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A Nation of Notables: Class, Politics and Religion in the Netherlands in the Nineteenth Century

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A Nation of Notables

Class, Politics and Religion in the Netherlands
in the Nineteenth Century

Robert van der Laarse

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Acknowledgments

This short monograph originates from a long interest in Dutch political history, and is intended to provide an interpretative framework and bibliographical guide to further research on class, politics and religion in the Netherlands in the nineteenth century. Its basic arguments, as well as the concept of the notables itself, will be elaborated in my wider study on the making and decline of the nineteenth-century Dutch notables and elite culture. For their initial support of this project I am much indebted to Hans Blom of the University of Amsterdam and the Nederlands Instituut voor Oorlogsdocumentatie, as well as to Arnold Labrie of the University of Maastricht, Maarten Prak of the University of Utrecht, Yme Kuiper of the University of Groningen, Michael Wintle of the University of Hull, and Hugh McLeod of the University of Birmingham. As to this English publication I want to particularly thank John Garrard of the University of Salford, on whose request I was so incautious as to bind myself to a publication on the Dutch process of democratization, of which this work on elitism is a sort of spin-off. The research was financially supported by the Nederlandse Organisatie voor Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek (NWO).

Rob van der Laarse
University of Amsterdam
January 1999

Preface

At the start of the nineteenth century, the Netherlands was probably the most highly urbanized country in Europe, and the one with the most significant urban patriciate. The evolution of this bourgeois elite from the regents of the Dutch Republic through to the financial and political elites of the twentieth century is of special interest to those interested in the European history of bourgeois society and aristocracy. The Netherlands is equally of interest to those concerned with the relationship between religion and politics, since nineteenth-century modernization is bound up with the typical phenomenon of religious segmentation between Roman Catholics and different Protestant denominations, which is known as pillarization. On both subjects a large amount of work in various parts of the Netherlands has been completed, although a national synthesis of this very complex material does not yet exist. In fact, one of the aims of this study is to show how, parallel to the Grand Narrative of national history, a kaleidoscope of micro-histories reveals the local elite's contribution to the making of the modern nation.

In contrast to the Golden Age of the Dutch Republic, so vividly portrayed by Anglo-American historians, the nineteenth century history of the Netherlands has received scarce attention from abroad.¹ From a Dutch perspective, however, we are fortunate in having Ernst Kossmann's *The Low Countries* (1978), that offers an unsurpassed survey of the history of both the Netherlands and Belgium from the 1780s to 1940, although it is mainly confined to the world of parliamentary politics and intellectual ideas.² Compensating for Kossmann's blind eye for religion, though, the English reader also has at his disposal an outstanding introduction to the complexities of religious life in Michael Wintle's *Pillars of Piety* (1987).³ Yet both studies neglect the role of the elites, and appeared too early to profit from the results of recent historical research into nationalism, liberal culture, and pillarization. Thus the unique way Dutch society was organized on the principles of both class and religion still needs to be put on the map of European history. As a first contribution to this self-proclaimed task, I hope the reader will forgive me for jumping a few times into the morass of theory by challenging some strong preconceptions concerning the conciliatory nature of Dutch history. For the same reason I have to apologize for the way this essay is burdened with references. This is a deliberate attempt to offer the English reader a wide selection of recent Dutch research, that may permit the notables to take their legitimate place in literature.

1 Thus the Netherlands are omitted in recent comparative studies on religion and aristocracy, such as Hugh McLeod (ed.), *European Religion in the Age of the Great Cities, 1830-1930* (London/New York, 1995); Dominic Lieven, *The Aristocracy in Europe, 1815-1914* (Hampshire, 1992); Jürgen Kocka and Allan Mitchell (eds.), *Bourgeois Society in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Oxford, 1993).

2 E.H. Kossmann, *The Low Countries 1780-1940*, (Oxford, 1978)

3 Michael Wintle, *Pillars of Piety. Religion in the Netherlands in the Nineteenth Century* (Hull, 1987),

I. Introduction: The Age of the Notables

"I love the hoary notables, walking slowly on the square: the vicar, the doctor, and the notary; so unmistakably honest and honourable in their grey suits, while their faces are lined with a sense of duty." By this 'declaration of love' the Dutch poet Jan Greshoff (1888-1971) revealed his love-hate relationship with an old ruling class in the interwar period, and mercilessly portrayed its outdated respectability. Living in a parochial world of order, embedded in rules, manners and morals, their lifestyle seems to have been a product of immutable laws of nature instead of historical change and social conflicts. Yet, as Greshoff noticed, for those 'living monuments at the square' from whom the world concealed no secrets: "things would take a turn".⁴

In fact this prediction had already come true. The old certainties had disappeared long before the First World War, when the notables lost their natural supremacy in trade and banking, politics, and culture. The vicar, the doctor and the notary were the last survivors of a dying class of patricians, enriched by trade and banking, that had dominated Dutch society from the end of the Middle Ages. Yet the rise of the industrial bourgeoisie in the Netherlands is much better documented than the decline and fall of this burgher aristocracy, which went almost unnoticed.⁵ To foreigners Dutch society may seem only to comprehend by viewing it through the spectacles of the age-old antagonism of the merchants and the righteous.⁶ Yet among the Dutch themselves the merchant-regency has been erased from collective memory, and its nationwide heritage - canals, townhouses, parks and country seats - functions at best as an object of commercial exploitation.⁷ This has to do with the fact that in the Netherlands the nineteenth century has for long been

⁴ J. Greshoff, *Liefdesverklaring* quoted from H.J.L. Vonhoff, *De zindelijke burgerheren. Een halve eeuw liberalisme* (Baarn, 1965), p. 15. For an outline of notable manners and etiquette in this period, primarily based on prescriptive literature, see Ileen Montijn, *Leven op stand 1890-1940* (Amsterdam, 1998), and for an outstanding analyses of the decay of aristocratic lifestyle and the rituals of the Season around 1900, based on the diaries of the Frisian 'Freule' A.W. van Andringa de Kempnaer: Yme Kuiper and Mirjam Wagter, 'De uitgaande wereld van Leeuwarden 1860-1900', *Leeuwarder Historische Reeks*, VI (1997), 210-266.

⁵ Cf. a recent historiographical survey of elitestudies: M.G.J. Duijvendak and J.J. de Jong, *Eliteonderzoek: rijkdom, macht en status in het verleden* (Zutphen, 1993),

⁶ See e.g. D.S. Meldrum, *Home Life in Holland* (London 1911), and for a recent illustration: Ernest Zahn, *Regenten, rebellen en reformatoren. Een visie op Nederland en de Nederlanders* (Amsterdam, 1989), a work of a German sociologist, praised by the Dutch historian Ernst Kossmann for its intellectual distinction, though even this eminent Whig historian admitted: "No, such a tranquillity, so much continuity, such a monotony, could history in this land not have been." (E.H. Kossmann, 'Een land van tolerante kerkgangers', *NRCHandelsblad*, 6-4-1990).

⁷ As in England, the heritage industry has contributed to an outpouring of coffee-table books on country houses in particular, but it has only very recently become an object of academical interest: Erik de Jong, Yme Kuiper and Rob van der Laarse (eds.), *Beelden van de Hollandse buitenplaats: elitevorming en elitecultuur in de korte 19de eeuw (1815-1880)*, to be issued autumn 1999 in co-production with *Tuinkunst: Jaarboek of Tuin- en Landschapsgeschiedenis* (containing English summaries).

regarded a period of stagnation and retardation, whereas the period round about 1900 is considered a time of progress and optimism instead of fin-de-siècle decadence and pessimism.⁸ In fact, this contrastive image is strongly influenced by the 'Writers of the Eighties' and the following Functionalist Movement (Nieuwe Zakelijkheid), of which Greshoff himself was a descendant. The self-styled bohemians of the 1880s, that were known as 'young Holland' or 'young Amsterdam', felt more at home among the beau monde of the new, fashionable quarters of the Amsterdam metropolis or the modern villas in Het Gooi near Hilversum, than among the aristocracy within the old ring of canals; and a decade later, most of them ended up as radical chic. Thus the notable past had become a foreign country not only to the political mass leaders of the middle and lower classes, who were waiting to be admitted to civic society, but also to the bourgeoisie's own offspring: the cultural avant-garde.⁹

The purpose of this monograph is to explain the Janus-faced character of Dutch society. In some countries, such as France, democracy developed after some sort of revolutionary break, while in others, such as England, the transition from the ancien régime to modernity took a more gradual form. The Netherlands' route to democracy was, however, a combination of both change and continuity. The national state itself dates only from the Batavian Revolution of 1795, predated by the Patriot Revolt of the 1780s and completed by the Orangist Restoration of 1813-1815. But there is no vestige in the nation's memory of this revolutionary episode: nineteenth-century civic ritual revived the old-republican liberation mythology, by commemorating the endless number of sieges of the 'Protestant Nation' in the Eighty Years War against Habsburg Spain (1568-1648), accompanied by the victorious Battle of Waterloo (1815), and the Ten Days Campaign (1831) against the rebellious Belgians. The notable fighters - mostly student volunteers and civic guards officers - were honoured by the royalist memorials of the Societies of the Silver and the Metal Cross, a ritual that lasted until the end of century. This heroic calendar made the Low Countries one glorious landscape dotted with lieux de mémoire.¹⁰

8 Cf. the special issue on the problem of a Dutch fin de siècle, of *Bijdragen en Mededelingen betreffende de Geschiedenis van Nederland*, 106 (1991) 4.

9 Cf. E.H. Kossmann, *De Lage Landen 1780-1914: Anderhalve eeuw Nederland en België* (Amsterdam-Brussels, 1979), 241-251; J.Th.M. Bank, 'Mecenaat en stadsontwikkeling in Amsterdam, 1850-1900', *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis*, 104 (1991) 4, 548-573; Henk te Velde, 'Herenstijl en burgerzin. Nederlandse burgerlijke cultuur in de negentiende eeuw', in Henk te Velde and Remieg Aerts (eds.), *De stijl van de burger. Over Nederlandse burgerlijke cultuur vanaf de Middeleeuwen* (Kampen 1998), 157-185, in particular pp. 183-4.

10 Cf. E. Koolhaas-Grosveld, 'Nationale versus goede smaak. Bevordering van nationale kunst in Nederland: 1780-1840', *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis*, 95 (1982), 605-636; Bram Kempers, 'Symboliek, monumentaliteit en abstractie. Het beeld van de staat en het beroep van kunstenaar na 1789', *Amsterdams Sociologisch Tijdschrift*, 14 (1987) 1, 3-61; J.Th.M. Bank, *Het roemrijk vaderland. Cultureel nationalisme in Nederland in de negentiende eeuw* (inaugural, Leiden 1989; The Hague, 1990); D. Carosso (eds.), *Helden van het Vaderland. Onze geschiedenis in 19de-eeuwse taferelen verbeeld* (Amsterdam, 1991). Interestingly, the first phase of the Dutch Revolt against the King of Spain, which began in the southern Low Countries, was presented in Belgian historicist painting as a foreshadowing of the revolution of 1830 against the King of the Netherlands!:

Among modern scholars, too, there is a strong tendency to present Dutch history from the perspective of continuity and conciliation, instead of breaks and conflicts. Even the introduction of mass politics at the end of the nineteenth century has been interpreted from such a Whig perspective as a rather peaceable process of segmented emancipation, known as *verzuiling* or pillarization - a term that refers to the postwar metaphor of the modern welfare state as a temple, supported by the four pillars of Calvinism, Catholicism, liberalism and socialism.¹¹ Though attention has focused on the sharp cultural boundaries between these ideological communities, and on the remarkable scope of their institutional networks during the European 'age of the ideological ghettos', the peculiarity of pillarization applies in particular to the state-sponsored character of Dutch segmented organization, covering all aspects of everyday life, such as religion, politics, welfare, health care, education, insurance, sport and the media. According to most historians and political scientists, the Netherlands experienced a unique system of 'consociational democracy' ever since the so-called Pacification of 1917, which settled the religious conflict on education, and the social struggle for universal suffrage, by accepting some age-old pragmatic rules of the game, transforming politics from an ideological struggle into an accounting system of the proportional distribution of public spending. It has become a stereotyped idea that the leaders of the pillars acknowledged each other's right to existence, and, in spite of the almost complete subcultural isolation of their rank and file, maintained narrow political relations at the top. Hence, the paradox of subcultural pluralism and political stability is ascribed to the conflict management of 'prudent elites'.¹² From this conciliatory perspective, the emancipation of the new pillarized mass-parties appears to have been

Tom Verschaffel, *Beeld en geschiedenis. Het Belgische en Vlaamse verleden in de romantische boekillustraties* (Turnhout, 1987), pp. 35-43, 175-188.

¹¹ The power of metaphor may be illustrated by the fact that recently some early modern historians have even proposed studying the Republic from the perspective of pillarization: Karel Davids, Jan Lucassen, Jan Luiten van Zanden, *De Nederlandse geschiedenis als afwijking van het algemeen menselijk patroon* (Amsterdam, 1988); Simon Groenveld, *Was de Nederlandse Republiek verzuild? Over segmentering van de samenleving binnen de Verenigde Nederlanden* (inaugural RU Leiden, 1995). For some historiographical reviews, see: J.C.H. Blom, 'Onderzoek naar verzuiling in Nederland. Status quaestionis en wenselijke ontwikkeling', in J.C.H. Blom, C.J. Misset (eds.), *Broeders sluit U aan*. Aspecten van verzuiling in zeven Hollandse gemeenten (Amsterdam/The Hague, 1985), pp. 10-29; Hans Daalder, 'Politologen, sociologen, historici en de verzuiling', *Bijdragen en Mededelingen betreffende de Geschiedenis der Nederlanden*, 100 (1985) 1, 52-64; Piet de Rooy, 'Zes studies over verzuiling', *Bijdragen en Mededelingen betreffende de Geschiedenis der Nederlanden*, 110 (1995) 3, 380-392.

¹² Arend Lijphart, *The Politics of Accommodation* (2nd. ed. Berkeley, 1975); M.P.C.M. van Schendelen (ed.), *Consociationalism, pillarization and conflict-management in the Low Countries* (Meppel, 1984); J.E. Ellemers, 'Pillarization as a process of modernization', and Hans Daalder, 'On the origins of the consociational democracy model', both in *Acta Politica* (1984) 1, 97-116, and 129-144; for a critical approach, see Ilya Scholten, 'Does consociationalism exist? A critique of the Dutch experience', in R. Rose (ed.), *Electoral participation* (London/Beverly Hills, 1980), pp. 329-354, and Siep Stuurman, *Verzuiling, kapitalisme en patriarchaat. Aspecten van de ontwikkeling van de moderne staat in Nederland* (Nijmegen, 1983).

the one-way integration of the political periphery into an accommodationist elite culture that reaches back to the urban patriciate of the old Republic.¹³

Strangely, considering the assumption of historical continuity, political developments before the appearance of pillarized mass politics have not attracted much scholarly attention from the perspective of democratization. Yet, by exploring the features of Dutch political culture from the end of the Republic until the Pacification of 1917, I will show that parliamentary democracy in the Netherlands had initially proceeded from a mixture of strategies, initiated by competing national and local elites, long before pillarized democracy took its definite shape. For that reason, the process of democratization will not be approached from the perspective of social emancipation, but viewed in the light of elitist dissension. I will, in particular, draw attention to the way Dutch liberalism had to cope with an internal contradiction between an 'old-republican', federalist, longing for freedom, and a 'new-republican', nationalist, desire for unity. Thus from the early nineteenth-century, those who opposed the king's 'enlightened absolutism' in the name of liberty, and those who criticized 'aristocratic oligarchy' in the interest of the unitary state, were both calling themselves liberals. The argument developed here is that precisely because of this inherent contradiction between individualism and 'unitarianism' the Netherlands witnessed sharp conflicts and unexpected processes of mass-mobilization along lines of class, religion and politics on the one hand, while, on the other, the continuous fragmentation of opposing 'liberal' groups or coteries prevented the realization of modern party politics. Liberal culture could therefore be conceived as an idiom of symbols, rituals, metaphors, narratives, and styles of politics, that contributed to a remarkable conceptual flexibility, rendering various ideological stands - conservatism, liberalism, and radicalism - almost indistinguishable.¹⁴ Looked at from this angle, it is the dissension within this culture of

13 Cf. Hans Daalder, 'The Netherlands, opposition in a segmented society', in R.A. Dahl (ed.), *Political oppositions in western democracies* (New Haven/London, 1966), pp. 188-237, and *ibid.*, 'Consociationalism, center and periphery in the Netherlands', in P. Torsvik (ed.), *Mobilization, center-periphery structures and nation-building. A volume in commemoration of Stein Rokkan* (Oslo, 1981), pp. 181-240; Daalder himself has coined the term 'conciliatory history', in *ibid.*, 'Oud republikeinse veelheid en democratisering in Nederland', *Bijdragen en Mededelingen betreffende de Geschiedenis der Nederlanden*, 102 (1987) 3, 516-531; although the conciliatory school of history dates back to the Leiden liberal historian Robert Fruin in the 1860s: Jo Tollebeek, *De toga van Fruin. Denken over geschiedenis in Nederland sinds 1860* (Amsterdam, 1990), 16-55. See also Ivo Schöffer, 'Het politiek bestel van Nederland en maatschappelijke verandering', in G.A.M. Beekelaar et al. (eds.), *Vaderlands Verleden in Veelvoud. 31 Opstellen over de Nederlandse geschiedenis* (The Hague, 1975), pp. 622-644, and for a recent specimen of the liberal myth of age-old toleration: M. Wessels, *De Nederlandse traditie van vrijheid. Een vruchtbare voedingsbodem voor de hervormingen van 1848* (Assen, 1998).

