
RELIGIOUS DISSIDENCE BOTH RESISTED AND PROTECTED BY POWER: THE CASE OF THE GERMAN REFORMED PIETIST MINISTER THEODOR UNDEREYCK (1635–1693)

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INTRODUCTION

Given its critical relationship with the mainstream of a religious denomination, one would expect dissident religious subcultures to be regarded by ecclesiastical and political authorities as a threat to the stability of society and the church.¹ It would be expected for the authorities to react by excluding the voice and influence of religious dissidence. However, historical examples of dissident religious subcultures show that this has not always been the case. The focus of this article will not be on the role of religion as an instrument triggering and mobilizing resistance to religious or political authorities, but on the opposite reaction: the reaction of those authorities to religious dissidence. I will consider the example of a pronounced religious dissident of the Early Modern era: German minister Theodor Undereyck (1635–1693). He was a key founder of the Reformed branch of Pietism, a dissident religious subculture in Germany.

Undereyck's case illustrates which factors influenced the reactions of the said authorities. Research into the Pietist era has often focussed on the theological and religious aspects, neglecting the political and social contexts that determine the chances of propagators of religious dissidence to attain their religious goals. Previous research into Dutch Reformed Pietist ministers in the 17th century has revealed the criticality of these factors.² With the exception of the case of a key figure in Halle Pietism,

¹ I would like to express my thanks to Alexander Thomson MA (Dordrecht, Netherlands) for revising this article.

² Cf. W. J. op 't Hof, "Het Nederlands gereformeerd Piëtisme en de Nadere Reformatie in relatie tot de (beeld)cultuur in de zeventiende eeuw", – *Documentatieblad Nadere*

August Hermann Francke (1663–1722),³ these factors have not received much explicit attention in research into Pietism. This article will show how political and social factors could hinder or further the religiously motivated goals of a Pietist such as Undereyck.

Before progressing to an analysis of Undereyck, I consider it useful to define the concepts of “religious dissidence” and “Pietism”. Dissident religious believers do not seek to conform to the prevailing cultural, social and religious norms, practices or rites of their environment, but to deviate from them. They regard this dissidence as a characteristic of true Christianity. Religious dissidents wish to distinguish themselves from an environment that they define as wicked, and aim by their way of life to reform church and society. Religious dissidence expresses itself in clothing, in forms of social intercourse and community, in a conscious bridging of class boundaries and in the rejection of mainstream cultural constructs such as opera, theatre, dancing, games and language patterns peculiar to the group, thus forming a sociolect.⁴

Reformatie, 28 (2004), 4–8; W. J. op 't Hof, “Johannes Hoornbeek als theoloog van de Nadere Reformatie in zijn betekenis voor het reformatorisch onderwijs” – *Johannes Hoornbeek. Reformatorisch onderwijs en de schat der eeuwen*, Eds. A. Moerkerken et al. (Kampen: Kok, 2009), 42–43.

³ Carl Hinrichs, *Preußentum und Pietismus. Der Pietismus in Brandenburg-Preußen als religiös-soziale Reformbewegung* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1971); Gott zur Ehr und zu des Landes Besten. *Die Franckeschen Stiftungen und Preußen. Aspekte einer alten Allianz. Ausstellung in den Franckeschen Stiftungen zu Halle vom 26. Juni bis 28. Oktober 2001*. Kataloge der Franckeschen Stiftungen, vol. 8. Ed. Thomas Müller-Bahlke (Halle: Verlag der Franckeschen Stiftungen, 2001); Johannes Wallmann, “Preußentum und Pietismus” – Johannes Wallmann, *Pietismus-Studien. Gesammelte Aufsätze II* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 362–395; Wolfgang Breul, *Generalreform. August Hermann Franckes Universalprojekt und die pietistische Neuordnung in der Grafschaft Waldeck* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, forthcoming).

⁴ Previous research has used the term “nonconformism” rather than “religious dissidence”. Cf. “Nonkonformismus” (Michael N. Ebertz) – *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche*, 3rd ed. Vol. 7. Eds. Walter Kasper et al. (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1998), 898; “Devianz” (Gerd Schwerhoff) – *Enzyklopädie der Neuzeit*. Vol. 2. Eds. Friedrich Jaeger et al. (Stuttgart etc.: Metzler, 2005), 953–956; Thomas Hase, “Criticism and Protest in 17th and 18th century Protestant Nonconformism. Religious Misfits on Church and State” – *Religion – Staat – Gesellschaft. Zeitschrift für Glaubensformen und Weltanschauungen*, 8 (2007), 237–259. Wolfgang Breul has applied the concept of nonconformism to Pietism: “Pietismus. 1. Evangelische Kirchen” (Wolfgang Breul) – *Enzyklopädie der Neuzeit*. Vol. 10 (Stuttgart etc.: Metzler, 2009), 12–17; Guido Naschert, “Breckling als Netzwerker des protestantischen Nonkonformismus” – *Friedrich Breckling (1629–1711). Prediger, »Wahrheitszeuge« und Vermittler des Pietismus im niederländischen Exil*. Eds. Brigitte Klosterberg and Guido Naschert (Halle: Verlag der Franckeschen Stiftungen, 2011), 3–18. However, the term “nonconformism” has historically carried

The term “Pietism” is generally used for the dissident religious sub-cultures in the Lutheran and Reformed⁵ confessions in German-speaking lands (and also within Lutheranism in Scandinavia) that arose in around 1670 and lasted until the end of the 18th century.⁶ However, Pietism also had parallels and connections with piety movements such as Puritanism⁷ in the English-speaking world, the Further Reformation⁸ in the Nether-

connotations that place it as a tendency within the Church of England in the 16th and 17th centuries that refused to conform to the prescriptions of the Church concerning clerical vestments and liturgy and rites, cf. John **Spurr**, *English Puritanism 1603–1689* (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 1998), 29–36. Moreover, the use of this term leaves unresolved the question of who was not conforming to whom. The term “dissidence”, accompanied by the specification “from the mainstream of a religious denomination”, is more specific.

