On 14 April 1580 Melchior de Grote, priest commander of the Teutonic Order at Schoten in Friesland, sounded a cry of desperation to land commander Jacob Taets van Amerongen in Utrecht. The States of Friesland had banned the practice of the Catholic religion and taken over the control of most monasteries. They would shortly be knocking on his door to demand the goods of the Order. 'Why have you, why has the German Master not yet done anything for me, with the Prince, with the States General? Have I thus served the Order faithfully for forty years and invested all my family capital in the restoration of the Order’s house in Schoten only to be cast off like a dog in my old age?'

What he did not know was that the recipient of his letter was likewise confronted with threats. In early March, the so-called Betrayal of Rennenberg—the defection of the Stadtholder of the Northern Regions to the Spanish camp—had prompted the Utrecht Calvinists to seize power, after which the faltering religious tolerance which previously held the parties together had given way to a great mutual fear. Were not the Catholics potential traitors, one and all, whose only intention was to bring the Spaniards to power? This fear had the result that, on 28 June, the now Protestant-disposed city government, using the urban militia as a means of pressure, could move to ban Catholic worship, after William of Orange had overturned an earlier decision to the same effect on 23 March.

In retrospect the measures to ban the Catholic religion can be seen as crucial to the fate of the Hospitallers and the Teutonic Order. They were never again overturned in Friesland or in Utrecht or in other regions of the Republic. But did this not then mean that the Dutch establishments of the military orders were immediately secularised? Could military orders continue to function if public Catholic worship was banned? The answer to this question is both yes and no. We know that the Utrecht bailiwick of the Teutonic Order was ultimately assured of its continued existence by giving up first worship, then the priesthood and finally also communal life and celibacy. It thus went through a transformation that, in 1637, would separate it definitively from the Teutonic Order as a

1 I would like to thank Renger de Bruin, Bram van den Hoven van Genderen and especially Daantje Meuwissen for their comments and suggestions on an earlier version of this text. Furthermore, I am indebted to Menno Koopstra for sharing me his notes on the matters relating to Utrecht in the records of the Teutonic Order’s Central Archives (Deutschordenszentrarchiv) in Vienna.

2 Mol, Friese Huizen, p. 199.


4 On the 10th of November that year, the States of Utrecht gave the members of the Utrecht bailiwick permission to marry: De Geer, Archieven I, p. cxxiii.
Fig. 1. Map of the houses of the Hospitalliers and the Teutonic Order in the Northern Netherlands ca. 1560.

whole. It is also known that the Catharijne Convent, the main centre of the Order of St John in the diocese of Utrecht, could not use this route to survival, simply because it had no knight brethren in its midst. Nevertheless, the outcome in 1580 or even twenty years later was not completely obvious. Whereas in Friesland the houses of the military orders were secularised in a relatively short time, developments in Holland and Utrecht took a different course. Just like the Hospitalliers in Haarlem, for decades the brethren of St John in Utrecht and those of the Teutonic Order retained control of their own possessions, continued some of their religious practices and retained a form of communal life.

This may perhaps be surprising for Catholic institutions in a small Protestant state that, until 1648, was almost permanently at war with the mightiest kingdom in Europe and – apart from its economic power – managed to keep its head above water mainly through the Calvinist disposition of its elite. And was not Calvinism the most hostile of all Protestant persuasions towards Catholic corporations such as the military orders?

As to the fate of the Haarlem Hospitalliers, see the contribution of Truus van Bueren elsewhere in this volume.
Thus the attempts of both military orders to survive in the Republic of the Netherlands continued a very long time: a total of 35 years for the Hospitallers of Utrecht, the end point being the death of the last Catholic member of the Order in 1615; 39 years for the Teutonic Order, if we consider the decisive point to be Jasper van Lijnden’s taking of office in 1619 as first Protestant land commander, and the virtually simultaneous appointment of seven-year-old Hendrik Casimir van Nassau-Dietz as Coadjutor of the bailiwick of Utrecht. How could this transformation phase last so long?

Using the literature, the printed sources and a concise selection of archive material, this chapter will examine what measures were taken against the military orders in the province and the city of Utrecht and how their bailiffs or land commanders reacted to them, in consultation with their superiors. The emphasis will be on an analysis of political power relations. It should be said that some restraint is in order here. Because little preliminary research has yet been done into the secularisation of the spiritual institutions in Utrecht in general and the military orders in particular, my considerations can have no more than an exploratory character.

The Hospitallers and Teutonic Brethren in Utrecht until 1570

Before the Reformation the military orders were well represented in the Northern Netherlands. The oldest and most important house of the Hospitallers was the Catharijne Convent, which dates at least from the last quarter of the twelfth century. It contained a community of priest brethren who devoted themselves to worship and who ran a hospital for the sick, presumably from the time the Order had been founded. Administratively it came under the Prior of Germany. As one of the camerae priorales it had contributed to the Prior’s costs of living since the start of the fifteenth century. The convent quickly acquired a considerable amount of landed property distributed over the whole bishopric, and also acquired a number of daughter convents, including one monastery for women. These daughter houses, in turn, had dependent parish churches to which brothers were assigned as pastors. The smaller property complexes of the Catharijne Convent, linked with churches or chapels, had since the fourteenth century held the status of membri. They were each run by a Utrecht priest-brother with the title of commander; in the sixteenth century there were ten. If one wanted to

6 The earliest history of the Catharijne Convent is unclear. Johanna Maria van Winter concludes from an imperial charter from 1122 containing privileges for the bishop of Utrecht in which seven fratres Jerusolimitani are mentioned as witnesses, that already in that year a Hospitaller community was established in Utrecht: Van Winter, ‘Heren van Sint-Catharijne’, p. 351. Building traces on the original location of the Catharijne Convent indicate in any case that the convent must have been there in the last decades before 1200.

7 In 1561 the hospital was fitted out with eighteen beds. Before the house-moving of 1529, however, it was said to have counted 24 beds: Brondegeest, Bijdragen, p. 104; Hensen, ‘Hendrik Berck’, p. 10.

8 Brondegeest, Bijdragen, p. 4 e.v.; Van Winter, Sources, pp. 18-19.
briefly characterise the Utrecht Hospitallers, it would not be out of place to call them canons and pastors. Just as in Haarlem, they were largely of well-to-do patrician descent, and some of them could even claim noble descent.

The Teutonic Order likewise had its base for the bishopric of Utrecht in the city of Utrecht, in the so-called Teutonic House. Accommodated in this house was a convent of knight and priest brethren. There were a number of convents of priest brethren connected elsewhere: at Nes in Friesland, at Rhenen and at Tiel. The whole was defined as a bailiwick. Like the the Hospitallers’ membra, there were ten smaller complexes, which had the same set-up as those of the Hospitallers; they were houses with a parish church or with their own chapel, which owned a substantial amount of land and were run by commanders. The big difference from the Hospitaller bailiwick was that the Teutonic Order in Utrecht had knight brethren who were of noble descent. The land commander was always a knight brother, while many commander positions were also filled by knights. It is striking that in the sixteenth century these knights were recruited from an ever-decreasing circle of brethren. Of the few knight brethren after 1520, for example, no less than four were descended from the family Egmond van Merestein, while the Van Goir family was also well-represented. Little research has yet been done into the social background of the priest brethren. The impression exists that they were of middle-class origin, not without means, from the areas around the urban commanderies.

However strongly they may have resembled each other, the situation of the two organisations diverged sharply on the eve of the Revolt. In effort and self-awareness the Hospitallers seem to have formed a more close-knit and more active group. In the first place their number had hardly changed at all since 1495. Twelve resident conventuals took part in the election of the new bailiff Hendrick Berck in 1561, plus eight brethren from the closest subordinate membra; and of these twelve residential conventuals only one was aged over 32. This is remarkable, because the complement of many similar men’s monasteries in the bishopric of Utrecht had dropped off sharply at that time, and the number of pastors in the Habsburg Netherlands, which had remained Catholic, had also declined alarmingly. The growing disinterest in masses for the soul, which was fed by the evangelical and humanistic schools of thought, meant an enormous fall in income for both regular and secular priests. That alone translated into a sharply declining interest in the priesthood, both within and outside the monasteries.