14 For this cultural-political perspective on symbolic continuity and ideological struggle within a shared language or idiom, see Robert van der Laarse, *Bevoogding and Bevinding: Heren en kerkvolk in een Hollandse provinciestad, Woerden 1780-1930* (Amsterdam-The Hague, 1989, with an English summary), 22-31, which offers a micro-historical demonstration in the case of a Calvinist community; for the narrative discourse of the Netherlands' religion of humanity, see my contribution 'De Deugd en het Kwaad: Het negentiende-eeuwse project van de Verlichting', to appear in a study on the Dutch nation-state, edited by J.C.H. Blom and J. Talmsa, which is currently under review. For a British version, see James A. Epstein, *Radical Expression: Political*

Enlightenment that (irrespective of party) explains both the long-term success of the 'liberal squires' under the elitist conditions of the electoral system of 1848-1896, and their failure to win the popular vote ever since. For the abolition of the constituency voting system in 1896, and the introduction of proportional representation in 1917, offered new strata of society the opportunity to operate as political communities on their own. Calvinism and Catholicism were politicised then as 'antithetical' idioms. As we will see, the retreat of the notables from modern party politics brought about the disappearance of the conservatives and liberals as 'majority parties' and subsequently favoured the rise of a new arrangement of pillarized politics.

II. Invented Restoration

The united kingdom of William I was essentially a product of European diplomacy. At the Congress of Vienna (1815), the introduction of the monarchic principle was regarded as a restorative guarantee of internal stability, whilst the containment of imperialist France required a political union between the former Dutch Republic and the Austrian Netherlands. But even apart from the temporary link-up of the Low Countries, which in its anachronistic throwback to the old Burgundian heritage lasted only until the Belgian Revolt of 1830, the new Dutch state made a complete break with the past, for William's kingdom - as far as it was not created at the Viennese negotiating table - was strongly influenced by the spirit of the Enlightenment and greatly indebted to the project of Bonapartist unification.

Though originally formulated by radical printers, journalists and Freemasons during the Patriot Revolt of 1785-87, the demand for political centralization was only realized with French political aid after the Batavian Revolution of 1795. Patriotism then was a highly confusing political label for a temporary coalition of at least two sorts of 'patriots': a militant underworld of clubs and societies, which was in favour of social equality and national unity, and an aristocratic group which adhered as 'good regents' to the old federalist or particularist principle of 'true freedom'. The federalist grievances, carefully drawn up in *Grondwettige Herstelling van Nederlands Staatswezen* (Constitutional Restoration of the Netherlands' Body Politic, 2 Vol., 1784-6) - an anonymously published investigation into the need for the restoration and renewal of the original federalist constitution of the nation's body politic - were directed against the old corruption of the Orangist system of patronage.¹⁵ What the aristocrats in revolt demanded was the restoration of the privileges of the provincial estates, embedded in the Union of Utrecht (1579) as the outcome of the sixteenth-

¹⁵ See for the old system of patronage A.J.C.M. Gabriëls, *De heren als dienaren en de dienaar als heer. Het stadhouderlijk stelsel in de tweede helft van de achttiende eeuw* (Leiden/The Hague, 1990), and for federalist patriotism: G.J. Schutte, 'Van grondslag tot breidel der vrijheid. Opvattingen over de Unie van Utrecht in het laatste kwart van de achttiende eeuw', in S. Groenveld, H.L.Ph. Leeuwenberg (eds.), *De Unie van Utrecht. Wordings en werking van een verbond en een verbondsacte* (Den Haag, 1979), pp. 199-225, and E.J. Himbergen, 'Grondwettige Herstelling', in *Figuren en Figuraties. Acht opstellen aangeboden aan J.C. Boogman* (Groningen, 1979), pp. 27-40. Fascinating accounts of the revolutionary process from below can be found in Simon Shama, *Patriots and Liberators. Revolution in the Netherlands 1780-1813* (New York, 1977); Wayne Ph. te Brake, *Regents and Rebels. The revolutionary world of an eighteenth-century Dutch city* (Cambridge, Mass./Oxford, 1989); *ibid.*, 'Burgers and Boeren in the Dutch patriot revolt', in Th.S.M. van der Zee [et al.] (eds) *1787. De Nederlandse Revolutie?* (Amsterdam, 1988), pp. 84-99; and his contribution on 'Provincial histories and national revolution in the Dutch Republic', in Margaret C. Jacob and Wijnand W. Mijnhardt (eds), *The Dutch Republic in the Eighteenth Century. Decline, Enlightenment and Revolution* (Ithaca/London, 1992), that also contains some fine contributions on the political and intellectual climate of the late Republic. For some recent evaluations of the Patriot movement, see Maarten Prak, 'Citizin radicalism and democracy in the Dutch Republic. The patriot movement of the 1780s', *Theory and Society* 20 (1991) 73-102; Wayne Ph. te Brake, 'Staking a new claim to an old revolution: A review article', *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis*, 104 (1991) 15-23.

century Dutch Revolt. Yet, under the influence of the Enlightenment, some of these aristocrats went even further; for example, Baron Joan Derk van der Capellen tot den Pol (1741-1784), whose anonymously published pamphlet *Aan het volk van Nederland* (To the People of the Netherlands, 1781) propagated the sovereignty of the people and the right of civic armament. Thus, the aristocrat revolt contributed, paradoxically, to a nationwide militia movement, whose demands for democracy were directed against the aristocracy itself. This ideological jump from the Ancien Regime found final expression in the Batavian Revolution of 1795, when the revolutionary regime dismantled the old regime by proclaiming the unity of the nation; the sovereignty of the people was now legitimized by natural law instead of historical argumentation.¹⁶ This unitary idea of the nation was embodied in the first National Assembly (1796) of chosen representatives, and in the radical (or Jacobin) constitution of 1798, which can be regarded as the first outline of the modern Dutch state.¹⁷

Recent research into the character of Dutch elites has revealed a remarkable change in personnel during the first phase of the Revolution: when the estates were broken up, the church and nobility lost their privileges, and new revolutionary administrations were purged of Orangists and federalists. Except for a minority of former patriot noblemen and aristocratic regents, most Batavian representatives and administrators were *homines novi*, recruited from the landed gentry and commercial classes.¹⁸ But the Revolution could also be mapped by religion. The language of patriotism found its main support among the 'enlightened' latitudinarians within the Dutch Reformed Church, as well as Catholics and Protestant dissenters (Mennonites, Lutherans, and humanist Remonstrants): the non-Calvinist part of the population that had formerly been excluded from

16 Cf. C.H.E. de Wit, *De strijd tussen aristocratie en democratie in Nederland, 1780-1848. Herwaardering van een periode* (Heerlen, 1965), which is however sharply criticized for its finalist interpretation of democratic patriotism and 1798-unitarianism as a foreshadowing of the liberal revolution of 1848: E.O.G. Haitsma Mulier, 'De geschiedschrijving over de Patriottentijd en de Bataafse Tijd', in W.W. Mijnhardt (ed.), *Kantelend geschiedbeeld. Nederlandse historiografie sinds 1945* (Utrecht/Antwerpen, 1983), pp. 206-227; it may now be set against the revisionist interpretation of the transition from classical to new, patriot republicanism, by S.R.E. Klein, *Patriots republikenisme. Politieke cultuur in Nederland (1766-1787)* (Amsterdam, 1995), and the making of 'modern' nationalism after 1795, by N.C.F. van Sas, 'Vaderlandsliefde, nationalisme en vaderlands gevoel in Nederland, 1770-1813', *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis* 102 (1989), 3/4, 471-495, and *ibid.*, *Talen van het vaderland. Over patriottisme en nationalisme* (inaugural University of Amsterdam, 1995), even though the idea of a Patriot-Batavian discontinuity is questioned in Wyger Velema, '1795 en de geschiedenis van het Nederlandse republikenisme', *Documentatieblad De Achttiende Eeuw* 28 (1996), 1/2, 29-38.

17 Cf. L. de Gou, et al., *Grondwetgeving 1795-1806* (Haarlem, 1997).

18 See A.M. Elias, P.C.M. Schölvinc, *Volksrepresentanten en wetgevers. De politieke in de Bataafs-Franse tijd, 1796-1810* (Amsterdam, 1991); P. Brood [et al.] (eds.), *Homines Novi. De eerste volksvertegenwoordigers van 1795* (Amsterdam, 1993); P.W. van Wissing (ed.), *De eerste volksvertegenwoordigers van Gelderland in 1795* (Amsterdam, 1996). For some careful investigations of local development, see Renger de Bruin, *Burgers op het kussen. Volkssoevereiniteit en bestuurssamenstelling in de stad Utrecht, 1795-1813* (Zutphen, 1986), and Tom Nieuwenhuis, *Keeshonden en Prinsmannen. Durgerdam, Ransdorp en Holisloot: drie Waterlandse dorpen in de Patriottentijd en de Bataafs-Franse tijd (1780-1813)* (Amsterdam, 1986).

government and that opted for some kind of ecumenical egalitarianism.¹⁹ Otherwise, the Calvinist orthodoxy in the old centre of the Republic (i.e. Holland, Utrecht and Zeeland) edged away from radicalism. Here, as local research suggests, the Revolution lost its support among the Protestant majority, who feared the dismantling of the Reformed Church and the nationalization of its funds and buildings on behalf of the Catholic minority.²⁰ In fact, this geographical and religious imbalance was already reflected in the radical referendum of 1798, when - after the electorate was purged of federalists and orangists - in Holland less than a third of the male population went to the polls, whereas in the Catholic province of Brabant two-third of the male population voted in favour of the draft.²¹

The radicalization of the Revolution produced a wave of anti-Papism which - like all Dutch reform movements in the nineteenth century - would be defeated by Protestant intransigence. From 1800 most Catholic representatives in the revolutionary municipalities in Holland and the northern provinces were replaced by former Orangist regents.²² This process of consolidation by the Protestant elites signalled the decay of ecumenical radicalism. The revolution from below, which started as a dynamic complex of municipal and regional revolts, became a revolution from above. In 1806 this hierarchic process of state-building resulted in Louis Bonaparte's Kingdom of Holland, which was annexed in 1810 by Napoleon's French Empire. Thus, the initial radical demand for national unification found its final expression in a long-term bureaucratic centralization, pushed

19 For an earlier period the Dutch cocktail of Newtonism, Freemasonry, and Huguenotism has been excessively sketched by Margaret C. Jacob, *Living the Enlightenment. Freemasonry and Politics in Eighteenth-Century Europe* (Oxford, 1991); that enlightened Huguenots could also appear as Orangist conservatives is shown, however, by Wyger Velema, *Enlightenment and Conservatism in the Dutch Republic*. The political thought of Elie Luzac (1721-1796) (Assen/Maastricht, 1993), and R. van der Laarse, 'Christo Sacrum. Verlichte sociabiliteit te Delft, 1797-1838', in J.C. Okkema [et al.] (eds), *Heidenen, Papen, Libertijnen en Fijnen. Zesde verzameling bijdragen van de Vereniging voor Nederlandse Kerkgeschiedenis* (Delft, 1994), pp. 221-248. See also J. van den Berg, 'Hervormden, dissidenters en de patriottenbeweging', in Th. S.M. van der Zee [et al.] (eds.) *1787. De Nederlandse revolutie?* (Amsterdam 1988), pp. 146-165, and for some recent studies on Catholic patriotism: Joost Roosendaal, 'Geloof en Revolutie. De Nederlandse katholieken en het oecumenisch christen-radicalisme', in Marit Monteiro et al. (eds), *De dynamiek van religie en cultuur. Geschiedenis van het Nederlandse katholicisme* (Kampen, 1993), pp. 260-281; *Ibidem*, 'Vrijmetselarij en revolutie', in Anton van de Sande and Joost Rosendaal (eds), 'Een stille leerschool van deugd en goede zeden'. *Vrijmetselarij in Nederland in de 18e en 19e eeuw* (Hilversum, 1995), pp. 63-84; J.P. de Valk, 'Nederlandse katholieken in een overgangstijdperk: omslag en terugkeer in de jaren 1780-1830', *Bijdragen en Mededelingen betreffende de Geschiedenis der Nederlanden*, 112 (1997) 4, 487-501.

20 See Van der Laarse, *Bevoogding en Bevinding* pp. 57-60, 78-83; G.J. Schutte, *Een Hollandse dorpsamenleving in de late achttiende eeuw. De banne Graft, 1770-1810* (Franeker, 1989).

21 On a national scale, some 40 per cent of the adult male population of the Batavian Republic took part in the referendum, of which only 6 per cent voted against the radical constitution, after rejecting in 1797 a federal draft by the same majority; cf. E.H. Kossman, 'The Crisis of the Dutch State 1780-1813: Nationalism, Federalism, Unitarism', in J.S. Bromley and E.H. Kossman (ed.), *Metropolis, Dominion and Province* (Britain and the Netherlands, IV, The Hague, 1971); reprinted in Beekelaar, *Vaderlands Verleden in Veelvoud*, p. 448.

22 Cf. Th. Clemens, 'De terugdringing van de rooms-katholieken uit de verlicht-protestantse natie', *Bijdragen en Mededelingen van de Geschiedenis betreffende de Nederlanden*, 110 (1995) 1, 27-39.

forward by Bonapartism and completed after the Restoration of 1813 by King William I's programme of national reconciliation.

The Protestant amalgamation from 1800 onwards of former regents and patriot newcomers produced the new ruling class of notables, which dominated social life and politics until the end of the nineteenth century.²³ In November 1813 some prominent lords, acting as its representatives, offered the Prince of Orange the title of 'Sovereign'; and in December the son of the last stadtholder William V proclaimed his wish to reign under a 'wise constitution'. Thus royal sovereignty was legitimated by the idea of a social contract. This federalist reflex was even further underlined by the fact that on 30 March 1814, William took his oath on the constitution in the Amsterdam New Church, which is located next to the former town hall - the power centre of the old Republic - that had been converted into a royal palace by Louis Bonaparte (1778-1846). The day before, the draft-constitution had been presented on the same spot to a gathering of some 470 members of the nation's most distinguished families, who made up a special Assembly of Notables. Yet, this meeting also marked the ambiguous position of the elected, as they were personally invited by the sovereign after being carefully selected by the provincial governors. Although the draft was opposed by only 26 representatives (most of them Catholics), another 126 notables (of the invited 600) did not even take the trouble to come to Amsterdam, as it was rightly assumed that the haughty, former patriot Cornelis Felix van Maanen (1769-1846), acting in his new role as 'agent of the king', would prevent any debate taking place.²⁴

In fact, the term 'notables' (Notabelen) itself - in its nineteenth-century meaning of a national political elite - originated from this occasion. The constitutional committee of 1814 used this term to indicate its twofold ambition of restoration and reconciliation. Thus the notables were a nineteenth-century political invention, signifying a national amalgamation of the old-republican aristocracy and the new-republican elite of patriot officials.²⁵ This new ruling class was defined and nominated by the state, as became perfectly clear when the sovereign, immediately after his inauguration, for the first time used his established right to appoint all the members of the States

²³ This process of the making of a new national aristocracy in the 1780-1820s has not attracted much attention of Dutch historians, who, in imitation of Robert Fruin and Johan Huizinga, endorsed the conciliatory myth of Dutch liberal, bourgeois culture as the seventeenth-century heritage of the old Republic. Remarkably though, for all the differences in scale, political regime, and outcome, the Netherland's pattern in this respect closely corresponds with the British case: David Cannadine, *Aspects of Aristocracy* (Harmondsworth, 1995), ch. 1: 'The Making of the British Upper Classes', 9-37.

²⁴ Cf. Kossmann, *De Lage Landen*, 65-73; J.A. Bornevasser, 'De zelfstandige eenheidsstaat in de Noordelijke Nederlanden gegrondvest, 1813-1814', in *Algemene Geschiedenis der Nederlanden*, XI (Bussum 1983), pp. 208-222; I.J.H. Worst, 'Het begin van 'ons grondwettig volksbestaan', in C.A. Tamse and E. Witte (eds), *Staats- en natievorming in Willem I's Koninkrijk* (Baarn 1992), pp. 56-75.

²⁵ Cf. Lodewijk Blok, *Stemmen en kiezen: het kiesstelsel in Nederland in de periode 1814-1850* (Groningen, 1987), 9-12.

General, the Provincial Estates and the Church administration. This autocratic tendency intensified after Napoleon's defeat at Waterloo (1815), when the Dutch sovereign was permitted to 'reunite' the Low Countries. He then arbitrarily retitled himself king William I of the United Netherlands (1772-1843), the constitution was revised in a monarchist direction, and the assembly of notables divided into two Chambers, one of which was chosen by the king. Although Amsterdam remained the capital, king and parliament assembled from that time alternately in Brussels and The Hague, until it took up permanent residence in The Hague in 1830.

Important to William's state-building, and to the making of the notable elite, was a new policy of ennoblement.²⁶ During the Republic the nobility had been restricted to the old noble families, raised to the peerage before the Dutch Revolt, and recognized in their titles by the regional estates on the principle of ancestry and seigneurial status, even though most of the regents had changed from merchants into landlords, and some 15 per cent had acquired titles by purchasing seignories and foreign patents of nobility.²⁷ From 1815, however, the Dutch nobility became a national elite which took its official recognition from the crown. Following Napoleon's example, hereditary titles in the Netherlands were not simply bestowed on the principle of birth, but conferred as a reward for merit, defined in bourgeois terms of wealth and money. As a result, the old nobility had to accept in the restored *Ridderschappen* (the provincial noble estates) the presence of a new nobility, composed of descendants of the former regent aristocracy, and a remarkable number of *nouveaux riches*. The invented character of the 'restored' nobility was, however, even more accentuated by the corresponding invention of a new patrician estate, that also developed into a hereditary group with an aristocratic lifestyle, and often quite substantial landed estates. This non-titled part of the political class of notables incorporated in particular the rising class of officials and administrators, but also some prominent members of the landed gentry and some of the richest Amsterdam merchant bankers, who refused to buy their dignity from the king.²⁸

26 Cf. Blok, *Stemmen en kiezen*, 79-105; Dick van den Bosch, 'De adel en de vorst in de eerste jaren van het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden', *Symposion 1* (1979) 70-93; P. Janssens, 'De politieke invloed van de adel in het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden', in C.A. Tamse & E. Witte (eds) *Staats- en natievorming in Willem I's koninkrijk* (Brussel-Baarn, 1992), pp. 98-121.