- ⁵ Cf. Heiner **Faulenbach**, “Die Anfänge des Pietismus bei den Reformierten in Deutschland” – *Pietismus und Neuzeit*, 4 (1977/1978), 190–234; Johann Friedrich Gerhard **Goeters**, „Der reformierte Pietismus in Deutschland 1650–1690” – *Der Pietismus vom siebzehnten bis zum frühen achtzehnten Jahrhundert. Geschichte des Pietismus*, vol. 1. Eds. Martin Brecht et al. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1993), 241–277; Jan van de **Kamp**, “*auff bitte und einrahten etzlicher frommen Menschen ins hochteutsche ubersetzet*”. *Deutsche Übersetzungen englischer und niederländischer reformierter Erbauungsbücher 1667–1697 und die Rolle von Netzwerken*. Dissertation. Manuscript in the Faculty of Theology, VU University Amsterdam (Amsterdam, 2011), especially 360–361, 367–370.
- ⁶ Cf. on this and the next paragraph: Martin **Brecht** et al. (eds), *Geschichte des Pietismus*. 4 vols. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1993–2004); William Reginald **Ward**, *The protestant evangelical awakening*, (Cambridge University Press, 1992); **Ward**, *Christianity under the Ancien Régime, 1648–1789* (Cambridge University Press, 1999); **Ward**, *Early evangelicalism. A global intellectual history, 1670–1789* (Cambridge University Press, 2006); Johannes **Wallmann**, *Der Pietismus*. 2nd revised ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2005); Peter **Schicketanz**, *Der Pietismus von 1675–1800* (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlags-Anstalt, 2001); Martin H. **Jung**, *Pietismus* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 2005); Douglas **Shantz** (ed.), *Brill Companion to German Pietism 1600–1800* (in press).
- ⁷ Cf. John **Coffey** and Paul C. H. **Lim** (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to Puritanism* (Cambridge University Press, 2008).
- ⁸ Cf. Johannes van den **Berg**, „Die Frömmigkeitsbestrebungen in den Niederlanden” – *Der Pietismus vom siebzehnten bis zum frühen achtzehnten Jahrhundert*, 57–112; Fred A. van **Lieburg**, „From pure church to pious culture. The Further Reformation in the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic” – *Later Calvinism. International perspectives*. Ed. W. Fred Graham (Kirkville: Sixteenth Century Journal Publishers, 1994), 409–429; C. **Graafland**, W. J. op ’t **Hof** and F. A. van **Lieburg**, „Nadere Reformatie: opnieuw een poging tot begripsbepaling” – *Documentatieblad Nadere Reformatie*, 19 (1995), 105–184; W. J. op ’t **Hof**, „Die Nähere Reformation und der Niederländische reformierte Pietismus und ihr Verhältnis zum deutschen Pietismus” – *Nederlands archief voor kerkgeschiedenis*, 78 (1998), 161–183, there 161–180.

lands and Jansenism⁹ in the Roman Catholic Church.¹⁰

Advocates of Pietism lamented the failure of the reformation of doctrine in the 16th century to effect a reformation in Christian life. Although most churchgoers outwardly professed Christian doctrine, Pietists were convinced that most had no inward commitment to the Christian faith, and that many even acted in flagrant denial of it in their daily life. Pietists criticized this situation sharply in sermons and writings, calling for a radical conversion and urging concrete proposals for a renewal of Christian life. Their two major hallmarks are the exhortation to read and study primarily the Bible (rather than dogma-based catechisms) and their holding of devotional meetings of small groups for committed Christians to discuss passages from the Bible and devotional books.

We now come to the protagonist of this article, Theodor Undereyck.¹¹ He was born in 1635 in Altstadt, near Duisburg, the son of a wealthy trader, who was descended from 16th-century Reformed refugees from the Southern Netherlands. From 1653 onwards, Undereyck studied theology at Duisburg and made a long study tour through the Netherlands, Switzerland, France and England. In the Dutch city of Utrecht he studied under Professor of Theology Gisbertus Voetius (1589–1676), a zealous advocate of the Dutch Further Reformation movement. Undereyck attended the

⁹ Cf. Hartmut **Lehmann**, Hans-Jürgen **Schrader** and Heinz **Schilling** (eds.), *Jansenismus, Quietismus, Pietismus* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2002).

¹⁰ It is a matter of scholarly debate whether or not we may extend the term across time and space beyond these parameters, or indeed across more confessional boundaries within Protestantism. Cf. the following historiographical overviews: Jonathan **Strom**, „Problems and Promises of Pietism Research” – *Church History*, 71/3 (2002), 536–554; Hartmut **Lehmann**, „I. Einführung – Glaubenswelt und Lebenswelten”. Ed. Hartmut Lehmann. *Geschichte des Pietismus*, vol. 4. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2004), 1–18; W. J. op ’t **Hof**, *Het gereformeerd piëtisme* (Houten: Den Hertog, 2005), 17–23; Wallmann, *Der Pietismus*, 22–26; Wallmann, „Pietismusforschung. Gesamt- und übergreifende Darstellungen und Aufsatzbände (I)” – *Theologische Rundschau*, 76 (2011), 222–254; Wallmann, „Pietismusforschung. Gesamt- und übergreifende Darstellungen und Aufsatzbände (II)” – *Theologische Rundschau*, 76 (2011), 296–322; Lehmann, „Perspektiven für die Pietismusforschung” – *Theologische Rundschau*, 77 (2012), 226–240.

