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7. See for this and the following in more detail e.g. Daalder, 1981; Ellemers, 1967; Schöffler, 1956; I. Schöffler, Protestantism in Flux During the Revolt of the Netherlands, in: J. S. Bromley and E. H. Kossman (eds.), *Britain and the Netherlands*, vol. II, Wolters, Groningen, 1964, pp. 67-83; Schöffler, 1973.
8. Kok, 1964.
9. J. Briels, *De Zuidnederlandse immigratie 1572-1630*, Fibula-Van Dishoeck, Haarlem, 1978.
10. Cf. Lijphart, 1968-A.
11. Cf. e.g. Bakvis, 1981; Coleman, 1978; Daalder, 1981; Schöffler, 1973.
12. E.g. by Lijphart, 1968-A.
13. Cf. e.g. Brunt, 1974; P. F. Maas, *Sociaal-Democratische gemeentepolitiek in Katholiek Nijmegen 1894-1927*, Janssen, Nijmegen, 1974; Verrips, 1978.
14. Cf. Bax, 1982.
15. Cf. e.g. J. D. McCarthy and M. N. Zald, Resource Mobilization and Social Movements: A Partial Theory, *American Journal of Sociology*, vol. 82, 1977, pp. 1212-1241.
16. Cf. Ellemers, 1981.

Pillarization reconsidered*

L. Huysse

Ten to fifteen years ago questions and doubts arose with many people, both participants and social scientists, with regard to the chances of survival of the pillars in Belgium.¹ The doubts were based on two assumptions. The first one concerns the numerous signs of secularization. Among the catholic population, it was being predicted, advancing secularization would impair the 'we-feeling', and thus the texture that gave the catholic pillar its cohesion would decompose. Therefore the crumbling down of the catholic pillar seemed inevitable. Next to this it was assumed that, as a reaction, a similar development would take place on the non-catholic, formerly anticlerical, side² which could incite the demolition of the socialist and liberal pillars. The second consideration led to a similar prognosis: the school-pact³, or broader, the political truce of 1958 between catholics and non-religious groups, which had created quite a few guarantees for both groups, would, so it was expected, start a process of bilateral disarmament.

This prediction turned out to be false: the pillars remained upright, although their original philosophical-ethical value basis seemed to be largely gone. New, more accurate measurements of deconfessionalization on the one hand, of organizational pillarization on the other, did not eliminate this contradiction.⁴ The mystery remained.

Recently, the following hypothesis was presented: on the catholic side, the original religious-philosophical substratum on which the pillar rested had been replaced *in time* by another set of mainly secular values and legitimacies, better tuned to the new circumstances.⁵ That explains how the catholic pillar survived secularization. This development has been called the *secular adaptation* of the catholic symbolic universe. But through this statement doubt crept into social science circles as to the current

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theoretical approach on pillarization: how meaningful could it still be to conceive Belgian pillarization as the transformation of *religious-philosophical* diversity into social and political organization? Cannot the pillars' operation be better understood by regarding these constructs as *complex organizations tout-court*, which follow their own course and develop their own logic?⁶ Such a theory-correction, it was then suggested, might provide us with a satisfactory explanation of the paradoxical growth of the pillars in the 70s.

My intention is to explore this thesis extensively. In order to do so it is necessary to consider the religious-philosophically based pillarization of the past as a time-linked modality of a more general phenomenon. Hence the question: what are the Belgian pillars a particular case of?, or: what is the basic form of their permanent core? To answer these questions a search for the pillarization's *geno-type* is required.

In the social science literature on pillarization nearly all attention has been directed to what is considered the central feature of this phenomenon: the interweaving of *religion* or *confession* or *Weltanschauung* with the organization of *secular* activities. This is called the mingling of domains. It can be found in most definitions of pillarization, e.g. also in the classical description of the Dutch sociologist Kruyt: pillars are formed only then, when we are dealing with organizations on a *religious-philosophical* basis that serve *secular* affairs.⁷

Others, however, have pointed at a more *structural* characteristic: pillars are large organizational complexes or intricate aggregates of mutually related organizations. Here the presence of widely branched, but integrated networks draws the attention.⁸ Feature 1 (the organization of religious-philosophically based activities that are considered profane) has usually been seen as the kernel and feature 2 (the pillar as a network of organizations) the epi-phenomenon. I would like here to develop the thesis that it is better to reverse that order – not only when analysing recent evolutions, but also when studying the period of the early shaping of the pillars. This means that the *geno-type*, the lasting basic form of pillarization is: the formation of tight organizational networks in which political, professional and cultural associations and interest groups are firmly bound together. The ideological basis of the pillars (in Belgium principally religion and philosophical persuasion) is thus moved to the background in this analysis.