27 Joop de Jong, *Een deftig bestaan. Het dagelijks leven van regenten in de 17de en 18de eeuw* (Utrecht/Antwerpen, 1987), pp. 171-178.

28 For some demonstrations of local notabilities, with respect to communal cohesion as well as internal dissension, see L. Buning, *Het herenbolwerk. Politieke en sociale terreinverkenningen in Drenthe over de periode 1748-1888* (Assen, 1966), pp. 77-126; Kees Bruin, *Een herenwereld ontleed. Over Amsterdamse oude en nieuwe elites in de tweede helft van de negentiende eeuw* (Institute of Sociology, University of Amsterdam, 1980); Peter Hofland, *Leden van de Raad. De Amsterdamse gemeenteraad 1814-1941* (Amsterdam, 1998); R. de Bruin, 'De tweede ronde. De rol van Utrechtse patriotten in de Bataafs-Franse tijd', *Jaarboek OudUtrecht*, 1987, 277-310; R. van der Laarse, 'Welstand, macht en aanzien: Het Delfts patriciaat in de negentiende eeuw', in J.W.L. Hilkhuijsen (ed.), *De stad Delft. Cultuur en maatschappij van 1813 tot 1914* (Delft, 1992), pp. 11-28; Yme Kuiper, *Adel in Friesland 1780-1880* (Groningen, 1993), pp. 139-160, 228-303; *Ibid.*, 'Inleiding: Friese families', *Nederland's Patriciaat*, 77 (1993), viii-xxxiii, and for Maastricht, Nick Bos, *Notabele ingezetenen*.

It was at the request of the Belgium aristocracy that the constitutional committee of 1815 had adopted the English model of a Lower and an Upper House. Yet, afraid of a concentration of land and power among the hereditary peerage, it did not accept the British principle of primogeniture (which allowed the estate to be passed down only to the oldest son), but clung to the French law of partial succession, favouring a division of the legacy among the relatives. Hence the Dutch Senate became a royal instrument, a *ménagerie du roi*, composed for almost 90 per cent of titled noblemen, appointed for life by the king, even though four-fifths of the northern members had only become peers in 1814-1815. Only the Lower House, or Second Chamber, of the States General functioned as a kind of assembly, although the representatives were chosen by means of a very complicated electoral system in which town councils, regional estates and provincial councillors all functioned as electoral bodies, but at two (or more) removes from the voters; a system, quite unlike that of England or France, that resembled most the situation in some German states, such as Saxony, the Rhineland, and Westphalia. Moreover, the franchise restrictions strongly favoured the highest and most prominent taxpayers, notably noblemen and patricians. Interestingly, the delegates from the northern Netherlands - as heirs of the old regency - held twice as many of the most prominent offices, while most of the (professional) businessmen, bankers and manufacturers, who held some 10 per cent of the seats in parliament, were representatives of the more industrialized south.²⁹

Power then was concentrated at the national level and delegated by the government in The Hague to provincial governors (Lord Lieutenants), burgomasters and court presidents, all of whom were appointed by the king. An immense amount of correspondence between these various authorities bears testimony to their function as royal eyes and ears, although this material also demonstrates that the early nineteenth-century government was far from being a monolith.³⁰ The electoral complexity contributed to a lot of corruption and government control, in particular within the provincial administrations where the old nobility and regent aristocracy still played a prominent role.³¹ Yet the king's most powerful administrators were recruited from the Dutch patrician bourgeoisie, such as the Lord Chancellor Van Maanen, who started his career as a radical unitarian

Historische studies over Nederlandse elites in de negentiende eeuw (Brunssum, 1995), pp. 171-222.

²⁹ Cf. Blok, *Stemmen en kiezen*, 2-4; J.A. Bornewasser, 'Het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden 1815-1830', in *Algemene Geschiedenis der Nederlanden*, XI (Bussum 1983), pp. 229, 245.

³⁰ Cf. A.J.C. Rüter, *Rapporten van de gouverneurs in de provinciën, 1840-1849*, 3 volumes (Utrecht, 1941-1950); G.A.M. Beekelaar (ed.), *Gelderland tussen 1840 and 1850. Rapporten, verslagen en andere stukken omtrent de toestand van de provincie Gelderland, opgemaakt door de gouverneur in de jaren 1840-1849* (Hilversum, 1997); specific parts of the correspondence between the government and its regional officials have been published with regard to the Belgian Revolt of 1830 and the Afscheiding of 1834, though the practice of government has not yet been studied in detail.

³¹ Cf. Blok, *Stemmen en kiezen*, 19-32.

(Jacobin) under Louis Bonaparte and stayed in office until 1842.³² Altogether, the centralized administration, the royal policy of patronage and the local elite's lean towards particularism produced some kind of a political hybrid.

Considering the above, it is not surprising that William I has been accepted as being the first and only Dutch 'enlightened despot', marked by a Bonapartist presidential style of government as well as a patriarchal self-image, adopted from his relative, Frederick (II) the Great (1712-1786) and his brother-in-law, the Prussian king Frederick William III (1770-1840).³³ For that reason, a Belgian historian recently spoke in rather polemic tones of a Dutch 'Germanic Sonderweg'.³⁴ According to the German historian Lademacher, however, William's kingdom possessed Europe's most 'liberal' constitution until the Belgian revolution of 1830, one rooted in a long tradition of freedom and tolerance.³⁵ Yet in my view these contradictory characterizations only confirm the regime's essentially dualist nature. For if the king followed the example of the great European monarchs and governed increasingly by royal decree, beneath the surface of bureaucratic order many local and regional authorities still clung on to what they conceived as a federalist tradition.

So, paradoxically, the restorative element in the new monarchy was responsible for its 'early liberal' appearance. Instead of privileges favoured by the king, liberties were regarded as established rights - rights defended by the urban regents and regional estates against, consecutively, the King of Spain, the stadholders, the French emperor and finally the king of the Netherlands. Though King William I soon regarded the constitution as his gift to the people, the Dutch ruling elite never accepted the monarchic principle. In fact, the question of the legitimation of power was crucial to political opposition until the end of the nineteenth century. But the defence of liberty would also present itself in a religious form. Together this contributed to the specific outcome of the Dutch process of democratization.

³² L. François, 'De verlichte ambtenaren onder Willem I. Kritische pijlers van een bewind', *Documentatieblad Werkgroep 18de eeuw*, 49-50 (1981) 135-147.

³³ See M. Chappin and J.P. de Valk, 'Koning Willem I; een verlicht despoot?', *Documentatieblad Werkgroep 18e Eeuw* (1981), 49/50, 84-109; cf. for the German influence: J.A. Bornewasser, 'Koning Willem I', in C.A. Tamse (ed.), *Nassau en Oranje in de Nederlandse geschiedenis* (Alphen aan den Rijn, 1979), pp. 231-272, and for the Bonapartist legacy: Th. Clemens, 'Is de concentratie van macht onder koning Lodewijk een uitloper van het verlicht absolutisme?', *Documentatieblad Werkgroep 18de eeuw* (1981), 49/50, 70-83.

³⁴ Lode Wils, 'Het Verenigd Koninkrijk van Koning Willem I (1815-1830) en de natievorming', *Bijdragen en Mededelingen betreffende de Geschiedenis der Nederlanden*, 112 (1997) 4, 514-5.

³⁵ Horst Lademacher, 'Modernisering en emancipatie. Enkele opmerkingen over de Nederlandse negentiende eeuw', *Bijdragen en Mededelingen betreffende de Geschiedenis der Nederlanden*, 104 (1989), 1-16; see also Daalder, 'Oud-republikeinse veelheid', *passim*.

III. The Rise and Fall of an Opposition

How could one guarantee the stability of a nation which by tradition was infected by the virus of particularism, without catching the 'French disease' of bureaucracy? This question of the balance between federalism and national unity had been crucial to the founding fathers of the Dutch constitution. Yet by the 1820s its main architect, Count Gijsbert Karel van Hogendorp (1762-1834), concluded in his 'letters to the nation' that the social contract had been violated by royal despotism.³⁶ To fight the king's informal power politics, grand seigneurs such as Hogendorp and a good many aristocratic governors and burgomasters proposed reforms that surpassed even their 'own' constitution. As the embodiment of the old regency and court nobility, these 'Anglomanian' moderates were now prepared to join hands with patrician radicals, most lawyers and journalists, such as the later minister Dirk Donker Curtius (1792-1864).³⁷ Confronted with censure and repression, they closed ranks around what was known as the British model of parliamentary monism and the French doctrine of the separation of church and state. In reaction to these liberal demands, however, the monarchy affirmed its desire for centralization and unity. Thus, in 1829, the Prince of Orange - the later William II - was appointed head of a 'royal government' and his brother, the Grand Master of Dutch Freemasonry, Prince Frederick of the Netherlands (1797-1881), Admiral of the Royal Navy, while the state's officials were forced by royal proclamation to promote the unity of language, education and religion as being crucial to the survival of the nation.³⁸ Thus, in contrast to theory, it was precisely this sort of nationalism from above that would produce ideological segmentation, and not the other way round.³⁹

³⁶ N.C.F. van Sas, 'Het politiek bestel onder koning Willem I', Documentatieblad Werkgroep 18e Eeuw (1981), 49/50, p. 120; Worst, 'Het begin van ons 'grondwettig volksbestaan', pp. 66 ff. Hogendorp used the term 'social contract' already in 1813: G.K. van Hogendorp, *Brieven en Gedenkschriften* (7 volumes, The Hague, 1866-1903), vol. V, p. 40.

³⁷ For some interesting analyses of Hogendorp's aristocratic liberalism in about 1830, see H. van der Hoeven, *Gijsbert Karel van Hogendorp, conservatief of liberaal?* (Groningen, 1976), and Roel Pieterman, 'Gijsbert Karel van Hogendorp tussen realisme en idealisme', *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis* 101 (1988), 352-371. Yet even radical pamphleteers such as the later (conservative!) politician Dirk Donker Curtius did not unite at the time behind the franchise issue, but appealed to the old republican language of virtue: Siep Stuurman, *Wacht op onze daden. Het liberalisme en de vernieuwing van de Nederlandse staat* (Amsterdam, 1992), pp. 95-135; *ibid.*, 'The discourse of productive virtue: Observations on Early Liberalism in Europe and the Netherlands', in Simon Groenveld and Michael Wintle (eds.), *Under the Sign of Liberalism. Varieties of Liberalism in Past and Present (Britain and the Netherlands, XII)*, Zutphen, 1997), pp. 33-45.

³⁸ Van Sas, 'Politiek bestel', pp. 124, 129, 133; and *ibid.*, 'Het politiek klimaat in Noord-Nederland tijdens de crisis van het Verenigd Koninkrijk, 1828-1830', *Colloquium over de Geschiedenis van de Belgisch-Nederlandse Betrekkingen. Acta te Brussel 1980* (Gent, 1982), pp. 103-127.

³⁹ The Dutch case contradicts e.g. Benedict Anderson's general argument concerning the origin of nationalism, which states that the key to situating this type of 'official nationalism', "is to remember that it developed after, and in reaction to, the popular national movements proliferating in Europe since the 1820s". It also contradicts his claim that official nationalism originated from a collective response of an older power group, an aristocracy threatened by marginalization: both in the Northern and Southern Netherlands it was precisely the

The Belgian Revolution of 1830 was the first and most fundamental reaction to this kind of 'official nationalism'. In the north, however, the attack on the honour of the House of Orange weakened the call for reform, and united (at least temporarily) the 'Protestant nation' behind the king. The atmosphere of romantic, popular nationalism in both parts of the Low Countries came to a head a year later, when, under the command of the Princes William and Frederick, the 'mutinous' Belgians were defeated in a military campaign, supported by civic guards and student militia. The European powers, though, were not prepared to intervene and within ten years the financial costs of William's 'policy of perseverance' bankrupted the state. Coupled with the economic crisis in the Netherlands East Indies - which was brought about by the government's misuse of the profits of the Dutch Trading company and the so-called Cultuurstelsel (the state's exploitative cultivation system in Java) - this completely isolated the monarchy from the world of finance. Ironically, however, William had to abdicate in 1840 because he wanted to marry a half-Belgian Catholic countess. Worried about the state's repayment of government bonds, the Amsterdam merchant bankers then called for financial reforms. Appointed prime minister by King William II (1792-1849) under the conditions of a new constitution that at least officially recognized the principle of ministerial responsibility, their political spokesman Floris Adriaan van Hall (1791-1861) was able to restore confidence in the money market.⁴⁰ By strengthening its support among the moneyed aristocracy, though, the government's main concern soon became the ideological legitimization of its policy among the nation at large.

Calvinism had been the Republic's official religion until 1795, and even the patriots were initially inspired by the seventeenth-century myth of the Republic as a 'Second Israel'. But from the late eighteenth century, religion was changed in form and meaning. The Dutch Reformed Church lost its control of public life when, under the sign of Enlightenment, the educated elites propagated a new religion of civic virtue, located in man's inner self instead of church-doctrine.⁴¹ In fact, this enlightened theology became crucial to William's general project to unify the nation by moralizing the citizen. From both his Batavian predecessors and his own experience with Prussian

old nobility that was opposed to official nationalism; B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London/New York, 1991), 86, 109.

⁴⁰ The importance of this long-neglected 'moment' of reform is underlined in particular by J.A. Bornewasser, 'Ministeriële verantwoordelijkheid onder koning Willem II', *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis*, 75 (1962) 436-458, and for the government's financial dependence on the Amsterdam money market, see Joost Jonker, *Merchant, Bankers, Middlemen. The Amsterdam money market during the first half of the 19th century* (Amsterdam, 1996), pp. 85-90. As to Van Hall's Janus-faced policy of reform and stability, which also offers interesting information on the royal administration in the 1840s, we have still to rely on J. Gleichman, *Mr. F.A. van Hall als minister - Mededeelingen en Herinneringen* (Amsterdam 1904).

⁴¹ For the 18th century roots of this 19th century theology of enlightenment, see Joris van Eijnatten, *God, Nederland en Oranje: Dutch Calvinism and the Search for the Social Centre* (Amsterdam, 1993), and Peter van Rooden, *Religieuze regimes. Over godsdienst en maatschappij in Nederland, 1570-1990* (Amsterdam, 1996), pp. 78 ff.

Staatskirchentum, William had inherited a strong belief in Christian unity as crucial to the policy of state-building. Therefore, the Dutch Reformed Church (Nederlandse Hervormde Kerk) was reorganized in 1816 under the supervision of the state as a hierarchic ecclesiastical association, headed by the king, whilst the doctrines of Calvinism were sacrificed for a more intimate, humanist religion of reason under the latitudinarian device of 'belief, hope, and peace'.⁴²

As such, this new set-up of religion and politics contributed to new forms of dissent. Although the Calvinists were by tradition staunch adherents of the House of Orange, the orthodox creed was incompatible with the royalist policy of ecclesiastical centralization and religious unification. Hence, the ardent critics of this religion of Enlightenment were to be found among the so-called Reveil, which was the Calvinist branch of European Neo-Pietism.⁴³ It was composed of some Amsterdam and Hague circles of distinguished men of letters, such as the lawyer, occultist, erotomaniac and religious zealot, Willem Bilderdijk (1756-1831), his protegee in poetry, the Jewish convert Isaac da Costa (1798-1860), the patrician travel writer, Willem de Clercq (1795-1844), and the erudite court-archivist and politician, Guillaume Groen van Prinsterer (1801-1876).⁴⁴ Initially the aristocrat Reveil was accompanied by a grass-roots revivalist movement, combining the doctrines of traditional Calvinism with the 'mad beliefs' of folk religion. In contrast to gentle evangelicalism, though, this popular pietism was systematically expelled from the Dutch Reformed Church, and has thus provided a presbyterian alternative to the 'hierarchical' order of 1816 ever since the Afscheiding (Secession) of 1834.⁴⁵

42 Cf. J.A. Bornewasser, 'The Authority of the Dutch State over the Churches, 1795-1853', in A.C. Duke and C.A. Tamse (eds.), *Church and State since the Reformation (Britain and the Netherlands, VII, The Hague, 1981)*, pp. 154-175; J.P. de Valk, 'Landsvader en landspaus? Achtergronden van de visie op kerk en school bij koning Willem I (1815-1830)', in Tamse and Witte, *Staats- en natievorming* pp. 76-97.

43 It's significant, considering the Prussian background of William I's royal absolutism until his abdication in 1840, that also in Prussia until the accession of Frederick William IV in 1840, aristocratic federalism found an outlet in neo-pietist revivalism: Christopher M. Clark, 'The Politics of Revival: Pietists, Aristocrats, and the State Church in Early Nineteenth-Century Prussia', in Larry Eugene Jones and James Rattallack (eds.), *Between Reform, Reaction, and Resistance. Studies in the History of German Conservatism from 1789 to 1945* (Oxford, 1993), 31-60.

44 See in general M.E. Kluit's, *Het Réveil in Nederland* (Amsterdam 1936), Michael Wintle's, *Pillars of Piety*, and Nicholas A. Rupke, 'Romanticism in the Netherlands', in Roy Porter and Mikulás Teich (eds.), *Romanticism in National Context* (Cambridge, 1988), pp. 191-216. Strangely, though over the years much of their immense correspondence appeared in print, there is a great lack of biographical studies on these Reveil men, except for Bilderdijk: Joris van Eijnatten, *Hogere sferen. De ideeënwereld van Willem Bilderdijk (1756-1831)*, (Hilversum, 1998).