¹¹ Cf. Gottfried **Mai**, *Die niederdeutsche Reformbewegung. Ursprünge und Verlauf des Pietismus in Bremen bis zur Mitte des 18. Jahrhunderts* (Bremen: Verlag H.M. Hauschild, 1979), 77–115, 243–252; Do-Hong **Jou**, *Theodor Undereyck und die Anfänge des reformierten Pietismus* (Bochum: Universitätsverlag Dr. N. Brockmeyer, 1994); „Undereyck, Theodor (1635–1693)” (Rudolf **Mohr**) – *Theologische Realenzyklopädie*. Vol. 34. Eds. Gerhard Müller et. al. (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2002), 268–272; Kamp, „*auff bitte und einrahten ...*”, *passim*.

devotional meetings held by Minister Jodocus van Lodenstein (1620–1657). Moving in these circles, he experienced a religious conversion. In Leiden he studied under theologian Johannes Coccejus (1603–1669) of Bremen, who developed a theological framework known as covenant theology (*Foederaltheologie*), in which he describes the history of salvation as a succession of phases in God’s covenant with mankind. In England, Undereyck may have stayed in Puritan households.

As an ordained minister from 1660, Undereyck was in a position to apply all of the influences he had absorbed during his studies and trips. He proved to be a dissident minister who did not accept the status quo within the church but instead sought to adapt it to the norms he found that the Bible prescribed. The manner in which he did so and the reaction of ecclesiastical and political authorities to his undertakings is the topic of the following overview of his ministry.

MÜLHEIM

Undereyck began his ordained ministry in 1660 in the Reformed congregation in the city of Mülheim an der Ruhr, close to Duisburg.¹² The ruler of the territory, Count Wilhelm Wyrich von Daun-Falkenstein (1623–1682), was a Lutheran who did not wish to give much support or freedom of action to the Reformed congregation, which made up the majority of the city’s believers. Undereyck proved to be an ardent advocate of the congregation’s independence. In 1661, he submitted 25 complaints to Count Wyrich, in which he petitioned for the formation of a consistory: a board comprised of ministers and elders from among the congregation to assume responsibility for preaching, pastoral care and church discipline. Count Wyrich rejected Undereyck’s proposals. According to the Count, ministers should not be propagating new opinions and dangerous novel-

¹² Cf. on this section: Heinrich **Forsthoff**, „Theodor Under Eyck in Mülheim an der Ruhr, 1660–1668” – *Monatshefte für Rheinische Kirchengeschichte* [= MRKG], 10 (1916), 33–76; Forsthoff, „Ein verhängnisvoller Vertrag. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der reformierten Gemeinde Mülheim an der Ruhr” – MRKG, 10 (1916), 193–206; Forsthoff, „Theodor Under Eyck, der Begründer des Pietismus in der reformierten Kirche Westdeutschlands” – MRKG, 11 (1917), 289–310; Jou, *Theodor Undereyck*, 136–155; J. F. Gerhard **Goeters**, „Die Grafen von Daun-Falkenstein und ihre Bedeutung für den rheinischen Protestantismus” – *Monatshefte für Evangelische Kirchengeschichte des Rheinlandes*, 61 (2012), 21–36.

ties, nor should they generate bitterness within the church. As the congregation's patron, Count Wyrich permitted only churchwardens known as *Kirchen-Adjunkten*, whom he personally appointed.¹³

Throughout 1662 and 1663, a power struggle raged between Count Wyrich, who ruled the House of Broich, and the Roman Catholic Count Moritz von Limburg-Styrum (1634–1664), who was subordinate to Philipp Wilhelm (1615–1690), the Roman Catholic Count of Pfalz-Neuburg. Undereyck was suspended from office for nine months because both houses claimed the right of patronage for his parish. The conflict ended with a compromise: Undereyck was invited by Styrum to accept the position of minister, but was also appointed Minister of Broich.

After this patronage conflict had been resolved, a consistory headed by Undereyck was eventually established in 1663. Faced with the great lack of doctrinal knowledge among many of his congregants, he undertook several measures: the intensification of catechism for the youth; the introduction of public catechism for the whole congregation; the division of the congregation into four neighbourhoods; ministers' home visits to congregation members prior to holy communion to examine whether they were leading a real Christian life; and finally a strict exercise of church discipline.

Count Wyrich was very dissatisfied by the fact that the consistory was exercising discipline over its members, and prohibited this under threat of a fine, but the consistory continued regardless. Finally Wyrich dissolved the consistory in 1667. Undereyck appealed to a higher authority, the Government of Brandenburg at Kleve. Count Wyrich called Undereyck's complaints false accusations and charged him with the introduction of forbidden novelties, "English Quakerism" ("englischer quaeckerey"),¹⁴

¹³ These *Kirchen-Adjunkten* had the right to propose candidates for the ministry, but Wyrich reserved the right of appointment exclusively to himself, cf. Jou, *Theodor Undereyck*, 143–144.

