

# Contested Rights: Clerical and Lay Authority in the Holland Mission

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## Abstract

This article studies eleven conflicts between Catholic nobles and the leaders of the Holland Mission. The nobles claimed the right to nominate and present priests in the clandestine Catholic churches and chapels in their jurisdictions; the apostolic vicars and internuncios refused to grant such privileges to members of the laity. Through the assertion of patronage rights, the Dutch Catholic nobility tried to expand their influence over the Holland Mission and voiced their preference for particular priests. As such, these conflicts offer a window into the inner workings of the *Missio Hollandica* and the Dutch Catholic community, revealing the complex and dynamic interplay between clergy and laity. Moreover, a number of these quarrels represent early instances of laypeople taking a stance in the battle between Jansenists and their opponents, a larger conflict which eventually led to a schism in the Catholic Church in the Dutch Republic. This analysis therefore provides a cross-section of the Dutch Catholic community and shows how slowly but surely this community disintegrated into warring factions of clergymen and laypeople.

*Keywords:* Dutch Republic, Catholic nobility, Holland Mission, Jansenism, *jus patronatus*, lay agency

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'I am torn apart by the greatest troubles because of the *jus patronatus* which certain Catholics confer upon themselves here', wrote a worried Johannes van Neercassel, apostolic vicar of the *Missio Hollandica* or Holland Mission, to Sebastiano Antonio Tanara, internuncio of the pope in Brussels.<sup>1</sup> At the time of this letter, 28 July 1682, Van Neercassel was embroiled in conflict with four noblemen – Floris Bam, Floris Carel van Beieren-Schagen, Nicolaas van der Duyn, and Anthony van Lynden – who maintained that they enjoyed patronage rights over clandestine Catholic churches and chapels in their seigneuries.<sup>2</sup> Theoretically, this right entitled them to nominate priests in these churches. However, the apostolic vicars vehemently denied the existence of such rights, as a result of which they became involved in a series of conflicts with Catholic nobles throughout the Holland Mission.

These conflicts merit our attention for several reasons.<sup>3</sup> First, the clashes about the *jus patronatus* in the Dutch Republic shed light on the configuration of lay and clerical power and influence over the *Missio Hollandica*. The conflicts represented a struggle for leadership between the most powerful members of the Dutch Catholic lay elite, Catholic nobles, and the clerical leaders of the mission, the apostolic vicars (and, later on, the internuncios).<sup>4</sup> Recent scholarship has firmly established that the programmes of Catholic renewal that were

1 Utrecht, Het Utrechts Archief [hereafter HUA], 1003, Apostolische vicarissen van de Hollandse Zending [hereafter OBC], inv. 240, 28 July 1682: 'Summis molestiis divexor ob ius patronatus quod aliqui Catholici hic sibi arrogant.' I would like to thank Victoria O'Brien, Róisín Watson, and the three anonymous reviewers for their criticisms of and comments on earlier versions of this article.

2 HUA, OBC, inv. 240, 12 April 1683.

3 Most scholarship on the *jus patronatus* in the Dutch Republic has focused on its legal aspects and, to a lesser extent, its practical application (often in relation to the Dutch Reformed Church). See Ypeij, *Geschiedenis van het patronaatsrecht*; Rengers Hora Siccama, *De geestelijke en kerkelijke goederen*; Van Gelder, *Getemperde vrijheid*; Tukker, 'Patronaatsrecht en protestantisering'; De Boer, 'De collatierechten'. For a number of case studies on the *jus patronatus* in relation to the Holland Mission, see Frenken, 'Het verzet'; De Kok, 'Het katholicisme te Aerd'; De Kok, 'De strubbelingen'.

4 According to Van Neercassel, Catholic nobles tried to 'usurp' the *jus patronatus* because 'they wish nothing else than to claim the authority of the divine and ecclesiastical mission for themselves' ('Catholici Nobiles hic ius patronatus sibi volunt usurpare, revera nihil aliud volunt, quam auctoritatem divinae et Ecclesiasticae missionis sibi ipsi arrogare.'). HUA, OBC, inv. 240, 3 July 1682 (to Lorenzo Casoni).

launched across early modern Europe were not simply top-down affairs; rather, the success of such efforts depended on cooperation between clergy and laity.<sup>5</sup> In the Dutch Republic, an officially Protestant country where Catholicism was outlawed and reduced to a minority faith, clerical control could easily give way to lay leadership, as the Catholic mission depended on lay support in the form of money, places of worship, and protection.<sup>6</sup> The authority of the apostolic vicars who presided over the Holland Mission did not go unquestioned: they were locked in a long-standing quarrel with regular priests, Jesuits in particular, most of whom were loath to acknowledge their leadership over the Mission. Lay claims to power through the assertion of patronage rights presented yet another challenge to their authority.

Secondly, important as rights and influence may have been, these conflicts entailed more than just that: they reveal the religious preferences and loyalties of the Catholic nobility who pressed for their candidates to be appointed as priests in clandestine Catholic churches in the areas over which they held sway. Dutch Catholic lay elites indeed came to express their preferences for a particular type of Catholic spirituality and style of pastoral care. Loyalties to specific priests and religious orders emerged among the Dutch laity, often depending on the geographical organization of the Holland Mission.<sup>7</sup> Some major Dutch cities, including Amsterdam and Utrecht, were home to a significant number of regulars within the city walls, while the border regions near the Holy Roman Empire and the Southern Netherlands were often frequented by regulars based in monasteries across the border.<sup>8</sup> As a result, long-lasting bonds between religious orders and laypeople were established in these areas.

Thirdly, this analysis of the conflicts over patronage rights enables us to start to unveil a dimension of the history of the schism within the Catholic Church in the Republic that has been neglected, namely the role of the Catholic laity. Scholars have studied the schism almost exclusively from theological and juridical perspectives, and have centered on the fortunes and misfortunes of the clergymen involved.<sup>9</sup> In the last decades of the seventeenth century, when the controversy between ‘Jansenists’ and their opponents started to heat up (as will be discussed below), a number of nobles voiced their religious preferences – their disdain for Jansenist priests and the rigorist brand of Catholic spirituality they advocated – by resorting to what they regarded as their legitimate rights of patronage.

The struggles over patronage rights thus touched upon two fault lines within the Holland Mission – the authority of the apostolic vicars vis-à-vis regular priests and the Catholic laity, and the existence of different types of Catholic spirituality – which imbued these conflicts with extra gravity and longevity. In this article, I will study how these fault lines manifested themselves in the quarrels regarding the *jus patronatus*, based on the analysis of ten conflicts that occurred in the period when the apostolic vicars governed the Holland Mission

5 For the Low Countries, see Parker, *Faith*; Parker, ‘Obedience with an Attitude’; Pollmann, *Catholic identity*.

6 Parker, *Faith*. This applies to England as well, see for example Questier, *Catholicism*.

7 For similar developments in England, see Questier, *Catholicism*; Kelly, ‘Kinship and religious politics’.

8 Roelofs, *Kirche und Kloster Zwillbrock*.

9 The traditional chronology of this controversy starts in 1702, when apostolic vicar Petrus Codde was suspended by the Holy See, revealing the clerical perspective of these studies. See for example Van der Vorst, *Holland en de troebelen*; Van Kleef, *Geschiedenis van de oud-katholieke kerk*; Van Bilsen, *Het schisma van Utrecht*; and other studies cited throughout this article.

(1592-1727). The eleventh conflict occurred in 1728, when Giuseppe Spinelli, nuncio in Brussels, presided over the mission; it is included because of its clear links with an earlier clash. As we shall see, a number of these conflicts were firmly intertwined with the Jansenist controversy, and should be regarded as early instances of Catholic laypeople taking a firm stance in the larger conflict that would ultimately tear Dutch Catholicism apart.

### *Contested Rights: The Jus Patronatus*

The *jus patronatus* was the right of patrons to nominate and present a priest to a bishop for approbation in a church that had been either constructed or endowed by the patron in the Middle Ages. Over the centuries, many a noble family acquired this right and passed it on to their descendants; at the eve of the Reformation the *jus patronatus* was well established. After the Protestant and Catholic Reformations, this right remained in force. The Council of Trent decided to maintain the *jus patronatus*, albeit with the requirement that claimants of this right had to prove that they had acquired it legitimately.<sup>10</sup> In the Dutch Republic, the Reformed Church heavily criticized the existence of this right, as it rejected any outside influence on the election of Protestant ministers, which it regarded as an internal affair.<sup>11</sup> However, despite continuous lobbying by Calvinists, the secular authorities in the Republic decided to maintain this right. Whereas in cities the right of patronage was exercised by the secular authorities, in villages in the countryside this right was usually in the hands of seigneurial lords.<sup>12</sup> As a result, in some places Catholic patrons exerted influence over the appointment of Reformed ministers in former Catholic parish churches.<sup>13</sup> In spite of the stance of the secular authorities, Reformed Protestants staunchly continued to challenge the existence of the *jus patronatus*, which often led to protracted legal battles.<sup>14</sup>

The apostolic vicars did not mind Catholic patrons being involved in the process of electing new Reformed ministers; indeed, time and again they stressed that the patronage rights Catholic nobles enjoyed over parish churches remained unharmed and intact.<sup>15</sup> A number of Catholic nobles (and one Protestant), however, argued that this right also applied to the manorial chapels and clandestine Catholic churches in their jurisdictions. This was objectionable to the apostolic vicars, who regarded it as a serious threat to their authority. They argued that patronage rights had to be sanctioned by local bishops; rather than automatically acquired through the patron's actions and inheritance, these rights were granted to him.<sup>16</sup> Comporting themselves 'as resident archbishops formed in the

<sup>10</sup> Schroeder, *Canons and decrees*, 113 and 245-247.

<sup>11</sup> See for example Van Amsweer, *Christelijke vnde truhartighe vermaenschriften*.

<sup>12</sup> Van Gelder, *Getemperde vrijheid*, 25.

<sup>13</sup> Van Gelder, *Getemperde vrijheid*, 20-29.

<sup>14</sup> These legal battles involved both Catholic and non-Catholic patrons. See HUA, 749, Nederlandse hervormde gemeente Zuilen, inv. 22-31.

<sup>15</sup> Parker, *Faith*, 168; HUA, OBC, inv. 252, 30 July 1682, and an undated letter to Warfusé.

<sup>16</sup> *Dissertatio qua expenditur*, esp. A2r-A3r.

mold of Trent', the apostolic vicars reserved the prerogative to allow or refuse such rights to themselves.<sup>17</sup> As they rejected the nobility's claims, problems ensued.

