate churches quickly resigned themselves to their dissolution and accepted the compensation offered, the Bailiwick of Utrecht contested the decision. Pointing out that the Bailiwick was not named in the decree, the lawyer it appointed also indicated that its dissolution could not possibly have been the intention: since the sixteenth century, the Bailiwick had no longer been an ecclesiastical or knightly institution, but only a “simple association” focused on generating income for its members.⁵⁰ This made little impression in Paris and Amsterdam, and the procedure for liquidating the Bailiwick was set in motion, as it had been earlier with the Teutonic Order in the Confederation of the Rhine.⁵¹ But resistance had brought delay, which was

⁴⁷ Friedrich Täubl, *Der Deutsche Orden im Zeitalter Napoleons*, Quellen und Studien zur Geschichte des Deutschen Ordens 4 (Bonn: Wissenschaftliches Archiv, 1966), 171–177.

⁴⁸ Minutes des décrets impériaux (24–28 février 1811), 27 February 1811, Paris, Archives Nationales, AFIV inv. no. 530, doss. 4129, no. 79; Decreet van keizer Napoleon waarbij ook de D.O. Balije van Utrecht wordt opgeheven. Met copie van een adres aan de keizer, houdende verzoek om dit decreet niet van toepassing te doen zijn voor de Balije van Utrecht, 1811, ARDO-OA, inv. no. 19. Renger E. de Bruin, “The narrow escape of the Teutonic Order Bailiwick of Utrecht, 1811–1815,” in *The Military Orders*, vol. 6.2, *Culture and Conflict in Western and Northern Europe*, ed. J. Schenk and M. Carr (London-New York: Routledge, 2017), 222–232. Condensed from the Dutch: De Bruin, *Bedreigd door Napoleon*, 371–453.

⁴⁹ Proces-verbaal van het verhandelde in de vergadering der leden van de gesupprimeerde Duitse Orde, gehouden in het voormalige hotel der Orde te 's-Gravenhage van 4 tot 12 juni 1812, 4–12 June 1812, ARDO-NA, inv. no. 3, bijlage 3; Minuut-notulen van de intendant-generaal voor de Financiën en de Publieke Schatkist, 8–16 March 1811, The Hague, Nationaal Archief, 2.01.21, inv. no. 906 no. 9.

⁵⁰ Decreet van keizer Napoleon [...], 1811, see above (note 48), adres p. 4.

⁵¹ Täubl, *Der Deutsche Orden*, 171–177.

extended by the failure of the steward, U.W.T. Cazius, to produce the right documents and accounts. The Bailiwick was saved by what had actually been his attempt to conceal fraudulent practices: when the French troops withdrew in November 1813, no damages had been paid, and few of the order's estates had been auctioned.

Very soon after Dutch independence had been restored, Land Commander Bentinck submitted a petition to the new sovereign, William I, for the decision to be reversed. The circumstances above played a decisive role in its assessment. On 8 August 1815, after a procedure lasting over eighteen months, William signed a recovery act.⁵² In The Hague six weeks later, the land commander was able to open the first meeting. Despite overall satisfaction at the recent course of events, good humour was not guaranteed. Three members criticised Bentinck for his policy on the dissolution, and especially for his decision to dismiss steward Cazius. It was to be the prelude to years of conflict. Discussions on a return to Utrecht; the position of the new steward C.P. de Vos (who would turn out to be an even greater fraud); and the formulation of new regulations: all made for tumultuous meetings. Though the fraud delayed the purchase of a new house, one was eventually found in Utrecht. The old house was not included in the restitution, as the government had paid for it in 1808, and it remained in use as a military hospital until the late 1980s.

The question regarding the new regulations concerned the degree of autonomy left to the Bailiwick under the terms of the recovery act. There was very little, it transpired. Annual reports had to be submitted to the king, who also nominated the members, even though he did so on the basis of the order of expectants on the list. While the criteria for admission were as before – ancestry and religion⁵³ – the new word *hervormd* was used to indicate Calvinism, replacing the traditional *gereformeerde*. Each word evoked an entirely different philosophy, both theologically and organisationally. In 1816, the king transformed the old *Gereformeerde Kerk in de Verenigde Nederlanden* into the *Nederlandse Hervormde Kerk*, the new regulations turning the previously decentralised structure into a model led from above, which gave considerable authority to the king.⁵⁴ In theological and liturgi-

⁵² Staatsblad nr. 43 Wet waarbij de Duitsche Orde, Balijs van Utrecht, wordt hersteld, gearresteerd 8–8–1815 no. 55; Stukken betreffende de behandeling en vaststelling van het conceptbesluit over het herstel der Orde en de teruggave van de goederen en de kapitalen van de Orde, 1815, ARDO-NA, inv. no. 31.

⁵³ Resolutiën van de landcommanderij [...], 1561–1827, see above (note 33), inv. no. 11–4, fol. 374r–375r.