¹⁴ Jou, *Theodor Undereyck*, 150. The Quakers (Religious Society of Friends), that was founded in England at the end of the Civil War (1642–1651), constructed a denominational identity upon the teaching of George Fox (1624–1691). The Quakers insisted on going further in the purification of the Church of England than the Puritans. The term "Quaker" refers to the bodily quaking of the adherents of the movement when they said they experienced the power of the Holy Ghost falling on them. According to the Quakers, everyone has direct access to the Holy Ghost. The Quakers refused to pay tithes (church taxes), to swear oaths or to serve in the army. They were convinced that all people are socially equal: "Quäker" (W.A. **Cooper**) – *Theologische Realenzyklopädie*,

the changing of the existing order for his own satisfaction, and of fomenting grievance, temptation and unrest.

The intervention of the Government of Brandenburg in 1668 required Count Wyrich to acknowledge the independence of the congregation. However, in June 1668, Undereyck received an invitation from Countess Hedwig Sophie of Hesse-Kassel (1623–1683) to serve as a minister, which he accepted. The Countess was a sister of Friedrich Wilhelm of Brandenburg (1620–1688), known as the Great Elector for his important role in European politics.¹⁵

KASSEL

An ardent adherent of the Reformed faith, Countess Hedwig Sophie had an anti-Lutheran inclination.¹⁶ The Countess had an interest in Puritanism and the Further Reformation: her library contained many German translations of books from these movements. This did not imply that she actually practised a fully Pietistic lifestyle, as she followed the latest fashions and did not reject dancing.

Current research on Undereyck posits that he was not an ordinary, but an extraordinary chaplain at the court of Hesse-Kassel. In that office, which he held from 1668 until 1670, he had the leisure to produce a compilation of quotations in defence of his style of devotion, against all of the mockery of nominal Christians, as a living and powerful religion. The title was derived from Revelation 3:14–22 – *Christi Braut, unter den Töchtern zu Laodicea* (The bride of Christ [the true Christians, JvdK] among the daughters of Laodicea [nominal Christians, JvdK]). Undereyck derived the quotations in this work from Scripture and older and more recent

vol. 28 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1997), 35–41. Quakerism may have been associated by Wyrich with the disruption of the dominant social and political order.

¹⁵ Another request in the grievances submitted by Undereyck concerned the obtaining of authorisation to send deputies to the *classis* of Duisburg, the regional gathering of deputies of all Reformed congregations. Initially Wyrich only granted the congregation the right to deliberate with and correspond with the *classis*. Only in 1667 did the ministers of Mülheim receive authorisation to be deputed to *classes* and to the church consultations of larger territories, the synods, cf. Jou, *Theodor Undereyck*, 144–145.

¹⁶ Cf. on this section: Mai, *Die niederdeutsche Reformbewegung*, 89–90; Jou, *Theodor Undereyck*, 156–163; Kamp, “*auff bitte und einrahten ...*”, 69–71.

theological works, mostly from Puritan and Further Reformation writings. The book was published in 1670 at Hanau in Hesse.

BREMEN

In April 1670 Undereyck was invited to serve as Pastor primarius (first minister) of St Martin's in the merchant city of Bremen in northern Germany.¹⁷ There must, then, have been receptive ground for Undereyck's Pietistic views among the members of the congregation.¹⁸ Undereyck's colleagues, however, suspected him of heterodoxy.

Almost immediately upon his arrival, in July 1670, Undereyck was interrogated by the board of ministers of the city, the *geistliches Ministerium* (Spiritual Office). The ministers of the city suspected Undereyck of being a follower of Jean de Labadie, the Wallonian Reformed minister at Middelburg in the Netherlands,¹⁹ (1610–1674). De Labadie had established home devotional meetings, which eventually separated from the church, and was later stripped of his license to perform sermons. The suspicions expressed by Undereyck's colleagues may have been caused by the fear that Undereyck's ministry in Bremen would lead to a separation from the established Bremen church similar to that occasioned by Labadie. Undereyck denied that he had ever spoken to de Labadie, but doubts lingered. Undereyck's calling was confirmed only when, at the insistence of the congregation of St Martin's, the City Council ordered the Ministerium to do so. Quarrels had raged between the Ministerium and the City Council since the middle of the 17th century: both boards sought full control over the church. Each congregation was allowed to call its own ministers; the Ministerium was only entitled to examine

¹⁷ Cf. on this section: J. Friedrich **Iken**, *Joachim Neander. Sein Leben und seine Lieder* (Bremen: Müller, 1880), 61–76, 272–279; Otto **Veeck**, „Die Anfänge des Pietismus in Bremen” – *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte*, 25 (1904), 291–307; Mai, *Die niederdeutsche Reformbewegung*, 90–111, 243–251; Jou, *Theodor Undereyck*, 164–176; Kamp, „auff bitte und einrahten ...”, 70–79.

¹⁸ Goeters may well be correct in concluding that Undereyck was called to Bremen by the congregation of St Martin's with the deliberate aim of reforming the church: „Undereyck ist offenbar mit kirchlichen Reformabsichten nach Bremen berufen worden”, Goeters, „Der reformierte Pietismus in Deutschland 1650–1690”, 254.

¹⁹ Cf. T. J. **Saxby**, *The quest for the new Jerusalem. Jean de Labadie and the Labadists, 1610–1744* (Dordrecht etc.: Nijhoff, 1987); Daniel **Vidal**, *Jean de Labadie, (1610–1674). Passion mystique et esprit de réforme* (Grenoble: Millon, 2009).

ministers whose appointment had already been voted on. The vocation ultimately had to be ratified by the City Council.²⁰

Soon after their arrival, Undereyck and his wife began offering devotional meetings and catechism classes for various groups on Sundays and during the week. Undereyck organized meetings for young men; his wife, Margaretha Hüls (1633–1691), for girls and young women. At these devotional meetings members jointly discussed passages from the Bible. During these gatherings, people from across all social classes came together and discussed with each other in an uninhibited manner. The meetings were very popular with the townsfolk and were also visited by students.