Even though members of the Catholic lay elite exerted significant influence over the Holland Mission from its inception, this did not immediately cause difficulties. The first known conflict about the *jus patronatus* occurred in 1645, when the nobleman Nicolaas van Renesse van Elderen appointed a Carmelite priest in the village of Assendelft.<sup>18</sup> Apostolic vicar Philippus Rovenius protested and emerged victorious as Nicolaas yielded to the verdict of the University of Louvain which denied him patronage rights.<sup>19</sup> After that, it would take almost forty years for conflicts about the *jus patronatus* to re-emerge. The resurgence and intensification of clashes about patronage rights in the last two decades of the seventeenth century was caused by the fact that the fault lines within the Holland Mission became more pronounced. This can partly be attributed to the fallout of the increasingly ferocious controversy between Jansenists and anti-Jansenists which plagued Catholic Europe in the second half of the seventeenth century and beyond. The role of apostolic vicar Johannes van Neercassel was an important factor as well. Born in Gorkum in 1623 and appointed apostolic vicar in 1663, Van Neercassel managed to strengthen the authority of the apostolic vicars over both the secular and regular priests serving in the Holland Mission. This, in combination with his promotion of a more rigorous form of Catholic spirituality tending towards Jansenism, created opposition among sections of the clergy and laity alike, enabling them to make common cause.<sup>20</sup>

As Table 1 below shows, the conflicts can be grouped into three distinct clusters: 1679-1686, 1689-1694, and 1710-1714. Within these clusters, conflicts were often inter-related, as were the nobles involved. For example, four of the five protagonists of the first cluster enjoyed kinship ties: Anthony van Lynden, Lord of Kronenburg, and Floris Carel van Beieren-Schagen, Count of Warfusé, had married into the Catholic Van Wassenaar van Warmond family;<sup>21</sup> the Protestant Jacob II van Wassenaar was a member of the related Van Obdam branch of the Van Wassenaar family; Nicolaas van der Duyn, Lord of Rijswijk,

<sup>17</sup> Parker, 'In partibus infidelium', 123.

<sup>18</sup> In general, Assendelft was served by secular priests in the seventeenth century: Van Heussen, *Oudheden en gestichten*, I, 381-382.

<sup>19</sup> Voets, 'Een leider', 294-295; HUA, OBC, inv. 89, fols. 74r-76r; inv. 252, 30 December 1683 (to Van Lynden). For the judgment by the Louvain professors, see Vatican City, Archivio Segreto [hereafter AS], Varia Miscellanea (Misc.), Armaria I, fols. 198r-239v: *Canonicae Animadversiones*, 67-70. Sources on later conflicts about patronage rights refer to this conflict and not to earlier ones, suggesting that prior to 1645 conflicts about the *jus patronatus* did not occur. See HUA, OBC, inv. 237: 'Casus Propositus ex DD doctoribus aliquibus de jure patronatus', and inv. 252, 30 December 1683 (to Van Lynden).

<sup>20</sup> It should be noted that rigorist tendencies among clergy working in the Dutch Republic already existed prior to Van Neercassel: Visser, *Rovenius und seine Werke*, 153-156.

<sup>21</sup> Floris had married Jacoba Maria van Wassenaar (d. 1683), daughter of Johan van Wassenaar, Lord of Warmond (d. 1687). Anthony van Lynden was married to Elisabeth Anna van Wassenaar van Warmond (d. 1679), daughter of Jacob (d. 1658). Johan was Jacob van Wassenaar's son. Another nobleman who was asked to act as a mediator was the Lord of Spangen, Philips Jacob van Spangen (1635-1683), Anthony van Lynden's uncle, who was married to Philippa Maria van Wassenaar, daughter of Albrecht van Wassenaar van Alkemade and Hester Cornelia de Bruyn van Buijtenwech. HUA, OBC, inv. 253, 11 February 1684 and 13 December 1683; HUA, OBC, inv. 230, 27 July 1682.

Table 1 Conflicts about the *jus patronatus* in the Holland Mission

Apostolic vicars/internuncios	Nobles	Date
Philippus Rovenius	Nicolaas van Renesse van Elderen	1645
Johannes van Neercassel	Jacob II van Wassenaar van Obdam	1679-80
	Nicolaas van der Duyn	1681-4
	Anthony van Lynden	1682-4
	Floris Carel van Beieren-Schagen	1682-4
Petrus Codde	Floris Bam	1682-6
	Joost van Steenhuys	1689-93
Alexander Borgia	Hendrik van Dorth	1692-4
	Oswald III van den Bergh	1710-2
Alexander Borgia/Vincenzo Santini <sup>1</sup>	Ferdinand Maria, Count of Berlo	1712-4
Giuseppe Spinelli	Alexander Walrad Diederik van Hugenpoth	1728

On 10 October 1713, Santini was appointed as internuncio in Brussels. Although Adam Damen was the official apostolic vicar, his refusal to act as such *de facto* put Santini in charge of the mission. Van der Vorst, *Holland en de troebelen*, 141.

was also related to this branch through his grandmother, Tijmanne van Wassenaar-Obdam.<sup>22</sup> Floris Bam, who did not stem from an old noble lineage, was a close friend of Van der Duyn.<sup>23</sup> In addition to these social ties, the fact that all of these nobles lived in Holland, that they met, and talked about asserting their rights, contributed to the emergence of this particular set of incidents.<sup>24</sup>

### *The First Cluster of Conflicts (1679-1686): The Defence of Rights and Authority*

The quarrels between the Catholic nobility and apostolic vicar Johannes van Neercassel that occurred in the 1670s and 1680s mainly represented struggles over influence and

<sup>22</sup> According to Cornelis Paulus Hoyneck van Papendrecht, Jacob II van Wassenaar-Obdam was a non-Catholic, who desired Hendrick Snabel, a member of the Oratory of St Philip Neri at Scherpenheuvel and the chaplain of Jacob van Wassenaar van Warmond, to become the new pastor in Wassenaar. See Hoyneck van Papendrecht, *Historie der Utrechtsche kerke*, 46; *Nieuw Nederlands Biografisch Woordenboek* 4, 542-543. Another nobleman, Johannes van Reede van Renswoude, also desired the presence of Snabel, 'a trusted friend' ('familiare vriend') who was accustomed to assist Johannes 'in [his] music' on a weekly basis. HUA, OBC, inv. 227, 5 May 1676. Judging from the offices he held, it is highly likely that this nobleman was Protestant.

<sup>23</sup> Non-nobles could acquire patronage rights by buying seigneuries. Moreover, as owners of houses in which mission stations were established, they could exert informal influence over the appointment of priests. See Dudok van Heel, 'De rol van de katholieke elite', 44.

<sup>24</sup> I did not encounter any correspondence between Van der Duyn and Van Lynden, so it is impossible to say whether Van der Lynden refused Van der Burch because Van Neercassel did not send this priest to Rijswijk (see below). In a letter from January 1684, it is mentioned that Catholic nobles got together and discussed the *jus patronatus*. HUA, OBC, inv. 253, 30 January 1684. Van Lynden's letter of 26 January 1682 was sent from Warmond, showing that Van Lynden spent time (and possibly resided) there. HUA, OBC, inv. 230, 26 January 1682. In one letter the later apostolic vicar Petrus Codde spoke about a conspiracy of nobles. HUA, OBC, inv. 231, 4/14 October 1683.

authority. Several aspects of these conflicts, however, bear witness to the outfall of the swelling Jansenist controversy. The clash between apostolic vicar Johannes van Neercassel and Anthony van Lynden, Lord of Kronenburg, generated a large body of source material and is illustrative of the larger context in which conflicts about the *jus patronatus* took place and should be understood. In Loenen (aan de Vecht), Catholics had been accustomed to gather at Kronenburg Castle and 't Honderd House to practise their faith, but in 1648 Maria Sophia van Stepraedt donated a plot of land at the Slootdijk on which a clandestine church was built in 1652.<sup>25</sup> When the serving priest, Johan van Heymenberg, died in 1682, Maria Sophia's son, Anthony van Lynden, favoured Laurentius Pilsen to become the new 'pastor' at the Slootdijk and asked Van Neercassel to approbate him.<sup>26</sup> Yet Van Neercassel was hesitant about this proposal, because Pilsen had just been appointed in Huissen; instead, he was eager to appoint Everard van der Burch.

Van der Burch, however, had been nominated by the Lord of Rijswijk, Nicolaas van der Duyn, to become Rijswijk's new priest. Van Neercassel preferred to have a more senior priest in Rijswijk and refused to send Van der Burch. He feared that Van der Burch was not sufficiently schooled in the 'controversies' and not brave enough to face his opponents. The apostolic vicar wrote that no one would really support Van der Burch apart from Van der Duyn and his friend, the nobleman Floris Bam.<sup>27</sup> Thus Van Neercassel's decisions left three noblemen unhappy: Van der Duyn and Bam because Van der Burch was not coming to Rijswijk, and Van Lynden because he did not want this priest. Yet Catholics at the Slootdijk sent a letter to Van Lynden, asking him to accept Van der Burch and not to force another priest upon them, and stating that they would not bear the costs of maintaining that priest.<sup>28</sup> Van Neercassel, too, tried to convince Van Lynden to accept Van der Burch by arguing that the well-being and salvation of souls, not 'seigniorial rights', was of the utmost importance.<sup>29</sup>

In April 1682 Van Lynden wrote that he was forced to execute his rights and that he had ordered his sheriff to prohibit Van der Burch from living and administering the sacraments in his seignury.<sup>30</sup> Van Neercassel tried to persuade Van Lynden with a formal ruling by a number of professors from Louvain, which held that Van Lynden had not endowed the church, but was merely a benefactor, and that patronage rights could not be derived from the gift of such a small strip of land.<sup>31</sup> Yet unlike Nicolaas van Renesse

25 This particular conflict is analysed in more detail in my book *Patrons of the Old Faith. The Catholic Nobility in Utrecht and Guelders, c. 1580-1702*, ch. 4.

26 HUA, OBC, inv. 230, 26 January 1682. In this article, the term pastor ('pastoor' in Dutch), the equivalent of parish priest, denotes resident Catholic priests who were put in charge of spiritual care within a certain area. The use of this term by the Dutch apostolic vicars attests to their sense continuity as they saw themselves as bishops presiding over a diocesan structure staffed by parish priests. Parker, *Faith*, 31.