The origins

The historical roots of these networks reach well into the 19th century.

They are partly a product of the 'organizational revolution', that took place in Belgium, just like elsewhere in Europe, between 1880 and 1910. Historians indeed have concluded that precisely in this period (1880-1910) hundreds of political, professional and cultural associations and interest groups originated in most West-European countries. There was a 'general outburst of associability', a great eruption of corporate life.⁹

Already from the start two types are obvious in the pattern of development of the organizational revolution. In some countries, such as Belgium, we can find cross-connections growing between several organizations and associations. Clusters are formed. In Belgium this takes place around two nuclei: the catholic church on the one hand, and the socialist party on the other. In other countries, such as the Anglo-saxon and Scandinavian ones, these clusters are partly or wholly absent.

In Belgium organizational complexes thus appear, at first embryonic and from 1910 onward already to a great extent developed.¹⁰ They involve organizations promoting electoral interests (concretely: parties) or socio-economic interests (such as trade-unions, farmers' unions and so on) or operating in the social-cultural sector (youth-movements, charity organizations, newspapers and the like). Such networks therefore have, per definition, a considerable scope and reach; they extend to various social sectors.

What may be the explanation of the formation of these networks? Which factors are responsible for the genesis of what will later in time be referred to as pillars?

For Belgium the answer to these questions cannot be obtained with certainty. Historical research has shown too little interest for the genesis of pillar-networks. This is unfortunate, because it is in the history of a phenomenon's origin that its kernel may often be well observed. Therefore we will just have to do with hypotheses.¹¹

In general it may be stated that pillarization is an answer to the radical processes of social change that occur in the second half of the 19th century. For the *Church* and the *catholic community* these processes appeared in the shape of, firstly, the secularization of society and more precisely the development of the secular state; secondly: the institutionalization of class-oppositions; and thirdly: the political mobilization of groups that uptill then had been excluded from political participation. Forming a wide network of catholic associations was an obvious reaction that had its positive impact on all three processes. The secularizing effect of the state was countered by what Kossmann calls the clerical statesmanship of that time: supported by the principle of 'liberté subsidiée' (subsidized freedom), an intermediary layer of denominational organizations was laid

between state and citizens.¹² At the same time this network, as part of a broader strategy of isolation, formed a protective ring around the catholic population that could also avert other impulses of secularization, especially those coming from the new secular religion of socialism. The creation of a network of catholic associations can also be interpreted as an effort to counter the threatening reorganization and polarization of society along class lines.¹³ Finally it may be assumed that the organizational enclosure of the catholic population also served strictly political purposes. The catholic associations operated as shock-absorbers: they guaranteed safe, because delayed and controlled, absorption of hundreds of thousands of new voters into the political system.¹⁴ To the catholic elite they also served as a suitable instrument for mobilizing maximum power in the political arena.

Some of these strategies, especially the promotion of a protective isolation and the maximization of political power, can also be called upon to explain the genesis, at the end of the 19th century, of a socialist network.

A high degree of competitive associationalism forced both organizational complexes to grow.

Growth in width and depth (1920-1960)

After 1920 a new fase started in the development of pillarization. The most important feature of this episode is growth. Between 1920 and 1960 the pillars fully reveal themselves as what they really are: complex aggregates of organizations that operate in politics and in the sector of quaternary goods, in the way concerns and other large-scale industrial groups do in the economy.

Growth in width during that period can be perceived among other things in the construction of a second anticlerical, now liberal-conservative, network. Most remarkable however is the spectacular development of catholic and socialist corporate life. For describing this evolution in more than quantitative terms, adequate notions cannot, in my opinion, be sufficiently found in sociological and political science publications on pillarization. In the existing literature too much attention has been absorbed by what I have already called the other side of pillarization: namely the projection of religion/philosophical persuasion on secular activities. Nothing, however, can hold us from searching for suitable concepts and hypotheses in other sectors of social science research. For the benefit of my disquisitions I have adopted notions from what is called *institutional economics*; in this field of study historians and economists take the development of economic institutions as the subject of their analysis. Within this direc-

tion of thinking much research has been done after the genesis and evolution of large-scale industrial enterprises, here described under the name of corporations, concerns, managerial hierarchies, complex multi-company systems.¹⁵

The specific character of economic multi-company systems lies in the development of two strategies: product-diversification and vertical integration of business firms. Little imagination is needed to recognize both strategies in the behavior of the Belgian pillars.