⁵⁴ Joris van Eijnatten and Fred van Lieburg, *Nederlandse religiegeschiedenis* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2005), 255–256; Kennedy, *A Concise History*, 292.

cal respects, this led to the spread of modern insights – much to the displeasure of more orthodox congregations. If he had had his way, William I would have preferred to incorporate all Protestants – and possibly even Catholics – into a national church of which he was head.⁵⁵

With increasing strictness, the king pursued an authoritarian policy, concerning himself with even the finest points of detail. Everything had to serve his power – including, of course, the Bailiwick of Utrecht. Examination of the requirements for membership fell to the *Hoge Raad van Adel* – the Supreme Council of Nobility – which had been founded in 1814 as the instrument for royal policy on the aristocracy. Since the union of the Northern and Southern Netherlands into a single kingdom in 1815, 60% of the aristocracy in the new kingdom was drawn from the old Southern-Netherlandish nobility.⁵⁶ In the South, the power to invest nobility had continued under the Habsburgs. In the North, of course, it had not. To create more nobles in the North, William I took to widespread elevation.⁵⁷ The old nobility, whose role in government had been predominant before 1795, now felt threatened on two fronts. Previously, it had been possible to exclude patricians and rich burghers from knighthoods. Now, with the titles bestowed upon them, they could take their seats in the new knighthoods, which served as electoral colleges.⁵⁸ And there they sat, alongside the members of the old families – together with Catholics, who had been excluded since 1795. While the old nobility could at least feel superior to the new, matters were not so simple regarding their relationship with the high aristocracy in the southern part of the kingdom. This included men from the old Burgundian nobility whose ancestors had been members of the Order of the Golden Fleece – princes and dukes with illustrious names such as Aremberg, Croÿ, Ligne and Mérode, who looked down on mere counts

⁵⁵ Jeroen Koch, *Koning Willem I, 1772–1843* (Amsterdam: Boom, 2013), 427–429; Kennedy, *A Concise History*, 292.

⁵⁶ Coen O.A. Schimmelpenninck van der Oije, “De Ridderschappen in Noord en Zuid, 1815–1830,” *Bulletin Trimestriel/Driemaandelijks Bulletin (de l’/van de) Association de la Noblesse du Royaume de Belgique/Vereniging van de Adel van het Koninkrijk België* 276, (octobre/oktober 2013): 27; Paul Janssens, “De politieke invloed van de adel in het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden,” in *Staats- en Natievorming in Willem I’s Koninkrijk (1815–1830)*, ed. C.A. Tamse and Els Witte (Brussel: VUB Press, 1992), 115.

⁵⁷ Cornelis Johannes Bruin, “Een verloren zaak. Adel als persoonlijke verdienste in het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden,” in *De bloem der natie. Adel en patriciaat in de Noordelijke Nederlanden*, ed. Johan Aalbers and Maarten Roy Prak (Meppel-Amsterdam: Boom, 1987), 141–164; Cornelis Constantijn van Valkenburg, “Adelsbeleid sedert 1813,” in *De Hoge Raad van Adel: geschiedenis en werkzaamheden*, ed. Matthias Adriaan Beelaerts van Blokland et al. (The Hague: Staatsuitgeverij, 1966), 55–57; Wolleswinkel, *Nederlands*, 46–49 and 61–64.

⁵⁸ Lodewijk Blok, *Stemmen en kiezen. Het kiesstelsel in Nederland in de periode 1814–1850* (Groningen: Wolters-Noordhoff / Egbert Forsten, 1987), 91–99.

and barons from the North, who in their eyes were mere gentleman farmers who spoke poor French and held heretical beliefs.

Conversely, the old Northern-Netherlandish nobility were deeply averse to Catholicism, which they scorned above all for its bigotry. An example of their attitude can be found in the account by a later land commander, the Guelders baron, Henrik Rudolph Willem van Goltstein, of his journey to the Southern provinces in 1820. During his stay in Antwerp, he wrote with amazement of the statues of the Virgin Mary, the bells calling worshippers to Mass, and the processions for which passers-by would kneel reverently.⁵⁹ Over the years the tensions were to rise. The obligations of the king's ecclesiastical policy provoked a resistance that received the express support of Southern-Netherlandish high aristocrats such as Félix de Mérode.⁶⁰ During the Belgian Revolution of 1830, these men were to take sides with the insurrectionists, a position that naturally reinforced Protestant nobles' suspicions of their Catholic peers.

The restored Bailiwick of Utrecht provided members of old Northern-Netherlandish families with surroundings in which they could be among their own. The Bailiwick represented the same kind of bastion of old nobility as the knightships in the Dutch Republic had. On the basis of the pre-revolutionary admission criteria for Protestant nobles, it excluded all the categories of people it feared: Catholics, patricians who aspired to nobility, and *nouveaux riches*. Membership gained in prestige from the fact that four noble quarters were required: the only noble lineages that could qualify were those that had not mixed with burghers, the new aristocracy or Catholics. Membership of the Bailiwick was thus a mark of aristocratic distinction.⁶¹ As many portraits show, the black cross of the order was borne with pride.

The Belgian Revolution tore William I's kingdom in half. In 1831, an attempt to recapture the South seemed to have succeeded, but was soon abandoned upon the threat of French intervention. Participants in this Ten Days' Campaign – which unleashed a wave of anti-Papism in the North – included a large number of aristocratic volunteers, including the son of the Utrecht commander Albert Carel baron Snouckaert van Schauburg. Matters reached an impasse. In 1839, William

⁵⁹ Dagboek van een reis naar Antwerpen en Brussel van H.R.W. van Goltstein, 1820, Arnhem, Gelders Archief, 568 Archief Familie Van Goltstein, inv. no. 193.