27 HUA, OBC, inv. 252, 12 March 1683 (to Van der Duyn); 12 March 1682 (to Oudheusden).

28 HUA, OBC, inv. 230, 5 January 1682.

29 HUA, OBC, inv. 252, 31 January 1682, 20 February 1682.

30 HUA, OBC, inv. 230, 6 April 1682.

31 HUA, OBC, inv. 230, casus, 6 July 1682. Van Neercassel wrote to the Propaganda Fide that Bam was not going to maintain the chaplain with his own money, but with the funds his ancestors had provided for the maintenance of the parish: HUA, OBC, inv. 241, 8 June 1684. For a similar argument, see HUA, OBC, inv. 253, 18 January 1684.

van Elderen, Van Lynden would still not give in.<sup>32</sup> Furthermore, in 1683 he received support from Nicolas du Bois, professor of the Sacred Scriptures at Louvain and a former jurist who, according to Lucien Ceyskens, was a lackey of the anti-Jansenist camp.<sup>33</sup> Du Bois defended the rights of the Catholic nobility in a treatise in which he systematically refuted the points Van Neercassel had made in an earlier publication.<sup>34</sup> In his treatise, Van Neercassel had argued that patronage rights had always been a gift from the bishop and that if Catholic nobles indeed enjoyed patronage rights, those rights did not extend to private chapels, but were limited to parish churches.<sup>35</sup> In other words, the patronage rights that Catholic nobles rightfully possessed in former Catholic churches could not be transferred to manorial chapels or clandestine churches built on their land or within their jurisdiction.<sup>36</sup>

In the meantime, Van Lynden had embraced a more drastic course of action: he authorised the sheriff of his seignury, a Protestant, to remove the church furniture and library from the clandestine church to his castle and to order Van der Burch to leave.<sup>37</sup> A similar forceful intervention had already occurred in Rijswijk, a village in Holland, where the Protestant bailiff, sent by Van der Duyn, had disrupted Mass and chased away the serving priest, Theodorus de Groot. A couple of years later, in 1686, De Groot was taken captive at the altar and imprisoned.<sup>38</sup> The actions of these noblemen were replicated by Floris Carel van Beieren-Schagen, who sent his officer to prevent the priest Gerardus Alkemade from saying Mass in Schagen.<sup>39</sup> Sooner or later, all these noblemen flexed their muscles and resorted to similar strategies to enforce their claims. Finally, in April 1684, Pope Innocentius XI, solicited by

32 HUA, OBC, inv. 237, copy of letter, 25 October 1683. He also said that the 'facts' sent to Louvain had been 'completely changed' ('tamen rem minimè tangentes et circumstantias totaliter mutantes').

33 Lamberts and Roegiers *De universiteit te Leuven*, 95; Ceyskens, 'Het theologisch denken', 429; Ceyskens, 'La promotion de Nicolas Du Bois'. The Prince-Bishop of Liège had also provided written support to the Dutch Catholic nobility: HUA, OBC, inv. 240, 28 July 1682.

34 *Dissertatio Canonica*.

35 *Dissertatio qua expenditur. Canonicae Animadversiones*. HUA, OBC, inv. 237, casus; prima facta species; HUA, OBC, inv. 252, 30 July 1682.

36 *Canonicae Animadversiones*, 43-45; Parker, *Faith*, 168; HUA, OBC, inv. 252, 30 July 1682; HUA, OBC inv. 358, 1 November 1689.

37 HUA, OBC, inv. 231, 4 October 1683 (from Codde). This probably was an unexpected move: HUA, OBC, inv. 252, 5 October 1682. Van Lynden's actions were sharply denounced. In one letter it was remarked that he applied the anti-Catholic edicts more severely than the Provincial States. HUA, OBC, inv. 252, 4 January 1684 ('Projectum Epistolae missum'): 'Quod tu Catholicus lata contra Catholicam Religionem edicta severius exequi iubeas, quam ipsi Ordines Potentissimi ea exequi desiderent.'

38 HUA, OBC, inv. 241, 16 May 1684 (to Tanara, and Testimonium R.D. Jacobi Roos Romam missum); HUA, OBC, inv. 254, 18 January 1686; 22 January 1686 (to Cousebant); 29 January 1686 (to Swaen); 26 February 1686 (to Codde); Hoyne van Papendrecht, *Historie der Utrechtsche kerke*, 46. Earlier Van Neercassel seemed to have decided to transfer De Groot: HUA, OBC, inv. 230, letter from N. van der Duyn, no date. Bam and Van der Duyn sent their interpretation of the events in Rijswijk to the Propaganda Fide, arguing that a refusal to 'pay off' the Protestant bailiff had sparked the conflict. Vatican City, Archivio Storico di Propaganda Fide, Scrittura Originali riferite nelle Congregazioni Generali [hereafter SOCG], vol. 491, fol. 187r-v. For Catholic strategies to buy off persecution, see Kooi, 'Paying off the sheriff: strategies of Catholic toleration in Golden Age Holland', 87-101.

39 Parker, *Faith*, 168. HUA, OBC, inv. 253, 18 January 1684. Eventually Alkemade was allowed to celebrate Mass in Schagen until the pope reached a verdict. Probably at the instigation of the Lord of Schagen, Van Neercassel drew up a document in which he promised that this act of leniency would in no way undermine the nobleman's



Van Neercassel on this point, decided that the Catholic Church did not acknowledge the rights of patronage of the Catholic nobility in the Dutch Republic.<sup>40</sup> Yet whereas Anthony van Lynden, Floris Carel van Beieren-Schagen, and Nicolaas van der Duyn submitted themselves to the pope's judgment, Floris Bam obstinately refused to do so.<sup>41</sup> In May 1684, Van Neercassel complained to the Propaganda Fide about the privileges granted to Bam, conveying his incredulity that this nobleman was allowed a chaplain.<sup>42</sup> Although it was later decreed that Bam could not have a chaplain, subsequent events, including the imprisonment of De Groot, indicate that in 1686 this conflict was far from resolved.<sup>43</sup>

Although the conflicts in Loenen and Rijswijk had initially started as classic struggles for authority, the larger Jansenism controversy was already lurking in the background. This complex and multifaceted conflict consisted of a series of different but interlinked debates which were not neatly contained within the walls of theological faculties but spilled over into the public, creating warring factions among clergy and laity alike. At first these debates were primarily theological in nature and revolved around the role of free will and justification, moral theology, and pastoral care. From the last decade of the seventeenth century onward they became predominantly political and ecclesiological in nature, focusing on the authority of the pope and the secular authorities in relation to the governance of the Catholic Church.<sup>44</sup> Within the Holland Mission, a more rigorist brand of Catholic spirituality and pastoral care, which was permeated by the theology of the Latin Church Father Augustine (and promoted in the posthumously published work of Cornelius Jansenius), clashed with the theology of the Jesuit Luis de Molina. In general clerical proponents of the more rigorist brand demanded higher (moral) standards from the laity, for example by raising the bar for granting absolution and policing access to the sacraments, particularly the Eucharist. Yet other priests, usually regulars, continued to advocate a less exacting style of pastoral care, resulting in a divergence of opinions and practices which created unrest among both clergy and laity. Moreover, in the Dutch Republic discussions about theology and pastoral care intersected with debates about authority and influence over the Holland Mission, a highly explosive mix which pitted secular against regular priests (although this division was not absolute, as not all secular priests were Jansenists).

Both the significance of these theological issues and the sensitivity of matters pertaining to church governance, caused that local conflicts had the potential to reverberate widely

claim: Noord-Hollands Archief, Heerlijkheid Schagen (133), inv. 61. A similar document was sent to Van Lynden: HUA, OBC, inv. 253, 8 March 1684.

<sup>40</sup> HUA, OBC, inv. 231,1 April 1684 (from Cardinal Cibo). AS, Nunz. di Fiandra [hereafter NdF], vol. 145, fol. 162r-v. Van Neercassel had urged the pope to come to a verdict. AS, Vescovi, vol. 70, fol. 25r-v. On the expected stance of the Catholic nobility towards the pope's verdict, see AS, NdF, vol. 74, fols. 120r-120bisr.

<sup>41</sup> HUA, OBC, inv. 241, 11 February 1684; 16 February 1684; HUA, OBC, inv. 253, 30 January 1684; Roessingh, 'De voormalige oud-katholieke kerk te Rijswijk', 209.

<sup>42</sup> HUA, OBC, inv. 241, 3 May 1684 and [19] May 1684.

<sup>43</sup> Cornelissen, Post, and Polman (eds.), *Romeinsche bronnen*, II, 751 (#1071), 753 (#1081), 758 (#1104), 760 (#1111), and 767 (#1130). HUA, OBC, inv. 254, 18 January 1686. According to Gian Ackermans, Bam eventually succumbed to 'judicial pressure' in 1686, which might explain why the correspondence about this conflict petered out: Ackermans, *Herders en huurlingen*, 367.

<sup>44</sup> Spiertz, 'Jansenisme in en rond de Nederlanden'; Spiertz, 'Anti-jansenisme en jansenisme in de Nederlanden'.

throughout the Catholic world. Rome closely monitored the developments relating to these matters and actively intervened when necessary. Hence in 1670 Johannes van Neercassel himself was forced to travel to Rome to acquit himself of accusations of Jansenism and to resolve a long-lasting conflict with the Society of Jesus regarding the exact authority of the apostolic vicars.<sup>45</sup> Other forceful measures included the suspension (1702) and eventual dismissal of apostolic vicar Petrus Codde in 1704, the summoning of Jansenist priests to appear before the nuncio in Cologne, and the excommunication of a number of them.<sup>46</sup> Such interventions by the Roman curia established a dynamic pattern of interaction between 'centre' and 'periphery' and often exacerbated conflicts, some of which had initially been local and relatively small-scale in nature.

Seen from the perspective of the heightened tensions caused by the Jansenism controversy, the involvement of Nicolas du Bois in the quarrels about patronage rights was not a coincidence but the result of a mounting campaign against Jansenists. Even though the arguments in Du Bois's dissertation were grounded in canon law and did not contain any accusations of Jansenism, several of the tracts he authored left no doubt about his feelings toward this religious current, and in his capacity as censor he approved the publication of the ominously titled book *Jansenismus omnem destruens religionem*.<sup>47</sup> From around 1679 Du Bois also presided over a secret committee that actively lobbied in Rome in order to muster forces against the Jansenists.<sup>48</sup> Moreover, the conflict with Floris Bam dragged on at least partly because the nobleman had allowed a Dominican, friar Saly, to preach and administer the sacraments at his estate.<sup>49</sup> The superior of this friar, Willem Wijnants, conspired with Odoardo Cibo, the secretary of the Propaganda Fide, who had illegally obtained authorization for Saly.<sup>50</sup> Wijnants was 'plotting against me in Rome', Van Neercassel grumbled in a letter to the internuncio: Wijnants had joined a growing body of clergymen voicing their opposition to one of Van Neercassel's books, *Amor Poenitens*, in which he advocated an austere practice relating to the sacrament of confession.<sup>51</sup>

In Rome, Jansenists and anti-Jansenists competed for influence and tried to further their respective causes. Van Neercassel sent a continuous flow of letters to ensure the help of several cardinals and plead his case with the pope.<sup>52</sup> However, he had many opponents in the Eternal City: in a letter to a fellow priest he complained that Du Bois had besmirched

45 Post, 'De apostolische vicaris'.

46 Van der Vorst, *Holland en de troebelen*, 122-127 and 136.

47 According to Van Neercassel, Du Bois wrote for the Apostolic See against the French clergy: AS, NdF, vol. 74, fol. 52v.

48 Spiertz, 'Anti-jansenisme en jansenisme', 233-234.

49 HUA, OBC, inv. 241, 12 May 1684, 16 May 1684, 8 June 1684; HUA, OBC, inv. 243, 9 May 1684, 14 July 1684, 23 July 1684, and 25 July 1684.