10 The Teutonic House in Utrecht was founded in 1231-1232. For a general introduction into the medieval history of the Utrecht bailiwick of the Teutonic Order, see De Geer, Archieven I, introduction, and De Vey Mestdagh, Utrechse Balijs, pp. 5-44. The convents of Tiel and Rhenen often housed one or more knight brethren besides the priest conventuals.
11 Mol, Friese huizen, pp. 204-205.
12 Bosch and Immerzeel, Duitse Order in Maasland, 116; De Vey Mestdagh, Utrechse Balijs, pp. 42-43.
In this context it must be stressed that the established church in the Netherlands underwent hardly any Counter Reformation impulses between 1550 and 1570. The most important precondition to this end was the division of the large bishoprics, but this process could not commence until 1568, after the arrival of Philip II's strong man, the duke of Alva. Catholic life was therefore predominantly traditional, ritualistic and uninspired. The churches attracted fewer people than earlier, except where there were evangelical experiments despite the strict orders against deviant ideas and practices.

Whether the Hospitallers managed to avoid the malaise entirely is difficult to say. They did show themselves to be extremely energetic. Apart from deploying a huge building activity in and around the Catharijne Convent after its relocation of 1529, which had been imposed on them in connection with the compulsory building of a princely stronghold on their old place of establishment, they managed to found a complete new house in Montfoort in 1544, at a time when nowhere were new foundations being created. Interest in joining the Order continued, possibly because of the favourable material conditions. Anyone who was admitted as a Hospitaller could count on gaining a rich commandery or pastorate over the longer term. But perhaps the strong group awareness and pride in what the Order had performed for Christianity militarily and charitably also counted. Beating off the Turkish siege of Malta in 1565 will also have substantially increased their prestige in the Netherlands.

The situation was different for the Teutonic Order. Not that their pastorates were poorer than those of the Hospitallers; on the contrary, the leading parish churches they served were in cities and produced a substantial income. The Teutonic Order did not generally have to fear a lack of revenues. The brothers in Utrecht, however, suffered to an increasing degree from negative evaluation by their prior and by noble fellow-brethren. Since no knight brethren had any longer to be sent to the East, the Utrecht bailiwick continued to develop into a care-home for the regional low-level nobility. The maintenance on a limited budget of a suitable lifestyle for knight brethren meant that less money was available for other members. The relative numbers of brothers show the course of this development: whereas in 1415 the Utrecht bailiwick, excluding Friesland, had 15 knight brethren and 34 priests, there were only 8 knights and 9 priests in 1539; and the proportion was even more unfavourable in 1577, with 9 and 7.

Land commander Frans van Loo, who took office in 1560, even wished to halt the admission of priest brethren and asked the German Master for permission to be able to entrust all parish churches bestowed on him to pious secular priests. His judgement of his ordained co-brethren was stern: they were undisciplined, lived in lechery, let their tasks be done by hirelings and demand-

16 Sasse van IjsseI, 'Commanderij Montfoort', p. 52 et seq.
17 These were the city parishes of Leiden, Tiel, Rhenen, Schoonhoven and Doesburg.
18 Mol, 'Admission Policy', pp. 119-122.
19 De Geer, Archieven I, pp. cv-cvii. The German Master agreed to the request in a letter of July 28, 1560.
ed, once they were old and burdened with debts, to end their days in the Teutonic House in Utrecht. But, so as not to sully his good name and that of his knight brethren, he was forced to provide such black sheep with an annuity to impose silence on them.

The accusation of a sexually immoral life was somewhat hypocritical because his immediate predecessor, Albert van Egmond van Merestein, had for decades kept a concubine in a cottage on the grounds of the Teutonic House. In 1549, he reportedly even legitimised the daughter he had sired with her. Frans van Loo, for that matter, considered himself just as little bound to celibacy when in 1565 he withdrew without officially giving up his land commandership in Dieren and later in Arnhem.

From the letters of priest brother Melchior de Grote, however, it turned out that there had been another side to the coin. When, in 1565, after 25 years of faithful service to the coadjutor Jasper van Egmond van Merestein, he asked about pension possibilities in Utrecht, the coadjutor offered him an annuity of 50 guilders (whereas knight brethren of that time could count on 200 guilders). And that despite the fact that, by his own account, he had invested his entire family capital in the restoration of the Order’s house of Schoten! Because he remembered and could name five fellow priest brethren who had died miserably in the Teutonic House as a result of the poor care they had received, he decided eventually to abandon his plan to retire there. An additional consideration was that he wanted to avoid the disdain of his knightly colleagues, because – in his words – ‘if the land commander begins to mouth criticism, the knight brethren and even their servants always agree with him.’

Thus, as a result of the continuing reduction of membership numbers, great tension existed between the two kinds of brethren in the 1560s and 1570s, tension possibly reinforced by the assumed Protestant sympathies of Frans van Loo and his coadjutor Jasper van Egmond, who ran things in Utrecht between 1565 and 1576. The discharge of priests had the result that, in the convents – in Utrecht itself, Rhenen and Tiel – divine service could only be kept up using secular priests and scolares (choir boys).

Political and social developments in the region and the city of Utrecht, 1570-1580

Before going further into the survival attempts of the military orders, a short outline of the balance of power in the region and the city would be useful, noting the most important political events between 1570 and 1580.

20 Van der Meer, Nalatenschap, pp. 19-20, 36.
21 He was not released from the land commandership by the chapter of the bailiwick until 1579 after repeated requests from his side: De Vey Mestdagh, Utrechtse Balije, pp. 44.
22 Mol, Frieze huizen, pp. 205-206.
23 This is suggested by De Vey Mestdagh, Utrechtse Balije, p. 43.
The city of Utrecht, as the seat of the bishop until 1528, had been the centre of a spiritual principality that comprised the current provinces of Utrecht (the Nedersticht), Overijssel (the Oversticht), and Drenthe, and the city of Groningen. Since the incorporation of this region into the Habsburg state system, it had been administrated by a stadtholder and a court, as executors of the princely power that had its central organs in Brussels. However, the regional States Assemblies— in which the Utrecht church (in the form of five Episcopal chapters) formed the First Estate, the nobility the Second (the so-called Ridderschap or knighthood), and the magistrate of Utrecht with a number of small towns the Third— retained their influence on decision-making, because they had to give permission for the levying of taxes. Because the Chapters recruited their members largely from the provincial Utrecht nobility, which was composed of families from a ministeriales background and which had strong ties with the Utrecht patriciate— in fact the dividing-line between both groups is hard to draw— noble and patrician interests were dominant. For the rest, the Hospitaller bailiff and the land commander of the Teutonic Order had no seat in the States. The patrician class and the craftsmen traditionally disputed with each other over power in the council of the city of Utrecht which, with its numerous church institutions, was more of a regional care centre than a trade metropolis, though with its ca. 25,000 inhabitants it was of considerable size.

As everywhere in Europe, the urban middle-class of entrepreneurs and craftsmen in Utrecht would also turn out to be sympathetic to the Reformist school of thought. In 1568, however, the Calvinists were still a negligibly small community. A majority of Reform-minded people followed the pastor Jacob Duifhuis, who preached evangelicism but long remained a Catholic in name, and strove for a broadly tolerant people’s Church without desiring the order and discipline of the faithful. There was definite talk about a ‘comprehensive evangelical Church’, which sounded very much like a Lutheran people’s Church and the Zurich town church of Bullinger. The number of Duifhuis’ followers was to rise sharply in the 1570s, particularly among the patrician class and the lower classes. From the 1570s they were heavily favoured by both the urban magistrate and the (provincial) States Assembly but ultimately turned out to be less well-organised than the Church of the orthodox Calvinists, who showed themselves to be their closest competitor and fiercest opponent.