45 The general features of the Secession of 1834 are well treated in P.N. Holtrop, 'De Afscheiding - breukpunt en kristallisatiepunt', in W. Bakker et al. (eds.), *De Afscheiding van 1834 en haar geschiedenis* (Kampen, 1984), pp. 62-99, and for a recent historiographical survey, see G.J. Schutte, 'De Afscheiding van 1834 herdacht', *Bijdragen en Mededelingen betreffende de Geschiedenis der Nederlanden*, 101 (1986) 3, 400-416. From the urban historian's point of view, new perspectives concerning the relationship between politics and religion can be found in P.R.D. Stokvis, 'Katholieke emancipatie en hervormde revitalisatie tegen de geest der eeuw en het spook der revolutie in Den Haag', in Blom and Misset, *Broeders sluit U aan*, pp. 30-64; Van der Laarse, *Bevoogding en Bevinding* 78-116, and Dirk Jan Wolfram, *Bezwaarden en verlichten. Verzuiling in een*

Thus we can observe in around 1830 a defense of liberty in religion as well as politics against 'enlightened despotism', legitimized by revivalist doctrines and inspired by romantic imagination. It can be argued that this interesting interweaving of political radicalism and religious opposition was itself a product of a political climate that neglected every form of organized dissidence, and even made the word 'party' taboo.⁴⁶ In fact, the government itself raised the ghost of factionism by creating a register of potential 'separatists' involved in the church and in politics: liberal aristocrats, radical democrats, ultramontane Catholics and Calvinist evangelists. The paradox of this self-fulfilling fear of segmentation was made clear by the Amsterdam editor of the moderate newspaper *Algemeen Handelsblad* in a confidential recommendation made to King William II in 1840. According to this political insider, it was William I's policy of repression that was responsible for the regime's loss of confidence. Government intervention - against the Belgians, the religious 'fanatics' and the radical press - allied moderates and even former king's men with the liberal opposition. Altogether it shows us the making of an opposition.⁴⁷

Without going into further detail, it is clear that the crisis of 1830 only ended with the liberal changeover in March 1848. Perhaps this explains the 'velvet' character of the whole event, which happened peaceably, not least because some radical 'gentleman leaders' gained the new king's confidence as spokesmen of 'the people'.⁴⁸ At first most of these romantic aristocrats - such as the impoverished nobleman and journalist Adriaan van Bevervoorde tot Oldemeule (1819-1851), who took part in Brussels in the formation of Karl Marx' 'Association Démocratique' (1847)⁴⁹ - only had

Gelderse provinciestad, Harderwijk 1850-1925 (Amsterdam, 1993), 19-51.

⁴⁶ Cf. J.A.O. Eskes, 'Het Nederlandse beeld van politieke partijen tussen 1813 en 1848', *Jaarboek Documentatiecentrum Nederlandse Politieke Partijen* (Groningen, 1991) 62-83, and for the unitarian discourse in ecclesiastical politics, see J. Vree, 'De Nederlandse Hervormde Kerk in de jaren voor de Afscheiding', in Bakker, *Afscheiding van 1834*, pp. 30-61.

⁴⁷ Cf. J.P. de Valk, 'Een politiek tableau van Nederland in het voorjaar van 1840. Twee memories van J.W. van den Biesen, hoofdredacteur van het *Algemeen Handelsblad*, bestemd voor de Prins van Oranje', in *Nederlandse Historische Bronnen*, (Nederlands Historisch Genootschap, Amsterdam, 1983), Vol. III, pp. 209-210. The mechanism of this dynamic rearranging of radical and religious networks is not yet fully understood, though it has been analysed at the local level, in R. van der Laarse, 'Het zaad der partijschap'. *Orthodoxe sociabiliteit te Delft (1834-1848)*, in D.Th. Kuiper (ed.), *Jaarboek voor de geschiedenis van het Nederlandse Protestantisme na 1800* (Kampen, 1994), pp. 17-49.

⁴⁸ In contrast to England, where historians have recognized even in John Bright and Gladstone this peculiar type of romantic hero and populist 'broker' between high and low culture, the gentleman leaders in the Netherlands were both more aristocrat and radical, and as such less successful in penetrating the domain of parliamentary politics, dominated by the legalistic style of post-1848 liberalism; cf. John Belchem and James Epstein, 'The nineteenth-century gentleman leader revisited', *Social History*, 22 (1997) 174-193; Siep Stuurman, 'John Bright and Samuel van Houten: radical liberalism and the working classes in Britain and the Netherlands 1860-1890', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 50 (1989) 135-152.

⁴⁹ See also for Marx' Dutch connections, and the visits to his Brabant relatives, the notable Philips family, founders of the well-known electronics concern, the correspondence in Jan Gielkens, (ed.), 'Was ik maar weer in Bommel'. *Karl Marx en zijn Nederlandse verwanten. Een familiegeschiedenis in documenten* (Amsterdam, 1998).

in common their personal antipathy against Van Hall. Yet, the radicals gathered strength by the petitioning movement of 1844 against Van Hall's financial reforms, and the food- and tax riots during the hunger crises of 1845-1847, caused by the potato blight and directed against the speculation on grain prices and the imposts on bread.⁵⁰ As the urban riots were often organized by gentleman leaders, the anti-tax petitions were initiated by liberal landlords in the Outer Provinces. And, as self-appointed spokesmen of the country, these rural squires brought about a general suspicion of the Court.

This repeat of the federalist revolt of the 1780s was entertained by the idea of the government's fiscal favouritism of the Amsterdam moneyed aristocracy, since stock was free of duty and land was heavily taxed. In the southern duchy of Limburg, the aristocracy even longed for regional separatism. If they had affiliated themselves in the 1830s with Belgian liberalism, in around 1848 they affiliated with the nationalist movement in the German Rhineland. Thus in July 1848 the Frankfurter Parliament declared Limburg a German country. Yet, ironically, the separatist fever was all over before the year was out, as it became clear to the Limburg Catholic aristocrats that federalism had made way for imperialism from the moment the Rhineland liberals lost command to the Protestant king of Prussia.⁵¹

More important though, at least from the perspective of political mobilization in the Netherlands on the whole, was the founding of a series of 'debating clubs'. These clubs included the Amsterdam liberal *Amstelsociëteit* and its departments in other Dutch cities, which operated in secret as local constituency associations for the electoral colleges. Around 1848 there was also a liberal Catholic circle in the capital - *La jeune Hollande catholique* - which secretly organized the nomination of candidates for parliament.⁵² William II was impressed by these activities of radicals, liberals and Catholics and shocked by the February and March revolts in Paris, the Rhineland states,

50 Cf. M.J.F. Robijns, *Radicalen in Nederland (1840-1851)* (Leiden, 1967), 194 ff.; J.J. Giele, *De pen in aanslag. Revolutionairen rond 1848* (Bussum, 1968); Martin Schouten, *De sozialen zijn in aantogt. De Nederlandse arbeidersbeweging in de negentiende eeuw* (Amsterdam, 1976), 7-63. The hunger crises also stimulated emigration to the United States, although most of the emigrants were orthodox Calvinists, and local research suggest that material conditions were closely connected with internal conflicts within the Secessionist movement of 1834; cf. P.R.D. Stokvis, *De Nederlandse trek naar Amerika 1846-1847* (Leiden, 1977), and Van der Laarse, *Bevoogding en Bevinding* pp. 110-1.

51 For an interesting sketch of the day-to-day organization of the so-called separatist-movement in 1844, see Rüter, *Rapporten gouverneurs*, vol. III, and for the later Rhineland context, though without reference to the Limburg case: Jonathan Sperber, *Rhineland Radicals. The democratic movement and the revolution of 1848-1849* (Princeton, NJ, 1991), while the international context is sketched in J.C. Boogman, *Nederland en de Duitse Bond* (2 volumes, Groningen, 1955), especially, vol. II, p. 638. The tax issue was used by liberal Limburg noblemen as an instrument for liberal political mobilization until the 1860s: Bos, *Notabele ingezetenen*, pp. 125, 160-5.

52 Cf. J.H. von Santen, 'De Amstelsociëteit: liberale organisatie in Nederland in de jaren 1846-1851', in *Figuren en Figuraties. Acht opstellen aangeboden aan J.C. Boogman* (Groningen, 1979), pp. 113-154; G.A.M. Beekelaar, *Rondom grondwetsherziening en herstel der hiërarchie. De Hollandse katholieke jongeren 1847-1852* (Hilversum/Antwerpen, 1964).

Berlin and Vienna, which were echoed by popular demonstrations in The Hague and Amsterdam. Consequently he changed overnight from very conservative to very liberal, as he himself admitted. In fact, even this can be seen as a dialectic proof of kingcraft. Confronted with the radical Camarilla of noble intriguers at Court, profiting from the political vacuum caused by Van Hall's resignation some months earlier, the king was able to split the liberal opposition.⁵³ On the one hand, he appointed his self-satisfied London envoy, Count Gerrit Schimmelpenninck (1794-1864) as 'prime minister' of a reform cabinet that even admitted democrats such as Donker Curtius. On the other, he offered Schimmelpenninck's sworn enemy, the Leiden jurist Johan Rudolf Thorbecke (1798-1872), the possibility of creating, single-handedly, a completely revised constitution. And when it dawned upon the ministers that Thorbecke's draft in its scope went much further than the 'early liberal' proposals of 1844, which inspired their own policy, Schimmelpenninck could only resign.

Though considered 'un-Dutch' for its German 'organicist' orientation and French doctrinarian argumentation, Thorbecke's constitution has so far survived all political changes.⁵⁴ As it seems to me that the significance of the momentum of 1848 sprouted from a kind of epistemological jump from the discourse of Restoration to the discourse of Revolution, marked by Thorbecke's own conversion from legalist monarchist to doctrinarian liberal. Passing over the old republican and Anglophile orientation of early aristocratic liberalism, this established an imaginary link with democratic patriotism. Thorbecke's own cabinet (1846-1853) completely changed the franchise system and introduced periodic elections by direct vote, with the exception of the Senate, whose members were, and still are, elected by the provincial estates. Yet, if these electoral reforms weakened the power of the king, the new constitutional system was generally more in favour of centralism than federalism, preferring a strong government to parliamentary monism, a Bonapartist nationalization of the taxation system, and a strengthening of the state's control of education and poor relief.⁵⁵ It was precisely because of this break with particularism, however, that the Thorbeckian revolution from above lacked the necessary support from below.

⁵³ For an almost identical, and even more succesful, combination of royalist restoration and constitutional adaptation in Prussia in this period, crucial to the process of conservative political mobilization in the 1850s, see David E. Barclay, 'The Court Camarilla and the Politics of Monarchical Restoration in Prussia, 1848-58', in Jones and Retallack, *Between Reform*, 123-156.

⁵⁴ Historians have long debated the modernity of Thorbecke's constitution but have never reached a consensus about its intellectual roots and ambiguities: cf. J.B. Manger, *Thorbecke en de historie* (1938, repr. Utrecht, 1986); K.H. Boersema, *Johan Rudolf Thorbecke. Een historisch-critische studie* (Leiden, 1949); J.C. Boogman, 'Thorbecke, Challenge and Response', *Acta Historiae Neerlandicae. Studies on the history of the Netherlands*, VII (The Hague 1974); E.H. Kossmann, 'Thorbecke en het historisme', in *ibid.*, *Politieke Theorie en geschiedenis* (Amsterdam, 1987), pp. 306-347; C.H.E. de Wit, *Thorbecke en de wording van de Nederlandse Natie* (Nijmegen, 1980); Kees Bakker, 'Een poëtisch gewest'. Thorbecke, Duitsland en de Romantiek', *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis*, 107 (1994) 4, 517-536; F.L. van Holthoorn, 'Thorbecke and Dutch liberalism', in Groenveld and Wintle, *Under the sign of liberalism*, pp. 46-61.

⁵⁵ Cf. J.A. Bornewasser, 'Thorbecke and the Churches', in *Acta Historiae Neerlandicae*, VII (1974) 146-169; J.J. Dankers, 'Thorbecke en de armenzorg van 1854. Armenzorg tussen staatsvermogen en particulier

The liberal abolition of the estates, seigneurial rights and urban excise duties was favourable in particular to the rising commercial bourgeoisie and industrial manufacturers in the Outer Provinces, but not to the Amsterdam merchant aristocracy and the landed interest, which endorsed Van Hall's 'conservative liberal' policy of moderate reform. Moreover, the Thorbeckian separation of church and state alienated the Protestant majority from government, as they feared a gathering influence of Catholic elites on local schools and charitable institutions. Finally, Thorbecke's *laissez-faire* policy was opposed to the social demands of the 'people's leaders', who still hoped for the king's intervention and opted for a sort of radical royalism.⁵⁶ What these three groups had in common was not a longing for the old regime, but an aversion to doctrinaire liberalism, personified by Thorbecke's intellectual hauteur and legalism. So it was a question of religious identity, the language of class and style of politics that explained the 'new liberal's' estrangement from the mood of the nation. As Dutch liberal culture bore for years the legalistic stamp of Thorbecke's sophistic personality, 'old liberal' conservatism longed for the Burckian virtues of tradition, prudence and 'Protestant tolerance'.⁵⁷ Incapable of philosophical systematizing, its moral language was utterly remote from the scientific attitude and stiff sense of duty of Thorbeckian liberalism, and probably

initiatief, in E. Jonkers and M. van Rossem (eds), *Geschiedenis en Cultuur. Achttien opstellen. Festschrift voor Herman von der Dunk* (The Hague, 1990), pp. 119-130; Nico Randerad, 'Thorbecke en de inrichting van het lokale bestuur', *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis*, 107 (1994) 4, 537-558.

⁵⁶ The combination of royalism and social reform can also be found among the enlightened leaders of the so-called Utrecht faction, such as the Professors G.W. Vreede and G.J. Mulder, who had been radical liberals before 1848, and commanded the anti-Papist April Movement in 1853; cf. R. Kuiper, 'G.W. Vreede, conservatisme en agitatie', in R.E. de Bruin and G.J. Schutte (eds.), *Drie protestantse conservatieven uit de 19de eeuw* (Amsterdam, 1994), pp. 67-88; Ronald van Raak, 'De jobstijding van Gerrit Jan Mulder: Nederlands conservatisme in de negentiende eeuw', *Geschiedenis van de Wijsbegeerte in Nederland*, 8 (1997), 1/2, 45-70. For the long-term effects of radical royalism and its transformation into moral republicanism, such as in the case of the famous Freethinker and colonial critic Multatuli (Eduard Douwes Dekker), see Jacques Giele, 'De oppositie der 'volksmannen' (1850-1869)', *Tijdschrift voor Sociale Geschiedenis* (1975) 171-218.

⁵⁷ For the identity of Dutch liberal culture, see the splendid analysis of the art of cultural critique in Remieg Aerts, *De letterheren. Liberale cultuur in de negentiende eeuw: het tijdschrift De Gids* (Amsterdam, 1997), and the stimulating comments on the issue of liberal legalism by Henk te Velde, 'Liberalism and Bourgeois Culture in the Netherlands, from the 1840s to the 1880s', and J.P. de Valk, 'Caught between Modernism, Pillarization, and Nationalism: Dutch Liberals and Religion in the Nineteenth Century', in Groenveld and Wintle, *Under the Sign of Liberalism*, pp. 62-77, and pp. 102-115. For the liberal-conservative debate on political economy, see T.J. Boschloo, *De productiemaatschappij: Liberalisme, economische wetenschap en het vraagstuk der armoede in Nederland, 1800-1875* (Hilversum, 1989), and for the succesful thorbeckian 'bourgeois' attack on the classicist academic style of enlightened conservatism in the 1860s, the biography of the Groningen professor H.C. van Hall, a brother of the politician: Richard F.J. Paping, 'Die waardige man': Prof. H.C. van Hall (1801-1874), botanicus, landhuishoudkundige en pionier van het hoger landbouwonderwijs (Groningen, 1996), and for Leiden: W. Otterspeer, *De wiekslag van hun geest: De Leidse universiteit in de negentiende eeuw* (Den Haag, 1992). The memoirs of the social-liberal professor and banker Quack, who owned his position to the influence of some influential conservatives, are spotted with lively descriptions of Amsterdam and Utrecht academic life: *Herinneringen uit de levensjaren van H.P.G. Quack, 1834-1914* (Amsterdam 1915, reprinted Nijmegen 1977).

more akin to the evangelical spirit of English Gladstonian liberalism, although it lacked its immense popular appeal.

The complexity of this new differentiation between liberalism and conservatism may explain the anti-Papist anger of the Protestant nation during the so-called April Movement of 1853. Rallying against Thorbecke's consent for the restoration of the Catholic ecclesiastical organization, sanctioned by the constitutional disestablishment, the Protestants lost confidence in reform from the moment the Catholics began to profit from it - just as the radicals and Catholic patriots had been expelled from office half a century earlier. Though the national organization of this 'no-Popery' Movement is still shrouded in fog, local research suggests it was the combined attack by Thorbecke's government on the vested interests of economy, state and church that created an 'All-Protestant' rapprochement of nonconformist radicals, 'early liberal' conservatives and Calvinist 'anti-revolutionaries'.⁵⁸ Most important from the perspective of democratization, though, was its combination of populist strategy and royalist political orientation. Using the instrument of a nationwide people's petition, which was framed by the Dutch Reformed Church and presented to the king, the April Movement was able to mobilize 'the people behind the electorate' against the liberal government. The petitions - signed by the vast majority of the Protestant adult male population (roughly 200,000 signatures) - were presented to the king on two ritual occasions: one in Utrecht - the traditional centre of the Protestant Reformation - the other in Amsterdam, the burgher capital of the notable nation.⁵⁹

58 The crucial importance of Van Hall's 'moderate' liberalism is particularly emphasized in Kossmann, *De Lage Landen*, pp. 128-9, 203-4, and for the anti-Papist reflex of Dutch Protestantism, see J.A. Bornewasser, 'Mythical aspects of Dutch Anti-Catholicism in the Nineteenth Century', in J.S. Bromley and E.H. Kossmann (eds.), *Some Political Mythologies (Britain and the Netherlands, V)*, The Hague, 1975), pp. 184-206. Yet, these publications underestimate the conceptual and organizational connections between liberalism, conservatism and Calvinism, such as exposed at the local level, in J.H. von Santen, 'Politiek leven in de stad Utrecht rond het midden van de negentiende eeuw (1840-1860)', *Jaarboek Oud-Utrecht*, 1985, 110-165; R. van der Laarse, 'Verzvolgen door den ultramontaanschen vloed. Leken en clerus in katholiek Delft in de negentiende eeuw', in Blom and Misset, *Broeders sluit U aan!* (Amsterdam/The Hague, 1985), pp. 68-109, in particular 88ff.; Jos Leenders, *Benauwde verdraagzaamheid, hachelijk fatsoen. Families, standen en kerken te Hoorn in het midden van de negentiende eeuw* (Amsterdam/The Hague, 1991), pp. 281-294, 347-382; Jan van Miert, *Wars van clubgeest en partijzucht. Liberalen, natie en verzuiling 1850-1920* (Amsterdam, 1994), pp. 26-9.