In 1671, two proposals were raised within the Ministerium to introduce catechetical instruction, both for the youth (as preparation for their attendance at Holy Communion) and for the broader congregation. The instruction for the whole congregation was proposed to be held once a week in place of prayer meetings. Both proposals were accepted. Although Undereyck did not himself submit these proposals, he might have initiated the ideas.²¹

As a Reformed minister, Undereyck considered it a duty of government to further the kingdom of Jesus Christ, and he addressed the authorities accordingly.²² Undereyck and those ministerial colleagues who

²⁰ Cf. Ruth **Prange**, *Die bremische Kaufmannschaft des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts in sozialgeschichtlicher Betrachtung* (Bremen: Schünemann, 1963), 173; Goeters, „Der reformierte Pietismus in Deutschland 1650–1690“, 254; Herbert **Schwarzwälder**, *Das Große Bremen-Lexikon*, 2nd revised ed., vol. 2 (Bremen: Edition Temmen, 2003), 65.

²¹ Gottfried Mai, however, thinks that the aim of the Ministerium in introducing this catechetical instruction for the whole congregation was to take the wind out of the sails of Undereyck's devotional meetings, cf. Mai, *Die niederdeutsche Reformbewegung*, 98.

²² For rulers and governors – as for all people – God should be the highest goal. They are to deny themselves, glorify God and serve the expansion of God's kingdom. This command applies in even greater measure to Protestant rulers and governors, because they have received God's revelation in its full clarity. They should not, however, use coercion, but persuade their subjects in an affectionate manner, cf. Theodor **Undereyck**, *Christi Braut, unter den Töchtern zu Laodicæa, das ist, ein hochnötiger Tractat, in diesen letzten Tagen. Darinnen die lebendige Krafft deß seeligmachenden Glaubens von allen Schmach-Reden der in dieser Zeit Christ-scheinender Spötter ... gereinigt und vertehädiget wird* (Hanau, Johann Ingebrand, 1670), vol. 1, [(8r)-2](1r, 96; Undereyck, *Halleluja, das ist, Gott in dem Sünder verkläret. Oder, des Sünders Wanderstab zur Erkänntnis, Geniessung, und Verklärung Gottes, alß des Höchsten Gutes*, vol. 1 (Bremen: Jakob Köhler, Hermann I. Brauer, 1678), 458; Undereyck, *Der närrische Atheist, entdeckt und seiner Thorheit überzeuget* (Bremen, Hermann Brauer 1689), [(7v)-2](3r-v, 3)(2r-3)(3r, 598–600. Undereyck dedicated his catechism *Der einfältige Atheist* to Bremen councillors Werner Köhne and Heinrich Klugkist with the request that they commend the work to

shared his views may have submitted individual reform proposals before then. Some proposals by the ministers have been found in the minutes of the City Council, submitted in 1673, in which they proposed that ministers should have the right to abridge the prescribed form of prayer for the next day of penitence and to choose an alternative Bible passage to the set text. They also urged measures against cursing, swearing and desecration of the sanctity of Sunday to be enforced.²³

In 1679, together with his pupil and colleague Cornelius de Hase, he submitted a comprehensive church reform programme to the presiding mayor of the city, Johann Harmes, a friend of Undereyck's. Undereyck and de Hase made three main requests in this manifesto: the right not to admit non-believers to holy communion;²⁴ not to admit to baptism the children of non-practising parents; and the establishing of a presbytery (college of elders) to be responsible for church discipline, particularly in regard to the villagers surrounding Bremen. The reform programme was not accepted by the City Council, which considered the changes too harsh and feared that its implementation would lead to opposition or unrest. Only Undereyck's request to abolish the *Beichtpfennig* (confession penny), which he argued was a vestige of Roman Catholicism, was

the lower orders. In doing so, they would further the eternal and temporal welfare of their subjects, cf. Undereyck, *Der einfältige Christ* (Bremen: Hermann I. Brauer, 1681), pi2r. Undereyck dedicated his last work, *Der närrische Atheist*, to three rulers, Friedrich III of Brandenburg, Karl of Hesse and Georg Ludwig of Braunschweig-Lüneburg. He urged them to further the kingdom of Christ as rulers and to recommend the book as a means of combating atheism, cf. Undereyck, *Der närrische Atheist*, [] (2r) - [3] (8r).

²³ Cf. Kamp, "auf bitte und einrahten ...", 74.

²⁴ Undereyck would have classified believers and unbelievers according to his definition of true faith: the prevalence in an individual of love of God above love of the world. He acknowledges that true believers have their weaknesses. However, according to Undereyck the inner spiritual life should express itself in deeds: right prayer, the avoidance of *adiaphora* (things that are not sinful in themselves but become sinful under certain circumstances, e.g. extravagance in home furnishing, food, clothes and jewelry; dancing, theatre, card-playing, wigs, make-up), and in self-denial, wise conduct as a guest at wedding receptions and dinners, and avoidance of even the least sins, cf. Undereyck, *Christi Braut*; Undereyck, *Hallelujah*, 207–600. Nevertheless, Undereyck emphasised that he was not implying that man can make an entirely reliable judgement on the inward state of others: according to him, only God can do that. People have to judge the inward state by gauging the exterior. They are obliged to judge this through evidence provided in Scripture: the zealous attendance of church services, the use of the sacraments, the ability to live in peace with one's fellow men, a greater desire to talk about spiritual than about worldly matters, loyalty to those in authority over the church, edification of one's neighbours, and Christian charitable giving. Cf. Undereyck, *Christi Braut*, vol. 3, 165–171.