⁶⁰ Marc Reyebau, *Een Geschiedenis van België*, 6th ed. (Tielt: Lannoo, 2006), 22; Els Witte, "De constructie van België 1828–1847," in *Nieuwe Geschiedenis van België*, vol. 1, 1830–1905, ed. Els Witte (Tielt: Lannoo, 2005), 63.

⁶¹ Renger E. de Bruin, "Een protestants adelsbolwerk in het Verenigd Koninkrijk der Nederlanden. Het herstel van de Ridderlijke Duitse Orde Balije van Utrecht in 1815," in *Belg en Bataaf. De wording van het Verenigd Koninkrijk der Nederlanden*, ed. Frank Judo and Stijn Van de Perre (Antwerpen: Polis, 2015), 205–224.

I finally yielded. In frustration, he abdicated a year later in favour of his son, William II. The constitutional crisis in which the country found itself was described by the moderate liberal parliamentarian Baron Jan Karel van Goltstein – brother of the traveller named above, and himself a later coadjutor of the Bailiwick of Utrecht – as “a standstill in the mud”.⁶² Van Goltstein and his political sympathiser Willem Anne baron Schimmelpenninck van der Oije, himself a future member of the order, proposed reforms, but William II would have none of them. Only in 1848 did he give in – under pressure from revolutions abroad, and allowed a liberal constitution. In this way, the foundations were laid for parliamentary democracy. Equal status for all religious denominations brought an end to the Protestant nation, leading to a considerable sense of unrest among Protestants, especially some years later, when the Roman Catholic church restored the episcopal hierarchy in the Netherlands. The aristocracy played a leading role in the protests.⁶³

TRADITIONS IN A CHANGING WORLD, 1848–2006

While the constitution of 1848 deprived nobles of nearly all their formal power, this did not mean they no longer had an important role to play – research, particularly in the social sciences, has shown that they continued to make their mark on Dutch society.⁶⁴ Their retreat from positions of dominance was a very slow affair. Precisely because formal privileges had been abolished, organisations such as the Bailiwick of Utrecht gained a more important role in maintaining aristocratic positions. Without any concessions, the Bailiwick held onto its admission criteria of four noble quarters and membership of the Dutch Reformed church. Members of other Protestant churches were excluded – traditionally Lutherans, Mennonites and Arminians (who had no aristocratic adherents anyway). The

⁶² Jeroen van Zanten, *Koning Willem II, 1792–1849* (Amsterdam: Boom, 2013), 471.

⁶³ Annemarie Houkes, “Het succes van 1848. Politiek in de Aprilbeweging,” in *Staf en storm. Het herstel van de bisschoppelijke hiërarchie in Nederland in 1853*, ed. Jurjen Vis and W. Janse (Hilversum: Verloren, 2003), 87–104; Fred Vogelzang, “Adel op de pastorie. Aristocratische huwelijken van predikanten in de negentiende eeuw,” *Virtus* 24 (2017): 141–142.

⁶⁴ Johannes Theodorus Jozef van den Berg, *De toegang tot het Binnenhof. De maatschappelijke herkomst van de Tweede Kamerleden 1849–1970* (Bussum: Van Holkema en Warendorf, 1983), 41–52; Jaap Dronkers and Huibert Schijf, “Van de publieke naar de culturele of economische sector? Een vergelijking tussen de Nederlandse adel en het patriciaat in de twintigste eeuw,” *Virtus. Jaarboek voor adelsgeschiedenis* 11 (2004): 104–117; Yme Kuiper, *Adel in Friesland 1780–1880* (Groningen: Wolters-Noordhoff, 1993), 304–342; Jaap Moes, *Onder aristocraten: over hegemonie, welstand en aanzien van adel, patriciaat en andere notabelen in Nederland, 1848–1914* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2012), 56–121.

same applied to the orthodox Calvinist congregations that had left the church out of dissatisfaction with the policy of William I. Though this split was rooted most deeply in the ordinary people, it also had the sympathy of parts of the elite. The pietistic Réveil movement, in which the aristocracy was strongly represented, nonetheless remained within the Dutch Reformed church.⁶⁵ One nobleman with clear sympathies for the Secession was Frederik Louis Willem van Brakell van den Eng, who acceded to the chapter in 1850 and became land commander in 1863. He abhorred the free-thinking preaching of the Reformed minister in the village of Ommeren, which lay close to his castle, Den Eng. Instead, he supported the seceded congregation, which had been established by his steward, a man who drew many people, including Van Brakell and his wife (who, however, did not formally become members). Later he provided his support to the Dutch Reformed congregation in nearby Lienden, when an orthodox minister was called.⁶⁶