59 Personal petitions to parliament were a normal phenomena in Dutch parliamentary life from 1815, but the instrument of an organized popular petition to influence political decision-making, was used for the first time by the Belgian 'separatists' in 1830: L. François, 'De petitiebeweging in het Verenigd Koninkrijk der Nederlanden: balans van een onderzoek', in Tamse and Witte, *Staats- en natievorming* pp. 122-145. In Holland, the liberals took the initiative in coordinating a 'petition movement' in 1844, while most petitions to parliament in 1848-1849 were coordinated by Thorbecke's opponents. The strategy to petition the king in 1853 could have had something to do with the fact that Thorbecke did not respond to any of these petitions, which - interestingly - were not related to the election issue but to that of the separation of church and state: Jaap Talsma, 'Geeft met verschuldigde eerbied te kennen. Petities over kiesstelsel en kiesrecht uit de periode 1848-1850', *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis*, 92 (1979) 3, 438-451.

This confrontation between two models of democracy (populist and representational) resulted in a conservative victory, after which Van Hall took over. Yet, it was not the strength of this anti-parliamentary opposition but the king's unconstitutional behaviour that had forced Thorbecke to resign.⁶⁰ King William III (1817-1890), who had come to the throne in 1849, passionately denounced his father's consent to the idea of constitutional government. Opposed to the former king's liberal revolution, his royalist coup symbolically confirmed the mythical alliance between the House of Orange and the Protestant Nation, as well as the 'social contract' of 1813 between the sovereign and the notables. Yet, it was only a moment of hope and glory, for, after his finest hour, the last nineteenth-century king of Orange soon found history passing him by.

⁶⁰ See for the account of one of Thorbecke's aristocrat ministers: G.J. Hooykaas (ed.), 'Herinneringen van J.P.P. baron van Zuylen van Nijvelt, kamerlid en minister, 1849-1853', in *Nederlandse Historische Bronnen*, vol. I, (Nederlands Historisch Genootschap: The Hague, 1979), pp. 238-275.

IV. The Geography of Politics

After Thorbecke stepped down in 1853, the old set-up may have lost its constitutional legitimation but was never seriously challenged in practice. In fact, William I's class of notables would govern the nation for at least another forty years. Although under the Electoral Law of 1850 the franchise was no longer made up of voters and electives, suffrage still depended on income, while a new discrimination between local and national voters restricted politics as before to the upper classes, at least when the nation was at stake. Before 1850 a relatively large group of some 90,000 urban voters could elect legislators only from a select category of persons in the highest tax bracket, restricted to around 1 per cent of adult males. In 1850 the franchise was extended to approximately 18 per cent for municipal elections, but restricted to about 10 per cent of adult males for parliamentary and provincial elections: roughly 75,000 voters, or 6-7 per cent of heads of households.⁶¹ Moreover, chosen by indirect vote by the provincial councillors, the Upper House continued to be almost completely noble, and in the Lower House (now chosen by direct vote) at least two-thirds of the seats were taken by noblemen and their untitled patrician relatives, most of whom were burgomasters, court presidents or provincial governors. After the Belgian Secession of 1830 and before the electoral reforms of the 1890s, only a few members of parliament belonged to the industrial bourgeoisie, and the middle and lower classes were not represented at all.⁶²

To explain this aristocratic continuity after the 'bourgeois revolution' of 1848, Dutch historians have generally taken for granted that Thorbecke's reforms came too early and were too modern. It has even been argued, though without much evidence, that the franchise of 1848 was of ample dimensions, since the elections had a poor turnout, at least until the denominational

61 Cf. Blok, *Stemmen en kiezen*, passim; Kossmann, *Lage Landen*, pp. 136, 260, 268, 544; N. Bos and R. de Peuter, 'Werk in uitvoering. De lijsten van verkiesbaren voor de Eerste Kamer als bron voor elite-onderzoek, 1850-1892', *Tijdschrift voor Sociale Geschiedenis* 14 (1988) 412-439.

62 For parliament and government, see Daalder, 'Consociationalism', 216-7; J.Th.J. van den Berg, *De toegang tot het Binnenhof. De maatschappelijke herkomst van Tweede Kamerleden tussen 1849 en 1970* (Weesp, 1983); W.P. Secker, 'Alle de aanzienlijken in de regeering'? De maatschappelijke herkomst van Nederlandse ministers (1848-1986), *Mens en Maatschappij* 63 (1988), 141-155; A.J.H. Ette, 'Onze volksvertegenwoordigers 1849-1888', *Jaarboek van het Centraal Bureau voor Genealogie* 8 (1954), 129-174, and *ibid.*, *Onze ministers sinds 1798* (Alphen a/d Rijn 1948); for some contemporary impressions of parliamentary sociability, see A. Ising, *In de kamers der Staten-Generaal. Herinneringen en indrukken 1850-1886* ('s Gravenhage 1892) and C.K. Elout, *De Heeren in Den Haag* (Amsterdam 1909), while information on regional representatives is offered in H. van Felius and H. Metselaars, *Noordhollandse Statenleden, 1840-1919* (The Hague, 1994). From their part, in contrast to the older merchant regency, political functions were not held in high esteem among the late nineteenth-century industrial barons, as demonstrated by their biographies: Wim Wennekes, *De aartsvaders. Grondleggers van het Nederlandse bedrijfsleven* (Amsterdam/Antwerpen, 1993). The financial elite, on the other hand, was in around 1900 still strongly connected with the aristocracy: Huibert Schijf, *Netwerken van een financieel-economische elite. Personele verbindingen in het Nederlandse bedrijfsleven aan het einde van de negentiende eeuw* (Amsterdam, 1993).

politicization of the middle classes from the 1870s.⁶³ And indeed, politics were characterized during this transition period from enlightened royalism to pillarized mass politics by an almost complete lack of formal party organization, and accordingly by individualist voting behaviour in parliament that puzzled even well-informed contemporaries, such as Lord Napier, the British ambassador to the Hague. In fact, even the ideological colour of the 'conservative-liberal' cabinets is hard to classify, for their making and reshuffling was almost independent of parliamentary influence, and thus also of the electoral process.⁶⁴ But does this really mean that the nation adapted itself to the prudent leadership of its moderate elites?

An examination of the polls at local elections reveals an interesting pattern, which makes it possible to understand the political indifference from a more rational perspective. Both the constituency voting system and the formal rules of the Electoral Law of 1850 favoured the majority party due to the principle of 'the winner takes all'.⁶⁵ To have a chance of representation, political minorities had to either cooperate or take the electoral meetings by surprise. As long as the political factions in the constituencies balanced each other, the polls were generally high. But the turnout lowered as soon as a majority party became firmly entrenched, for voting could hardly be interesting when nothing was at stake. Therefore, the electorate was highly politicized during the political crisis of 1848-1853, when in many boroughs old and new liberals were fighting for votes and power. Things changed, however, after the 'April Storm' of 1853, when the 'Thorbeckians' and their Catholic allies were thrown out by majority vote. For at least a decade, elections became ritual confirmations of the conservative hegemony of the Protestant elites. Of course, the office holders still had to offer themselves as politicians for election by direct vote, and in the aftermath of 1853 some Protestant newcomers from the upper middle class were admitted to office. But the

63 The empirical evidence is based on Th. van Tijn, *Twintig jaren Amsterdam. De maatschappelijke ontwikkeling van de hoofdstad, van de jaren '50 der vorige eeuw tot 1876* (Amsterdam, 1965), pp. 145-6; cf. *ibid.*, 'De wording van de moderne partijorganisatie in Nederland', in Beekelaar, *Vaderlands Verleden in Veelvoud*, pp. 590-610; see further J.C. Boogman, 'De periode 1840-1848' and 'De 'revolutie' van 1848 en haar nasleep', *Algemene Geschiedenis der Nederlanden*, XII (Haarlem/Bussum, 1977), pp. 318-21, 346.

64 J.C. Boogman (ed.), 'De Britse gezant Lord Napier over de Nederlandse vertegenwoordiging in 1860', *Bijdragen en Mededelingen van het Historisch Genootschap*, 71 (1957) 186-211. Judged from the voting behaviour the members of the Second Chamber, they could be classified earlier in four factions (Thorbeckians, the former radicals around Donker Curtius, Van Hall's conservative liberals, and Groen van Prinsterer's calvinist anti-revolutionaries), though individual members voted different on any occasion: C.B. Wels and M. Wolters, 'Analyse van het stemgedrag van de Tweede-kamerleden in 1849. Tussenstand van een onderzoek', *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis*, 95 (1982) 1, 31-57, and for the later period: J.J. Huizinga, *J. Heemskerk Azn. (1818-1897). Conservatief zonder partij* (Harlingen, 1973), appendix I, voting behavior of the members of the Second Chamber, 1860-1864, pp. 60-1.

65 The basic argument can be found in Rob van der Laarse and Jaap Talsma, *Accommodatiegedrag van lokale politieke elites bij gemeenteraadsverkiezingen in de tweede helft van de 19de eeuw* (Department of History, University of Amsterdam, 1986), and Jaap Talsma, 'Accommodation and Conflict: Traditional Politics, Religion and Social Relationships in the Dutch Electoral Process', in Raffaele Romanelli (ed.), *How did they become Voters? The History of Franchise in Modern European Representation* (The Hague, 1998), pp. 373-86.

complexity of the system promoted the periodic re-election of sitting administrators over new candidates, which means they were practically chosen for life.⁶⁶

These general observations about the electoral mechanism help us to understand why radical changes in many constituencies often became bogged down in religious strife, which favoured political stability in the end. Yet, they do not explain the significant geographical differentiation in Dutch political culture. The social historian Van Tijn has argued that political opposition in the Netherlands from the Patriot Revolt of the 1780s to the rise of pillarization in the 1870s must be seen as provincial movements for emancipation, opposed to the economic and political dominance of 'the Amsterdam-The Hague axis'.⁶⁷ Although there is not much empirical evidence of such a long-term geographic continuity of patriotism and liberalism, the election results from 1848 support the idea of an ideological contradistinction between Holland and the Outer Provinces. Up to 1870 the central Randstad area between Amsterdam, Utrecht, Rotterdam and The Hague was a bulwark of conservatism, whereas the liberals were mainly returned to parliament by votes from the provincial periphery - an interesting contrast to the current cliché of the backward provinces as opposed to the progressive Randstad. The evidence suggests, however, that here religion rather than regionalism was at stake. The electoral basis of conservatism was primarily situated in the Protestant strongholds of the public church, whilst the liberals won the polls in some latitudinarian areas in the northern provinces and in the Catholic provinces of Brabant and Limburg, in the same way as half a century before the radical patriots were recruited from the dissenter-Protestant and Catholic fringe.⁶⁸ Of course, this does not mean that liberalism was lacking in Holland: early liberalism, as we saw, was firmly rooted especially in Amsterdam, while many Protestant conservatives or 'conservative liberals' were of liberal or even radical descent. For years after the April Movement, however, liberalism in this western part of the country was mainly restricted to the Catholic minority, which comprised some 30-40 per cent of urban voters. Thus it

66 Cf. Buning, *Herenbolwerk*, pp. 127-192; Kuiper, *Adel in Friesland*, pp. 304-343; Van der Laarse, *Bevoogding en Bevinding* pp. 134 ff.; Van der Laarse, 'Welstand, macht en aanzien', *passim*; Wolffram, *Bezwaarden en verlichten*, pp. 12-16, 53-59, 71-3; Leenders, *Benauwde verdraagzaamheid*, pp. 29-42, 330-4, 361-4; Van Miert, *Wars van clubgeest en partijzucht*, pp. 22-29, 70-77; Frans Groot, *Roomsen, rechtzinnigen en nieuwlichters. Verzuiling in een Hollandse plattelandsgemeente, Naaldwijk 1850-1930* (Hilversum, 1992), pp. 148-192.

67 Th. van Tijn, 'The Party Structure of Holland and the Outer Provinces in the Nineteenth Century', in Bromley and Kossmann, *Metropolis, Dominion and Province*, pp. 176-207; repr. in Beekelaar, *Vaderlands Verleden in Veelvoud*, especially pp. 564-567, 572; the original idea was put forward by Boogman, who suggested that patriotism and liberalism should both be understood as regional movements of emancipation against the political dominance of Holland; Boogman, 'Napier', p. 196; cf. Kossmann, *Lage Landen*, pp. 129, 204-208.

68 For a good survey of religious geography, see Hans Knippenberg, *De religieuze kaart van Nederland. Omvang en geografische spreiding van de godsdienstige gezindten vanaf de Reformatie tot heden* (Assen, 1992).

seems that 'religiography' explains the fundamental weakness of the liberals in the aftermath of 'their' revolution of 1848.

Map 1: elections for the Second Chamber, 1860:

underline:

Elections for the Second Chamber, 1860. Source: Th. van Tijn, 'The Party Structure of Holland and the Outer Provinces in the Nineteenth Century', in G.A.M. Beekelaar [et.al.] (eds), *Vaderlands Verleden in Veelvoud*. 31 Opstellen over de Nederlandse geschiedenis (The Hague, 1975), p. 586

One of the strategies used by those holding the reins of government after 1848 was gerrymandering, i.e. moving the boundaries of constituencies to the advantage of the dominant politico-religious group. The crucial variable, however, was the balance of power within the centre. Things would change if parts of the Protestant majority were to link up with the Catholic periphery. Such a reshaping of political loyalties took place around 1795 en 1848, and again in the 1860s, the decade that has been called the pivot on which the whole period of 1850-1890 hinged.⁶⁹ Repeating the pattern of the 1840s, different religious and social minorities then closed ranks against the established elites by supporting each other's candidates.

In fact, all parties from 1848 had been ad hoc coalitions: one such was the 'All-Protestant Party' of 1853, which split up around 1860 when a group of enlightened Protestants tried to win the votes of the Protestant orthodoxy by outbidding the liberals with a mixture of royalism and educational reform. Possibly, this would have resulted in a Dutch variant of Disraeli's Tory Party had another group of Calvinist 'anti-revolutionaries' not exchanged the old-Protestant idea of one church and one nation for a new concept of a free church and a free school liberated from government control. This opened up a new field of coalitions, the immediate outcome of which was a liberal victory at the polls. In 1862, Thorbecke formed a second government that was able to complete the law-making programme of his first administration. And when in 1866 the conservatives returned to power, the king had to appeal to the country for support for 'his' cabinet against the liberal majority in parliament. At first this constitutional crisis strengthened the Conservative party, as it did in 1853. Under the impact of the 'Prussia hysteria' of the Austro-Prussian War of 1866 the Conservatives even succeeded in organizing a nationwide Militia Movement, commanded by king William III, and marked by the same blend of social radicalism and anti-parliamentary Bonapartism as the 'All Protestant Party' of 1853.⁷⁰ Yet in the end, party politics eroded the royalists' right to power. The conservatives suffered an electoral defeat after a second dissolution of parliament in 1868, when public opinion learned of secret deals between the government and some Catholic 'ultramontanists' to join forces against the liberals. At that crucial moment, the heirs to the April Movement of 1853 lost not only the battle but the Protestant nation.⁷¹

⁶⁹ Kossmann, *Lage Landen*, p. 145; this notion is however restricted to political discourse, for the decline of political conservatism did not reflect a social transformation as Kossmann suggests.

⁷⁰ An important issue in the constitutional crisis of 1866-8 was the king's defense policy, as William III used his control over the army as a last stronghold against the liberals, who, ever since the 1840s, opted for parliamentary control of the expensive navy and fortification-system, such as realized with the Fortress Act of 1874; in the period before even Thorbecke had to accept in his cabinets conservative ministers of war. The volunteers, however, offered the king a private army to restore, with the aid of royalists and radicals, 'some Bonapartist or Bismarckian guidance in the nation', to quote the king's confident Count R.J. Schimmelpenninck (a son of Gerrit): W. Bevaart, *De Nederlandse defensie (1839-1874)*, (The Hague, 1993), pp. 417, 413-24.

⁷¹ Here too we have at our disposal Van Zuylen's memoirs, though now acting as a leader of a

This remarkable ideological volte-face was the result of the separation of church and state - the constitutional disestablishment of 1848 that in the long run undermined the influence of the notability in church affairs. In the Dutch Reformed Church, the notables lost their ecclesiastical hegemony after the introduction of an electoral system for church offices in 1867, enabling the reveilaristocrats to mobilize the orthodox parishioners against the exponents of the 'Protestant Enlightenment'.⁷² Equally, after the episcopal restoration of the Roman Catholic Church in 1853, the liberal-Catholic notables lost influence to a new elite of ultramontanists, who - solidly backed by the clergy - exchanged their allegiance to the democratic parties of 1795 and 1848 for an anti-modernist policy, inspired by the encyclical *Quanta Cura* (1864).⁷³

In politics around 1870, these ecclesiastical changes led to an overall breaking up of the 'All-Protestant' coalition of conservatives and anti-revolutionaries on the one hand, and the dissolving of the 'Papo-Thorbeckian' alliance of liberals and Catholics on the other. In 1860, liberals and conservatives each had 34 seats (of 72 seats) in parliament; by 1877, the liberals occupied 45 seats, while the Conservatives had only 7 (of 80) seats; the rest were divided among the clerical parties: ultramontanists and anti-revolutionaries.⁷⁴ Within a few years this reversal of alliances was responsible for the complete transformation of the geography of politics.⁷⁵ Liberalism after 1870 lost its hold on the Catholic south, to take its main strength from the latitudinarian north and the old stronghold of Conservatism: the cities of Holland. The anti-revolutionaries conquered the orthodox 'Bible belt' in the middle of the country, and in the southern province of Brabant the Catholic

conservative cabinet: G.J. Hooykaas (ed.), *J.P.P. baron van Zuylen van Nijvelt en de kabinetsformaties van 1861 en 1866*, in *Nederlandse Historische Bronnen*, (Nederlands Historisch Genootschap, The Hague, 1980) vol. II, pp. 353-376; and for his compagnon Heemstra: Huizinga, *Heemskerk Azn*, while the constitutional debate and electoral tactics are exposed in: C. Tamse, 'Het ministerie-Van Zuylen-Heemskerk 1866-1868', *Algemene Geschiedenis der Nederlanden*, XII, pp. 405-417, J.T. Minderaa, 'De macht des konings en de parlementaire democratie. De discussie van 1866', in *Jonker and Van Rossem, Geschiedenis en Cultuur*, pp. 97-106; Ron de Jong, 'Conservatieven en katholieken tijdens het kabinet-Van Zuylen-Heemskerk, 1866-1868', *Jaarboek Katholiek Documentatie Centrum* (1995), 7-26.