accepted by the council, and that only in 1684.²⁵

From late March 1671 Undereyck's colleagues, acting collectively in the Ministerium and rallied by the second minister at St Martin's, Johann Hildebrandt, attacked Undereyck's devotional meetings. From 1674 until 1681 they brought other complaints against Undereyck. Firstly, they charged that Undereyck would not accept the authority of the Ministerium, nor did he yield to its decisions. Secondly, they criticized his devotional meetings, at which his wife, a handmaid, and a servant held examinations in preparation for participating in Holy Communion. According to the Ministerium, these large groups were causing a public sensation and leading to neglect of jobs and housekeeping, pride on the part of the participants, and condescension towards non-participants. Thirdly, Undereyck's colleagues condemned his maverick behaviour in regard to sacramental and liturgical forms: his independent selection of the Bible passages for days of prayer, his habit of not elevating the bread and wine at Holy Communion,²⁶ his odd manner of prayer, praying extempore without

²⁵ Undereyck also had partial success in the founding of a school in Rablinghausen, attached to St Martin's church, to mitigate the lack of local education in general and religious education in particular. Undereyck managed to raise the requisite funds and construction began. However, the city council claimed the right to oversee the construction process and Undereyck had to withdraw from the project, cf. Mai, *Die niederdeutsche Reformbewegung*, 109–110; Jou, *Theodor Undereyck*, 173–174.

²⁶ Gottfried Mai summarizes the minutes from the Ministerium as follows: "Er [Undereyck, JvdK] konsekrierte nicht Wein und Brot, sondern lasse sie bei den Einsetzungsworten hinter seinem Rücken stehen", cf. Mai, *Die niederdeutsche Reformbewegung*, 102. In this case "not consecrating" probably refers to not elevating the elements of the Holy Communion. The reason that Undereyck did not elevate the communion bread and wine may have been that he viewed this custom as a Roman Catholic usage (the Adoration of the Host). Non-elevating the elements may have been practiced among some of the followers of Calvin and Melancthon. According to Albrecht Peters, they feared the elevation of the elements because of their feared the adoration thereof. Instead they emphasized the spiritual character of the Holy Communion, cf. „Abendmahl III/4. Von 1577 bis zum Beginn des 20. Jahrhunderts“ (Albrecht **Peters**) – *Theologische Realenzyklopädie*, vol. 1. Eds. Gerhard Krause and Gerhard Müller (Berlin/New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1977), 131–145, there 132–133. In the Church of England the elements were not elevated (*The order of communion*, 1548), cf. „Abendmahlsfeier III. 16. bis 19. Jahrhundert“ (Alfred **Niebergall**) – *Theologische Realenzyklopädie*, vol. 1., 287–310, there 296. In the 17th century elevation of the elements was even dismissed in many German Lutheran territories, cf. „Abendmahlsfeier III. 16. bis 19. Jahrhundert“, 300. See further for Protestant communion liturgies in Early Modern times: Irmgard **Pahl** (ed.), *Coena domini I. Die Abendmahliturgie der Reformationskirchen im 16./17. Jahrhundert* (Freiburg, Switzerland: Universitäts-Verlag, 1983); „Die Eucharistie“ (Hans-Christoph **Schmidt-Lauber**) – *Handbuch der Liturgik. Liturgiewissenschaft in Theologie und Praxis der Kirche*, 3rd rev. ed., Eds. Hans-Christoph Schmidt-

using the fixed service and changing the baptismal liturgy. Fourthly, they complained that he spoke publicly from the pulpit about his conflict with the Ministerium. Fifthly, they censured Undereyck's attraction of members of other parish churches away from their appointed ministers by expressing the opinion that everyone may attend the minister by whom he may be best served. Finally, Undereyck's colleagues denounced the distinction that Undereyck maintained between regenerate and unregenerate ministers, whose ministry he insisted would not be blessed. Undereyck's colleagues may also have feared social unrest. Undereyck's opponents blamed three tragic events in the community on the frightening effect of Undereyck's sermons. Two young people committed suicide out of terror at their own sinfulness, which the detractors alleged had been caused by Undereyck's sermons. They likewise claimed that a third person, a man who temporarily became mentally ill, had been terrified by Undereyck's preaching.

To have its complaints about Undereyck scrutinised, the Ministerium had to submit them to the City Council. The Council, however, found in the Pietist minister's favour or even defended his actions. The Councillors, presided over by the aforementioned Mayor Harmes, referred to the popularity and pious fruits of Undereyck's devotional meetings. The Ministerium should be reconciled to Undereyck and hold a fraternal communion with him. Undereyck, for his part, should temper his language so as to avoid arousing fresh distrust. The Ministerium expressed its annoyance that the Council was protecting and supporting a dissident minister such as Undereyck. It was ruled that both parties should reconcile. In 1681 the council indeed forced them to do so. Undereyck was required to yield to the authority of the Ministerium. He should not continue his devotional meetings unless they had been drawn up in accordance with the Ministerium's stipulation. The council gave Undereyck's wife permission to continue her meetings with those churchgoers who were members of her own parish church.

The parish of St Stephen's in Bremen had a vacancy in 1681 and a new minister was due to be appointed. At Undereyck's recommendation, the Pietistic wing of the congregation wanted to issue an invitation to Minister Jacob Lehnhoff from Wesel. The orthodox wing of the congregation resisted. Both parties sought the support of the City Council. This led to

Lauber, Michael Meyer-Blanck and Karl-Heinrich Bieritz (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2003), 207–246, there 221–227.

great quarrels and ultimately to the appeal of both parties to the Imperial Court (Reichshofrat) in Vienna. The dispute was only resolved in 1683. Undereyck continued his ministry in Bremen until his death on the 1st of January 1693.