Product-diversification occurs fairly early in the existence of the three networks, but it can be observed especially during the 50s when in the fields of public health, social work and adult education the pillars develop new organizations and services or gather existing initiatives under their umbrella. However it has been the technique of vertical integration that in three forms has had a striking impact on the Belgian pillars.

1. Vertical integration in economic institutions, according to Chandler, is '*incorporation of successive processes of production and distribution*' (p. 25). This strategy aims to integrate the units that operate in the various stages of production and distribution and to link them in a hierarchical relationship. A similar strategy may be observed in the behavior of the Belgian pillars. For a description of this we can call upon the input/output model, as it was introduced in political science by Easton and Almond.¹⁶ This model conceives the political system as an enterprise that transforms inputs (demands, claims from surrounding systems) into outputs (laws, collective goods and services). The input-activities are shaped in various phases of interest articulation and aggregation: the bringing of problems and demands on the public agenda, the translation of private troubles into public issues, the mobilization of collective pressure to enforce claims, and finally, the aggregation and ranking of demands. The output-activities are: rule-making, rule-application and rule-adjudication. In modern political systems, around each one of these 'activities' a *specialization in function* has developed; this means that in every area of input- and output-activities specialized institutions arise. A few examples may clarify this point: the media are specialized in bringing problems on the public agenda; trade-unions are mainly active in mobilizing collective pressure; public administration is charged with applying the rules and consequently, among other things, with supplying collective goods and services; courts of law are specialized in rule-adjudication. Vertical integration as a strategy of pillars, therefore, means that the networks incorporate organizations and associations in such a way that their reach covers as many stages of the political production-process as possible. Hence the integration in one network of a party, a trade-union, a farmer's union, newspapers and of private associa-

tions and organizations that, through sub-contracting, have taken over the production and distribution of collective goods and services (education, health care, social work, ...) ¹⁷ from the public authorities. Where vertical integration cannot take place through encapsulation, such as in the case of public administration, it takes place *indirectly*: e.g. through the intervention of the networks in the recruitment or promotion of public servants and judges. ¹⁸

2. Vertical integration, according to economists, occurs in a second form: *cross-connections and a hierarchical ordering* come about between the components of a multi-company system. The integrative mechanisms are based partly on financial, partly on organizational techniques (cross-participations, intersecting directorates). Again fruitful projection of these notions on the Belgian pillars is no insurmountable task. In three steps the structural features, social positions and rules of the game were created that are to make this form of vertical integration possible. Firstly, within each network separate organizations and associations (e.g. local and independent trade-unions and sick funds) were centralized into national associations. Secondly, intermediate umbrella-organizations, covering various national associations, were formed: in the catholic network they are, among others, the *Algemeen Christelijk Werkersverbond* (1921), coordinating the catholic trade-union, the national association of sick funds and of co-operative societies and several cultural associations, and since 1952 the *Inter-diocesaan Centrum*, grouping together and coordinating all catholic initiatives in the area of welfare services, education and health care (caring institutions, the catholic educational network, auxiliary services). This stepwise integration was completed by the creation of even more general umbrella-organizations: formal ones, like the *Gemeenschappelijke Actie* (an alliance between the socialist party, union, sick funds and co-operative societies) in the socialist network and the 'Agenda-committee' (that brings together the top-leaders of the major *Standen*) in the catholic pillar; informal or temporary ones, like the 'Committee for Freedom and Democracy' that co-ordinated the actions of the catholic network during the 'school-war' of the 1950s. Hierarchical integration and ordering of organizations also take place through controlled staffing of strategic positions. ¹⁹ Inside each network a few key persons cumulate crucial positions in various organizations and associations: in the party, in the sick funds, in the newspapers of the pillar and so on. Cumulation has in the past been considered too much as an inadmissible 'hoarding' of personal power, and too little as a crucial integrative technique for the benefit of the networks. ²⁰