⁷² A detailed analysis of this process at the local level can be found in Van der Laarse, *Bevoogding en Bevinding* pp. 140-162, 214-234

⁷³ Cf. Van der Laarse, 'Verzwolgen door den ultramontaanschen vloed', *passim*; J.P. de Valk, 'Meer Hollands dan Paaps? De Nederlandse kerkprovincie en Rome in de tweede helft van de negentiende eeuw', in *Archief voor de Geschiedenis van de Katholieke Kerk in Nederland* 27 (1985), 140-156; Jan van Miert, 'Conservatisme onder katholieken in een biografisch perspectief: Mr. J.B. van Son (1804-1875)', in *Bijdragen en Mededelingen betreffende de Geschiedenis der Nederlanden* 104 (1989) 393-414; see also more in general H. Bakvis, *Catholic Power in the Netherlands* (Kingston/Montreal, 1981); J.A. Righart, *De katholieke zuil in Europa. Een vergelijkend onderzoek naar het ontstaan van verzuiling onder katholieken in Oostenrijk, Zwitserland, België en Nederland* (Meppel/Amsterdam, 1986).

⁷⁴ C.A. Tamse, 'De politieke ontwikkeling in Nederland, 1874-1887', in *Algemene Geschiedenis der Nederlanden*, XIII (Haarlem/Bussum 1978), p. 219

⁷⁵ Even as late as 1986 the polls for the elections of the Second Chamber reflect this pillarized political geography: Hans Knippenberg and Ben de Pater, *De eenwording van Nederland. Schaalvergroting en integratie sinds 1800* (Nijmegen, 1988), p. 193.

constituency organizations were politically organized on ultramontane foundations. In mixed areas of Protestants and Catholics, where all these forces met, this took the form of anti-Papist charivaris, as during the earlier breaks in political culture in around 1800, 1830 and 1850.⁷⁶ But again these rituals of identity only accentuated the essentially pluralist character of the nation, which from 1795 had never been seriously questioned.

76 Cf. Frans Groot, 'De strijd rond Alva's bril. Papen en geuzen bij de herdenking van de inname van Den Briel, 1572-1872', *Bijdragen en Mededelingen betreffende de Geschiedenis der Nederlanden*, 110 (1995) 161-181; *ibid.*, 'Papists and Beggars. National festivals and nation building in the Netherlands during the 19th century', in Peter van der Veer and Hartmut Lehmann (eds.), *The religious morality of the nation state* (Princeton, forthcoming).

V. Politics in a New Key

In the 1870s, the separation of religion and politics, generated by the 1848 disestablishment, culminated in a *Kulturkampf*. On the one hand, a new generation of 'young liberals', standard-bearers of a 'modern', positivist world-view, tried to cleanse politics from the pollution of religious rivalry; on the other, a new generation of clerical politicians translated religious revivalism into politics. Thus, in 1878, the liberal Prime Minister J. Kappeyne van de Coppello initiated a civilizing offensive to 'enlighten' the nation by way of the state's primary school system, while both the ultramontanists and anti-revolutionaries petitioned the king for state aid for denominational education. Significantly, however, this 'School Act agitation' - aimed at the withdrawal of the liberal Education Bill - mobilized an even greater part of the nation against the government than the no-Popery agitation of 1853. Yet the instrument of a people's petition proved to be out of date, since the monarchy had lost its political power as a result of the constitutional crisis of 1866-1868.⁷⁷

Although clerical constituency associations dated from the 1860s, the 'school struggle' stimulated their national integration based on party principles. In 1879 the Calvinist preacher-politician Abraham Kuyper founded the Anti-Revolutionary Party (ARP), which is held to be the first modern political party in the Netherlands, and in 1883 the priest-politician H.J.A.M. Schaepman published his ultramontane *Manifesto for a Roman Catholic Party*. Interestingly, their new strategy of political centralization and ideological isolation was accompanied by a more 'politicized' and 'cosmopolitan' theological orientation. Kuyper distanced himself from the ethical pietism of the conservative, reveal aristocracy,⁷⁸ while Schaepman, in spite of being distrusted by the episcopate for his 'open' Catholicism, initiated an ideological break with the liberal Catholic elites. Together this opened up the prospect of a clerical coalition between the adherents of Rome and those of Calvin. This ideological bridging of the cleavage of the Reformation, which until then had

77 For the young-liberal view, steeped in unitarianism, see G. Taal, *Liberalen en radicalen in Nederland, 1872-1901* (The Hague, 1980), pp. 43-81, and for the catholic position: J.A. Bornewasser, 'Curiale aspiraties van de priester-politicus Schaepman', in *Mededelingen der Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen, afd. Letterkunde*, 49 (Amsterdam/Oxford, 1986) 7, 211-248. A detailed local analysis of the confrontation of the liberal civilizing offensive and the antirevolutionary struggle for 're-Christianization' within the domain of popular culture, is afforded in J.L. Helsloot, *Vermaak tussen beschaving en kerstening. Goes 1867-1896* (Amsterdam, 1995).

78 In Dutch historiography Kuyper is regarded a social reformer, because in 1886 he had brought about a schism in the Dutch Reformed Church, known as the *Doleantie*, in order to liberate the orthodox 'little people' from the control of the 'liberal lords'; that, however, even at the 1890's both the *Reveilaristocracy* and the pietist *bevindelijken* or 'grass roots' calvinists (within and without the Dutch Reformed Church) far outnumbered the Kuyperian 'neocalvinists', is shown in detail by Van der Laarse, *Bevoogding en Bevinding* pp. 258 ff., and Wolfram, *Bezwaarden en Verlichten*, 115-138, 189 ff., and noticed in general by J. de Bruyn (eds.), *Een land nog niet in kaart gebracht. Aspecten van het protestants-christelijk leven in Nederland in de jaren 1880-1940* (Amsterdam, 1987), and G.J. Schutte, 'Over '86 en '92 en daarna. Kuypers gereformeerde wereld herdacht', *Bijdragen en Mededelingen betreffende de Geschiedenis der Nederlanden*, 110 (1995) 4, 515-547.

prevented the conservatives from winning the Catholic vote, goes by the name of the Antithesis: the cultural dichotomy of Christianity and Enlightenment, or - in politics - the dichotomy between right and left.⁷⁹

Thus, as the conservatives had initiated in the 1850s the electoral instrument of local constituency associations, the clericals in the 1870s introduced the modern party organization, featuring a party manifesto, voting discipline and a cult of leadership - a practice followed in the 1880s by the socialists but never perfectly imitated by the liberals. Moulded by the agitation for *laissez faire* and public spirit in the 1840s and 1860s, liberal culture would adhere for more than a century to the respectable sociability of the Masonic club, the Society for Public Utility (Maatschappij tot Nut van't Algemeen), and the genteel style of the debating society.⁸⁰ Still, the education issue contributed not only to the strength of the clerical coalition but also to a 'Protestantization' of liberalism. The conservatives left the stage only because the clericals monopolized the interests of church and religion, and the liberals took over the torch of anti-clericalism, as defenders of the unitarian principles of 1795. As such, this ideological polarization marked a decisive division between the secular and the religious. The result was a new political arrangement, in which the secular 'left' (the socialists included) stood firm for the autonomy of the state's public sphere as an endangered remnant of William I's enlightened nation, whereas the clerical 'right' demanded denominational 'particularism', as a corporatist translation of the old republican fear of centralism.

Thus the nationalization of the masses took place in the Netherlands by way of a pillarized segmentation.⁸¹ Yet, this segmented integration should not blind us to the fact that, at least until the end of the century, at the local level the political machinery was still controlled by 'local bosses', functioning as power brokers between the state and their own communities. In most boroughs, a

79 Cf. Kossmann, *Lage Landen*, pp. 219-221, 261-3; Wintle, *Pillars of Piety*, pp. 50-61; for Kuypers role as a mass politician, see also Henk te Velde, 'Ervaring en zingeving in de politiek. Het politieke charisma in de tijd van Abraham Kuyper', *Theoretische Geschiedenis* 23 (1996) 4, 519-538; *ibid.*, 'Een aparte techniek. Nederlandse politieke acteurs en de massa na 1870', *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis* 110 (1997) 2, 198-212.

80 Cf. Aerts, *De letterheren*, pp. 126 ff.; Ido de Haan and Henk te Velde, 'Vormen van politiek. Veranderingen van de openbaarheid in Nederland, 1850-1900', *Bijdragen en Mededelingen betreffende de Geschiedenis der Nederlanden*, 111 (1996) 167-200. For Dutch Freemasonry and the Maatschappij tot Nut van't Algemeen - the main forces of organized virtue, from the late-eighteenth century Patriots to the late-nineteenth century radicals, see the contributions in Van de Sande and Rosendaal, 'Een stille leerschool; W.W. Mijnhardt, *Tot Heil van't Menschdom: Culturele genootschappen in Nederland, 1750-1815* (Amsterdam, 1988), and Bernard Kruithof, *Zonde en deugd in domineesland. Nederlandse protestanten en problemen van opvoeding, 17e-20ste eeuw* (Groningen 1990), ch. 3: 'De deugdzame natie. Het burgerlijk beschavingsoffensief van de Maatschappij tot Nut van't Algemeen', pp. 160-195.

81 Cf. Daalder, 'Consociationalism', 228; Piet de Rooy, 'Het grofste communisme. Een beschouwing over de verzuiling als integratieproces in Nederland in de negentiende eeuw', *Symposion*, 2 (1980) 1, 8-21; Jan van Miert, 'Verdeeldheid en binding. Over lokale, verzuilde en nationale loyaliteiten', *Bijdragen en Mededelingen betreffende de Geschiedenis der Nederlanden*, 107 (1992) 59-85.

new generation of ultramontane and anti-revolutionary officials simply continued the 'family government' of their conservative or liberal fathers and uncles. The clerical 'emancipators' were drawn from the patrician class, not from 'the people', and often formed a paternalistic elite par excellence.⁸² Besides, even the liberal notables in parliament could often survive for years by crossing the poles of the antithesis in their own constituencies, as active members of consistories and christian school boards.⁸³ Thus, within the ARP as within the Liberal Union (1885) and the Catholic party organizations, the regional notable elites, still acting as a rural and urban 'squirearchy', played a prominent role until at least the 1890s.⁸⁴

This aristocratic continuity suggests that parliamentary democracy in the Netherlands did not imply a process of social democratization: the internal dynamic of politics determined the

82 The importance of political kinship was noticed already by Van Tijn, *Twintig jaren*, pp. 148 ff., and empirically confirmed in the local studies, mentioned above, Ch.IV, note 6. For regional, protestant, notabilities, see further Yme Kuiper, 'Van familieregering naar isolement. Frieslands politieke elite in het tijdvak 1748-1888', in Y.B. Kuiper and R. Mulder-Radetzky (ed.) *Menschen van macht en aanzien. Frieslands elite in de 18e en 19e eeuw* (Heerenveen, 1987), and Van der Laarse, *Bevoogding and Bevinding* pp. 134-148, 443, and for the importance of 'family' among the Calvinist orthodoxy: D.Th. Kuiper, *De Voormannen. Een sociaal-wetenschappelijke studie over ideologie, konflikt en kerngroepvorming binnen de Gereformeerde wereld in Nederland tussen 1820 en 1930* (Kampen, 1972); Jorada Verrips, *En boven de polder de hemel. Een antropologische studie van een Nederlands dorp 1850-1971* (Groningen, 1978). For catholic elites, see Van der Laarse, 'Verzvolgen door den ultramontaanschen vloed'; Maarten Duyvendak, *Rooms, rijk en regentesk. Elitevorming en machtsverhoudingen in Oostelijk Noord-Brabant (circa 1810-1914)* (Bois-le-Duc, 1990), pp. 96-130; Ton Duffhues, *Generaties en patronen. De katholieke beweging te Arnhem in de 19e en 20e eeuw. Een wetenschappelijke proeve op het gebied van de sociale wetenschappen* (Baarn, 1991), pp. 245 ff.

83 Even in Catholic regions the liberal elites could survive until the introduction of universal (male) suffrage and proportional representation in 1917 - notwithstanding a complete lack of party organization - by way of acting as a non-political 'middle party': Ton Duffhues, 'Van liberaal bolwerk tot politiek meerstromenland. De formatie van politieke partijen in Arnhem 1880-1920', *Bijdragen en Mededelingen Vereniging Gelre, LXXVII* (1986) 101-127. In particular in the so-called Bible belt in the middle of the country (a mixed area of Protestants and Catholics), Kuyper's 'policy of the antithesis' was obstructed at the local level by a Protestant orthodoxy that would rather vote paganist than Papist: Von Santen, 'Politiek leven in de stad Utrecht', and Van der Laarse, *Bevoogding en Bevinding* pp. 281-296, 316-348; an influential exponent of this orthodox-aristocratic liberalism was the high-bred liberal politician W.H. de Beaufort, who from the 1880s up to 1918 combined a deep aversion to Kuyper's clerical politics with a strong interest in the local church affairs of his huge Utrecht estate; cf. *Dagboeken en aantekeningen van Willem Hendrik de Beaufort*, J.P. de Valk and M. van Faassen (eds.), 2 volumes ('s Gravenhage, 1993).

84 Although, by the absence of primogeniture, the concentration of noble wealth and power was less spectacular in the Netherlands than in the British case, the position of both the rural and urban elites in the Netherlands, with respect to land, kinship, paternalism, and accommodationist politics, corresponds with the notion of 'new squirearchy' as developed for the urban elites in England: John Garrard, 'Urban Elites, 1850-1914: The Rule and Decline of a New Squirearchy?', *Albion*, 27 (Autumn 1995) 3, 583-621, especially pp. 586-8, 601, 611-612. Yet the peculiarity of Dutch notability can probably be at best compared with the aristocracy of Tuscany, that has been characterized by a 'Renaissance paradigm' for its absence of primogeniture and the British (or German) opposition between landed elites and urban middle classes, which resulted in a mixture of all sorts of traditional and modern forms of rural and urban seigneurial power and lifestyles, so that the Florentine merchant-bankers shared as much the aristocratic values as did their Amsterdam counterparts: Raffaele Romanelli, 'Urban patricians and 'bourgeois' society: a study of wealthy elites in Florence, 1862-1904', *Journal of Modern Italian Studies*, 1 (1995) 1, 3-21.

democratization of politics. Even the atheist 'neo Malthusians' on the radical left of Dutch liberalism, as well as most feminist leaders of the woman's right movement, were from notable, Protestant birth.⁸⁵ Thus in 1887 the liberal majority party initiated electoral reform, seeking new voters to outvote the clerical parties at the polls, and to win over the radical adherents of the League for Universal Suffrage (1879). The discrimination between local and national voters disappeared, after which the electorate increased from 122,000 to 292,000 voters (25-26 per cent of the adult male population, or 14 per cent of the adult population at that time). In contrast to the English working-class enfranchisement of 1867 and 1884, however, the Netherland's extensions of the franchise in the 1880s generally favoured the lower middle classes, and proved to be more favourable for the right than the left. The clerical minorities succeeded for the first time in mobilizing the popular vote 'against liberalism' by combining their lists of candidates. Not only were the liberals defeated at the elections, they also had to face the holy music of a Clerical cabinet (1888-1891) in the old humanist nation of Erasmus and Spinoza.

Yet the reforms of 1887 showed not only the fragility of the liberal order, they also pointed at the weak spot of the clerical coalition. Only two of the eight ministers were Catholics: while the polls suggest that Catholics voted for anti-revolutionaries, Calvinists hardly voted for ultramontanists. Thus, after the Christian coalition altered the liberal Education Act and reached consensus on the possibility of state-aided denominational education, it broke apart as an old-fashioned alliance of interest groups, because there simply was no 'clerical policy' apart from the education issue.⁸⁶

Map 2: elections for the Second Chamber, 1897.

⁸⁵ See in general, Friso Hoeneveld, 'Met behoud van eigen standpunt'. Oud-liberalisme en nationalism in Nederland rond de eeuwwisseling', *Theoretische Geschiedenis*, 23 (1996) 1, 16-47, and for aristocratic feminism: Maria Grever, *Strijd tegen de stilte: Johanna Naber (1859-1941) en de vrouwenstem in de geschiedenis* (Hilversum, 1994), while the broad spectrum of feminist opinion is treated in Ulla Jansz, *Denken over sekse in de eerste feministische golf* (Amsterdam, 1990).