The disturbances in Utrecht began with the iconoclastic fury of 1566, which the nobility permitted in protest against ever-increasing tax pressure and the effort of Brussels to limit the authority of the regional States Assemblies. In this period resistance against the central government was coupled with a tolerant attitude towards the discontents of other faiths, who were prosecuted by Brussels

24 A profound analysis of the balance of power in the province and the city of Utrecht before and after the Revolt is given by Kaplan, Calvinists and Libertines, p. 111 ff. See also Van Schaik, ‘Nieuwe heer’, and the contributions of Maarschalkerweerd, ‘Overdracht van het wereldlijk gezag’ and Bogaers, ‘Politieke verwikkelingen’ in the Geschiedenis van de Provincie Utrecht van 1528 tot 1780.

as heretics. An interesting detail is that even the Teutonic Knights gave the Protestants the opportunity to hold open-air church services on their terrain, incensed as they were about the contributions that were asked of them for financial support of the new archbishop.\(^{26}\)

Important events then followed each other at a rapid pace. The duke of Alva established himself in Utrecht in November 1568 and set the regional States against him, particularly in Utrecht, through the introduction of heavy taxes. The refusal of the States to go along with this was punished by a forced billeting of Spanish soldiers. That resulted, as a matter of course, in increasingly more sympathy among the people for the causes of the Revolt and Reformation. Then, in 1572, when important towns in the provinces of Holland and Zeeland opened their gates to the rebels, protracted fighting began that would ravage the whole Netherlands.\(^{27}\) The militarily strong Spaniards turned out to be unable to win this conflict, partly because King Philip II could no longer pay his troops following Spanish national bankruptcy in the mid-1570s. In 1576 the Council of State in Ghent, tired of the war, concluded a truce with rebellious Holland and Zeeland, the first aim of which was to be released from obligations to the unpaid Spanish troops. In Utrecht in early 1577 the city administration succeeded, with the help of the Calvinist-minded urban militia, in driving the Spaniards out of the local stronghold (the Vredenburg). From that moment on, the more moderate Protestants acquired complete religious and political freedom, although in principle both the region and the city of Utrecht were still Catholic – in the Pacification of Ghent and the Satisfaction of 1577 the status quo was maintained. Meanwhile, William of Oranje, who was named stadtholder by the States of Utrecht, turned his power and influence to having Protestant administrators appointed to the Utrecht Council. This move succeeded, particularly thanks to the pressure of the urban militia, with the consequence that the city government in Utrecht could unilaterally announce freedom of religion on 15 June 1579.

In 1578, Alexander Farnese, duke of Parma, was on the march and this forced the rebellious Northern Regions to join forces in the Union of Utrecht. The Union was signed on 23 January 1579 with the aim of closer military and political cooperation, but it was decided that in religious matters each province would be autonomous. Holland and Zeeland held to the ‘true reformed’ religion, while the other regions took religious freedom as their starting point. Within the constellation of religious freedom the Catholics had become the threatened party. The Spanish successes put them in the impossible dilemma of either supporting the fighting against King and Mother Church and running the risk of being sidetracked by the Protestants or leaving their own country in the lurch by siding with Spain.

If we consider the political structure of the region after the signing of the Union of 1579\(^{28}\) – which became the constitution of the Republic – we can estab-

---

lish that the decline of the authority of Brussels led to a strong decentralisation of power. The Union had its own States-General, to which a stadtholder from each province was responsible. Its responsibility extended, first and foremost, over the areas of defence, taxation and foreign politics. To this end, in the long run the Republic came to command various other central organs such as the Council of State and a Chamber of Accounts, but it was more of a confederation of regions than a centrally organised state. Sovereignty lay with the separate state assemblies and their day-to-day administrators, the Deputies.

For the many Catholic institutions in the cathedral city this meant that they were dependent more than ever on local administrators and leaders of opinion for their continued existence. At that time the city government was not very kindly disposed to them, but what were their relations with the hitherto Catholic-oriented nobility who dominated the First and Second Estates? In late June 1580, thanks to an about-turn by the majority of the nobility, the States of Utrecht adopted the ban on Catholic worship issued by the city that would have so many consequences for the religious orders. Was it only under the pressure of war that the nobility ‘turned’ or did other factors play a role? Did this social group see more opportunities of pursuing its own interests under Protestant rule?

The measures against the regular clergy and its possessions 1580-1587

Just as in Friesland, the ban on Catholic worship in the Utrecht region was immediately followed by specific measures in regard to the religious corporations.29 It was the city which took the initiative, by announcing the ban on 18 March. Its implementation, however, was at first annulled on 23 March by William of Orange who still wanted to maintain religious the freedom of 15 June 1579. Meanwhile the city council’s decision had induced the States to set up a commission to prepare religious measures. Its report ‘to impose order on the clergy’ was ready on 14 June, following which, four days later, the city administration once again unilaterally proclaimed a ban on the practice of the Roman Catholic religion. The commission’s report was adopted on 28 June with a few small alterations. Although some historians have claimed that as a result the monasteries were given up and their goods confiscated,30 this was very far from the case.31 A close reading of the texts reveals that the States tried only to gain control of the administration of the property and of the personnel policy of the various institutions. For the monasteries, however, the new measure meant that they could no longer admit new members of the clergy and that their members were prohibited from wearing ‘ostentatious’ habits in public.

30 Among others by Brondgeest, Bijdragen, p. 25.
31 See the extensive legal historical analysis by Rengers Hora Siccama, Geestelijke goederen, p. 279 ff.; p. 622 ff.
Separate sections were devoted to the Hospitallers and the Teutonic Order, of which the first said that their superiors had to hand over all lists of important possessions and foundation documents. Just as with the traditional monastic orders, it was stated that from henceforth the priest brethren would receive allowances. When the priest brethren died, knight brethren would be appointed in their place and these had to serve the country militarily. Of course, only those who had the approval of the States would be appointed. So, according to this proposal, both the Hospitaller and the Teutonic Order’s bailiwicks were to be transformed into a Reformed corporation of knights who could be

32 'Item ... datmen die heeren, die inde voorss. convente zijn, gheen ridderluyden wesende, geven zal alimentatie ende onderhoudt in zulcker maniere ende staete als zy dat nu hebben, ende datmen inde plaatze vande geheenen die afsterven zullen, stellen zal ridderluyden, diemen met den eersten zooveel toevoegen zall, dat zy’t Landt daermede met pperden moegen dienen, gelijck oock zullen moeten dienen die commanduers onder die voorss. conventen of oorden behoorende': Rengers Hora Siccama, Geestelijke goederen, p. 283.
deployed in the fighting against Spain under the supervision of the States. Both
the Hospitaller bailiff Hendrick Berck and the Teutonic Order land commander
Jacob Taets van Amerongen protested vigorously against this proposal, each
in his own ‘remonstration’. They absolutely refused to deliver the requested inven-
tories of their goods and each denied the States the right to exercise supervi-
sion over their organisations. Just as their colleague Timan van Wou of the Haar-
lem convent of St John would do later, both men presented their houses and
goods as a separate category that should remain outside the general regulations
regarding the clergy. In Taets’ view the Teutonic House of Utrecht stood un-
der the authority of the German Master, who as independent prince of the Holy
Roman Empire and ‘Administrator of the Grand Master’s office’ not only came
under the protection of the Empire but also had to act for the Empire against the
traditional enemy of Christianity, the Turks. Hendrick Berck also reasoned in
the same way. He argued that the Catharijne Convent belonged to a sovereign
Order of knights which, under the leadership of the Grand Master in Malta, had
made enormous efforts to the benefit of the Christian Commonwealth. More-
over, as camera prioralis, the convent came directly under the Prior of Germany
established at Heitersheim near Freiburg, who had likewise been recognised as
prince of the Empire (since 1548) and to whom it had to make the due contribu-
tions.

Naturally, Taets and Berck also called on the help of their immediate su-
periors. As they saw things, the Utrecht components should not be severed from
their international orders. To underscore this point, they could appeal to the me-
diation of Stadtholder William of Orange and to earlier decisions of the States of
Holland and the States-General – based on the same considerations – to leave the
goods of the military orders in the rebellious regions undisturbed. Indeed, after
signing the Pacification of Ghent, the Hospitallers and the Teutonic Order had
managed to regain free command over their houses and property in the provinces
of Holland and Zealand. In this way, on 20 November 1577, the priest com-
mander and pastor of Leiden, Aernt van der Goude (for his portrait see plate 4),
was permitted by the States of Holland to repossess his house with related lands
and incomes.