3. In its third form vertical integration is directed *towards the members*. I can deal with this briefly. In numerous publications on the distribution of

power among elite and common citizens in a consociational democracy, it has been shown with what techniques, expressive and instrumental, the pillar-elites know how to successfully bind their followers to the course they set. ²¹

Strategies explained

What made product diversification and, especially, vertical integration so attractive to the Belgian pillars are the considerable advantages that spring from a substantial increase in organizational scale. *One* of them is: the spreading of risk. Loss of power in one area can be compensated by consolidation or gain in another area. A political party's electoral recession, for example, can be neutralized in its general implications for the network by good scores for the trade-union in the 'social elections'. ²²

How the spreading of risk operates, can be observed in the development of the catholic pillar after 1961, when electoral losses of the CVP (Christian-Democratic Party) were more or less compensated by the steady progress of the ACV (Catholic labor union) in the social elections. Such developments keep the network's overall power largely intact. A *second* scale-advantage lies in the self-sufficiency of the pillars. Nobody is obliged to leave his or her network for most of the vital provisions or services. This element causes the members to be relatively strongly bound to the network. A *third* scale-advantage shows especially from the late 50s on: the solid bindings among the pillar-organizations permit that some of them drop – without negative consequences for the whole – most of the original philosophical-ethical foundation. It suffices that a few pillar organizations maintain the original value-basis – usually this will sufficiently affect the entire network.

The growth of the Belgian pillars cannot be explained completely from their internal dynamics, however. In the 50s the networks developed a number of macro-functions that provide them in society in general, and in politics in particular, with a high degree of irreplaceability and indispensability. This promotion takes place with the development of the welfare state and can also be observed in the evolution of the rules of the political game in Belgium.

After World War II the amount of *social services* has increased considerably. Education, health care and social security probably are the most important nuclei of growth, but certainly not the only ones. Van Doorn, for the Netherlands, speaks of an 'explosion of organizational energy in the field of welfare' ²³, and in Belgium this has been no different. The develop-

ment of the welfare-state has been so stormy because, among other things, the pillars, with public funding, co-operated to the full to create these welfare-facilities. They enabled the welfare-state to break through rapidly, not in the least because collective services were usually founded in triplicate (within the catholic, the socialist and the liberal-conservative network). The gradual rise and shaping of the welfare-state therefore fully coincided at that time with the expansion of the networks. The generous policy of subsidizing by the public authorities gave strong growing-impulses to the pillars, but at the same time the networks appeared as a more or less indispensable mainstay of the welfare-state.

These networks have also come to play a major role in the production of political stability. That is their second macro-function. A political regime should be able to control its internal conflicts. If not so, it will stagger from one crisis to another and eventually collapse. Conflict-control assumes the presence of a set of rules-of-the-game, whereby things may be cooled down in times of high pressure. In the past pillarization has provided such *rules-of-the-game*.

(a) Conflicts can be controlled more easily when the sources they arise from are limited in number. In this way the unpredictability of political business diminishes. It is known from where the blows may come: one can anticipate, and head off threatening conflicts. This, in its turn, highly reduces the burden of policy that weighs on political elites. *In this sense pillarization has been effective.* Most conflicts in Belgium originated in the rivalry among the three pillars. If other problems arose, they were translated, whenever possible, into more conventional, more manageable items of policy so that they would still fit the mould of traditional Belgian opposition among catholics, liberals and socialists. If such a transformation turned out to be impossible, the awkward, disturbing dossiers were carried out of the political arena as 'false problems', 'invalid issues'.

(b) Good conflict-control not only implies knowing how to anticipate the political problems and demands that may arise. However well these political demands may be foreseen, they cannot all be dealt with simultaneously, let alone be answered. For that they are usually too numerous and too diverse. Besides, a political system's capacity to deal with them is limited. A ranking of demands imposes itself: what will be dealt with first? What will be realized to what extent? The question of what will appear on the political agenda is a crucial point in politics. In principle government and parliament must establish priorities for this. And that is what happens, but the pillars make this task easier. Each pillar spans a wide range of interest-groups, that can formulate demands which at times may also be conflicting. It is able (and often also forced) to grade packages of demands

internally. This aggregative activity makes the pillars into some kind of shock-absorbers, buffer-zones by which government and parliament arrive at conflict-control more easily.