50 Voorvelt, *Amor Poenitens*, 149-150 and 154. See also HUA, OBC, inv. 241, 16 May 1684 and 8 June 1684.

51 HUA, OBC, inv. 241, 7 July 1684 (to Altieri) and 14 July 1684 (to Tanara). Voorvelt, *Amor Poenitens*, 125-126, 141, 149, and 186-191. According to Van Neercassel, the opposition against his book and his stance on the *ius patronatus* were related: HUA, OBC, inv. 241, 7 July 1684 (to Altieri) and 14 July 1684 (to Tanara). Voorvelt, *Amor Poenitens*, 154, 157, and 159.

52 HUA, OBC, inv. 241, passim.

his name and reputation, even among the lords of the curia, in whose love he had hoped to find comfort.<sup>53</sup> Van Neercassel did not only have to deal with opponents from within the ranks of the clergy, since from the mid-1680s onward Dutch Catholic laypeople started to affiliate themselves with one or other of the parties in order to pursue their own interests.<sup>54</sup> The laity, and members of the social elite in particular, could and did write directly to the Propaganda Fide or even the pope to advance their cause.<sup>55</sup> They also recruited agents who could do this on their behalf in situ. Van Neercassel mentioned that apparently ‘Bam [was] wasting much money to find friends who can aid him in his damaging intention.’<sup>56</sup> In June 1684, Van Neercassel wrote a letter to Cardinal Pietro Ottoboni in which he complained that a regular priest in Rome had offered Bam support and that this regular ‘also attacks my book, *Amor Poenitens*, with equal animosity’.<sup>57</sup> The laity and clergy thus started to make pacts to further their respective goals. This was partly possible because the Jansenist controversy had many sides to it, enabling various parties to align their interests. This trend would continue as the conflicts about the *jus patronatus* in the late 1680s and the 1690s became increasingly intertwined with the Jansenist controversy. Even though the apostolic vicars had some reasons for not granting patronage rights to the laity which had nothing to do with theological issues, this could not obscure the fact that the apostolic vicars’ preference for priests started increasingly to diverge from that of the laity.

### *The First Cluster of Conflicts (1679-1686): Clerical Versus Lay Authority*

One of the reasons Van Neercassel objected to granting *jus patronatus* to the laity was that he foresaw that ‘all rulers, either Catholics or non-Catholics, all magistrates and prefects of villages, would in a short period of time creep stealthily towards the same right if the faculty of nominating and presenting priests or missionaries would be granted to nobles and wealthy Catholics’, as he wrote to the Propaganda Fide.<sup>58</sup> Thus one important fault line within the Holland Mission upon which the *jus patronatus* touched was the (contested) authority of the apostolic vicars. In 1671, after a long and hard struggle, Van Neercassel had finally acquired the right to formally approve all missionaries working in the Holland

53 HUA, OBC, inv. 252, 4 October 1683 (to De Swaen).

54 HUA, OBC, inv. 230, 6/16 April 1682 (from Van Lynden).

55 The priest and anti-Jansenist Hoynck van Papendrecht mentioned that after the pope’s final verdict regarding the *jus patronatus* the noble claimants of this right ‘were forced to keep quiet, [or] at least they did not pursue their cause in Rome any longer’: Hoynck van Papendrecht, *Historie der Utrechtsche kerke*, 46.

56 HUA, OBC, inv. 253, 14 July 1684 (to Oudheusden): ‘Dien goeden Joncker verspilt apparentelijck veel gelds om vrienden op te soeken dewelke hem in sijn schaedelijck voornemen mochte stercken.’ Van Neercassel also complained that the disadvantageous decisions of the Propaganda Fide were caused by his not having a procurator in Rome: Cornelissen, Post, and Polman (eds.), *Romeinsche bronnen*, II, 754 (#1087). Bam had one acting on his behalf: HUA, OBC, inv. 241, 21 April 1684 (to Cibo).

57 HUA, OBC, inv. 241, 29 June 1684 (to Ottoboni).

58 HUA, OBC, inv. 241, 8 June 1684: ‘Praevidebam omnes Toparchas sive Catholicos, sive Aatholicos, omnes Magistratus, villarumq[ue] praefectos idem ius sibi intra breve tempus fore arrepturos, si facultas nominandi praesentandiq[ue] pastores sive missionarios Nobilibus opulentisq[ue] Catholicis permitteretur.’ See also HUA, OBC, inv. 231, 29 December 1683.

Mission, including regulars.<sup>59</sup> Until then, the jurisdiction of Van Neercassel and his predecessors, who were granted not the authority of ordinary bishops but of bishops 'in partibus infidelium', had never been carefully delineated. Regular priests in particular were loath to submit to the leadership of the apostolic vicars. The conflicts about the *jus patronatus* threatened to undermine once again the authority of the apostolic vicars over the Holland Mission; hence Van Neercassel's unwavering determination to emerge victorious.

Another reason for rejecting the *jus patronatus* was that the apostolic vicars feared that the priests themselves would be subordinated to the authority of lay patrons. What Van Neercassel did not mention to Van der Duyn was that he did not want Van der Burch to become the pastor of Rijswijk because Van den Burch's sister was Bam's sister's chambermaid, and the apostolic vicar feared that the priest would be equally subservient to Bam.<sup>60</sup> Moreover, according to Van Neercassel, Van der Duyn was a suitor to Bam's sister, thus placing Van der Burch in the hands of two aligned Catholic families, and leaving little space for the ties between the missionary and his bishop.<sup>61</sup> It should be noted that close connections between noble families and priests were not uncommon: relationships were formed due to the nobility's maintenance and protection of missionaries, something which the apostolic vicars themselves encouraged. But when priests were overly dependent on their patrons, those patrons – and not the apostolic vicars – would hold the reins over the Mission, or so the vicars feared.<sup>62</sup>

In addition to the fact that apostolic vicars dreaded the 'domestication' of missionary priests by lay families, the personal and professional characteristics of the candidates selected by the patrons constituted another cause for concern. Van Neercassel feared that allowing the nobility to exercise patronage rights would result in the entrance of insufficiently qualified priests.<sup>63</sup> These alleged mercenary priests ('Presbyteros mercenarios'), soaked in bad doctrine ('mala imbutos doctrina'), would be added to the mission if patronage rights were granted to the nobility, Van Neercassel wrote.<sup>64</sup> Hence he deplored the words 'pro suo arbitrio' – 'according to his choice' – in the title of Du Bois's dissertation, because it implied that patrons could also nominate unqualified priests.<sup>65</sup> Both Van

59 Rogier, *Geschiedenis* II, 257–262; Post, 'De apostolische vicaris'. While in conflict with Van Neercassel, Bam challenged the authority of the apostolic vicar by sticking to a decree by the Propaganda Fide from 1623. HUA, OBC, inv. 241, 21 January 1684 (to Cibo).

60 HUA, OBC, inv. 241, 8 June 1684 (to the Propaganda Fide).

61 Jacoba Agnes Theresa Bam van Vrijenhove and Nicolaas van der Duyn married in 1684. According to Gerard Wt de Wael, the priest stationed in the village of Cabauw, Jacoba Agnes and her former husband, Cornelis de Nobelaer, had tried to claim the *jus patronatus* as well: HUA, OBC, inv. 231, 15 July 1684.

62 HUA, OBC, inv. 240, 8 May 1682 (to Tanara) and 19 June 1682 (to Casoni). Hence Petrus Codde criticized a priest who 'excessively (nimium) fears the anger of Count [van den Bergh], and seems to be excessively concerned about his nourishment': HUA, OBC, inv. 340, 15 April 1694 (to Ferron).

63 HUA, OBC, inv. 252, 7 October 1683 (to Massis). See also the verdict about the *jus patronatus* made by two doctors from Leuven in 1679: *Canonicae Animadversiones*, 72.

64 HUA, OBC, inv. 240, 8 October 1683. See also HUA, OBC, inv. 241, 8 June 1684 (to Selencensi).

65 This, at least, is how Van Neercassel's lawyer interpreted these words: HUA, OBC, inv. 237, 30 October 1683. In a letter to the priest Petrus Pelt, who had been in touch with the Lord of Schagen, Van Neercassel wrote that bishops were not required to approbate the candidates of lay patrons: 'Patronus nominat instituendos, episcopus vero eos instituit si idoneos iudicet.' HUA, OBC, inv. 252, 25 July 1682.

Neercassel and his successor Petrus Codde were concerned about the education and standard of the missionaries, who had to be sound in doctrine and whose behaviour should provide living exempla to the laity.<sup>66</sup> As the apostolic vicars deemed the appointment of priests to be the sole prerogative of bishops, lay influence in this process was nothing but an obstacle to the full implementation of the mission they envisaged.<sup>67</sup>

### *The Second Cluster of Conflicts (1689-1694): The Early Jansenist Controversy*

Other fault lines within the mission that became increasingly apparent were the differences in theological doctrine and pastoral style, as the second cluster of conflicts demonstrates.<sup>68</sup> Van Neercassel and Codde, both members of the Oratory of Bérulle, where a stern Augustinianism was taught, tended to favour secular priests who shared their theological outlook and style of pastoral care, most of whom had enjoyed an education at the University of Louvain, and more specifically the Holland College, a hotbed of Jansenism at the time.<sup>69</sup> Next to financial prowess and social standing, education was one of the factors on which a process of oligarchization in the Holland Mission was based, as a clerical elite gradually emerged around Van Neercassel and Codde.<sup>70</sup> This created tensions within the missionary corps as a number of priests, particularly those who had been educated not in Louvain but in Rome or Cologne, felt themselves to be systematically disadvantaged by the apostolic vicars, further complicating the Jansenist controversy in the Dutch Republic.

To an increasing extent, the preference for priests expressed by noble patrons and other members of the Catholic laity started to diverge from that of the apostolic vicars. The three priests Van Neercassel included in his efforts to quell the conflict in Rijswijk, for example, later received bad publicity in the *Breve Memoriale*, a treatise from 1697 that was compiled by Codde's opponents.<sup>71</sup> In the Dutch Republic, Catholics favoured priests for a variety of reasons, some of which did not have anything to do with the theological convictions or pastoral style of the priest in question.<sup>72</sup> Charles Parker has shown, however, that generally lay expectations 'focused on pastoral competence': priests needed to be well-educated and their behaviour had to be morally sound.<sup>73</sup> The preference for a particular priest could also be the result of the strong ties which existed between Catholic laypeople and religious orders and

66 Ackermans, 'Good Pastors'.

67 HUA, OBC, inv. 358, 19 March 1689 (to Roskam).

68 For these differences, see Hoppenbrouwers, *Oefening in volmaaktheid*.

69 On the Oratory, see Frijhoff, 'The Oratory'. See Van Neercassel's remark about Van Rhemmen: HUA, OBC, inv. 253, 12 December 1684; Roegiers, 'De avonturen van Pulcheria'.

70 Spiertz, *L'Eglise catholique*, 156-157; Ackermans, *Herders en huurlingen*, 307-308.

71 Ackermans, *Herders en huurlingen*, 217, 366-7 (Theodorus de Groot), and 427 (Johannes and Jacob Roos). For the background of the *Breve Memoriale*, see Polman, 'Het Breve en het Prolixum Memoriale'; Spiertz, 'Achtergronden van het "Breve Memoriale"'.  
72 HUA, 620, Franciscanen, inv. 112, fol. 31. For another example, see Cornelissen, Post, and Polman (eds.), *Romeinsche bronnen*, II, 787-788 (#783).