⁸⁶ After the elections of 1888, the Lower House numbered 28 antirevolutionaries, 26 Catholics, and 44 Liberals (and one Conservative and one Socialist), while 12 of the 28 antirevolutionaries were chosen by Catholic vote but only 4 of the 26 Catholics by orthodox vote; cf. Kossmann, *Lage Landen*, p. 260 ff.; J.T. Minderaa, 'De politieke ontwikkeling in Nederland 1887-1914', in *Algemene Geschiedenis der Nederlanden*, XIII, pp. 432-436; Th.B.F.M. Brinkel, 'De Haagse lente', in Th.B.F.M. Brinkel [et al.] (eds), *Het kabinet Mackay. Opstellen over de eerste christelijke coalitie (188-1891)* (Baarn, 1990), pp. 52-55; H. Righart, 'Een eeuw confessionele politiek?', in Paul Luyckx and Hans Righart (eds), *Van de pastorie naar het torentje; een eeuw confessionele politiek* ('s Gravenhage, 1991), pp. 175-186.

underline:

Elections for the Second Chamber, 1897. Source: Th. van Tijn, 'The Party Structure of Holland and the Outer Provinces in the Nineteenth Century', in G.A.M. Beekelaar [et.al.] (eds), *Vaderlands Verleden in Veelvoud*. 31 Opstellen over de Nederlandse geschiedenis (The Hague, 1975), p. 589

From 1891 to 1901 the liberals operated again (and for the last time) as a majority party, though behind the liberal-clerical scheme a new segmentation was now at stake. The 1890s was a decade of political radicalization, fostered by the Agrarian Depression as well as the take-off of modern industrialization and the consequential drift from the land to the cities.⁸⁷ All parties were then confronted with democratic opposition, which was demanding an extension of the franchise and a change of personnel. For a while this seemed to result in a new, dualist party structure along the lines of class instead of religion. In opposition to the notable factions of their own clerical parties, **Kuyper** and **Schaepman** - the latter now backed by the social encyclical *Rerum Novarum* (1891) - allied with the young-liberal Prime Minister **J.P.R. Tak van Poortvliet** in support of his radical ballot bill, which would extend suffrage to the working classes. Though the liberals in 1894 occupied no fewer than 60 (of 100) seats, the 'Takkians' were defeated at the elections by the narrowest of margins.⁸⁸ Yet, in the longer run, the democratic element in parliament was strengthened by the moderate electoral law of 1896, which enfranchised most tradesmen, shopkeepers and craftsman, as well as a small working-class 'aristocracy'.

In all parties this contributed to a withdrawal of notables. Thus in 1896 the reveal aristocracy, which was opposed to electoral reform and **Kuyper's** coalition with **Rome**, broke away from the **ARP** and later reunited themselves in a **Christian Historical Union** (1908), which can be distinguished from **Kuyper's** following of **Christian Reformed 'little people'**, by its commitment to the 'national' **Dutch Reformed Church**, and its air of **Protestant notability** and old-fashioned anti-Papism.⁸⁹ This so-called ethical orthodoxy became practically linked up with the 'national liberals', who seceded from the 'Takkian' Union, which also lost its left wing of social liberals in 1901.⁹⁰ Only

87 Although modern industrialization in the Netherlands only dated from the 1890s, the 'traditional' fields of agriculture, trade and banking experienced a rapid process of growth already from the 1830s, so that in Europe only Great-Britain outranked the Netherlands in terms of GNP: cf. **J.A. de Jonge**, *De industrialisatie in Nederland tussen 1850 en 1914* (Nijmegen, 1968); **R.T. Griffiths**, *Achterlijk, Achter of Anders? Aspecten van de economische ontwikkeling van Nederland in de 19de eeuw* (Amsterdam, 1980); **J.M.M. de Meere**, *Economische ontwikkeling en levensstandaard in Nederland gedurende de eerste helft van de negentiende eeuw* (The Hague, 1982); **J.L. van Zanden**, *De economische ontwikkeling van de Nederlandse landbouw in de negentiende eeuw, 1800-1914* (Utrecht, 1985).

88 Joined up politically with the radical liberals in the election issue, parliamentary democracy meant to **Kuyper** and **Schaepman** in principle not an extension of the franchise (nor the secrecy of the ballot, which was already ensured by the Electoral Law of 1850) but a proportional representation of religious minorities; otherwise the vast majority of anti-revolutionary and Catholic members of the Second Chamber of Parliament were opposed to any kind of electoral reform, and longed for the idea of a new Conservative Party, made up by Catholics, Antirevolutionaries, and 'Old' or 'National Liberals'; cf. **J.W.A. van der Giessen**, *De opkomst van de democratie in Nederland* (Den Haag, 1948), pp. 227-241; **J.A. Bornewasser**, 'De katholieke partijvorming tot de Eerste Wereldoorlog', in **L.W.G. Scholten** [et al.], *De confessionelen, ontstaan en ontwikkeling van de christelijke partijen* (Utrecht, 1968), pp. 23-40.

89 **R. Kuiper**, *Herenmuiterij. Vernieuwing en sociaal conflict in de antirevolutionaire partij 1871-1894* (Leiden, 1994).

90 **Taal**, *Liberale en Radicale*, pp. 230-318; **K.E. van der Mandele**, *Het liberalisme in Nederland. Schets van de ontwikkeling in de negentiende eeuw* (Arnhem, 1933), pp.140-2. Curiously enough, in their

the Catholic Party was not split up during the radical 1890s, but reorganized by the clergy as a corporatist league of upper, middle and lower class representatives, in response to popular demands for a progressive Christian Democratic Party.

In 1896 the connection between suffrage and taxpaying was exchanged for a broader definition of electoral capability, which extended the franchise to some 50 per cent of the adult male population (581,000 voters in 1897). But again, as in 1887, electoral reform proved to be most favourable for the right, which returned to power in 1901. Still, headed by **Kuyper**, this second cabinet of the clerical coalition (1901-1905) contrasted strongly in its social composition with the first coalition government, presided over by the moderate **Baron Aeneas Mackay**, a descendant of Scottish nobility. In **Kuyper's** cabinet only a fifth of the ministers was of noble descent, against three-fifths of the ministers of **Mackay's** cabinet.⁹¹

Though a royalist and nationalist at heart, **Kuyper's** populist appearance raised hopes for democratic reform. Yet, after the 'men with the double names' had lost their hold on politics, he exchanged his social policy for one of stabilization. So, on the threshold of the twentieth century, the antithesis was introduced again, though it was no longer directed against liberalism but against socialism. **Kuyper** lost his democratic reputation after the railway strike of 1903, when the government introduced its notorious anti-socialist 'strangle laws'. In fact, this new identification with law and order contributed to his overthrow in 1905. Yet, in 1913 the Social Democratic Labour Party (the **SDAP**, founded in 1894) played into the clerics' hands by rejecting a liberal proposal for its participation in government. After the social-democrats further isolated themselves by the social-democrat's participating in the so-called **Operetta Revolution** of 1918 - 'the revolution that did not come off', as the Marxists put it - the confessional parties were able to monopolize political power up to the **Second World War**.⁹²

After the introduction of universal (male) suffrage, compulsory voting, and proportional representation by the **Pacification** of 1917, as well as women's suffrage in the years following it, the liberals changed from a majority party into one of the smallest political minorities (from about forty

opposition to **Thorbeckian** legalism, the conservative and radical liberals shared a common language of civic virtue, rooted in the old-republican protestant tradition: **Henk te Velde**, *Gemeenschapszin en plichtsbef. Liberalisme en nationalisme in Nederland 1870-1918* (The Hague, 1992), and **Stefan Dudink**, *Deugzaam liberalisme. Sociaal-liberalisme in Nederland 1870-1901* (Amsterdam, 1997).

⁹¹ Cf. **J.A. de Bruyne**, **N. Japikse**, *Staatkundige Geschiedenis van Nederland in onzen tijd* (6 Vol., Leiden, undated [1891-1901]), Vol. VI, 519-20; **G. Puchinger**, 'Minister-president **AE. Mackay**', and **D.Th. Kuiper**, 'Na 100 jaar: verandering of continuïteit', both in **Brinkel** [et al.], *Kabinet Mackay*, pp.59-89, 251

⁹² For the revolutionary events, see **A.J.C. Rüter**, *De spoorwegstakingen van 1903. Een spiegel der arbeidersbeweging in Nederland* (Leiden, 1935), and **H.J. Scheffer**, November 1918. *Journal van een revolutie die niet doorging* (Amsterdam, 1971), and for a similar bourgeois-clerical isolation of the **SDAP** in 1924, after the military repression of a 'communist' mutiny in the **Netherlands Indies**, see **J.C.H. Blom**, *De munterij op de Zeven Provinciën. Reacties en gevolgen in Nederland* (Utrecht, 1983, 2nd. ed.).

to fifteen of the hundred seats in Parliament). But the process of democratization also took place at the expense of the socialists. Increased from two parliamentary seats in 1898 to twenty-two in 1918, the socialist vote stagnated until the 1960s at around 20-25 per cent of the electorate. Again this was a case of 'religiography', since socialism (like social liberalism) was almost entirely a latitudinarian phenomenon, restricted to the radical sociability of nonconformists, Freethinkers and Jews in the Randstadarea, and the agrarian proletariat of the northeastern Outer Provinces. In opposition to the old paternalism of the 'liberal elites' as well as the growing influence of the orthodoxy in and outside the Dutch Reformed Church, both regions functioned from the late nineteenth century as the geographical nucleus of atheism in the Netherlands.⁹³ Therefore, rather than being a vehicle of democratization, socialism was one of de-Christianization. Thus it was hardly accidental that the former Lutheran clergymen Ferdinand Domela Nieuwenhuis, founder of the 'old socialist movement' in the 1880s, was hailed by his followers as 'Our Saviour' and titled his autobiography 'From Christian to Anarchist'.⁹⁴

In the Netherlands it was not the socialists but the ultramontanists who held the key to social democratization. Except for the hinterland of the great port towns of Amsterdam and Rotterdam, modern industrialization was concentrated in those areas where for centuries Catholics had been the majority among the working classes, from the mining industry in Limburg and the tanneries in Brabant to the cotton belt of Twente and the breweries of cities of Holland.⁹⁵ Yet the political significance of the working classes also contributed to a remarkable volte-face in the clerical balance of power. The first clerical cabinets of Mackay and Kuyper had been no more than a try-out for the impending politics of pillarization, since they relied on the Catholic vote but reflected a Protestant hegemony. In fact, as we saw, this had been a structural feature of Dutch politics ever since the Batavian Revolution. But this changed after the railway strike of 1903, when the

93 For the religiography of de-Christianization, see Knippenberg, *Religieuze kaart*, Chapter 7, 227-243; and for the prosopography and geography of early socialism, see P. van Horssen and D. Rietveld, 'De Sociaal Democratische Bond. Een onderzoek naar het ontstaan van haar afdelingen en sociale structuur', I/II, *Tijdschrift voor Sociale Geschiedenis*, (1975) 5-71; (1977) 3-54.

94 Cf. Bert Altena (ed.), 'En al beschouwen alle broeders mij als den verloren broeder'. De familiecorrespondentie van en over Ferdinand Domela Nieuwenhuis, 1846-1932 (Amsterdam, 1997); and for a thorough study of the secularizing power of early socialism in a Zeeland town, see Bert Altena, 'Een broeinest der anarchie'. Arbeiders, arbeidersbeweging en maatschappelijke ontwikkeling. Vlissingen 1875-1929 (1940), 2 volumes (Amsterdam, 1989). Though attacking feminists and radicals for their bourgeois opinions, Domela was himself from notable birth, and as such unfamiliar with working class culture, as were most prominent socialist and communist intellectuals; cf. Elsbeth Etty, *Liefde is heel het leven niet. Henriëtte Roland Holst, 1869-1952* (Amsterdam, 1966); Herman de Liagre Böhl, *Met al mijn bloed heb ik voor U geleefd. Herman Gorter 1864-1927* (Amsterdam, 1996).

95 For the geography of industrialization, see Joel Mokyr, *Industrialization in the Low Countries 1795-1850* (New Haven/London, 1976), pp. 83-132; Knippenberg and De Pater, *Eenwording van Nederland*, pp. 112 ff.

episcopate started an anti-socialist offensive to unite the Catholic workers into corporatist 'estates'.⁹⁶ The strength of these pillarized, mass organizations contributed to the defeat of the Reds in 1918 (as it later contributed to the defeat of the Fascist Movement).⁹⁷ From then the Roman Catholic State Party (RKSP) controlled the popular vote, although the Catholics were still under-represented within the coalition cabinets, presided, predominantly, by protestant Prime Ministers, such as the authoritarian colonial officer and oil magnate, Hendrik Colijn (1869-1944); Kuyper's successor as leader of the ARP. In fact, his political rise expressed not so much the emancipation of the Calvinist lower middle classes as the hegemony of a new class of business tycoons, which - in contrast to the old enlightened notability - could afford to leave politics to the clericals by acting as a professional pressure group.⁹⁸

96 Cf. Jos Perry, *Roomsche kinine tegen roode koorts. Arbeidersbeweging en katholieke kerk in Maastricht 1880-1920* (Amsterdam, 1983); Siep Stuurman, *Verzuiling, kapitalisme en patriarchaat*, pp. 148 ff.; Don Kalb, *Expanding class. Power and everyday politics in industrial communities. North Brabant illustrations, c. 1850-1950* (Utrecht, 1995); and for the internal mechanism of pillarized mobilization, in the South as well as the northern part of the Netherlands, see Duffhues, *Generaties and Patronen*, pp. 89 ff. Jos Leenders, 'De papieren kapelaan. Katholiek Hoorn (1905-1911)', in Blom and Misset, *Broeders sluit U aan*, pp. 199-246.

97 Interestingly, the electoral basis of the fascist National-Socialist Movement (NSB) was as much restricted by religiosity as that of the socialist SDAP, that both attracted at first the catholic and orthodox workmen and both were checked by the control of ecclesiastical authorities, after which their electoral basis was confined to the 'de-pillarized' Protestants in the Dutch cities and northeastern Outer Provinces. Yet the electoral success of the SDAP stagnated from the economic crisis of 1929 as the NSB only started to grow, and while the socialists transformed from a Marxian revolutionary movement into a democrat party, the NSB, though started as a rightwing faction of the nationalist Free Liberals, ended up after 1935 as a fascist movement in complete opposition to the parliamentary system. For Dutch facism in general, see A.A. de Jonge, *Crisis en critiek der democratie; anti-democratische stromingen en de daarin levende denkbeelden over de staat in Nederland tussen de wereldoorlogen* (Assen, 1968), and the monumental work of the 'official historian' L. de Jong, *Het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden in de Tweede Wereldoorlog* 29 volumes ('s Gravenhage, 1969 -). Strangely, we know very little about fascism and class, though there has been some research done into the subjects of region and religion: H. Dam, *De NSB en de kerken. De opstelling van de NSB in Nederland ten opzichte van het Christendom en met name de Gereformeerde Kerken 1931-1940* (Kampen, 1986); L.M.H. Joosten, *Katholieken en fascisme in Nederland 1920-1940* (Hilversum, 1964); S.Y.A. Vellenga, *Katholiek Zuid Limburg en het fascisme. Een onderzoek naar het kiesgedrag van de Limburger in de jaren dertig* (Assen, 1975); G.R. Zondergeld, *De Friese Beweging in het tijdvak der beide Wereldoorlogen* (Leeuwarden, 1978).

98 Cf. for the mechanisms of episcopal control, faced with the socialist and fascist treach, see Jan Bank, 'Beheersing and beheersbaarheid van het katholieke volksdeel', and, for the authoritarian character of Colijn's politics: J.C.H. Blom, 'De politieke machtspositie van H. Colijn in de jaren '30', both in P.W. Klein and G.J. Borger (eds.), *De Jaren Dertig. Aspecten van crisis en werkloosheid* (Amsterdam 1979), 228-248, while Colijn's remarkably successful and heartless colonial career is revealed in Herman Langeveld, *Hendrikus Colijn 1869-1944. Dit leven van krachtig handelen*, vol. 1 (1869-1933) (Amsterdam, 1998), and his role as Prime Minister, under the gathering criticism of his Catholic allies, though from the perspective of an admirer, in G. Puchinger, *Colijn en het einde van de Coalitie: de geschiedenis van de kabinetsformaties 1933-1939* (Leiden, 1993). The political influence of the 'new' business elite, which (except for the haughty farmer's son Colijn himself) was almost completely from liberal, notable descent, is analyzed in Joh. Houwink ten Cate, *De mannen van de daad en Duitsland, 1919-1939. Het Hollandse zakenleven en de vooroorlogse buitenlandse politiek* (The Hague, 1995).

Yet, so important was class to Catholic policy that the clergy insisted on the eve of the Second World War (following the economic crisis of the 1930s), that the social democrats be invited to join the government. Far from being a socialist victory, however, this so-called Second Pacification of 1939 marked out the Catholics as the pivot of politics.⁹⁹ Socialist participation in national politics was made possible only by its symbolic integration with the nation. In fact, the SDAP came to play a vanguard role in the Europe-wide bourgeoisification of the socialists; but the price for its political success was the loss of its ideological soul: its original republicanism, Marxist ideology and trade unionism was replaced by a policy of appeasement towards 'Crown, Church and Capital'.¹⁰⁰ Instead of a class ideology, socialism was regarded as a moral stance against materialism and individualism. This 'personalist' socialism - or 'ethical socialism' in British terms - was in fact so akin to Catholic corporatism that in the aftermath of the Second World War a political fusion of Catholics and socialists seemed at hand. Only episcopal fear of de-Christianization frustrated this 'Breakthrough Movement', although for a decade the country was ruled by a 'Red-Roman Coalition'.¹⁰¹ The great transformation had to wait until the so-called de-pillarization of the 1960s and 1970s. By then, the Roman Catholic Church had experienced the same process of internal crisis that the Dutch Reformed Church had experienced almost a century before.¹⁰² And it was only after this that the liberal and socialist parties were able to penetrate the Catholic southern provinces, and to govern without clerical consent; a political secularization that contributed strongly to a last swing of the political pendulum: the so-called purple coalition of liberals and socialists of the 1990s.

99 Cf. J.Th.J. van den Berg and H.A.A. Molleman, *Crisis in de Nederlandse politiek* (Alphen aan den Rijn, 1977, 2nd edn), pp. 17-25, 70 ff.; J.C.H. Blom, *Crisis, bezetting en herstel. Tien studies over Nederland 1930-1950* (The Hague, 1989); J.J. Woltjer, *Recent Verleden. De geschiedenis van Nederland in de twintigste eeuw* (Amsterdam, 1992), pp. 61-130.