(c) Pillarization also enables to standardize the solutions to political problems. The presence of three firmly implanted power-blocks allows for de-charging explosive issues by dismissing controversial activities in sub-contract to the pillars (e.g. the education issue). Another mechanism to solve things is buying off conflict issues by distributing scarce goods (civil service jobs, government subsidies, time on state radio and television) among the three 'political families' or networks on the basis of pacts. Both techniques lead to standard solutions that diminish the burden of policy-making, reduce the chances of conflict and enhance the chances of compromise. This all benefits political stability.

In the 50s, by the end of the period discussed here, the prestige of the pillar- or networkformula is considerable. In wide circles this institution is recognized as a splendid type of social organization and an indispensable part of the political machinery. How great this prestige then was may appear from the efforts of Belgian politicians to introduce the pillar-system in the Belgian Congo.²⁴

1960-1980

The 1960-1980 period is a third phase in the life of the networks. It is characterized by two developments: consolidation of the positions acquired and erosion of the original politico-religious foundation.

Product diversification is also after 1960 a predominant characteristic of the networks' behavior. This can be felt especially in the welfare-sector. The pillars rapidly develop new services (e.g. for the old-aged and the disabled), or occupy as fast as possible welfare services that have originated outside their range of influence (e.g. law shops that deliver legal aid to the lower classes). But once again it is the technique of vertical integration that increases the range of the networks considerably. Two political events of the 1970s are of great importance in this respect. One is the *kultuurpakt* (1972): a formal contractual agreement between the three major pillars – modelled after the school pact – that regulates the allocation of public means (civil service jobs, money) and of decision-making power in the area of cultural activities. The second is the merger-of-municipalities-operation which in 1975 reduced the number of municipalities from 2359 to 589.

A direct effect of the *kultuurpakt* is the formation of umbrella organizations that set out to co-ordinate in each network the activities of the various

social-cultural associations. The pact also accelerated a process which has been called 'reactive pillarization'²⁵: as soon as one of the pillars increases its range in the area of cultural affairs, adult education and suchlike the others have to follow; for it is impossible to communicate or conflict with another network if the general structural pattern of pillarization has not been largely taken over. With its implications for size and scale and for the degree of dependence on central authorities the merger of municipalities enabled the national pillarized networks to reproduce their structural pattern at the local level. What since 1975 has been called 'the nationalization of municipal politics' may indeed be understood as the integration of numerous local and localistic associations into the national networks. Finally, a recent expression of this undiminished urge for vertical integration is the seizing of power the Belgian pillars plan to perform in the national (state) broadcasting system.

Erosion of the original philosophical-ethical identity is a second notable characteristic in the evolution of the networks since 1960.

This transformation can be demonstrated best (and has also been studied most intensively, among others, by Dobbelaere and Billiet²⁶) in the catholic pillar. The evolution here has been described as the secular adaptation of the collective consciousness, of the 'symbolic universe', and particularly of the public rhetoric with which the existence of a catholic network is justified. Secular adaptation appears in two forms. On the one hand, the emphasis when publicly establishing strict boundaries between this pillar and the others shifted from 'catholic' via 'christian' to general values of 'common humanity', that factually belong to the heritage of the entire Western civilization and that are also acceptable to non-catholics. Secondly, as has been demonstrated by Billiet a.o., the pillarized system is now also publicly legitimized from the catholic side with arguments that include no reference whatsoever to religion, but that originate from the free market-economy rhetoric; 'it gives people a greater freedom of choice', 'it has all the benefits of private enterprises', 'it has a greater economic efficiency'. The catholic organizations' right to exist is argued thus: it is a matter of equal opportunities and free choice; moreover, a catholic school or a catholic hospital is a service to the entire community and its output is higher than that of state-run institutions.

In both other networks public references to the original philosophical (anti-clerical) foundation have diminished as well: since 1961 for the liberal pillar, after 1975 for the socialist one.

It is very doubtful now whether, with the development we have just described, we may establish the *original philosophical* foundation to be gone. If this were so, it could also be said that one modality of the network

phenomenon, viz. the philosophically founded pillars, is being replaced, after about eighty years. Then, the so-called contradictory development, dealt with at the beginning of this article (viz. the simultaneous secularization and further development of the pillars), would turn out to be a *seeming* contradiction. Secularization would then indeed have rung in the end of one modality of the network-phenomenon, after which a different modus may come to the fore. But for the time being, this conclusion is premature. There are also counter-indications: in some catholic pillar-organizations there is a new urge to re-establish strict boundaries '... by stressing typical 'catholic' ethical norms, beliefs and practices ...'.²⁷ Besides we do not know to what extent the new (more secular) themes are shared as a group-consciousness by the entire catholic population. Original attitudes may survive within the population long after the official ideology has lost its power.²⁸

Still I would like to hold on the erosion-hypothesis. An important reason for this is that this choice obliges us to look for what might be the *new* ideological profile of the networks. In short four phenomena may be pointed at that indicate in similar ways the outline of such a new basis.