73 Parker, *Faith*, 170; HUA, OBC, inv. 388, 5 August 1690 (to Codde).

which had developed over the course of several decades or even longer.<sup>74</sup> For example, the chapel of the Wiardastate in Goutum, a Frisian village next to the city of Leeuwarden, contained an altar that was consecrated in 1615 and dedicated to ‘God, St Francis, and the saints of his Order’.<sup>75</sup> Such bonds are also visible in the testimonies gathered by the Jesuits in which the laity attested, among other things, that the Jesuits had been administering the sacraments in a particular area, constituting invaluable proof in their legal battles with the apostolic vicars.<sup>76</sup> A nobleman from Utrecht, Daniel de Ridder van Groenestein, several of whose family members joined the Society, stated that Jesuits ‘amidst great dangers’ had started to offer spiritual solace to the laity at a time when secular priests were few and dispersed.<sup>77</sup> Various members of the Heereman van Zuydtwijck family provided similar testimonies in favour of the Jesuits, as this family enjoyed close ties to the Society. Many family members were baptized by Jesuits, and several of them studied at Jesuit colleges and joined the Society as priests; in the later seventeenth century, some family members moved to Utrecht, where they bought a house bordering a Jesuit mission station, to which the family had direct access.<sup>78</sup> Small wonder, then, that this family became a vocal opponent of the Jansenists.<sup>79</sup>

Close relationships with religious orders were also established in parts of the Dutch Republic that were mainly served by regular priests, such as the border zones within reach of the monasteries located in Catholic enclaves or foreign territories just across the Dutch border. From their monastery in Megen, for example, Franciscans ventured into the area known as Maas en Waal, sandwiched between the rivers Meuse and Waal, where they frequently visited Doddendael Castle. Its owner, Peter Reinier van Stepraedt, emphasized his affection for this Order by donating the high altar in the church of their monastery in Megen.<sup>80</sup> Parts of the province of Gelderland, such as the Maas en Waal area, belonged to the spiritual jurisdiction of the bishopric of Roermond, which experienced financial hardship and administrative difficulties throughout the seventeenth century. As the bishop and his secular clergy were largely unable to fulfil their pastoral duties, regular orders such as the Franciscans stepped in to fill the vacuum.<sup>81</sup> Like elsewhere in Gelderland, strong links between the laity and this Order developed, too. In 1680 Van Neercassel was enraged about the ‘exorbitant wish’ of some Catholic nobles from the Veluwe, who wanted to make use of the services of a regular priest who had never received written approval by

74 Meijer, ‘De Dominicanen-statie te Tiel’, 66.

75 Six, *Het slot Wiardastate*, 174. For the Franciscan missionaries in the province of Frisia, see Rogier, *Geschiedenis* II, 467-477. Prior to the Reformation the Franciscans had monasteries in Bolsward and Leeuwarden. See Kok, *Acht eeuwen minderbroeders*, 169-172.

76 Several of these testimonies were gathered in 1669 and were part of the Jesuit response to the decrees of the Propaganda Fide, which held that twenty-four Jesuit priests had to leave the Holland Mission. Post, ‘De apostolische vicaris’, 102.

77 Aerts, *Acta Missionis*, VIII, fols. 323-324; Voets, ‘Een leider’, 203-204. HUA, OBC, inv. 341, 24 March 1694.

78 Dudok van Heel, ‘Heereman van Zuydtwijck’, 53 and passim; also, HUA, OBC, inv. 355, 5 August 1699 (to Wasoni). For another example of ties between Catholics and the priests of the station to which they went, see inv. 388, 1/11 August 1690 (to Codde).

79 Dudok van Heel, ‘Heereman van Zuydtwijck’, 57.

80 Gelders Archief [hereafter GA], 1172, Huis Vornholz, inv. 358 (donation of 300 guilders, the high altar had already been given in 1680).

81 Rogier, *Geschiedenis*, II, 630-631, 637, 639, 643, and 646.

the apostolic vicar.<sup>82</sup> Van Neercassel had always told Floris Bam that all priests had to be formally approved by him and that Rome had limited the number of regulars that were allowed to work in the Mission.<sup>83</sup> Yet in this case Van Neercassel acted differently, as he was well aware that these nobles preferred Franciscans.<sup>84</sup> Moreover, wanting to avoid the impression that he favoured certain priests, Van Neercassel informed the nobles that he did not want to force a secular priest ('prister vande cleresij') upon them.<sup>85</sup>

Compared with the earlier conflicts about the *jus patronatus* in the period 1679-1686, the conflicts in the second cluster were much more intertwined with the Jansenist controversy. The conflict between Joost van Steenhuis, Lord of Aerdt, and Petrus Codde started when the former wanted to obtain a pastor for Aerdt, a village in the province of Gelderland, which had lacked one for several years. Van Steenhuis thereby claimed patronage rights which Codde explicitly refused to acknowledge, referring to the tracts written by Van Neercassel on this matter. Later Codde declined to appoint Van Steenhuis's nominee, the secular priest Arnoldus Massop, as the pastor of Aerdt, arguing that this priest 'had not studied long enough'.<sup>86</sup> As a result, in 1693, four years after the start of this conflict, Aerdt still did not have its own pastor. The situation was exacerbated as the Franciscans in the nearby village of Elten, who celebrated Mass in Aerdt on Sundays and holidays, were not allowed to preach or take confession.<sup>87</sup> In order to end this precarious situation, Codde and Van Steenhuis agreed on the appointment of the secular priest Thomas Verhoeven. Yet even though initially Van Steenhuis and his wife Barbara Antoinette de Fourneau were satisfied with this priest, the latter nevertheless requested that Codde allow her to make confession to another priest, her 'confesseur ordinaire'.<sup>88</sup> The warm feelings toward Verhoeven seem to have evaporated rather quickly. According to a draft letter written by the priest Rutger van der Burch, Van Steenhuis had threatened to have Verhoeven removed by a Protestant official.<sup>89</sup> Apparently Van Steenhuis had levelled criticism at Codde, too, as did his wife, who called the apostolic vicar a 'niegesinde', an innovator, who restricted Franciscans from taking up pastoral care.<sup>90</sup> Whereas for Van Steenhuis

82 HUA, OBC, inv. 251, 13 October 1680.

83 HUA, OBC, inv. 253, 25 July 1684; HUA, OBC, inv. 247, 22 October 1676; HUA, OBC, inv. 248, 3 May 1678. The Concordia of 1671 did reduce the numbers of Jesuits, but not the numbers of regulars in general. Rogier, *Geschiedenis*, 1, 260. It was determined that a maximum of 65 Jesuits could take part in the Holland Mission: Spiertz, 'Godsdienstig leven', 346.

84 HUA, OBC, inv. 250, 12 September 1680.

85 HUA, OBC, inv. 250, 27 October 1680.

86 De Kok, 'Het katholicisme te Aerdt', 184-185; HUA, OBC, inv. 358, 22 March 1689 and 3 December 1690 (to Massop). Several years later, Massop preached without Codde's permission; Codde also refused to appoint him as pastor of Ulft, a village in the county of Bergh: HUA, OBC, inv. 359, 30 November 1691 (to Lippert), 20 January 1692, and 19 February 1692 (to Massop). In 1690 Codde complained about the activities of two unauthorized missionaries in Aerdt, suspecting the Lord of Aerdt was involved in their 'impudence' ('stoutigheid'): HUA, OBC, inv. 358, 25 January 1690 (to Roskam).

87 De Kok, 'Het katholicisme te Aerdt', 185.

88 HUA, OBC, inv. 360, 21 March 1693; HUA, OBC, inv. 341, 10 April 1693. Codde replied that he was willing to consider her spiritual needs: HUA, OBC, inv. 360, 17 April 1693.

89 HUA, OBC, inv. 341, 29 November/9 December 1693.

90 HUA, OBC, inv. 341: 'Excerptum ex epistola aliqua Domina[e] d'Aert.'

this conflict primarily revolved around contested rights (he nominated a secular priest to become the pastor of Aerdts and criticized the earlier missionary activities of the Franciscans), his wife clearly connected Codde's actions to his Jansenist leanings.<sup>91</sup>

As the Jansenist controversy steadily gained pace, it cast an even larger shadow over the conflict between Hendrik van Dorth and Codde. Van Dorth was the owner of Medler Castle, near Vorden, a village in Gelderland which enjoyed the frequent presence of Franciscans from the monastery of Zwillbrock.<sup>92</sup> In 1692 Van Dorth clashed with Codde because he preferred a Franciscan, whereas the latter insisted on the appointment of a secular priest. However, the priests Codde favoured, Balthazar van Ray and Laurentius van Rhemmen, were attacked by Van Dorth and his peers on grounds of Jansenism and because these priests would not allow them to choose their own confessors.<sup>93</sup> This was an important matter, as some nobles refused to make confession to Jansenist priests.<sup>94</sup> In a letter to Codde, Derk van Keppel, Lord of Wolbeek, wrote that he could not understand why Van Rhemmen had prohibited his ailing sister from going to the 'father (pater) of Zutphen' for confession, something she had done for over fifteen years.<sup>95</sup> He also pointed out that it was strange that certain authorities were granted to secular priests, but not to Jesuits.<sup>96</sup> Codde, like his predecessor, was keen to avoid the idea that he favoured priests who shared his convictions, and was aware that a specific style of pastoral care was not particularly liked by these nobles. He therefore suggested to Hendrik van Dorth that Van Rhemmen's successor should not be a priest 'from the Dutch nation, neither from the University of Louvain' ('van de Hollandse natie, nog van de Leuvense studij').<sup>97</sup> Yet criticism of the Jansenists and the apostolic vicar continued to mount. In addition to the criticism directed at Codde by Barbara Antoinette de Fourneau, other nobles complained about 'junior missionaries' whose aberrant ideas about the 'death of Christ for all' and the sacrament of penance threatened the unity of the Catholic Church.<sup>98</sup> Priests with Jansenist leanings, such as Van Rhemmen, commonly propounded the idea that Christ had died only for a select group of people, while restricting absolution to those believers who were truly contrite for their sins.<sup>99</sup>

Similar complaints were voiced by Everard Canisius van der Heyden, Baron of Meijnerswijk. In 1688 he wrote a letter to the pope to complain that Codde was restricting

<sup>91</sup> De Kok, 'Het katholicisme te Aerdts', 187.

<sup>92</sup> Roelofs, *Kirche und Kloster Zwillbrock*, ch. 3. On the missionary activities of these Franciscan friars, see HUA, OBC, inv. 338, 20 May 1690 (from Van Dieren).

<sup>93</sup> De Kok, 'De strubbelingen', 240 and 242; Cornelissen, Post, and Polman (eds.), *Romeinsche bronnen*, III, 374-375; HUA, OBC, inv. 339, 27 October 1691 (from B. van Westerholt).