In view of their response of 22 August 1580, the States of Utrecht ap-
peared to be officially insensitive to these remonstrations. They emphasised that
it was not their plan to separate both organisations from their Orders nor to ob-
struct the payment of their contribution to their Orders. The States said it was
acting only for the ‘preservation’ of the Order’s properties, because contributions
could also be paid from these properties towards the fight against Spain, which

33 Ibidem, p. 290-291. The protestation of Taets van Amerongen is found in ARDOU, no. 173.
For Jacob Taets’ portrait, see plate 19.

34 In Haarlem the Hospitaller convent initially escaped the dissolution and confiscation mea-
sures of the city administration thanks to the directives of the States of Holland. In 1581 how-
ever, the city administrators as yet claimed to have the right to take over the commandery
goods, to which commander Timan van Wou protested vehemently in a so-called ‘Memoriael
van diligentie’ d.d. August 6 1582: Van Bueren, Tot lof van Haarlem, pp. 96-97.
was just as great an enemy of the 'true Christian religion' as the Turks! The States, however, did not particularly exert themselves to carry out the decree to the letter. They did press repeatedly for examination of the administrative paperwork, but did not support their requests with force. Their failure to enforce the decree was due to the failure of the Calvinists – who championed the most far-reaching policy of appropriation of clerical property – to obtain a majority in either the City Council or the States Assembly in 1581. They tried in vain to persuade William of Orange to intervene on their behalf; both the magistrate and the States together remained moderately Protestant and noble-patrician in disposition. The result of these power relations was that, for the military orders, everything stayed the way it was and Hendrick Berck and Jacob Taets could go on with managing their houses and properties. The same was the case to a lesser degree for the abbots and abbesses of the large monasteries in and around Utrecht. They, too, could continue to govern their houses, although their annual accounts were checked by representatives of the so-called Directiekrater (Board Room).

In 1585 the situation began to change under threat of new Spanish successes – these were the years of the building of the Armada and the successful advances of Alexander Farnese, duke of Parma. As his troops began to approach even Utrecht, the radical Calvinist faction could really come to power, supported by Robert Dudley, earl of Leicester, who was sent by Queen Elizabeth I of England to lead the defence of the Netherlands against the Spaniards. 'Calvinism rode on the back of the Revolt', Alastair Duke once remarked: an observation that certainly held true for this period in Utrecht. The Utrecht Calvinists enjoyed the protection of Leicester and in turn provided support to him. He had in mind a princely administration on a Calvinist basis, and chose as his centre Utrecht which, almost like Geneva under Calvin, was the stage for fierce persecution of Catholics and a new purge of the church. In view of the means applied by Leicester and his supporters – for example, a Benedictine abbot was taken prisoner and tortured – it is not going too far to characterise their actions as a theocratic reign of terror.

Part of a radical reform of the religious life, according to Calvinist leaders of opinion, was a more far-reaching control of religious property. At a national synod, Leicester pleaded for rigorous closing down of the convents in combination with complete confiscation of their possessions, which he compared to the dissolution of the English monasteries by Henry VIII. Naturally he saw himself as the obvious man to lead such a project. It is evident that this plan could never have been implemented throughout the whole Republic; the various sovereign

35 See for example the order from the Delegated States d.d. October 5 and November 30 1581 to the land commander Jacob Taets and bailiff Hendrick Berck to hand over their administrations: ARDOU, no. 173.
37 Van Kalveen, 'St. PaulusabdiJ', p. 46.
38 On the political developments in this period, see Kaplan, Calvinists and Libertines, pp. 166-178.
State Assemblies would never have allowed Leicester competence over religious properties in their provinces. But after the necessary pressure, the States of Utrecht turned out to be taken with the basic idea and, in 1586, had a so-called Redressement ('renewed arrangement') drawn up which was approved in their meetings on 18 and 28 October. This Redressement intended to earmark the income from religious property for pious objectives, through taking away control from the religious orders and allowing the convents to die out. In article 16 of the draft, it was advised, in regard to the two military orders, that they accommodate their goods in a joint fund, a fund that would be controlled by a steward of the States. The land commander, bailiff, commanders and other knights had to be ‘separated’ and pensioned off. For the rest, members who still qualified for earnings had to be ‘employed in the war at the service of the Country’. All things considered, this was a consequence of the suggestion put forward in 1580 that the military orders should pay a substantial contribution to the fighting against Spain. Only the continuity of the community was now up for discussion. Instead of turning the Utrecht establishments of the Teutonic Order and the Hospitaliers into non-celibate corporations of fighting nobles, the drafters of the Redressement intended to reduce them to prebendary funds which indirectly – through the rewarding of meritorious men – would work to the benefit of the war efforts of the Utrecht States. This probably went too far for the representatives of the nobility in the States because the article was not ratified in voting on the Redressement. The consequence was that not only the military Teutonic Order but also the non-military Catharijne Convent obtained a special position in the midst of the great religious institutions in the city and region of Utrecht. Where, as a consequence of the Redressement, the large monasteries had to end their communal life over the course of time and hand over their administration to the common steward of the States, these two Orders were left undisturbed in the management of their goods and were permitted, for the time being, to take on new members, albeit that these had to be approved first by the States. It was a position which was comparable with that of the five Episcopal chapters, which likewise retained the administration of their possessions and could admit new canons proposed by the States.

Practice until 1620: the Hospitallers

In this way the States arrangement of 1580 remained in effect for both Utrecht communities of the military orders after the Redressement. This is also why, as of 5 January 1588, bailiff Hendrick Berck and land commander Taets van Amerongen were recommended by the Directiekaamer to hand over an inventory
of their properties." As to why nothing had yet come of it, they also added: "...waertoe die voors. Balijer ende lantcommandeur dickwils vermaent sijn, ende es tselve alsnoch nyet voltrocken". Berck, in any case, did not respond to this new reminder either, because it was decided on 22 May 1588 to summon him for the last time, under the threat that he would otherwise be relieved of his administration. Indeed, on 19 July, the States declared he was no longer in control of the Hospitallers' property - this to the benefit of a certain Dirck de Leeuw.42 But as the days of theocratic rule and thus also of the Directiekamer were already numbered, it is questionable whether de Leeuw ever actually exercised control over the property of the Catharijne Convent.

After the death of Leicester in 1588 the armoured Calvinist faction had to immediately give up its seats in the Utrecht Council and the regional State Assembly to the moderate Protestants, who virtually all belonged to the nobility or the ranks of the city patricians. It was the same group that, in the period before 1585, had called the tune in Utrecht. How did they deal with the States Arrangement of June 1580 regarding the military orders? They were at first inclined to slacken the reins in reaction against the punishing rule of Leicester's party, but how did they act over the longer term towards the Hospitallers and the Teutonic Order?

If we look first at the Hospitallers, the picture is difficult to interpret. For this period, hardly any material has been handed down from the Catharijne Convent’s own archives but, on the other hand, we are able to command two detailed snapshots – the visitation reports of 1594 and 1603.43 Other than the substantial inspections of 1495 and 1540 which took in the whole managerial district of the Prior of Germany, these visitations only involved the Order’s centres in the Republic. On behalf of the Prior of Germany, the inspection of 1594 was carried out in May, June and July by Augustin von Mörsberg, commander of Base!, and Arnold von Lülsdorf, commander of Herrenstrunden. Their assignment was to look into how things stood with the Order's houses in Arnhem, Nijmegen, Utrecht and Haarlem. The visitation of 1603 only covered the house in Utrecht. It involved an investigation into the complement of personnel and the possessions of the Catharijne Convent after the death of the bailiff Hendrik Berck on 12 October 1602. The visitatores this time were the commander of Steinfurt, Eberhard von Galen, and the commander of Falkenstein, Johan Nolt.