1. Earlier in my article it has been said that on the catholic side public rhetorics are fed by arguments derived from free market-economy.

2. A second point: Zolberg in his study of Belgium's ethnic issue, and G. Dierickx in his analysis of changes in the rules of the political game after the school-pact, arrive at the thesis that Belgian politics evolve from a battle in an arena to competition on a market.²⁹

3. Also, numerous observers have pointed at changes in the relationship between elites and their support; clientelism is the term that characterizes this changed relationship.³⁰

4. To these shifts changes in the character of citizenship correspond: people now are less citizens than clients, they are mainly interested in politics and the state from their position as clients.

From all these views a fascinating hypothesis may be distilled: the Belgian networks partly attune their behavior to, and seek their legitimation in, the model of free market-economy. Hereby they have more than ever before come close to the phenomenon, the economic *multicompany systems*, that served as my analytic point of reference. In other words pillars have grown out to be non-economic concerns, and should be studied as such.

I am fully aware of the many questions that are still to be asked and of the many lacunes in producing empiric material. Questions such as: can cohesion between the components of a pillar-network actually be realized on a basis of impulses that originate from the model of free market-

economy? Is this tissue not too fragile? Another question is: are we about to have an irreversible evolution? Here I can already call upon the help of the French political scientist Duverger: some of his publications contain the thesis that political institutions are forced to adopt the structural pattern of economic institutions. This synchronization of political to economic organization is, according to Duverger, a constant in Western history.³¹

Epilogue

By the way of an epilogue I will – be it too briefly – check these developments with the democracy-ideals advocated by many in our community. This check may apply to the internal operation of each network, regarded separately. This is the neglected problem of internal democracy in non-profit organizations, and their controlability.³² However, I want to direct my attention fully to the strategies developed by the networks in *combined action*. For this I will once more seek my inspiration with the institutional economists.

Large-scale industries are known to develop techniques to neutralize the free market-mechanisms. These techniques are, among other things, the implantation into the market of barriers to entry; impeding quality control by clients; and introducing high costs of conversion meant to discourage a client to change over to another concern.

Again little imagination is needed to recognize similar techniques in the behavior of the pillars. Admission to the political market has been regulated in Belgium by legal, customary and informal rules-of-the-game, that have been tailored to size for the established networks or their organizations. The effects of quality control by members/clients of the networks (if they may come about at all) are limited by the inavailability of possibilities to sanction. After all, high costs of conversion are applied here too: leaving one network for another one creates a considerable administrative bother for the person involved, it may cause loss of seniority and other loyalty-bounties or endanger the security of one's own employment or that of relatives. The life of the Belgian pillars is thus colored by a variety of techniques that are used to establish oligopolies and to make cartels. And herein lie strong sources of irritation for those who believe that an open political market is conducive to democracy.