While the religious requirements for Dutch members were clear, they were more complex for Germans. We have already seen in the eighteenth century that German expectants had to show proofs of baptism and confession in a *Reformierte Kirche*. Matters were further complicated by a decision dating from 1817 by the Prussian King Frederick William III to merge the Lutheran and Reformed churches into a single *Evangelische Kirche in Preussen*.⁶⁷ There were similar mergers in other German states.⁶⁸ For the Bailiwick of Utrecht, the question now arose of whether membership of these united churches complied with the requirements of Calvinist confession. This question led to a lengthy debate in the chapter meeting of 1843. The Prussian count Ferdinand Friedrich von Alvensleben asked for his eldest son, Friedrich Joachim, to be entered in the register of expectants. While dealing with the matter, the chapter considered the merger of Calvinists and Lutherans in certain German states, and decided that proofs of Protestant confession were sufficient.⁶⁹ Fourteen years later, the religious admission requirements came

⁶⁵ Kennedy, *A Concise History*, 302–303.

⁶⁶ Klaas C. Tammes, *Frederik Louis Willem baron van Brakell van den Eng. Biografie van een landbouwpionier* (Ommeren: Arend Datema Instituut, 2015), 54–56.

⁶⁷ Franz-Rheinhold Hildebrandt, “Die Evangelische Kirche der Union,” in *Die unierten Kirchen*, ed. John Webster Grant, *Die Kirchen der Welt* 10 (Stuttgart: Evangelisches Verlagswerk, 1973), 29–105.

⁶⁸ Theo Schaller, “Die Pfälzische Landeskirche,” in *Die unierten Kirchen*, ed. Grant, 106–117; Hermann Erbacher, “Die Evangelische Landeskirche in Baden,” in *Die unierten Kirchen*, ed. Grant, 118–138; Hermann Vogt, “Die kleinen Unionen in Deutschland,” in *Die unierten Kirchen*, ed. Grant, 139–150.

⁶⁹ Notulen van de vergaderingen van het kapittel (1815–1989), 1843, ARDO-NA, inv. no. 54–2 p. 20; Maarten Jan Vos, *Hoe Duits was de Duitse Orde? Duitse edellieden in het kapittel van de Balije van Utrecht, 1815–1946* (Research report, 2016), 7.

up for discussion once more. King William III, who had succeeded his father in 1849 after his unexpected death, had expressed his concern about the increasing number of Germans members of the Bailiwick of Utrecht. To avert the risk of foreign dominance, the chapter proposed to apply the religious admission rules strictly.⁷⁰ This tighter preservation of Calvinist identity coincided with the role referred to above, in which the aristocracy led the protest movement against the re-emergence of Catholicism made possible by the constitution of 1848. King William III was the man on whom these Protestant conservatives pinned their hopes, ultimately in vain.⁷¹

The admission of Germans was to occupy minds at the Bailiwick of Utrecht several more times until 1938, when the chapter decided to admit no more members from over the Netherlands' eastern border. Any Germans still on the list of expectants could accede – which the outbreak of the Second World War prevented. In 1946, the last German member of the chapter was expelled.⁷² German expectants were informed by post that they no longer qualified for membership. But 75 years earlier, in 1871, the church background of the German members played a role in the development of a new regulation. A thick dossier was compiled containing all the decisions that had been taken since 1561. In the article on the religious requirements, the old formulation *de waren Christelijke Gereformeerde Religie* – the true Reformed faith – was reinstated.⁷³ The German translation of the regulation stated that it was desired of a new member *dass er den wahren reformierten Glauben bekennt*.⁷⁴ The 1871 statutes remained in force until their amendment in 1938. In the post-war years, the immediate expulsion of the German member and the discontinuance of expectants' rights also required amendments to the statutes. In 1959, wholly new statutes were drawn up. While these maintained the definition of ancient nobility – i.e. that predating the cut-off year of 1795 – the religious criteria were broadened. Rather than membership of the Dutch Reformed Church, expectants were expected to provide “proof of enrolment in a Protestant con-

⁷⁰ Notulen van de vergaderingen van het kapittel (1815–1989), 1857, see above (note 69), inv. no. 54–2, p. 370.

⁷¹ Johan Christiaan Boogman, *Rondom 1848. De politieke ontwikkelingen van Nederland 1840–1858* (Bussum: Unieboek, 1978), 123–133; Dik van der Meulen, *Koning Willem III 1817–1890* (Amsterdam: Boom, 2013), 267–279; Vogelzang, “Adel,” 141.

⁷² Notulen van de vergaderingen van het kapittel (1815–1989), June 1946, ARDO-NA, inv. no. 54–5; F.J.W. Fabius, *De Ridderlijke Duitse Orde van verleden tot heden* (Utrecht: School voor de Grafische Vakken te Utrecht, 1961), 183.

⁷³ Reglement voor de Ridderlijke Duitse Orde Balije van Utrecht, 1871, ARDO-NA, inv. no. 104, art. 36–7.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

gregation”.⁷⁵ In principle, adherents of the many Protestant denominations now qualified, but in practice aristocrats were members of only two churches: Dutch Reformed or Catholic. The latter was still excluded. While the subsequent amendment to the statutes also required membership of a Protestant denomination, that of 1996 provided scope for exemption. A proposal to change the phrasing for the foundation of the Bailiwick in the statutes from “protestants-christelijk” to “christelijk” in 1977 was not implemented.⁷⁶ As we have seen in the introduction of this article, the Protestant option is still leading, also in the present statutes.