It turned out from both reports that the Utrecht Hospitallers led by Hendrick Berck had managed to continue their community, as good and bad as it was. This was less simple for them than for the Teutonic knights because they had no knight brethren in their midst and were all clerics. There was no possibility of holding choir services. 'Es werden bey diessen Zeiten im Templo keine sacra verrichtet, dan solchs bey Leibstraff und uf Verluss und Confiscation aller Gütther durch den Magistrath verbotten', as it was stated in the report of 1594. Only on

42 Rengers Hora Siccama, Geestelijke goederen, p. 638.
43 Dirck de Leeuw accepted his appointment at the 6th of August 1588: ibidem, p. 649.
44 Both reports are published in Van Winter, Sources, respectively pp. 563-627 and 628-636.
Sundays was a mass celebrated in the chapel of the bailiff ‘... doch gar heimlichen und mit Gefahr’.

Aside from the bailiff the house had seven resident conventual brethren, of whom two had been admitted only a short time before and one was an external brother who had left his commandery and come to live in the house in Utrecht. There were five additional external members, who, as commanders of the subordinate houses in Gelderland, Holland, Zeeland and Utrecht, resided elsewhere. That brings the total number of members of the conventual community to thirteen. Most seem to have already entered the convent long before 1580.46 We recognise few names from the voting list of 1561, but there were also a few brothers who were among the first entrants after Utrecht joined the Revolt. Aside from Petrus van den Berg, who, as commander of the convent’s membrum of ’s Herenloo (St Jansdal), is listed in 1603 under the name Petrus Montanus, they were the two newcomers Johannes Hoen and Steven van Harteveld, who were reported to be in training for the priesthood. Johannes Hoen turned out finally to have achieved ordination, since he is characterised as ‘Conventual und Priester’ in 1603.

The report of 1603 provided several interesting particulars with regard to the intake and training of new brothers. The total conventual population had hardly declined at all compared with 1594. There were now seven brethren who lived out and five resident brethren along with Prior Berend van Schoonhoven, who was commander of Waarder at the same time but who lived in Utrecht. Of the five resident brethren, including the already mentioned Johannes Hoen and Steven van Harteveld, two had very recently been taken in as novices while the fifth, a certain Anthonis Vreeswijk, had paid his respects in the community shortly after 1594 at 22 years of age. In other words, both the convent and the bailiff had taken the necessary trouble since 1580 to keep the number of brothers up to par. They had even had several newcomers ordained as priests, despite the ban of the States against appointing new clerics. However, in the case of the still young Van Harteveld – he was admitted in 1594 as a 15-year-old! – and Vreeswijk and the two novices, ordination was not forthcoming. As to why, the brethren could not give a clear answer. Vreeswijk said he had not been put forward by the bailiff, although he himself had always been prepared to accept ordination. All brothers pointed to the hostile climate in the city, which did not make it possible to walk about in clerical clothing; they were laughed at every day, not only by strangers but also by their own friends and relatives. All of them emphasised that religious services in the convent were performed secretly and always ‘mit groot gefaer [with great danger]’. It was therefore out of fear of prosecution that the brethren had not yet argued before the States for the restoration of the Catholic religion.

In this anti-papist climate, Hendrick Berck had to manoeuvre as carefully as possible, even though he was tacitly permitted to appoint new Catholic mem-

46 This also applies for the external members. About the residing Johannes Windt, Berend van Schoonhoven and Alexander Berck (a younger carnal brother of the bailiff) is said that they belonged to the Order of St John already 33, 24 and 22 years, respectively.
bers to the Order. Just like his colleague Timan van Wou in Haarlem, he remained in control of the property of his commandery until his death. According to the report of 1594, he sent money to Malta every year while he also provided the camera of the Prior of Germany with the usual responsiones from Utrecht. Only in the case of the money that the emperor had been demanding since 1595 from the Order for assistance against the Turks did Berck appear to make no more contributions. In 1606 the Prior of Germany demanded that the prior and the convent of Utrecht should send a representative to the provincial chapter in Speyer who could then pay the arrears in taxes immediately. 47

Nothing would ever come of that, however. The States used the death of Hendrick Berck to strengthen their grip on the Catharijne Convent. Virtually immediately after the bailiff had breathed his last, the Delegated States forbade the surviving members of the Order to elect a successor. The Delegated States turned over the management to the Prior Berend van Schoonhoven and a new lay steward, Johan Sael. The historian Rengers Hora Siccama justifiably called this decision of October 1602 the turning point in the legal position of the Utrecht bailiwick of the Maltese Order. 48

The Order, of course, protested vehemently. The Prior of Germany assigned two commanders to persuade Prince Maurits, the States and the Council of Utrecht to allow the Utrecht Hospitalers to proceed to the election of a new bailiff. They emphasised again that the property of the bailiwick was one and indivisible with the whole of the Maltese Order, and that this property had been given in ancient times to finance the struggle against the archenemies of Christendom. It was a wasted effort, however. The States let it be known on 28 October 1603 that nothing could be changed regarding this matter. They contended that the brothers of Utrecht had never had noble knight brethren in their midst; that they had focussed traditionally on worship and the care of the sick; and that they had been able to choose their own bailiff and had always been autonomous — and there, strictly speaking, they had been right. The Utrecht Hospitalers had been religiosi regulares, and thus their existence was now subject to the Reformation arrangement that the States had drawn up for religious houses in the province. 49 And that, then, was that. Even the Grand Master in Malta was powerless to introduce any change. 50

The breaking of ties with the Order did not yet mean that communal life had come to an end, nor that no more new conventuals were taken in. From a membership list preserved from 1605 it appears that vacancies were still being filled with new people. Along with the old convent members Berend van Schoonhoven and Anthonis Vreeswijk the names are recorded of Gerard Proeys,

---

48 Rengers Hora Siccama, Geestelijke goederen, p. 654.
49 Ibidem, p. 668.
50 This Grand Master, Alef de Wignaucourt, announced to the remaining brethren of the Utrecht convent at the 28th of December 1603 that he would request the States and the city administration to allow them to exert their rights and elect a new bailiff: Van Winter, Sources, pp. 109-110: A 136.
Willem van Nijhof, Gerard Oom, Willem Schade, Johan van Zuylen and Adriaan Mol. They were not admitted by prior and convent – in an instruction of 8 February 1603 the prior was forbidden from giving allowances or commanderies to new members on his own authority – but through the Delegated States. The convent was therewith transformed at one stroke into a prebendary system within which, at best, members who had performed meritorious services for the country were rewarded. At worst the sinecures were bestowed upon friends and relatives of the men who participated in the election. Until 1611 all these new protestant members were still accommodated in convent buildings, but three years later the communal table appeared to have been dismantled and conventual life was no more. After this time, the beneficiaries could determine for themselves where and how they wanted to enjoy their benefit or run their commanderies. *De jure* the bailiwick would remain a *corpus in se* for decades, but *de facto* their existence as religious community had been terminated.

**Practice until 1620: the Teutonic Order**

Just as for the Hospitaliers, it was of great importance to the Teutonic Order’s convent in Utrecht to continue communal life after 1587 and to maintain or even strengthen ties with the Order’s leadership in South Germany. The activities of land commander Jacob Taets van Amerongen in these years – and there are sources enough present in the bailiwick archive – reveal that he, more than his predecessors, tried to increase the religious content of the Utrecht knights and make them aware of the Order’s traditions.\(^3\)

Jacob Taets van Amerongen came from a respected, originally patrician family, which was amply represented in the Utrecht Episcopal chapters in the sixteenth century. His father Johan and grandfather Ernst had been burgomaster of the city of Utrecht various times. De Vey Mestdagh characterised him rightfully as ‘bon-Catholic’. Before joining the Order he had made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land in 1569/1570 following studies in Louvain, Basel, Orléans and Padua,\(^4\) so that he could become a member of the Utrecht Jerusalem confraternity. Just like his father and his brother he was also admitted into the most prestigious brotherhood of Utrecht: that of the Kleine Kalende. On 20 May 1576, as house commander, he accepted the administration of Teutonic House in Utrecht and, in this capacity, assisted the coadjutor Jasper van Egmond van Merestein for a short time. When the latter was forced to give up his office at the end of 1576 and withdrew to the commandery of Maasland, Jacob Taets succeeded him as coadjutor. Because the sitting land commander Frans van Loo had already handed over day-

---

\(^1\) That is to say, in as far as they did not reside in the dependant commanderies.