Notes

1. For a description of these doubts and questions, see Billiet, 1976-A; Fox, 1982.
2. There are several ways to name the rival groups, that built the three main pillars. There is a general agreement to call the most embracing network 'catholic'. What the two other pillars (the socialist and the liberal-conservative) have in common has been labelled: anticlericalism, anticonfessionalism, secular-philosophical persuasion, Free-Thought orientation. We will consider the three pillars as constructed on a religious-philosophical cleavage.
3. In Belgian politics conflicts between the antagonistic pillarized blocs are '... negotiated and resolved in an extra-parliamentary way, by a commission (...). (T)he result has been a 'truce' or an 'armistice' agreed upon by representatives of the principal groups involved, out of which has come a formal, contractual agreement (...) that subsequently has been written into law. Belgians call the contractual agreement a "pact"', Fox, 1978, p. 223.
4. Billiet, Dobbelaere, 1976-B.
5. Dobbelaere, Billiet, Creyf, 1978.
6. J. Billiet, On Belgian Pillarization: Changing Perspectives, in this issue of *Acta Politica*.
7. Kruyt, 1957-B.
8. Lipset, Rokkan, 1967; Lorwin, 1971.
9. Schmitter, 1979-B, p. 72.
10. Kossman, 1976, p. 369.
11. For an example of a recent historical study: Art, 1982.
12. Kossman, 1976, p. 258.
13. Lorwin, 1974-A, p. 181.
14. Lorwin, 1971, p. 147.
15. The following publications have been used: A. D. Chandler, H. Daems, (eds.), *Managerial Hierarchies. Comparative Perspectives on the Rise of the Modern Industrial Enterprise*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1980; H. Daems, *The Determinants of the Hierarchical Organization of Industry*, Working Paper 80-18, Brussels, European Institute for Advanced Studies in Management, 1980; H. Daems, *The Economics of Hierarchical Organization*, Working Paper 82-17, Brussels, European Institute for Advanced Studies in Management, 1982; H. Daems, *The holding company and corporate control*, Leiden, M. Nijhoff, 1978.
16. D. Easton, *A Systems Analysis of Political Life*, New York, Wiley, 1965; G. Almond, G. Bingham Powell, *Comparative Politics, A Developmental Approach*, Boston, 1966.
17. 'Subcontracting' as a conflict management technique has been described by Zolberg, 1977.
18. Huyse, 1974.
19. For a description of a similar development in the Netherlands: Duffhues, Felling, 1983.
20. Fox, 1978, pp. 220-221.

21. For a discussion of the literature on *verzuiling*, elite behavior and political apathy of the rank-and-file, see: Huyse, 1970.
22. Social elections are held in private enterprises every five years. Labor unions then compete for seats in, among other things, the work's councils.
23. J. A. A. van Doorn, De verzorgingsmaatschappij in de praktijk, in J. A. A. van Doorn, C. J. M. Schuyt, (eds.), *De stagnerende verzorgingsstaat*, Meppel, Boom, 1978, p. 28.
24. C. Young, *Politics in the Congo*, 1965, pp. 140-183.
25. Thurlings, 1978.
26. J. Billiet, On Belgian Pillarization: Changing Perspectives, in this issue of *Acta Politica*; Dobbelaere, Billiet, Creyf, 1978-A.
27. Dobbelaere, 1983-A, p. 27.
28. Lorwin, 1971, p. 173.
29. Dierickx, 1979-A, Zolberg, o.c.
30. B. de Clercq, De slechte staat van de verzorgingsstaat, in *Kultuurleven*, 49/8, 1982, pp. 675-689.
31. M. Duverger, *Janus, les deux faces de l'Occident*, Paris, Fayard, 1972.
32. P. J. M. van Wersch, *Democratisering van het bestuur van non-profit instellingen*, Alphen aan den Rijn, Samsom, 1979.

A first meeting of Belgian and Dutch scholars of 'verzuiling' Leuven, April 8-9, 1983

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As a subject for social research *verzuiling* has recently attracted considerable new interest, both in Belgium and the Netherlands. In the first country, the study of *verzuiling* was stimulated by the questions that arose when, in the late seventies, it became clear that twenty years of intense secularization did not bring about the demolition of the *zuilen*. It was the paradox of simultaneous secularization and further growth of the pillars that revived the interest in *verzuiling*. In the Netherlands, on the other hand, signs of an unexpected *herzuiling* brought pillarization back on the research agenda.

In line with this development, van Schendelen of the Erasmus University of Rotterdam and Huyse of the Catholic University of Leuven invited scholars from various Dutch and Flemish universities to join in a two day workshop on *verzuiling* (Leuven, April 8-9, 1983). The participants (25) were sociologists, political scientists and a few historians, who were or are all engaged in research on *verzuiling*.

The workshop participants received well in advance two readers on Belgian and Dutch pillarization (with articles and chapters, published between 1957 and 1982) and two trend reports, one by van Schendelen on the study of Dutch *verzuiling* and the other by Pijnenburg on Belgium. These documents (both readers and trend reports) proved to be very useful and made it possible to attack the subject without many of the hesitations and confusion that tend to harass conferences of this kind.

During the meetings a great variety of topics was discussed, but four became dominant: cohesion and integration in the pillar networks, the political functions of *verzuiling*, its historical origins and the problem of a relevant research agenda.

1. The cohesion and integration topic is a typical issue in the sociological approach of *verzuiling* and has a direct link with what was called the

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