The rapid secularisation of Dutch society after 1960 did not leave the nobility untouched. A survey of Dutch aristocrats conducted in 2005 showed that 60% were still members of a church, over half of them Dutch Reformed.⁷⁷ This meant that the proportion of believers was higher in the aristocracy than in the population as a whole, especially with regard to those who were Dutch Reformed, where the proportion was much higher; at the beginning of the twenty-first century, overall adherence to the erstwhile majority church was a mere 13%. In 2004, the church merged with one of the other Calvinist churches and the Dutch Lutherans to form the Protestant Church in the Netherlands. In 2005, more members of the knightly orders were religious than members of the nobility as a whole.⁷⁸ Many of those who counted themselves as religious were no longer practising members; they were only baptized. If the Bailiwick of Utrecht were to maintain full membership of a church as an entry requirement, it would have difficulty in recruiting members. The same applied to the four quarters of old nobility. In 2006, the entry criteria were broadened in the way described at the beginning of this article.

One monument to continuity at the Bailiwick is the series of portraits of the land commanders, which is still being continued. The last portrait, which dates from 2014, is that of the incumbent, Baron Jan Reint de Vos van Steenwijk. Until the 1970s, the land commanders were shown in armour, kneeling, as in the very first panel, which depicts the then Grand Master (1231) kneeling in worship be-

⁷⁵ Statuut van de Ridderlijke Duitse Orde Balije van Utrecht, 1959, ARDO-NA, no inv. number, art. 15.

⁷⁶ Notulen der vergaderingen der Dirigerende Commissie (1828–1989), 21 May 1977, ARDO-NA, inv. no. 157–6.

⁷⁷ F.F. de Smeth van Alphen, A.P. Kruydenberg, E. Blankevoort, and T. von Bönninghausen tot Herinkhave, “Adel in Nederland: niet meer zichtbaar, wel merkbaar. Resultaten van de enquête onder leden van de Nederlandse adel, november 2005,” *Virtus. Jaarboek voor Adelsgeschiedenis* 13 (2006): 15; Jaap Dronkers, Auke Huistra, and Yme Kuiper, “Hoe ‘adellijk’ is de adel in het huidige Nederland? Antropologische en sociologische kanttekeningen bij de in 2005 gehouden enquête onder de Nederlandse adel,” *Virtus* 13 (2006): 49.

⁷⁸ Thomas J. Verséwel de Witt Hamer, *Geloven verplicht. Een elite-onderzoek naar ridderlijke orden in het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden (1965–2015)* (The Hague: Nederlandsche Leeuw, 2017), 122.

fore the crucified Christ. Even though the phrase *Godt hebbe de ziel* has been omitted from all portraits since that of Hendrik Casimir I, the series of kneeling men still evokes something Catholic. In 1971, Baron Hendrik Jan van Nagell was the last to be portrayed in this fashion. The painter of his successor, Baron Paulus Anthony van der Borch tot Verwolde, broke with the tradition in two ways: the land commander is shown standing, and is no longer in armour. Instead, he wears the uniform of the order.⁷⁹ The figure in each of the next four portraits is standing, but the dress is different from one man to the next. To accentuate their Protestant faith, three of the five men hold a bible.

This identity also remained tangible in the order's charitable objectives, to which most funds are now devoted. This was not always the case: in the nineteenth century, as we have noted above, only a small percentage of expenditure went towards good causes. In some cases, that was also the consequence of old obligations – which the government then had to order the Bailiwick to fulfil. In 1851, an interesting discussion in this respect was initiated by a letter by commander Van Brakell, who, as we have already seen, was a sympathiser of orthodox Calvinist movements. He noted “that the order does not realise its intention of disseminating the Christian Religion among the Heathens”.⁸⁰ To fund schools and missionaries, he proposed that 10% should be deducted from commanders' salaries. The proposal was not accepted. Later, to justify this decision, the secretary wrote a lengthy account of the order's entire history, which repeated the earlier observation that the Bailiwick's aim was to support the aristocracy, and stated that the Bailiwick had lost “every trace of its former ecclesiastical origin and philanthropic position”.⁸¹

Ten years later, however, the chapter voted to adopt the proposal of commander Baron A.C.J. Schimmelpenninck van der Oije that 2,000 guilders should be donated to the eye hospital in Utrecht – not for religious motives, but as a gesture towards the province of Utrecht, with which the Bailiwick had such strong historical bonds.⁸² In the years that followed, however, donations were to increase, such as the gift of no less than 4,000 guilders to the Utrecht wing of the Red Cross in 1869 – a proposal that had been accepted by a narrow majority of six votes to four.⁸³ In 1873, on the argument that nursing the sick and wounded had been the

⁷⁹ Meuwissen, *Gekoesterde traditie*, 566–568.

⁸⁰ Notulen van de vergaderingen van het kapittel (1815–1989), 1851, see above (note 69), p. 184.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 191.

⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 460.