\(^2\) In her contribution on the portraits of the Utrecht land commanders elsewhere in this volume, Daantje Meuwissen offers a more detailed picture of the person and importance of Jacob Taets van Amerongen.

\(^3\) De Geer, *Archieven* I, p. cx; idem, *Excerpten*, p. 18; I am indebted to Menno Koopstra for the data on Taets’ studies in Louvain (1560), Basel (1563), Orléans (1565) and Padua (1568).
to-day administration to his coadjutor in 1570, Taets immediately acquired (also officially) the leadership of the bailiwick.14

After Van Loo, at the repeated request of the bailiwick chapter, was dismissed in early 1579, Taets was chosen as his successor on 15 September. It is striking that he had himself confirmed by the German Master but also immediately requested placet of his appointment by King Philip II, which request was honoured as early as one and a half months later – on 30 October of the same year.15 With that he indicated that – the Union of Utrecht had already long been signed by the Utrecht States – he at least hoped for and reckoned with a turning of the tides.

As is testified by the Untgheefbouck, a register of expenses that he started to keep when he was appointed a coadjutor, he soon displayed great activity. He saw to it that the choral services in the church were adhered to conscientiously, through the hiring of a number of secular priests. He revived old traditions such as washing the feet of thirteen poor people on Maundy Thursday. He was generous in his gifts to the poor and to impoverished clergymen, especially after 1580. And he renewed ties with the Order which had weakened seriously in the time of Frans van Loo.16 He did this, for example, by sending the young knight brother Diederik Blois van Treslong to the main convent of the German Master Heinrich von Bobenhausen in Mergentheim for three years.17 In 1577, still on behalf of Frans van Loo, he saw to it that a detailed report about the situation of the Utrecht bailiwick was sent to the German Master. During his first years in office, we also see new brothers such as Willem Sloet admitted,18 but it is unclear whether he was appointed by Jacob Taets or earlier by Frans van Loo.

We have already seen how fiercely Taets reacted to the ordinances of the States of Utrecht in 1580 and 1587. He had to give up worship in the convent church, of course, and could not appoint any new priests of the Order for the time being. The remaining priest brethren were virtually all tied to commanderies elsewhere, but when eventually they had to give these up as a result of the Revolt and related war conditions some of them withdrew to Utrecht. If they did not continue worship secretly in the form of masses and sermons, the land commander saw to it that the masses and sermons were continued by hired secular priests. The masses and sermons took place in the knights’ chamber where, according to an account over the year 1597, an altar was located.19 This chamber will

54 De Vey Mestdagh, Utrechtse balije, p. 79, speaks about a forced leave of Frans van Loo.
55 De Geer, Archieven I, nr. 454.
56 After his election as land commander in 1560 Frans van Loo had only communicated with the German Master in writing; he never appeared at the meetings of the General Chapters of the Order in Southern Germany. Only after the visit of the German Master Georg Hund von Wencheim to Utrecht, on occasion of a royal mission, in August 1570, was he confirmed in his office by the latter in 1571.
58 Willem Sloet was appointed coadjutor of Nes 1579: ARDOU, nr. 2266.
59 De Geer, Excerpten, p. 25. On the location of this knights’ chamber, see the article of Daantje Meuwissen.
have replaced the great chapter hall for the bailiwick community after or perhaps even before 1580. The hall became used only for representation purposes of the City Council and the States and, together with the rooms above and behind it, served for the accommodation of their high-ranking guests – for example, the duke of Alva, the earl of Leicester, and Prince Maurits, etc. That the Teutonic knights continued to celebrate mass, it should be said, was well known to the authorities. In 1600 the vice sheriff of the city of Utrecht came to disturb the divine service, only to retreat after he was given a bribe of two rose nobles. In 1606 Jacob Taets wrote to one of the Order’s knights in Mergentheim saying that he still had priests in service, but that he had been given to understand by the States (again) that no clerics could be admitted to the Order. Even in 1617, however, the bailiwick still had a Catholic priest on the payroll as sacristan.

This meant that, after the Calvinist interlude of 1586-1587, the States of Utrecht also allowed the Teutonic knights a relatively large degree of freedom to live as they had been accustomed to before the Revolt. Jacob Taets made as much use of this freedom as he could. In 1592 and 1593, for example, he let his knight brethren Willem Mulert and Willem Sloet take back possession of the commanderies of Leiden and Schelluinen in a demonstrative way in court and countryside by digging up earth and turf and strewing them over the land. And he tried to act in close concert with Grand Master Maximilian of Habsburg, the fourth son of Maximilian II, who succeeded Bobenhausen in 1589 as leader of the Teutonic Order. In 1593, with a view to the uncertain political situation, Grand Master Maximilian allowed him and the land commander of Biesen to take reliable persons as novices into their bailiwicks. Engelbert van der Noot, who was allowed in as knight brother in February 1597, was part of this new conscription as he was undoubtedly of the Catholic persuasion. The same can be assumed for Ludolf van Gutterswijk, who was admitted a few months later. Earlier we find the Catholics Johan van Steenhuis and Jasper van Lijnden as young knight brethren in the Utrecht bailiwick.

61 Ibidem.
62 He received permission to change his title of ‘Administrator of the Grand Master’s Office’ into that of Grand Master.
63 In a document concerning his admission, he is backed up by the catholic noblemen Frederick de Wael van Vronestein and Johan van Winssen, who declare themselves to be close relatives: ARDOU, nr. 303D.
64 Possibly at that moment there were – apart from Engelbert van der Noot – very few Catholic candidates to be found in the ranks of the Utrecht nobility. Ludolf van Gutterswijk came from Cleves and had no family in the province of Utrecht: d’Ablaing van Giessenburg, p. 7; De Geer, Archiven I, nr. 459.
65 Jasper van Lijnden had already been admitted as so-called ‘expectant’ to the bailiwick in 1569 at the age of thirteen: ARDOU, nr. 11, 1, Resolutieboek. His older brother Steven was a member of the bailiwick Biesen. At what moment Jasper really entered the community in Utrecht is not known. Johan van Steenhuis appears for the first time in the documents as brother of the Teutonic Order being commander of Schelluinen in 1587. He also had a relative with exactly the same name in the bailiwick of Biesen: Johan van Steenhuis, commander of Gruitrode, who died in 1594 on the expedition against the Turks in which he served as standard bearer of the Grand Master: Van der Eycken, ‘Ridders Balije Biesen’, p. 127.
Also fitting into this climate of renewed cooperation with the Order's leadership was the participation of the two already-mentioned brothers Willem Sloet and Willem Mulert in the campaign against the Turks in Hungary. They served, together with six brothers from the bailiwick Biesen, in the contingent of the Teutonic Order that was led by Grand Master Maximilian himself. Long afterwards, Maximilian's stadtholder Westernach could still remember the sincere catholic devotion practised by both men during this expedition.\(^{66}\) They managed to survive, it should be said.\(^{67}\) In this way, the Order's members in Utrecht could become familiar with the Teutonic Order's military role in the service of the Holy Roman Empire. It was also expected of the new entrants that, as part of their further training, they should first spend several years abroad. To this end, Jasper van Lijnnden travelled with the support of the land commander to Ath in 1595, to Germany in 1596 and to Milan in 1597.\(^{68}\)

So it appeared that the Utrecht bailiwick was still able to operate autonomously around 1600. It is striking that in 1598 the States of Utrecht even supported a request of the land commander to the States of Friesland to return the confiscated Frisian goods of the Order '... uijt der confiscatie te ontslaen', a request in which very explicit reference was made to the decision of the States General not to seize the possessions of the Hospitallers at Alphen in Noord-Brabant (the former Templar commandery of Tebrake). In the light of their own decision of 1602 not to have any new bailiff elected within their own territory at the Catharijne Convent and not to admit any new brothers themselves, this makes an ambiguous impression, all the more so because the Frisian States rightfully claimed that the Frisian convents had never accommodated knights. It also appeared here that material interests had been the deciding factor in letting the Utrecht institutions keep as many possessions as possible in other regions.\(^{69}\)

Meanwhile, to assure the continuity of the bailiwick it was necessary for Jacob Taets and the Grand Master to arrange the succession of the land commandery. For both, the most suitable candidate was Diederik Blois van Treslong. It shows the flexible attitude of the States of Utrecht that, on 17 July 1600, they gave the land commander and bailiwick chapter permission to elect a coadjutor according to their old privileges. The Catholic Blois was indeed named as such, albeit only in 1606.\(^{70}\) Taets did still not dare to leave Utrecht to take part in the meetings of the General Chapter of the Teutonic Order in South Germany, so that he could also not have been present at the meeting of 1606 when it was decided to amend the statutes. Nevertheless the Utrecht knights, via Biesen, did adopt the new statutes which, it should be said, differed little in content from the old ones. It can be assumed that the new members of the Order followed the revised rules as much as possible in Utrecht too, although, within the political con-

\(^{66}\) In a letter to Maximilian, from 1614, cited by Noflatscher, Maximilian der Deutschmeister, p. 260, n. 94.