100 Cf. H.F. Cohen, *Om de vernieuwing van het socialisme. De politieke oriëntatie van de Nederlandse sociaaldemocratie, 1919-1930* (Leiden, 1974); Piet de Rooy, 'Van uit een nieuwe wereld'. *Over de periodieke somberheid en het utopisch verlangen in de Nederlandse sociaal-democratie* (Amsterdam, 1993); Dietrich Orlow, 'The Paradoxe of Succes. Dutch Social Democracy and its Historiography', *Bijdragen en Mededelingen betreffende de Geschiedenis der Nederlanden* 110 (1995) 1, 40-51

101 Cf. Jan Bank, *Opkomst en ondergang van de Nederlandse Volksbeweging* (Deventer, 1978); J.A. Bornewasser, *Katholieke Volkspartij 1945-1980. vol. 1. Herkomst en groei (tot 1963)* (Nijmegen, 1995).

102 An interesting thesis is that of the internal crisis of the catholic community, that explains de-pillarization by the accommodationist modernization of the pillarized elites; J.M.G. Thurlings, *De wankele zuil. Nederlands katholicisme tussen assimilatie en pluralisme* (Deventer, 1977, 2nd edn); J.A. Coleman, *The evolution of Dutch Catholicism, 1958-1974* (Berkeley-Los Angeles-London 1978); Jan Bank, 'Verzuiling': A Confessional Road to Secularization. *Emancipation and the Decline of Political Catholicism*, in Duke and Tamse, *Church and State*, pp. 207-230. An unexpected cause of this process of catholic de-pillarization, at the time of the 'socialist' cabinet-Den Uyl in 1973, when many dreamed of a broad Progressive Party, was the founding of a protestant-catholic Christian Democratic Appeal (CDA), that, allied with the Liberals, and for succeeded for two decades to function as the pivot of politics; cf. R.S. Zwart, 'Gods wil in Nederland'. *Christelijke ideologieën en de vorming van het CDA (1880-1980)* (Kampen, 1996).

VI. Democracy and Distinction

At the beginning of this essay, I questioned the idea of the Dutch process of democratization as a gradual, straightforward evolution. In contrast to this conciliatory Leitmotiv of both the political and scholarly community, political development manifested some fundamental discontinuities. But these breaks did not seriously endanger political stability. The argument developed here suggests that political loyalties were moulded in a 'traditional' culture of particularism, and were primarily based on rank, kinship, religion, and education.¹⁰³ Moreover, the time-lag between the establishment of parliamentary democracy and the take-off of modern industrialization prevented a fundamental politicization of the lower classes.

Until the end of the nineteenth century, political culture was controlled by a relatively small group of notables, mostly landlords and merchant bankers, who gained power between the Batavian Revolt of 1795 and the democratic reforms of the 1830s and 1840s. Political debate during that period centred on the constitutional legitimacy of kingship. Van Hogendorp's ideal type of one ruling class, though, did not completely fit political reality. Firstly, it was complicated by his own subdivision into three political estates or orders: nobility, gentry and patriciate. Secondly, the division of parliament in 1815 into a First and a Second Chamber of what was then archaistically termed the States General, strengthened the titled aristocracy in its self-confident belief of being a separate elite, a world apart from the untitled gentry and patrician representatives, even though many aristocrats were only recently ennobled.

Yet, the notability was not a completely artificial class. The landed classes' lifestyle appealed also to a broad group of 'bourgeois' merchant bankers, manufacturers, and learned professionals, that longed for aristocratization and shared the squirearchical cult of land, family, and honour. Otherwise, the radicals' attack on the aristocracy's monopoly of power during the revolutionary episode of the late eighteenth century made the nobility, in spite of its social exclusiveness, eager for a 'cultural partnership' with the urban patriciate. This patrician-noble amalgamation was reflected by a shift from the rococo culture of pleasure to the early-liberal language of civic virtue, marked by 'bourgeois' seriousness, utilitarianism, respectability, sobriety, and conventionality.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰³ In contrast to England, and to the Dutch situation in the eighteenth century, most nineteenth-century notables (also noblemen) in the Netherlands were university-educated, after being trained at one of the new, prestigious boarding-school, such as Noorthey in Voorschoten; the university of Utrecht attracted in particular the provincial nobility, while the Dutch patriciate was educated, in particular, in 'liberal' Leiden; in Amsterdam and Groningen the atmosphere was more bourgeois and latitudinarian. Unfortunately, for this period the old-boys-networks have not attracted much historical attention, although some numerical and biographical information can be found in Otterspeer, *De wiekslag van hun geest*, 1992), 404-450, Paping, *Die waardige man*, 51-66, and Kuiper, *Adel in Friesland*, 381-5.

¹⁰⁴ The aristocracy's adaptation of 'bourgeois' seriousness in the Netherlands closely resembles the early-Victorian 'cultural partnership' between the nobility and the middle classes in Britain, challenged from below

In the urban world of the great townhouses, this notable culture found expression in the enlightened sociability of theaters, clubs and societies, which functioned as a nationwide mechanism of elitist accommodation, although their actual composition differed from place to place.¹⁰⁵ At the same time, in the landed world of the manor houses, this cultural shift from the Baroque Age to the age of Romanticism contributed to a complete transformation of landscape. Like the 'Anglomanian' elites in Prussia or Russia, Dutch landlords between the 1780s and 1840s executed a wholesale replacement of their 'French' formal gardens with new, wooded 'English' gardens. This new lay-out of parks, pastures, and forests, spotted with meandering brooks and winding roads, remains characteristic up to the present - as a heritage of the nineteenth-century Manor area - the Netherland's nature reserve on the sandy soils in the Outer Provinces and the coastal regions of Holland. In fact, the modern concept of nature dates from this period, for the new idea of landscape reflected a Rousseauian image of 'naturalness', as the antipode of civilization, which supplanted the former Cartesian idea of landscape as a civilized control of nature.¹⁰⁶

If, however, the nobility shared the 'bourgeois' values of enlightened christianity, this didn't imply a questioning of its own social superiority. There was no lack of aristocratic 'class consciousness', as wrongly supposed by those historians that have tried to explain the ideological weakness of Dutch conservatism and its ultimate decline from the 1860s by the failing in the Netherlands of a feudal tradition.¹⁰⁷ Cultural accommodation prevented the attribution of such class

after the Napoleonic Wars by Ludditism and Chartism: Jessica Gerard, *Country House Life. Family and Servants, 1815-1914* (Oxford/Cambridge, Mass., 1994), pp.16-18.

105 Cf. e.g. for Freemasonry at about 1850 the difference between the exclusive Masonic lodges in the Hague, almost entirely composed of protestant court aristocrats, and the Amsterdam lodges, which functioned as meeting point of the new commercial elites from dissenter- and Jewish origin: Anton van de Sande, *Vrijmetselarij in de Lage Landen. Een mysterieuze broederschap zonder geheimen* (Zutphen, 1995), pp. 115-121.

106 According to Lieven, the Prussian replacement of formal with natural gardens in this period didn't so much reflect the impact of Rousseauian ideas but was simply caused by an urge to spend money, although he also draws attention to the higher aristocracy's Anglomania; Lieven, *Aristocracy in Europe*, 153, 157. In the Netherlands too the higher nobility's Anglomania played a role in the introduction of the English garden, designed by German garden architects who took the place of the Huguenote designers of the former baroque gardens; yet, the Rousseauian cult of 'naturalness' was positively reflected in the 'Swiss' iconography of the English garden as well as in neoclassicist architecture, in 'physico-theological' poetry, and in naturalist painting; cf. the careful analysis of Dutch-classicism and formal gardening, by Erik de Jong, *Natuur en Kunst. Nederlandse tuinen landschapsarchitectuur, 1650-1740* (Bussum, 1993), the contributions on natural gardening in *Nederlandse Tuinen in de achttiende eeuw* (special issue of *Documentatieblad Werkgroep Achttiende Eeuw*, Amsterdam/Maarssen, 1985), those on 'Dutch' and 'French' neoclassicism in F. Grijzenhout and C. van Tuyll van Serooskerken (eds.), *Edele eenvoud. Neo-classicisme in Nederland 1765-1800* (Haarlem/Zwolle, 1989), and Thomas H. van der Dunk, 'De Bataafse omwenteling en de bouwkunst. De betekenis van het jaar 1795 voor de Nederlandse architectuur. Een eerste balans', *BMGN*, 111 (1996) 3, 314-343, and for the architecture of the nineteenth-century country estate: H.W.M. van der Wijck, *De Nederlandse buitenplaats: aspecten van ontwikkeling, bescherming en herstel* (Alphen a/d. Rijn, 1982), Part III: De ontwikkeling van de negentiende-eeuwse buitenplaats, pp. 221-516.

107 Cf. e.g. H.W. von der Dunk, 'Conservatisme in vooroorlogs Nederland', *Bijdragen en Mededelingen*

interests to a single political orientation. Aristocrats contributed to the Patriot Revolt of the late eighteenth century as well as to the liberal victory of 1848, even though the outcome ran counter to the federalist and radical demands that lay at the root of it. For, as we saw, the aristocrat's struggle to balance the constitutional power of the king ended in the constitutional dissolution of the nobility as a separate order, by depriving the manor of its judicial privileges, dissolving the regional *Ridderschappen*, and divesting the First Chamber of Parliament of its exclusive power as a House of Lords. In fact, it was precisely because of this that early liberalism changed into political conservatism from 1848 onwards.

Yet it was not only the position of the nobility that changed after 1848: so did that of the notability at large. By abolishing the nobility as a political class, Thorbecke's constitution returned in a way to Hogendorp's initial idea of one notable Estate, defined by wealth and prestige instead of birth and lineage. However, the political consequences of this redefinition only dawned upon the ruling elite after the constitutional crisis around 1870. This final episode in the long struggle between liberals and conservatives on the issue of the power of kingship definitively reshaped the political landscape. From then liberalism was *ipso facto* regarded as a class ideology of the notability as a whole, now posing as the 'right-minded part of the nation', defending the enlightened nation against the threat of clericalization. Thus, faced with the crack of doom, the notables finally operated as a single elite. Society was marked by controversial marriages between the offspring of the titled and those of the moneyed aristocracy¹⁰⁸, while the world of trade was no longer under a noble taboo, and more and more noblemen took refuge in merchandising, banking, insurance, and railway companies.¹⁰⁹ Yet, as in England at the same time, the political rise of the middle and lower classes then brought about the debate concerning an extension of the franchise by lowering the so-called census (the required national taxes for the enrolment to vote) or - more radically - by the introduction of universal (male) suffrage. In combination with the economic crisis of the landed estate during the Agrarian Depression, this democratic threat of the radical 1890s not only

betreffende de Geschiedenis der Nederlanden, 90 (1975) 15-37.

¹⁰⁸ The process of patrician-noble integration was still in its infancy at the time of the sensational marriage, in 1854, between the Amsterdam (new) noblemen Hendrik van Loon and the untitled Louise Borski - a daughter of one of the Netherlands' richest merchant bankers, financially connected with the Dutch-British Hope family; cf. F.J.E. van Lennep, *Late Regenten* (Haarlem, 1962); G. Wiersma, *Johanna Borski, financier van Nederland 1764-1846* (Amsterdam, 1997). See for the search for cultural distinction among this moneyed aristocracy, also the memoirs of the Amsterdam banker Ernst Heldring: *Herinneringen en dagboek van Ernst Heldring, 1871-1914*, ed. Joh. de Vries, 3 volumes (Utrecht, 1970).

¹⁰⁹ As a result of noble penetration into the world of finance, public opinion at around 1900 was shocked by some spectacular lawsuits, introducing a new type of noble stockjobbers, soon to be stereotyped in anti-aristocrat fiction, even though Society generally reacted after the habit of noblesse oblige by a social exclusion of its 'dishonourable' fraudeurs (as well as their offspring), of whom many fled to the colonies or foreign countries: Kees Bruin, 'Diep gevallen. De malversaties van De Geer en Lefèvre de Montigny', *Amsterdams Sociologisch Tijdschrift*, 25 (1998) 2, 196-233.

strengthened the social integration of the notability; it also stimulated a search for cultural distinction.

The late nineteenth century witnessed a *hausse* of genealogy, resulting in the yearly publication of two chronicles - the so-called red and blue booklets - which still today record the lineages of noble and of patrician families, respectively.¹¹⁰ Hence, democratization produced a new construction of prestige, one which allowed individual notables to get a start in business, diplomacy and elsewhere. Otherwise, the search for distinction expressed itself in a longing for class solidarity in order to compensate for the loss of power. The old nobility, in particular, opted for some kind of gentle sobriety and fostered their special relationship with the Court, that from the coronation of Queen Wilhelmina in 1898 expressed a new sense of 'bourgeois' modesty.¹¹¹ Others, though, experienced a significant process of 'distinguishing' by a great demonstration of comfort and exuberance. Yet all of them were opting for an escape from modernity. Thus, for example, from the 1870s onwards the Frisian nobility exchanged the family estate for a townhouse in The Hague or for a mansion in the wooded 'noble belt', which runs from the coastal regions via Utrecht to the German border. There, the old families created the illusion of a close-knit community, united in an everlasting Season; a process of cultural isolation that - in contrast to the preceding civilizing offensive - has been recently named a 'civilizing defensive'.¹¹²

All this happened after parliamentary democracy had been completely established in the Netherlands. Hence the new political parties would never question the legitimacy of the system. What they asked for was access to primary schools and the parliamentary system; in other words, admission to the liberal nation. But even entry to public culture was for years controlled by the notable elites, whose politics of accommodation were based on the illusionary assumption that a gradual incorporation of the lower classes would strengthen their position. If in the end this proved a miscalculation it was not because the masses were putting through their own demands, but because new political elites, backed by the churches, were seeking a confrontation with the old

110 Nederland's Adelsboek (The Hague, 1903-), and Nederland's Patriciaat (The Hague, 1910-); cf. C.J.M. Bruin and C. Schmidt, 'Het boekstaven van 'aanzienlijkheid' in het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden', *Jaarboek van het Centraal Bureau voor Genealogie* (The Hague, 1980), 203-20.

111 See for the early period of Wilhelmina's reign, and the noble bias against a female candidate for the crown, Cees Fasseur's *Wilhelmina. De jonge koningin* (Amsterdam, 1998). Though unreliable from a historical point of view, the court-aristocracy's growing distrust of the new 'bourgeois' advisers at the Court, in the interwar period under Colijn, is well portrayed in the memoirs of the widow of the queen's privat secretary Baron Schelto van Heemstra, edited pseudonymously by her son: *Homme Ernstma, Roman Hagois ou Autobiographie de la Comtesse Johanna Arnolda Bernardina Schimmelpenninck 1889-1971*, Douarière Cornelis Schelto Baron van Heemstra 1942-1971 (Bolswart, 1998).

112 Yme Kuiper, 'Aristocraten contra burgers. Couperus' Boeken der kleine zielen en het beschavingsdefensief rond 1900', in Aerts and Te Velde, *Stijl van de burger*, pp. 186-217; cf. also Maarten Duijvendak, 'Elite Families between Private and Public Life: Some Trends and Thesis', in Anton Schuurman and Pieter Spierenburg (eds.), *Private Domain, Public Inquiry. Families and Life-styles in the Netherlands and Europa, 1550 to the Present* (Hilversum, 1996), pp. 72-88.

establishment by creating segmented routes to national integration. Pillarization can therefore be seen as a new mechanism of social integration, balancing the interests of employers, tradesman and workers; a vertical, religious integration that promoted social stability by cutting across the boundaries of class. Moreover, these national political communities also integrated regional interests after the old elites had disappeared. It was because of this that they favoured the rise of new mediating elites, which - in spite of their antithetical ideologies - were ready to identify with the symbols and rituals of the nation as soon as they were allowed to participate in the political process.

It is here that we should seek the origin of the conciliatory myth of political development, for this late-nineteenth-century process of accommodation enabled the new elites to identify themselves with the legalist culture of liberal politics, combining a respect for judicial rules with an emphasis on moral integrity.¹¹³ To understand the dynamic of this accommodationist elite culture, we cannot content ourselves with the historical myth of an age-old patrician culture of religious toleration. Faced with the politicization of religious subcultures generated by the 1848 disestablishment, it was liberal dissension - not the elites' preference for moderation and compromise - that produced this ruling behaviour. By accommodating potential opposition movements, or even initiating reforms themselves, the liberal lords could strengthen the loyalty of their voters; a lasting strategy which, according to some, even survived the radical 1960s.¹¹⁴ In fact, however, the politics of accommodation reflected the gradual decline of the notability as a more or less cohesive political, economic and cultural elite.

Yet, having demonstrated discontinuity in the process of democratization, what explains Dutch society's long-term stability? The answer, I would suggest, has much to do with the dualist origin of the Netherlands' political culture, as traced above. As political democratization was essentially a process of political accommodation, the decline of the notables was accompanied by a new process of cultural distinction. Not only did the vicar, doctor and notary appear before the footlights as the 'old liberal' relics of the age of the notables, but the pillarized politicians acted as self-constituted guards of respectability, long after the landed aristocracy and merchant bankers had left the stage of politics. Even today the heirs of the notables are considered to represent the moral authority of what is called the *overheid*, an idea of government which - in contrast to the Prussian concept of *Obrigkeit* - is not associated with the state but with the nation. Thus democracy in the Netherlands is legitimated in terms of a defence of freedom rather than of power. Instead of a game

113 For the interaction of liberal nationalism and clerical mass politics, see Rob van der Laarse, 'Een morele natie: religie en politieke cultuur', in H. Schmall et al., *Nederland in de twintigste eeuw* (Utrecht, 1995), pp. 68-89, and for the corresponding liberal pillarization and its invention of a 'humanist-enlightened' tradition, see J.C.H. Blom, *Burgerlijk en Beheerst. Over Nederland in de twintigste eeuw* (Amsterdam, 1996), pp. 10-99.

114 Thus not only 'pillarization' but also the 'de-pillarization' during the 1960s has been studied in the Netherlands as a product of 'prudent' conflict management by the political elites: James C. Kennedy, *Nieuw Babylon in aanbouw. Nederland in de jaren zestig* (Amsterdam/Meppel, 1995).

for popular influence, the crux of political power is a businesslike play of negotiations on the distribution of means among the key groups of society, who are not expected to govern on their own. Bearing the stamp of history, this frozen system is never seriously opposed from outside, as it was democratized by the elites from above, and menaced only by the indifference of the masses below.

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