<sup>94</sup> Cornelissen, Post, and Polman (eds.), *Romeinsche bronnen*, III, 322-324 and 326-327.

<sup>95</sup> In all likelihood this was a reference to the Jesuit Adrianus de Bont, who was based in the city of Zutphen in the years 1676-1693; Van Oppenraaij, 'Zutphen', 371. The Lady of Medler, Maria Catharina van Twickelo, also requested the services of this Jesuit: HUA, OBC, inv. 341, 25 March 1693 (from Van Ray).

<sup>96</sup> HUA, OBC, inv. 341, 25 November 1692. This letter is signed 'D. J. van Keppel', but was probably written by Derk van Keppel, whose son Derk Jan was born in 1692.

<sup>97</sup> De Kok, 'Kerkelijke toestanden', 232. Years later, Codde allowed a Franciscan to come to Medler, but his services were restricted to Hendrik van Dorth and his family. HUA, OBC, inv. 361, 17 September 1698.

<sup>98</sup> Kleijntjens, 'Jansenistische beroeringen', 204-205.

<sup>99</sup> Rogier, 'De Oud-katholieken te Delfshaven'.



the ‘faculties’ (authorities) of two Capuchin missionaries whom he financially maintained. According to Van der Heyden, Codde endeavoured to introduce priests ‘of his opinion’ (‘suae sententiae’) who were often very young (‘valde juvenes’) and who

send the majority of penitents away from confession, without their having received absolution for a long time and almost towards desperation [...] [and] they plunder [them] with their absurd expressions, interrogations, [and] horrible and visible gestures, thus they transform the sacred tribunal of penance into a detested capital punishment of consciences [...] so that therefore many Catholics have been driven back towards desperation and resignation of confession.<sup>100</sup>

It is likely that Van der Heyden, who was trying to convince the pope to counteract Codde’s decisions, was rehashing some of the tropes which were often used to portray Jansenists in a negative way.<sup>101</sup> We therefore need to treat accusations of Jansenism with some caution, as they were sometimes unfounded but still effective means of getting a priest removed.<sup>102</sup> On the other hand, some of the priests with Jansenist leanings did rail against popular devotions and religious sensibilities, thus offending the laity.<sup>103</sup> The case of Hendrik van Dorth against Codde was discussed at a meeting of the Propaganda Fide, and the reasons why the nobleman did not want a secular priest as chaplain were summarized, such as the new doctrines spread by Jansenist priests and their preference for new catechisms published in France.<sup>104</sup> These included a Dutch translation of the ‘Catechism of the three bishops’ (it had been commissioned by three French bishops), which was criticized, among other things, for teaching the laity almost nothing about the invocation of saints.<sup>105</sup> Another book, *Christian teachings and prayers (Christelycke onderwijsingen en gebeden)*, authored by two Dutch Jansenist priests and published in 1685, was controversial because it contained a passage which explained why Christ had not died for all people.<sup>106</sup> Such ideas were also expressed in sermons, and, together with the high demands Jansenist priests placed on the laity with regard to offering absolution, they were cause for real concern.<sup>107</sup> As a result, a number of laypeople, including some powerful members of the nobility, started to lend support to the anti-Jansenists. In 1701 the priest Jacobus Cats wrote to

**100** Cornelissen, Post, and Polman (eds.), *Romeinsche bronnen*, III, 168 (#211): ‘Quod missi ab eodem archiepiscopo pastores, valde juvenes, poenitentes plerumque ex confessionibus non absolutos ad longum tempus et fere ad desperationem quasi infames dimittant, absurdissimis suis interlocutionibus, interrogationibus, gestibus horribilibus et visibilibus divexent, itaque sacrum poenitentiae tribunal in detestandam conscientiarum carnificinam cum scandalo publico commutent, et aliquoties volentes communicare in facie ipsius ecclesiae post audibilem increpationem tanquam indignos praetereant, – hac de re etiam integrum querelatum librum Clementi X fel. rec. porrectum novimus, – ita ut multi Catholici propterea ad desperationem et ejurationem confessionis fuissent redacti, nisi piorum consolatione sub spe impetrandi auxilii fuissent conservati.’

**101** For example, the anonymous book *Jansenismus omnem religionem destruens*, 18, contains similar language: ‘Instituendo tam importuna & absurda examina, ut S. Confessionis Tribunal fiat conscientiarum carnificina.’

**102** For a well-documented case, see Parmentier, *Geschiedenis van (oud-)katholiek Hilversum*, 87-106.

**103** Parmentier, *Geschiedenis van (oud-)katholiek Hilversum*, 92, 101-102, and 105. For another example, see HUA, OBC, inv. 341, 14 June 1693.

**104** Cornelissen, Post, and Polman (eds.), *Romeinsche bronnen*, III, 374-375 (#472).

**105** Van Kleef, *Geschiedenis van de oud-katholieke kerk*, 228, n. 11.

**106** Clemens, *De godsdienstigheid*, I, 91. Clemens has noted that the supposed ‘rigorism’ of this book has often been overstated: Clemens, ‘Katholieke vroomheid en het schisma van 1723’, 202 and 218.

**107** Witkamp, ‘Vervreemding’, 36.

Codde that several nobles, including Oswald III van den Bergh and Ursula van Raesfelt, had signed a tract (the 'libellus supplex'), which, according to an opponent of Jansenism, was very successful in Rome.<sup>108</sup>

The involvement of Oswald III van den Bergh might have been in the making for some time. Van den Bergh was a member of one of the most powerful noble families in the Dutch Republic and enjoyed kinship ties to the ruling Orange family. He governed the county of Bergh and his family's seat, Bergh Castle, was located at 's-Heerenberg, a village in the province of Gelderland and close to the German border. Although this family enjoyed cordial relations with secular priests, they favoured regulars. In Boxmeer, an autonomous seignury independent of the Dutch Republic, they supported the construction of a Carmelite monastery, while in Elten, a village belonging to the Duchy of Cleves, they gave the Franciscans permission to rebuild their monastery.<sup>109</sup> Van den Bergh preferred Franciscans and the Catholics of 's-Heerenberg reflected the preferences of their temporal lord.<sup>110</sup> In 1685 they made a request to Van Neercassel in which they related that the Franciscans, because of their 'exemplary life, holy teaching, carefulness, and well-mannered behaviour', had gained so much credit that Van Neercassel's refusal to allow a Franciscan priest to attend to the Catholics in Bergh was an affront to this Order. Moreover, the Franciscan missionaries were also beloved by Oswald van den Bergh and his mother, and the laity slyly pointed out to Van Neercassel that he did not want 'to offend the count, who is the patron and collator'.<sup>111</sup> The apostolic vicar corresponded about this matter with one of the count's councillors, 'a great patron (fautor) of the Observants', and a conflict was averted.<sup>112</sup> Yet the unrest, which had been caused partly by Du Bois' tract, allegedly spread by the Jesuits, did not evaporate immediately. On the contrary, in 1689 tensions were on the rise again as the count aimed to appoint a priest in Etten (a village near 's-Heerenberg).<sup>113</sup> All these developments clearly show that a section of the Catholic nobility, and Oswald van den Bergh in particular, became involved in the unfolding schism in the Catholic Church in the Dutch Republic. Due to a number of significant changes, however, later conflicts about patronage rights would not be so profoundly marked by rising heat of the Jansenist controversy.

**108** HUA, OBC, inv. 344, 18 August 1701.

**109** Van Beurden, *Boxmeer*; Van der Ven, 'De Observantenkloosters'. This monastery had originally been funded by a Van den Bergh in the fourteenth century, but had been destroyed during the Dutch Revolt.

**110** Van Dalen, *Bergh*, 240-242.

**111** HUA, OBC, inv. 232, letter from the Catholics of 's-Heerenberg [1685].

**112** HUA, OBC, inv. 232, 17 February 1685 (from Roskam). Van Dalen suggests that there were some tensions: Van Dalen, *Bergh*, 241. In 1701, four of the seven priests serving in the deanery of 's-Heerenberg were regulars (among them three Franciscans): Brom, 'Verslag', 453-454.

**113** HUA, OBC, inv. 254, 16 November 1685 (to Roskam); HUA, OBC, inv. 337, 4 May 1689 and 17 December 1689 (from Roskam). Archpriest Paulus Roskam was tasked with explaining to the count that he did not possess any rights of patronage in clandestine Catholic churches and chapels: HUA, OBC, inv. 358, 18 March 1689 (to Roskam). The priest Basius, in whom Codde had more faith than in the other candidate (Verkuyll), wanted to serve in Etten, which Codde deemed a 'large and ferocious' congregation, but the count was not well disposed towards him: HUA, OBC, inv. 358, 6 April 1689 (to Basius) and 11 April 1689 (to Roskam). Codde wrote to Roskam that he intended 'never to use him [Verkuyll] in our mission': HUA, OBC, inv. 358, 25 January 1690.

*The Third Cluster of Conflicts (1710-1714): A Return to Earlier Clashes*

After the skirmishes between Oswald van den Bergh and apostolic vicar Petrus Codde, which took place in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century, in 1710 the nobleman in turn clashed with the Propaganda Fide. The congregation did not acknowledge his patronage rights, thus copying the stance of Van Neercassel and Codde.<sup>114</sup> Eventually, the acting internuncio Alexander Borgia, stepping in after the vacuum created by the deposition of Codde in 1704, decided to appoint a Franciscan, thereby putting an end to the conflict.<sup>115</sup> This dispute, however, was not caused by the appointment of a Jansenist priest by Borgia. The possibility of such an appointment by the leadership of the Mission was rendered very unlikely because of the tightening control of Rome and a number of organizational changes. After Codde's suspension and dismissal, only apostolic vicars loyal to Rome were appointed, while sometimes, as a matter of expediency, (inter)nuncios were temporarily put in charge of the Mission. The new leadership was unlikely to appoint Jansenist priests, which lessened the importance of the Jansenist controversy in relation to quarrels about patronage rights, even though the controversy itself raged on. At the same time, the reorganisation of the Holland Mission did not remove its fundamental fault lines. Conflicts could and did still erupt due to lay claims to authority and contrasting religious preferences. Van den Bergh tried to claim patronage rights, while the appointment of a Franciscan bears witness to Borgia's awareness of the nobleman's religious preferences.<sup>116</sup> Devotional patterns and spiritual inclinations continued to exert important influence over the choice of priests. Hence, in 1729, Frans Wilhelm of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen followed in the footsteps of his predecessors and requested that a Franciscan become pastor of 's-Heerenberg.<sup>117</sup>

Another nobleman who clashed with Borgia was Ferdinand Maria, Count of Berlo. This nobleman refused to accept Nicolaas van der Steen as the new pastor of Esselijkerwoude,

**114** In order to bolster his claims Oswald sent various certified copies of letters of appointment to the Propaganda Fide. In 1721, the counts Van den Bergh claimed to have this right, too, but it was denied to them by the Propaganda Fide: Archivio Storico di Propaganda Fide, SOCG, vol. 578, fols. 505r-513r. See also Van Lommel, 'Toestand in de Hollandsche Missie', 128.