⁸³ Notulen van de vergaderingen van het kapittel (1815–1989), 1867–1887, ARDO-NA, inv. no. 54–3, p. 49 and 53–54.

old objective of the Teutonic Order, a piece of ground was made available for the building of a Red Cross hospital. In the space of less than 25 years a notable turn-about had taken place.

Incidental donations of medical causes by far outstripped the fixed subsidies for Reformed institutions, which in 1869 amounted to 1,382 guilders,⁸⁴ an amount that changed little for many years to come. As it had a century earlier, it represented 3.5% of total expenditure – a percentage that even declined because other items rose more quickly. The incidental donations could be paid easily out of the considerable annual surpluses, which lay between 25,000 and 45,000 guilders. From 1917, donations clearly increased, but now as part of the regular budget. Their primary objective still concerned the sick and wounded: the Dutch ambulance in Germany and Austria, the German Order of St John for wounded soldiers, and the German and Austro-Hungarian Red Cross. But were these causes – which had been proposed by German members – not at odds with Dutch neutrality in the First World War? In these years it was indeed the case that the function of the Bailiwick of Utrecht was criticised at a political level, partly out of suspicions of pro-German sympathies.⁸⁵ Donations after the war went to the Netherlands alone, and tended to be made to Protestant institutions, such as schools and hospitals. A lot of money was donated to Protestant causes in the predominately Catholic provinces of Noord-Brabant and Limburg. This donation policy gave the Bailiwick of Utrecht a stronger religious profile than ever since the break with Catholicism in the seventeenth century. This narrowed Protestant focus was consistent with the strong confessionalisation of Dutch society known as *Verzuiling* – literally, Pillarisation. Between them, Protestants, Catholics, socialists, and, to a lesser extent, liberals, had a complete network of schools political parties, trade unions and associations.⁸⁶

In 1925, donations and subsidies had been given a total of 10,797 guilders, over 13% of total expenditure.⁸⁷ Some of the donations were strongly incidental in

⁸⁴ Rekeningen van de ontvangsten en uitgaven van de rentmeester-generaal (1815–1950), 1869, ARDO-NA, inv. no. 190, p. 56.

⁸⁵ Redevoering door Jhr mr V.E.L.de Stuers, waarin hij het bestaansrecht der Balijs van Utrecht aanvecht, gehouden in de Tweede Kamer op 09–12–1901 en in 1904 en 1915 herhaald; met beschouwingen en opmerkingen daarover door de Hoge Raad van Adel en met een nota van de secretaris der Orde, 1901–1916, ARDO-NA, inv. no. 93.

⁸⁶ Kennedy, *A Concise History*, 340–343 and 356–359; Hans Daalder, “The Netherlands: Opposition in a Segmented Society,” in *Political Oppositions in Western Democracies*, ed. Robert Alan Dahl (New Haven–London: Yale University Press, 1966), 199–236; Arend Lijphart, *The Politics of Accommodation: Pluralism and Democracy in the Netherlands* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), 19–76.

⁸⁷ Memorien van toelichting behorende tot de rekeningen van de rentmeester-generaal (1884–1950), ARDO-NA, inv. no. 191–2 (budget year 1925).

nature. Ten years later, donations were made for a total of 3,196.20 guilders, over 4% of total expenditure. Payments to commanders – the same table as in the eighteenth century – were much higher: 27%. In 1935, the recipients of donations were primarily Protestant. Some of them were abroad, such as those who received the 15 guilders in the impoverished Protestant population of Germany's Ruhr area.⁸⁸

Donations rose in the years after the Second World War, amounting in 1950 to 7,281 guilders, 5.2% of total expenditure. The largest donation, 3,000 guilders, was made to the Community of the Moravian Brethren in Zeist.⁸⁹ Although modest, and still substantially less than the commanders' salaries, donations to Protestant charities had become integral to the order's policy. In 1959 this was also laid down in the statutes.⁹⁰ An excellent example of the result was the establishment in 1960 of a Protestant healthcare centre in Sittard, in the province of Limburg. The order's motivation for this lay in an express desire to support the small Protestant minority in a predominately Catholic province.⁹¹ The centre was by no means a success and became a burden for the Bailiwick. Even though support to charities had now been laid down in the statutes, contributions remained modest. In the 1970 financial year, they represented 11,232 guilders, 4% of total expenses. However, they were in fact greater than they seemed, as 333,300 guilders had been issued in the form of mortgages to ecclesiastical institutions.⁹² A mere ten years later, things had been turned on their head: the Bailiwick donated 245,029 guilders – 31.4% of total expenditure, which by then had also increased enormously. The contributions were covered by the income from leases, mortgages, interest and dividends, which had also increased.⁹³ They included 100,000 guilders to the Order of St John in the Netherlands, which had been re-established in 1909, and was open to all Protestant members of the aristocracy. In the post-war years, its collaboration with the Bailiwick became increasingly close.⁹⁴ While most other donations were also Protestant in nature, the sum of 1,200 guilders went to two attendants on a pilgrimage to Lourdes – something that could hardly be more Catholic.

⁸⁸ Ibid., inv. no. 191-3 (1935).

⁸⁹ Ibid., inv. no. 191-3 (1950).