DISCUSSION

The case of Theodor Undereyck shows that religious dissidence was not and is not universally opposed by ecclesiastical and political authorities. The manner in which these authorities reacted to Undereyck's dissident views, practices and proposals differed from one territory to another and depended on a range of factors.

In Mülheim, Undereyck's dissidence was opposed by Count Wyrich of Broich. The reasons for his resistance may be characterized as religious, political and social. As a Lutheran, the Count was no friend of the Reformed parish. He regarded the establishing of a consistory and its devotional programme to be dangerous novelties. Undereyck's request to set up a consistory to govern the congregation and exercise discipline was regarded by Wyrich as a threat to his own ecclesiastical authority. Finally, the count feared that Undereyck's dissident views would destabilize church and society.

The power struggle between the houses of Broich and Styrum ruled out Undereyck's candidacy as minister for some time. This does not, however, seem to have specifically concerned Undereyck's being a dissident minister; even Establishment-minded ministers would probably have found themselves entangled between these competing powers. Also, Undereyck was able to invoke the higher authority of the Government of Brandenburg at Kleve to force the lower-tier authority of the Count to concede.

The court at Kassel offered Undereyck refuge. The reason that Countess Hedwig Sophie invited Undereyck to become her minister might have been particularly religious, given her interest in English and Dutch Reformed devotional literature. While serving as a private chaplain gave Undereyck some relief, from the Countess's side it was probably the extraordinary nature of this clerical office that prompted her to offer it, for fear that his installation in a regular parish might have discredited her.

Bremen was the city in which Undereyck could most freely implement

his dissident views and practices. It was also where he met with the most resistance, at least from his ministerial colleagues (this was not the case in Mülheim). On the other hand, he was protected and supported by some members of the City Council. This fact was known to the public at large, and even to Philipp Jakob Spener (1635–1705), the initiator of German Lutheran Pietism.²⁷ There were, however, other members of the City Council who did not support Undereyck or his adherents.²⁸

We will now examine the reasons for which ecclesiastical and political authorities in Bremen either resisted or supported Undereyck. The motivations of other groups within church and society and Undereyck's strategic means of garnering support fall beyond the scope of this article.

The reasons for which the Ministerium resisted Undereyck appear to have been both religious and social. Firstly, his opponents may have considered Undereyck's views, preaching and practices to be strange and heterodox due to their deviation from mainstream theological opinions and practices. Secondly, they may have feared that his activities, like his devotional meetings, might lead to divisions and conflicts within congregations between mainstream believers and Pietists, or even to schisms. Thirdly, events such as the two suicides and the episode of mental affliction may have caused Undereyck's colleagues to fear unrest within church and society. Fourthly, Undereyck's colleagues may have experienced severe competition from Undereyck and may have feared for their own offices within the church in Bremen: Undereyck and his adherents might (these detractors may have thought) have been able and minded to do their utmost to replace them with men of Undereyck's persuasions.

That the political authorities of a city – the council of Bremen – protected and even partially supported Undereyck as an ordinary minister in

²⁷ In 1677 Spener wrote in a letter to Caspar Hermann Sandhagen: „Ach wolte Gott! wir könten die sache in solcher freyheit und mit solcher erbauung thun / wie ich vernehme / daß der reformirte prediger in Bremen Herr Under Eyck seine übungen haben solle ... So höre / daß er viele in dem Magistrat habe / so sein löblich vorhaben foviren / obwol seine Collegae nicht am besten mit ihm stehen ...“, cf. Wallmann, „Lutherischer und reformierter Pietismus in ihren Anfängen. Zwei unbekannte Briefe von Johann Jakob Schütz an Cornelius de Hase in Bremen“ – *Standfester Glaube. Festgaben zum 65. Geburtstag von Johann Friedrich Gerhard Goeters*. Ed. H. Faulenbach (Köln: Rheinland-Verlag; Bonn: Habelt, in Kommission, 1991), 181–190, there 183–184.

²⁸ During the disunity over the calling of a new minister at St Stephen's in Bremen, some members of the City Council supported the Pietistic wing of the church, and others the orthodox wing: cf. Mai, *Die niederdeutsche Reformbewegung*, 244–247.

his conflict with the Ministerium seems remarkable when compared with the resistance of Count Wyrich at Mülheim. There may have been a combination of reasons for the City Council to protect and support Undereyck.

Firstly, the council's stance may be explained as the result of a power struggle between itself and the Ministerium. Both authorities contested the other's authority over the church. Undereyck's defiance of the Ministerium and of its sacramental and liturgical prescriptions may have been welcomed by the City Council, which might have seen an opportunity to use Undereyck as an instrument to extend its own control over the church. Undereyck could profit from the power struggle between two local authorities: he could appeal to the authority most favourable to him for help and support.

Secondly, Mayor Harmes and other councillors were in agreement with Undereyck's dissident notions. When in 1671 a new minister was due to be called to St Paul's Church in the new district of Bremen (Neustadt), it was candidates who were concordant with Undereyck's dissident notions who received most of the votes.²⁹ The fact that Harmes was mayor in the years when the conflict between Undereyck and the Ministerium was at its height was very favourable to Undereyck. One example is that Harmes as Mayor favoured the Pietistic wing of St Stephen's Church during the disputes about the vocation of a new minister.³⁰

Thirdly, the council might have been motivated by economic considerations. Support for Undereyck, who had been influenced deeply by streams including English Puritanism, might have been a factor conducive to trade with England and with the English traders of the Merchant Adventurers' Company³¹, which had staple towns in the nearby cities of Stade and Hamburg. The company's membership included Puritan traders.³² The city of Bremen was keen to enforce its economic strength against

²⁹ Cf. Kamp, "auff bitte und einrahten ...", 72–73, 394–395.