**115** Polman, *Katholiek Nederland*, I, 231.

**116** According to one of the documents Oswald van den Bergh sent to Rome, he appointed Franciscus Tuijnslijper as the new pastor of Didam (Archivio Storico di Propaganda Fide, SOCG, vol. 578, fol. 509). This priest, a regular, was approved by Theodorus de Cock, Codde's successor: 'Franciscus Tuijnslijper... A provicario, consentiente Excellen<sup>no</sup>, Domino comite Bergensi, constitutes est pastor in Diedam.' Van Lommel, *Missio foederati Belgii*, 51. Van den Bergh appointed secular priests as well (such as Bernardus Buderman and Godefridus Franciscus Wanner): Van Lommel, *Missio foederati Belgii*, 29, 71, 90, and 99. Only the appointment of Bernardus Joannes Plasman, pastor in Wijnbergen, might have been related to the Jansenist controversy. Although this priest had initially supported Codde, he switched to De Cock's side. He was banished from Holland by the secular authorities in 1704: Parmentier, *Geschiedenis van (oud-)katholiek Hilversum*, 115; Van Lommel, *Missio foederati Belgii*, 20, 50, 51, 59, 63, and 90.

**117** Van Dalen, *Bergh*, 243. The count wrote that he knew that that regulars could not be presented as pastors, but that this rule could not be maintained in mission territory. Three years earlier, the count had clashed with apostolic vicar Johannes van Bijlevelt about the appointment of a priest in Zeddam: Noord-Hollands Archief, Collectie van aanwinsten van het R-K bisdom Haarlem, inv. 144, letters of 2, 13 and 30 August 1726.

a village in Holland, and resorted to the *jus patronatus*.<sup>118</sup> The internuncio tried to calm the situation by suggesting that he would accept a candidate nominated by Ferdinand Maria, but without acknowledging the nobleman's rights of patronage.<sup>119</sup> This proposal was outright rejected and Van der Steen was imprisoned in The Hague – according to Borgia because of the count's machinations – and released only after a bail of 1500 guilders had been paid. Eventually, however, Ferdinand Maria backed down somewhat and asked for Gerard Langeveld to be appointed, which Borgia was only willing to do in exchange for the nobleman's withdrawal of his claims.<sup>120</sup> In several respects, this conflict represented a return to the earlier conflicts about the *jus patronatus*. Firstly, it mainly revolved around the defence of (pretended) rights rather than the aim to bar the appointment of a Jansenist priest. Secondly, Ferdinand Maria's wife was Anna Hendrina van Wassenaar van Warmond (b. 1679-d. 1722), whose stepsister, Jacoba Maria (b. 1650-d. 1683), had been married to Floris Carel van Beieren-Schagen, the nobleman who had disagreed with Van Neercassel in the early 1680s.<sup>121</sup> After almost thirty years Ferdinand Maria took up the gauntlet and like his predecessors tried to claim patronage rights, yet again without any tangible results.

Regardless of the often fruitless attempts to claim formal patronage rights, Catholic nobles continued their efforts to influence the decisions made by the clerical leadership. In 1728, Baron Alexander Walrad Diederik van Hugenpoth (b. 1695-d. 1780), who had inherited the seignury of Aerdt from his uncle Joost van Steenhuis, wrote a letter to the Propaganda Fide complaining that a new pastor had been appointed without his preferences having been taken into account. As it was rather difficult for him and his family to travel to the abode of the newly appointed pastor, he requested a chaplain at his castle.<sup>122</sup> In his letter, Van Hugenpoth described the ways in which his ancestors – members of the Van Steenhuis family – had supported Catholicism in the region, and argued that the priests presented by them had always been approved by the apostolic vicars.<sup>123</sup> The Propaganda Fide did not budge: it refused to grant formal patronage rights, although it did offer to appoint a priest who would be to the baron's liking. Van Hugenpoth declined this offer and did not allow Willem Thoer, the priest appointed by archpriest Petrus van Beest, to enter his castle. Nevertheless, the nuncio was willing to send a chaplain to the baron's castle, which seems to have put the conflict to rest.<sup>124</sup>

118 Polman, *Katholiek Nederland*, I, 231.

119 Polman, *Katholiek Nederland*, I, 231.

120 Polman, *Katholiek Nederland*, I, 232-233.

121 Cornelissen, Post, and Polman (eds.), *Romeinsche bronnen*, IV, 221, n. 2.

122 Polman, *Romeinse bescheiden*, I, 66-67.

123 Archivio Storico di Propaganda Fide, Scritture Riferite nei Congressi Belgio e Holanda, vol. 10, fol. 3: 'Praesentatus ab antecessoribus meis pro hoc sacello sacerdos cum applause totius gregis catholici a vicario apostolico semper approbatus est.'

124 Polman, *Romeinse bescheiden*, I, 67, n. 2; HUA, 16, Aartspriesters Hollandse Zending, inv. 1818. The sources are silent as to why Van Hugenpoth preferred another priest, and there are no indications that this conflict was related to the Jansenist controversy. Thoer was not a native Dutchman, which could have been an important factor. See G. Hilhorst, 'Het kerkelijk Gooiland', 304. A mission report from 1758 mentions the following: 'R. Willelmus Thoer, diligens; sed lingua impeditus.' See Van Lommel, 'Missionis Batavae', 360.

Because the Dutch secular authorities (and the States of Holland in particular) began to interfere with the governance of the Holland Mission in earnest from the start of the eighteenth century, the authority of the apostolic vicars appointed by Rome waned. As a result, the influence of the nuncio and the Propaganda Fide grew, and in combination with the establishment of the Church of Utrecht in 1723 this culminated in the decision (taken in January 1727) to subsume the Holland Mission under the rule of the nuncio in Brussels. Despite the foundation of a rival Catholic Church and the organizational changes within the Holland Mission, the stance taken by the (inter)nuncio and the Propaganda Fide corresponded to the policy advocated by Van Neercassel and Codde to a surprisingly large degree.<sup>125</sup> Like the apostolic vicars, Borgia expressed the fear that ‘heretics’ would try to claim the *jus patronatus* once this was allowed to Catholic nobles.<sup>126</sup> Moreover, although both Borgia and the apostolic vicars refused to formally acknowledge the patronage rights of the Catholic nobility, in some cases they were willing to acquiesce to the candidates of the Catholic nobility.

The following example is illustrative of that policy. In 1689 the nobleman Frans van Dorth had taken it upon himself to care for the Catholics living in the village of Varik (Gelderland).<sup>127</sup> To this end he modified his castle, improving access to his manorial chapel and making it possible to house missionary priests.<sup>128</sup> Well-intentioned as the actions of this nobleman may have been, they ignited a quarrel with the pastor of the nearby town of Tiel, the Dominican P. de Windt. According to him, the Catholics of Varik and other places in the Tielervaard fell under his spiritual guidance.<sup>129</sup> Although Codde agreed with De Windt, in 1688 he nevertheless accepted Van Dorth’s candidate – the secular priest Daniel Meynaerts – and allowed him to provide spiritual solace to Varik’s Catholics.<sup>130</sup> De Windt

**125** Van der Vorst, *Holland en de troebelen*, 129. Only Codde’s successor, Theodorus de Cock, seems to have been more lenient towards Catholic nobles and allowed the Count of Bergh to present priests for various stations in the county of Bergh. In the words of Borgia: ‘Ho diligentemente ricercato il modo, con cui i vicarii apostolici pro tempore si sono regolati in tali emergenti, ed ho riconosciuto esser stata varia la loro pratica, poichè il Sebasteno lasciò più tostò le stazioni vacanti che ammettere i nominati da detti signori. Mons. Cock all’incontro, – per quanto ho letto nelle sue note, – molte volte conferì le stazioni della contea di Bergh a presentazione di quel conte’ (‘I diligently sought the means by which the apostolic vicars governed matters *pro tempore* in such unexpected circumstances, and I realized that their practice varied, since [Petrus Codde] left the stations empty rather than admit those named by the mentioned gentlemen. Monsignor [Theodorus de] Cock, on the other hand – as far as I have read in his notes – often conferred the stations in the county of Bergh to the presentation of the Count.’) See Cornelissen, Post, and Polman (eds.), *Romeinsche bronnen*, iv, 222. I would like to thank Dr Chris Geekie for helping me with the translation.

**126** Cornelissen, Post, and Polman (eds.), *Romeinsche bronnen*, iv, 222.

**127** Frans van Dorth was the fourth cousin of Hendrik van Dorth (their great-great-grandfathers were brothers). Hofman, ‘Het geslachtboek’.

**128** HUA, OBC, inv. 337, 23 March 1689 (from Van Dorth).

**129** In a letter to Codde, De Windt mentioned that Van Dorth ‘pretended the *jus patronatus*’, something Codde did not allude to in his letters to this nobleman. De Windt also cast doubt on the willingness of Van Dorth to support a priest for a prolonged period of time: HUA, OBC, inv. 336, 23 November 1688.

**130** Staverman, *Geschiedenis van de parochie Varik*, 57. Initially, Codde made sure to limit the extent to which Meynaerts could provide pastoral care: HUA, OBC, inv. 345, 17 November 1688 and 18 November 1688. In a tract from 1709, Meynaerts is mentioned as a signatory of tract written against the Roman clergy: Désirant, *Troost-schrift*, 2.

did not take this lightly and tried to obstruct Meynaerts; at various times Codde asked Van Dorth for his continuous support for and protection of this priest.<sup>131</sup> At the same time Codde suggested to Meynaerts that he should not continue to live at Van Dorth's castle but should find a place for himself, ideally without affronting Van Dorth. Although Codde referred to pastoral concerns ('for your sheep may access you and you may run out to them more freely'), having a separate dwelling reduced the extent to which a missionary priest depended on noble patronage.<sup>132</sup> In October 1695, Codde kindly informed Van Dorth about the necessity to transfer Meynaerts to Amsterdam and replace him with another priest.<sup>133</sup> In this way Codde tried to ensure the nobleman's continuous support, while at the same time making it perfectly clear that the authority to appoint and transfer priests lay squarely in his own hands.

Only in particular historical circumstances did Van Neercassel and Codde slightly amend their policy. For example, in the territories occupied by French armies in the years 1672-1674, most parish churches returned to Catholic hands. In several parish churches Catholic nobles possessed legitimate rights of patronage, as the apostolic vicars themselves had argued, and were allowed to nominate Catholic priests, just as had been the case in pre-Reformation times.<sup>134</sup> Yet apart from such exceptional circumstances, Van Neercassel and Codde embraced a consistent policy – denying formal patronage rights to laypeople – that was adopted by their successors in the eighteenth century. Hence, in spite of the change in the leadership of the Mission, conflicts about patronage rights continued to occur.