\(^{67}\) See the report of their journey in De Geer, Archieven I, nr. 457.

\(^{68}\) De Geer, Excerpten, p. 25.

\(^{69}\) De Geer, Secularisatie.

\(^{70}\) De Geer, Archieven I, p. cxii.
stellation in which the Republic found itself, there could of course be no question of doing three years of Turkish service or other military tasks to the benefit of the Empire.

Knight brethren entering the Order still had to take vows of poverty, obedience and chastity. The practice was that candidates were already admitted as ‘expectant’ at a very young age, without actually having to live at the house in Utrecht. For each appointment, however, agreatie (approval) had to be requested from the State, which of course gave preference to Protestant-minded candidates. But, because minors among the nobility did not yet have to possess entirely fixed religious convictions, the religious preference of the States could be easily sidestepped in practice. No wonder that various new members of the Order tended to omit the agreatie request on actual admittance to the Teutonic House. In this way virtually the whole bailiwick community could still consist of Catholic nobles until 1615.

It even appeared that the expectants were investigated in advance by the land commander and the chapter as to their ties to Mother Church. Along with those already mentioned, we are referring to Willem van Winssen and Hendrik de Voocht van Rijneveld. They both came from families that had remained Catholic and which, furthermore, were related to each other. Also Jacob van Zuijlen van Nijeveld, brother-in-law of Diederik Blois van Treslong, and appointed as commander of Maasland in 1616, will not have been anti-Catholic. Willem van Renesse van Baer, admitted to Teutonic House in 1616, still refused in the same year to meet the condition of the States, which likewise assumes Catholic sympathies on his part. Perhaps the religious climate which prevailed in the bailiwick at this time, however, is best characterised by the reassuring message that coadjutor Blois sent, shortly after the death of Jacob Taets van Amerongen, that his predecessor had died in the Catholic faith.

Because the Utrecht States had gone along in 1606 with the choice of Blois as coadjutor, they had to permit his being chosen as land commander in 1612. In any case, he quickly received confirmation from the Grand Master, on 8 October 1613. When, in 1615, together with the bailiwick chapter, he wanted to go over to the election of a coadjutor, he obtained a promise to this effect from the States only on the condition that the candidate would be a man who had made a ‘professie van de heylike christelijcke gereformeerde religie’. Thus the new man had to be a professed member who was known to participate regularly in the Holy Communion of the Reformed Church. As such, it was veteran Jasper van Lijn-

71 Repeatedly – in 1608, 1612 and even in 1622 – ‘expectants’ and commanders were exhorted to request the States to give them agreatie, on penalty of losing the membership of the order: Van der Puijl, Reformation gepasseerd, p. 37-38.

72 Ibidem, p. 50. See also the admission document of 25 January 1609 for Willem van Winssen, in which the traditional formula, left out in previous charters, is taken up again that the land commanders admits the named candidate ‘... dorch Godt ende des hoechlieefflicker coniginne stijnre gebenedyde moeder Maria’ (by God and the highly beloved queen, his blessed mother Mary): ARDOU, nr. 303C.

73 DOZA, nr. 383, f. 24r.

74 Ibidem.
den who was appointed. It is not entirely clear whether he really met the religious requirements of the States. In the deed of *agreatie* of 7 October 1617 regarding Jasper van Lijnden it was only said of him that he was born of honest nobility and showed himself to be a good patriot who loved his home country.\[^{75}\] He was presumably not a convinced member of the Reformed community, mainly also because he is characterised in the Mergentheimer sources as ‘dem Orden eifrig gesinnt’.\[^{76}\] Even so this development does indicate that the States were serious about the Protestantisation of the bailiwick. Their decision ran perfectly parallel to the explicit prohibition, likewise implemented in 1615, against appointing Roman Catholics as canons in the former Episcopal chapters.

With this information one could place the turning point in 1615. More decisive, however, appears to be 1619, when Jasper van Lijnden replaced the deceased Blois van Treslong as first Protestant land commander and his position as coadjutor was taken over on 3 August by the seven-year-old high noble Hendrik Casimir, Count of Nassau-Dietz.\[^{77}\] This last change in personnel— the boy was only allowed into the bailiwick on 19 June 1619— was very unusual. It can only be explained by the pressure exerted on the States of Utrecht by the Calvinist-minded Count Ernst Casimir, lieutenant governor of Utrecht since 1610, thereby benefiting from the orthodox victory in the religious-political conflict over power in the Republic. The consequence was that, when Jasper van Lijnden died in 1620, the leadership of the bailiwick fell automatically to Ernst Casimir, as guardian over his son. From that time on, nothing more could stand in the way of the further Protestantisation of the bailiwick.

**Summing-up: noble group interest and confessionalisation**

From the foregoing it may appear that the process of survival of the military orders in Utrecht was largely determined by the development of the power constellation within the States of Utrecht since 1580. We established that, of all groups with access to power, the wellborn and wealthy had won most from the change of religion and joining up with the Revolt. The nobility had increased its influence at the expense of the Church and, together with the Utrecht patricians dominated the political arena from then on— except for the *intermezzo* at the time of Leicester.\[^{78}\] But, for the leaders of these groups, the transition to Protestantism did not mean that they would immediately carry out a clear-cut programme of action towards the existing religious institutions. They had a choice of various possibilities,\[^{79}\] but had to work out both the theoretical and practical aspects. It is difficult to establish how far they actually did this, although we may assume that

\[^{75}\] Resolutieboek, ARDOU, nr. 11. I thank Daantje Meuwissen for pointing me at this document.

\[^{76}\] DOZA, Hs. 34 par. 120. Verg. De Vey Mestdagh, *Utrechtse Balije*.

\[^{77}\] Ibidem, p. 44.


\[^{79}\] A clear introduction to this theme is offered by Klueting, ‘Enteignung oder Umwidmung?’. 
they had some awareness of the varied ways in which the problem was approached in the surrounding Protestant countries and regions.

Within the Republic, the Frisian solution provided a clear model. There, in 1580, the now Calvinist States Assembly, which was not then so strongly dominated by the nobility as the Utrecht States, ordered the abbots, priors, commanders and all other heads of religious houses to surrender the administration of their property in exchange for allowances for the members who had not gone into exile. The convents – including those of the military orders – were dissolved, while their properties were put under the management of the provincial stewards. The revenues, after deduction of the pensions, were available for Reformed piii usus. These were 'pious objectives', by which were understood such things as the founding of a university, extra poor relief, supplements to the financial support of clergymen and even the costs of the war against Spain. In this way – one surmises that total monastery ownership constituted between 16 and 20 percent of arable land – a huge fund from which many important community expenses could be paid on behalf of the now autonomous province was amassed within five years.

The orthodox Calvinists in the province of Utrecht had wanted to take this course too, all the more because the extent of religious property was many times greater there than in Friesland. But the leading families from the regional nobility and the Utrecht patricians, who dominated the First and Second Estates, and who were 'liberal' Protestant-minded in the main, would not permit this. The determinations in the ordinance of 1580 with regard to the other large Church institutions speaks volumes. The Episcopal Chapters were continued without further ado as Reformed colleges with canons, appointed by the States, who had no other obligations than the management of properties so as to extract from them as much income for themselves as possible. The large monasteries for men also had to be transformed into such benefice funds. The noble nunneries would become prebendary funds for Reformed ladies, for which the benefices for noble families were allocated, again, by the representatives of the knighthood.