⁹⁰ Statuut van de Ridderlijke Duitse Orde Balije van Utrecht, 1959, see above (note 75), art. 3.

⁹¹ Notulen van de vergaderingen van het kapittel (1815-1989), 1960-1981, ARDO-NA, inv. no. 54-6, p. 1-3.

⁹² Jaarrekeningen Ridderlijke Duitse Orde Balije van Utrecht (1968-2005), 1970, ARDO-NA, no inv. number.

⁹³ Jaarrekeningen Ridderlijke Duitse Orde Balije van Utrecht (1968-2005), 1980, ARDO-NA, no inv. number, p. 5-8.

⁹⁴ Cornelis Johannes Bruin, "Honderd jaar Johanniter Orde in Nederland. De heropricting van een middeleeuwse orde," in *Honderd jaar Johanniter Orde in Nederland 1909-2009*, ed. Monda Heshusius et al., (Zwolle: Waanders, 2009), 35-41.

During the early 1970s the expenditure on charity rose steadily, but from 1975 we see a sharp increase. Between 1975 and 1978 the sum was about 20,000 guilders higher. In 1979 the total of donations more than doubled in comparison to the preceding year: from 111,730 to 268,120.⁹⁵ This change in policy was the outcome of fierce debates in the chapter. The plea for more spending on social projects around 1975 was at least partly based on fear for fiscal measures by the (then left-wing) Dutch government. A proposal to build a retirement home for elderly nobles was turned down out of concern for the reputation of the order, it would be “ANTIpropaganda”.⁹⁶

The expenditure on charity kept rising during the 1980s. In 1990, the contributions amounted to 462,352 guilders, 34% of the total. Once again, the greatest proportion went to Protestant organisations, such as the continued contribution to the salary of the minister at Schelluinen. One cause was one unmistakably Catholic: holidays for disabled persons organised by the Order of Malta in the Netherlands, which cost 25,000 guilders. But money also went to the United Ecumenical Centre in The Hague; Cheider, an orthodox Jewish school in Amsterdam; and the non-confessional Ronald McDonald House in Utrecht.⁹⁷ The increase in income and expenditure is explained largely by the high inflation and interest rates in the Netherlands in the 1970s and 1980s. The commanders' salaries, which did not keep pace with inflation, accounted for a diminishing proportion of expenses. A proposal to raise the salaries to match inflation was turned down in 1974. Here the argument used was the same as that the one in favour of increasing the donations: the pressure of the public opinion. One member of the Directing Commission pleaded for charity instead of salaries: “We, said the speaker, must use our money for OTHERS, NOT for OURSELVES”.⁹⁸ Some years later the salaries were adapted, but in exchange of ending the distribution of the surpluses. By the time the euro was introduced in 2002, the sum, when converted from guilders into the euro equivalent, was little more than symbolic. In 2005, the payments to the members totalled €22,600, out of a total expenditure of €1.8 million, over €700,000 of which was earmarked for charity.⁹⁹ The amendments to the

⁹⁵ Jaarrekeningen Ridderlijke Duitse Orde Balije van Utrecht (1968–2005), 1978 and 1979, ARDO-NA, no inv. number, 5–6.

⁹⁶ Notulen van de vergaderingen van het kapittel (1815–1989), 1960–1981, see above (note 91), p. 34.

⁹⁷ Jaarrekeningen Ridderlijke Duitse Orde Balije van Utrecht, (1968–2005), 1990, ARDO-NA, no inv. number, 13–14.

⁹⁸ Notulen der vergaderingen der Dirigerende Commissie (1828–1989), 27 November 1974, ARDO-NA, inv. no. 157–6, p. 59.

⁹⁹ Jaarrekeningen Ridderlijke Duitse Orde Balije van Utrecht, (1968–2005), 2005, ARDO-NA, no inv. number, 8.

statute of 2006 (see above) brought an end to the salaries. For this, a commanders' fund was substituted, out of which, at his own discretion, each member was able to make donations within his own commandery. To replace the previous system of rotation, members now have a fixed commandery.

By the turn of the millennium, the Bailiwick of Utrecht had become a charitable organisation. As the tasks of central government were rolled back, the function of such organisations increased.¹⁰⁰ The Bailiwick became an important player in the field. From 2002, Jan Cees van Hasselt, the new director, professionalised donations policy and collaborated on the 2006 amendments to the statutes, thereby setting a definitive stamp on the order's transformation. The beneficiaries were drawn from an ever-wider spectrum, although special attention is still paid to Protestant organisations.¹⁰¹ In geographical terms, policy since 2006 has focused on the municipalities in which the old commanderies are situated. This is consistent with the Bailiwick's strong historical consciousness.

An important event regarding the connection with the past was the return to the old land commandery. When the Military Hospital moved to University Medical Centre Utrecht, the complex that had been expropriated in 1808 became free. In conformity with the terms of the old expropriation contract, it was offered to the Bailiwick of Utrecht. The chapter responded positively but cautiously. Eventually the Bailiwick acquired only part of the complex, including the commander's residence and the remainder of the order's church. While the purchase price was 0 guilders, the terms of the contract also stipulated that the property should be restored.¹⁰² At a ceremony in 1995, land commander Baron Albertus van Harinxma thoe Slooten reopened the beautifully renovated *Duitsche Huis* for the Bailiwick's activities. New members are now installed in the former sacristy of the church. The ceremony has retained its earlier austerity – a contrast with the extended, somewhat medieval rituals of newly established knightly orders, which are clear cases of “invention of tradition”.¹⁰³

¹⁰⁰ Kennedy, *A Concise History*, 429–431.