### *Fragmentation*

The tensions which arose because of the contested patronage rights and the larger Jansenist controversy put a strain on the relationship between the laity and clergy of the Holland Mission, and among laypeople themselves. At several times noblemen who claimed the *jus patronatus* were harshly criticized by the apostolic vicars and felt their honour had been violated.<sup>135</sup> Van Neercassel likened the behaviour of Anthony van Lynden to that of a non-Catholic nobleman and gossiped that Floris Bam had married a 'vilis mulier' (a 'cheap woman') in Antwerp without obtaining the legally required consent of their parents. Moreover, Bam would only have constructed a 'splendid chapel' in this house so that 'he may rule similar to other nobles of this area'. In another letter, Van Neercassel claimed that Bam sought to acquire the *jus patronatus* in order to undermine the authority of other nobles in the region.<sup>136</sup> In other words, according to Van Neercassel, Bam's charade was

<sup>131</sup> HUA, OBC, inv. 358, 19 April 1689 and 17 September 1689.

<sup>132</sup> HUA, OBC, inv. 358, 2 March 1689: 'Majori enim libertate oves, Tuae te possent accedere, Tuque ad illas poses excurrere, si habitaculum ab aedibus Praenob. D[omi]ni de Varik separatum obtineres.' See also HUA, OBC, inv. 358, 17 December 1698 (to Van Dorth).

<sup>133</sup> HUA, OBC, inv. 360, 26 October 1695.

<sup>134</sup> HUA, OBC, inv. 358, 9 February 1690.

<sup>135</sup> ASDPF, SOCG, vol. 491, fols. 179v-180r.

<sup>136</sup> HUA, OBC, inv. 252, 16 February 1683 and 7 October 1683; HUA, OBC, inv. 241, 26 October 1684, 12 July 1684, and 3 May 1684; HUA, OBC, inv. 253, Copia ex Epla D De Groot... ad Illm D Cast [...]. Codde did not shy

nothing but an ill-fated attempt to mask his power politics. Van der Duyn was aggrieved by the actions of archpriest Johannes Roos, an Oratorian and Jansenist, whom he called 'hot-tempered and careless' as this priest had 'conferred' with a Protestant lawyer who had threatened the bailiff of Rijswijk that he would take the case to the provincial Court of Holland.<sup>137</sup> Although annoyed, Van der Duyn was hardly impressed and stated that Van Neercassel would certainly lose this case unless the 'placards of the land' were somehow nullified.<sup>138</sup> Like other Catholic nobles, Van der Duyn did not hesitate to invoke the laws against Catholicism and mobilize Protestant officials in order to gain the upper hand in a conflict.<sup>139</sup> Such actions indicate both the authority of the Catholic nobility and their willingness to confront and challenge the leaders of the Holland Mission.

In general, however, both the Catholic nobility and the apostolic vicars were keen to mend relations, because ultimately protracted disputes did not benefit either party. Hence in several letters to high-ranking clergymen in Rome, Van Neercassel blamed Du Bois and regular priests for inciting the nobility to claim these 'pretended' rights.<sup>140</sup> As he put it, 'the nobles were bewitched by pseudo-missionaries and animated by an impudent and deceitful text of a certain Du Bois, a professor from Louvain'.<sup>141</sup> Theodorus de Groot, the priest caught up in the conflict in Rijswijk, corroborated Van Neercassel's interpretation. According to him, Bam and Van der Duyn had acted 'at the urging of this regular, who even defames most foully and deceitfully you [Van Neercassel] and all the clergy in the Holland Mission'.<sup>142</sup> It was, of course, in the interests of Van Neercassel and his clergy to shift all the blame onto their enemies, but it also reflected a genuine wish to lead the nobility back into the bosom of the church, since Van Neercassel knew that the mission could not succeed without their support.<sup>143</sup>

The stance of the apostolic vicars and their missionaries could not conceal that the rifts in the Dutch Catholic community were real, and that they were deepening rather than healing. In spite of cases of rapprochement between Catholic nobles and apostolic vicars, when Rome suspended Codde on suspicion of Jansenism and appointed Theodorus de Cock as his successor, several Catholic nobles decided to back the latter.<sup>144</sup> Not all

away from undermining the credibility of his adversaries either: De Kok, 'De strubbelingen', 52; HUA, OBC, inv. 354, 4 May 1695 (to the Propaganda Fide).

**137** HUA, OBC, inv. 230, undated letter from N. van der Duyn. For Roos, see Ackermans, *Herders en huurlingen*, 427-428.

**138** HUA, OBC, inv. 230, undated letter from N. van der Duyn.

**139** Frenken, 'Het verzet', 242. Nicolaas van Renesse van Elderen did this as well: HUA, OBC, inv. 89, fols. 74v-75r.

**140** HUA, OBC, inv. 240, 5 November 1683 (to Casono), 22 October 1683 (to the rector of the Propaganda Fide), 26 November 1683 (to the Propaganda Fide), 26 October 1683 (to Selencensi), and 28 November 1683 (to Tanara); HUA, OBC, inv. 241, 15 June 1684 (to Tanara); HUA, OBC, inv. 252, 8 April 1683 (to Visscher); AS, NdF, vol. 74, fol. 52r.

**141** HUA, OBC, inv. 240, 7 December 1683 (to Casanata): 'Nobiles a pseudomissionarijs fascinosos, et cuiusdam Boisijs Professoris Lovaniensis impudenti mendacique scripto animatos.'

**142** HUA, OBC, inv. 253, Copia ex Ep[isto]la D De Groot [...]: 'Suasu huius Religiosi inquam, qui et Ill<sup>m</sup> D. et totum Clerum Hollandiae missinis foedissime ac mendacissime infamat.'

**143** On the manner in which Van Neercassel thought he dealt with the nobles, see AS, NdF, vol. 74, fols. 52r-53v.

**144** Including Frederik Johan van Baer, Lord of Slangenburch, the Count of Spanghen, the Baron of Valkenisse, and the Lady of Warmond: Polman, *Katholiek Nederland*, 1, 110. De Cock also sent a letter to Oswald van den

laypeople abandoned the Jansenist camp, however, and the rift amongst the clergy was replicated among the laity. Already in the 1690s several nobles around Vorden were willing to house Van Rhemmen, the Jansenist priest chased away by Hendrik van Dorth. Van Rhemmen even found refuge in the houses of some farmers, who boldly contravened the orders of their temporal lord.<sup>145</sup> By no means were the Catholic nobility and their subjects united.<sup>146</sup> As the Jansenist controversy intensified, the rifts within the Catholic community deepened even further, a process which deserves to be studied in depth but falls outside the scope of this article. Nevertheless, the conflicts regarding the *jus patronatus* offer a glimpse of the emerging factions within the Dutch Catholic community and show how the fault lines in the Holland Mission created fissures which crossed binary oppositions such as secular-regular and clergy-laity, instead causing the emergence of parties which cut across these lines.

### Conclusion

The conflicts over patronage rights reveal the dynamics between laity and clergy in the Holland Mission: in exchange for their support, Catholic laypeople expected to exercise a degree of influence over the missionary efforts. This included the appointment of priests who accorded with the type of spirituality and style of pastoral care preferred by the laity. Making use of their privileged position, the Catholic nobility thereby resorted to rights which had existed in the pre-Reformation Catholic Church and remained in force in the Dutch Reformed Church, albeit in a slightly modified form. The conflicts that emerged as a result of the claims of the Catholic nobility reveal how the two fault lines which had plagued the Holland Mission ever since its inception – the precise configuration of lay and clerical influence, and the existing spiritual and pastoral differences – played out in a particular context. On the one hand, clergy and laity vied for rights through which they could expand their influence and authority. Catholic nobles might have been partly motivated by dynastic considerations, aiming to safeguard or expand their power and autonomy as local lords. Yet for both the Catholic nobility and the apostolic vicars the defence of their rights was a balancing act: neither could afford to alienate the other party completely, dependent as they were on each other's services. The degree of lay and clerical agency in the Holland Mission was never fixed, but was rather a temporary outcome of the constant interplay between laity and clergy. This was a complex process that was influenced by a host of factors, ranging from the social standing and economic prowess of the people involved

Bergh, who had asked about the situation regarding him and Codde: Erfgoedcentrum Achterhoek en Liemers, Archief Huis Bergh, inv. 970, 8 September 1702.

<sup>145</sup> HUA, OBC, inv. 360, 30 January 1693 (to Van Ray). See also HUA, OBC, inv. 340, 22 July 1692 (from Van Rhemmen); Kok, 'De strubbelingen', 230, 232, and 237. Van Ray argued that Van Dorth also acted against members of his household who supported Van Rhemmen: 'Advertens domesticos suos, qui omnes suo pastori firmiter adhaerent, velle aliquid pecuniae contribuere, illis illud sub poena ejectionis e domo interdixit.' See HUA, OBC, inv. 341, 17 February 1693; HUA, OBC, inv. 231, 5 January 1682 (to Van Lynden).

<sup>146</sup> A number of nobles supported Van Ray or the Jansenists in general: HUA, OBC, inv. 341, 22 May 1693 (from Deventer); Polman, *Katholiek Nederland*, I, 111.



to the constantly shifting balance of power in Rome. As such, the struggles about the *jus patronatus* were part of the wider development of the (re)configuration of lay and clerical power and authority.

On the other hand, in addition to the juridical nature of these quarrels, some of them should be seen as the first adumbrations of the Jansenist controversy that would lead to a lasting schism in the Catholic Church in the Dutch Republic. Conflicts about the *jus patronatus* had clear religious dimensions as Catholic nobles and the apostolic vicars pressed for their respective candidates and thus articulated their religious preferences. These clashes serve as a sharp reminder that Catholic laypeople in the Dutch Republic chose their own sides and had a variety of means at their disposal to express their preferences. Due to their privileges and socio-economic status, the Catholic nobility enjoyed a unique and privileged position within the Dutch Catholic community. A growing number of laypeople of more modest means, however, could and did make their preferences known over the course of the first decades of the eighteenth century. This larger process of Catholic intra-confessional affiliation in the late seventeenth century and the first half of the eighteenth century has hitherto been neglected by historical scholarship, and will be the topic of my next book project.

In the end, the outcome of these conflicts did not yield a clear winner. In one of his letters to the Propaganda Fide, Van Neercassel warned that allowing patronage rights to the laity would create factions among laypeople and clergy alike.<sup>147</sup> As nobles were not granted formal patronage rights, noble power was somewhat curbed and a mission wholly dominated by the nobility did not materialize – although *de facto* Catholic nobles continued to enjoy extensive influence over the priests who worked in the areas under their control. Yet, even though the *jus patronatus* remained in the hands of the Church, the fragmentation of the Dutch Catholic community into rival camps could not be prevented, and the schism resulting from the Jansenist controversy continues to this date in the Catholic Church in the Netherlands.

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<sup>147</sup> HUA, OBC, inv. 241, 8 June 1684: 'Quod omnes Catholici tam laici, quam clerici in factiones et inimica contra se invicem studia abituri fuissent, alij alijs praefecturas animarum praeripere molientes, atque adeo omnis disciplina, omnis virtus atque religio hisce ex provincijs non post longa temporum spacia exulasset.'

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