The similarities in measures taken towards these various kinds of institutions are striking. It can be inferred that the First and Second Estates strove for everything but the compromise-free abolition of all monasteries and chapters. One chose an official continuance which at the same time implied a transformation, and indeed a transformation into easily managed funds that would continue to come to the benefit of the own group and family interests. This policy was followed for the establishments of the military orders in Utrecht. The secularising Utrecht bailiwick of the Teutonic Order, which had already been stripping away its religious character before the Reformation, appeared to fit precisely into this scheme. If it could continue to fill this function, there was nothing against allowing it to carry on independently as a Reformed noble corporation. The Catharijne Convent, however, could not, as a priestly institution, take this direc-

80 Mol, 'Kloostergoederen na de Reformation', p. 94.
81 Van Kalveen, 'Nalatenschap S. Paulusabdij', pp. 45-46.
tion on its own and thus had to be steered from outside, by no longer allowing a
new bailiff to be elected from its own circle, and by having only Protestants ad-
mitted as new members.

Even so, the surrounding developments are not entirely explained. Such a
scheme, in other words, does not explain why the regional administrators in the
nineties, both at the Catharijne Convent and the more or less re-Catholicised
bailiwick of the Teutonic Order, turned a blind eye to the continuation of wor-
ship and the recruitment of Catholic members in to the Order. Just as puzzling is
how the Teutonic knights could still elect a new Catholic coadjutor in 1606 and
why he, after the death of Jacob Taets, could take over the leadership of the baili-
wick in 1612 without further conditions, while, for the Hospitalers, with the
death of bailiff Hendrik Berck in 1602, free choice of a new bailiff and the ad-
mission of new members came to an end. It was of great importance that the
Utrecht States did not have to take account of the authority of the Holy Roman
Empire, which, in principle, was opposed to drawing on religious properties in
general and those of the military order in particular. The political influence of the
Empire on the Northern Netherlands had been particularly slight since the treaty
of Augsburg in 1548, so that the leaders of the Hospitalers and the Teutonic
Order, notwithstanding their status as princes of the Empire, did not have the
power to halt the secularisation of their Dutch establishments. They could at best
protest against the state of affairs at the States-General. Out of diplomatic con-
siderations, the States-General did appear prepared to spare the military orders,
partly under the pressure of Stadtholder William of Orange and his son Maurits
who, despite their Calvinist conviction, were willing to treat the military orders
as a separate category, presumably in defence of the interests of the nobility. But
even they could not exert much pressure – because – as had been established
in 1579 in the determinations of the Union of Utrecht – the States Colleges of the
various provinces were sovereign in point of fact, first and foremost in religious
matters. Authority rested with the parties in the province which, in turn, had to
permit the necessary freedom of action to some city administrations. It could
happen, for example, that despite the pressure that both the States-General and
the States of Holland exerted on the city of Haarlem to oblige the Order of St
John, the magistrates and council of Haarlem persistently and successfully pur-
sued their politics to allow the priest community of the local Hospitaler convent
die out so that they could lay their hands on its buildings, properties and works
of art.

That brings us to a number of special factors, whose individual importance
is difficult to determine. One is the relatively tolerant climate which still prevailed
in both the province and the city of Utrecht until the start of the Twelve Year
Truce. Catholics were in most cases left undisturbed if they did not practice their
faith too openly. That the community of the Catharijne Convent was forbidden

82 For an overview of the developments concerning the relationship between the Empire and the
Netherlands: Arndt, *Heilige Römische Reich*.

to elect a new bailiff in 1602 and thus to accept direct control from the city administration, could have been related to the practical interest that the latter had in gaining greater direct control over the city hospital that the convent ran. The Utrecht magistrate, which, just like the States, was dominated at this time by liberal Protestants, would ultimately also - via the political body of the so-called Geëligeerden (the elected), which constituted the continuation of the First Estate - acquire influence over the appointment of men who were paid with an allowance from the income of the Catharijne Convent.

The events of the year 1610 appear to have set a turnabout in motion in Utrecht. The numerically strong Catholics, who were not satisfied with having to practice their religion behind closed doors, publicly demanded the right to set up their own churches in the city, but also to take part in the city administration. To this end they entered into a surprising and au fond impossible alliance with the orthodox Calvinists, who were politically sidelined in 1587 and had remained powerless since then. The cooperation resulted in a rapid, but short-lived takeover of the city government by both dissatisfied groups. Their rule ended just as quickly through the action of State troops led by the still young Frederik Hendrik. Henceforth, among the liberal-Protestant patricians who had come back into power, there existed a great reluctance to tolerate 'papist tricks'. This reluctance also appears to have grown strongly in the States Assembly at this time. Within the variegated group of flexible Protestants there had also been opponents of a tolerant attitude towards Catholics before 1610. Whereas some of them had pleaded for cooperation with a view to the restoration of unity and harmony, there were others who claimed the opposite - arguing that these would lead to disorder and the undermining of social discipline.

After 1610 this latter party won the upper hand. Public religious expressions by Catholics were no longer permitted and action was also taken against the religious brotherhoods, virtually all of which had continued to exist after 1580 and of which some had even acquired a bi-confessional composition. So, from everyone who wanted to play a leading role in politics and society, a stronger commitment was demanded to the Protestant confession as the official religion of the Republic. Against this background, it is easier to understand that the States of Utrecht, even though they remained flexible-minded, added real force to their religious demands with regard to membership of the former Episcopal chapters and the Utrecht bailiwick of the Teutonic Order. Perhaps they also felt compelled to do so because the orthodox groups had gained strongly in strength in this area and it was necessary to take the wind out of their sails. That the latter in 1619, after a sharply escalated conflict in the whole Republic, including Utrecht, succeeded in seizing power again, could signify nothing other for the Utrecht bailiwick of the Teutonic Order - via the appointment of a Calvinist count of Nassau as land commander - than that it would ultimately have to lose its character.

84 Den Tex, 'Staten in Oldenbarnevelts tijd', p. 72 ff.; see also Felix, Oproer, passim.
Sources and literature

Abbreviations: ARDOU = Archief van de Ridderlijke Duitse Orde balije van Utrecht, te Utrecht; DOZA = Deutschordenszentralarchiv, Vienna.

Ablaing van Giessenburg, W.J. d', *Wapenboek der ridders van de Duitse Orde Balije van Utrecht 1581* (s-Gravenhage, 1871).


Geer tot Oudegein, J.J. de, 'De secularisatie van de Duitse Orde, Balije van Utrecht' (ms. 1889, at the ARDOU, nr. 2, 92).


Kaplan, Benjamin J., 'A clash of values: survival of Utrecht’s confraternities after the Reformation and the debate over their dissolution', *De Zeventiende Eeuw 16* (2000), pp. 100-117.

Maarschalkerweerd, Ph., 'De overdracht van het wereldlijk gezag', in: Geschiedenis van de provincie Utrecht van 1528 tot 1780 (Utrecht, 1997), pp. 33-46.


Nolfatscher, H., Glaube, Reich und Dynastie: Maximilian der Deutschmeister (1558-1618) (Marburg, 1987).


Post, R.R., Kerkelijke verbouwingen in Nederland vóór de Reformatie van ca. 1500 tot ca. 1580 (Utrecht/Antwerpen, 1954).

Puijl, Irene van der, 'De Reformatie gepasseerd. Een onderzoek naar het waarborgen van de continuïteit van de ridderlijke Duitse Orde balije van Utrecht in de zeventiende eeuw door haar sociale en politieke netwerken', unpublished 'doctoraalscriptie' modern history, Universiteit Utrecht s.a. [1998?].


Rengers Hora Sicama, D.G., De geestelijke en kerkelijke goederen onder het canonieke, het gereformeerde en het neutrale recht, dl I: de canonieke en de gereformeerde bedeling (Utrecht, 1925).


Winter, J.M. van, ed., Sources concerning the Hospitalers of St. John in the Netherlands, 14th-18th Centuries (Leiden, 1998).