¹⁰¹ Akte van Statutenwijziging Ridderlijke Duitse Orde, Balije van Utrecht, 2006, see above (note 1), art. 3, p. 2.

¹⁰² Koopakte tussen Ministerie van Financiën Dienst der Domeinen en Ridderlijke Duitse Orde Balije van Utrecht betreffende Overdracht commandeurswoning Springweg, 15 January 1993, ARDO-NA, no inv. number; Copieën betrekking hebbende op de overgang van Hofpoort naar Springweg, 1986–1995, ARDO-NA, no inv. number.

¹⁰³ De Witt Hamer, *Geloven verplicht*, 153–162; Eric J. Hobsbawm and Terence O. Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

CONCLUSION

The history of the Bailiwick of Utrecht demonstrates the sheer toughness of old aristocratic institutions. The Bailiwick survived various radical social changes: the Reformation, the period of revolution from 1789 to 1815, democratisation in the years after 1848. By adapting, it retains even now its identity as an aristocratic institution. The change to Protestantism in the seventeenth century, decades after Calvinism became the official religion in the Dutch Republic, was the result of political pressure. Afterwards the Bailiwick of Utrecht was a secular institution of Protestant nobles. In this way, the Reformation marked the end of the Bailiwick as a religious institution. The argument against the abolition by Napoleon in 1811 that the Bailiwick was not an ecclesiastical organisation at all, since the sixteenth century, was not just a juridical trick; it described the essential nature of the order. After the restoration of 1815 the membership of the Dutch Reformed church as one of the admission criteria was part of the aristocratic exclusiveness. It was in the twentieth century that the religious identity became more outspoken, mainly visible in growing donations to Protestant goals. During the last decades these donations developed into the core business of the Bailiwick. Although the scope widened, Protestant projects retained a preference. As an admission criterion, the membership of the Dutch Reformed church has been replaced, in 2006, by being “of a Protestant family or affiliation”. Although more vaguely formulated than half a century ago, the Bailiwick of Utrecht is still a Protestant organisation.

Protestantism has been closely connected to the function of an aristocratic distinction, which the Bailiwick of Utrecht has had since the mid seventeenth century. That makes this study relevant to a debate among Dutch historians and social scientists. The importance of the aristocracy to Dutch society after the middle ages has been underestimated. My research on the Teutonic Order is part of a larger project to nuance this view. The relevance for the study of the Military Orders is to demonstrate the importance of early modern and modern times in their long histories. The vicissitudes of the Bailiwick of Utrecht since 1640 indicate that, even after the Reformation, the Military Orders are a rich area of research. The heirs of the Crusades appear to be enormously resilient.



1: Panel 8 in the portrait series of the land commanders of the Bailiwick of Utrecht clearly shows the transition in the religious identity. From left to right: the last Catholic Land Commander Diedrik Bloys van Treslong, the intermediate Jaspas van Lynden, the first convinced Calvinist Hendrik Casimir I van Nassau and finally his brother Willem Frederik, whose succession in 1640 rounded up the Protestantisation. The first two portraits still bear the Catholic prayer 'Godt heb de ziel' (May God receive the soul).



2: Panel 19 in the series contains the first portraits of land commanders not sitting in armour. Three of them are holding a bible. From left to right: Paulus Anthony van der Borch tot Verwolde, Albertus van Harinxma thoe Slooten, Rudolph Everhard Willem van Weede and Anton Gerrit Aemile van Rappard.

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Utrecht. Archief Ridderlijke Duitse Orde – Nieuw Archief (From 1811). inv. no. 3, bijlage 3; inv. no. 31; inv. no. 54–2 p. 20, 184, 191, 370, 460; inv. no. 54–3, p. 49, 53–54; inv. no. 54–5; inv. no. 54–6, p. 1–3, 34; inv. no. 93; inv. no. 104, art. 36–7; also p. 11; inv. no. 157–6; inv. no. 190, 56; inv. no. 191–2 (1925, 1935, 1950).

Utrecht. Archief Ridderlijke Duitse Orde – Nieuw Archief (From 1811). no inv. number: Akte van Statutenwijziging Ridderlijke Duitse Orde, Balije van Utrecht, (2006), art. 8–2a, p. 4, xxxiii; Statuut van de Ridderlijke Duitse Orde Balije van Utrecht, art. 3, 15; Jaarrekeningen Ridderlijke Duitse Orde Balije van Utrecht (1968–2005), 5–8, 13–14; Koopakte tussen Ministerie van Financiën Dienst der Domeinen en Ridderlijke Duitse Orde Balije van Utrecht betreffende Overdracht commandeurswoning Springweg, 15 January 1993; Copieën betrekking hebbende op de overgang van Hofpoort naar Springweg, (1986–1995).

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