³⁰ Cf. Mai, *Die niederdeutsche Reformbewegung*, 246–247.

³¹ Cf. Wolf-Rüdiger **Baumann**, *The Merchants Adventurers and the Continental Cloth-trade (1560s–1620s)* (Berlin/New York: De Gruyter, 1990).

³² Cf. Hans-Jürgen von **Witzendorf**, „Bremens Handel im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert“ – *Bremisches Jahrbuch*, 44 (1955), 128–174, there 145–147; Wilhelm **Lühns**, *Die Freie Hansestadt Bremen und England in der Zeit des Deutschen Bundes (1815–1867)* (Bremen: Dorn; self-published, 1958), 121; Prange, *Die bremische Kaufmannschaft*,

Hamburg and Stade, which were stronger trading partners of England.

Fourthly, social factors may also have driven the City Council to protect and support Undereyck. The council may have considered the devotional meetings and catechism classes that Undereyck and his wife organized as an instrument to keep young people from indolence and criminality and a means to make them committed members of church and society. In this way, Undereyck's meetings could have helped reinforce social stability.

Another social factor might have been Undereyck's high social class. Further research should be performed to investigate the social origin of the other ministers of Bremen to determine whether Undereyck had a higher social standing than them, but the fact that Undereyck was descended from a wealthy merchant family must have given him a favourable status among the patricians and traders who made up the city council. Research into the Dutch Further Reformation has shown that dissident ministers of high social origin who were connected with members of political authorities had the best chances of advancing their reformation aims. One example is the father of the Further Reformation, Willem Teellinck (1579–1629), who came from a patrician family and enjoyed the support of his brother Eeuwout (1571–1629) for his reform programme in Zeeland. Eeuwout held high offices in the States, the provincial government of Zeeland.³³

Another example is the minister Jodocus van Lodenstein in Utrecht, whose devotional meetings Undereyck had attended as a student. Lodenstein was able to survive as a dissident minister because he belonged to the patrician class. This is all the more remarkable since Lodenstein's dissident views and practices were radical: he changed the order of service

37–38; Kamp, "auff bitte und einrahten ...", 61–62. One example of a Puritan trader of the Merchant Adventurers is Emanuel Thomson, who lived in Stade and translated Edmund Bunny's (1540–1619) *A Book of Christian Exercise, appertaining to Resolution* into German (1612): cf. Karl Josef Hölzgen, "Die Lösung des alten Rätsels: Emanuel Sonthom, das Güldene Kleinod und das englische Original" – *Anglia*, 100 (1982), 257–272; Edgar C. McKenzie, *British devotional literature and the rise of German Pietism*. Dissertation. Manuscript in the Faculty of Theology at the University of St. Andrews (St. Andrews 1984), vol. 1, 177–181; Udo Sträter, *Sonthom, Bayly, Dyke und Hall: Studien zur Rezeption der englischen Erbauungsliteratur in Deutschland im 17. Jahrhundert* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1987), 67–76.

³³ Cf. Hof, *Eeuwout Teellinck. Leven, werk en betekenis* (Rumpt: De Schatkamer, 1999); Hof, *Willem Teellinck*.

for baptism and in the last years of his life refused to issue communion to his congregation, considering many members unworthy. Lodenstein was able to avoid dismissal from his office thanks to his powerful relations, who were able to protect him.³⁴

A comparison with a Dutch dissident minister from the lower social orders bears out the class-differentiation hypothesis. The low-born minister Jacobus Koelman (1632–1695) had similar views and practices to Lodenstein's. He drew freely on the orders of service for baptism, Holy Communion and marriage, and rejected Christian holy days, considering them not to be divine ordinances. However, unlike Lodenstein, he suffered dismissal as minister of the town of Sluis in Zeeland-Flanders in 1675 by the States of the Province of Zeeland and the States-General of the Netherlands.³⁵

W.J. op 't Hof points out two factors that brought about the situation that Dutch Further Reformation ministers who hailed from the higher social classes were protected from dismissal from office. First, these men were able to sense the nuances of the position and the mindset of the politicians. Second, their high social origin gave them more boldness in any confrontation with political authorities over controversial issues concerning the renewal of church and society.³⁶

It should be emphasized in closing that the support of the ecclesiastical and political authorities for such dissident ministers was only partial. Only the minor points of Undereyck's reform programme of 1679 were accepted by the City Council.

³⁴ Cf. Pieter Jzn. **Proost**, *Jodocus van Lodenstein. Eene kerkhistorische studie* (Amsterdam: Brandt en Zoon, 1880); J. C. **Trimp**, *Jodocus van Lodensteyn. Predikant en dichter* (Kampen: De Groot Goudriaan, 1987); Carl J. **Schroeder**, *In quest of Pentecost. Jodocus van Lodenstein and the Dutch Second Reformation* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2001).

³⁵ Cf. A. F. **Krull**, *Jacobus Koelman. Eene kerkhistorische studie* (Sneek: Campen, 1901, reprint Amsterdam: Bolland, 1972); F. A. van **Lieburg**, „Jacobus Koelman (1631–1695): jeugd en studietijd” – *Figuren en thema's van de Nadere Reformatie*, vol. 2. Eds. T. Brienen et al. (Kampen: De Groot Goudriaan, 1990), 57–62; C. J. **Meeuse**, „Jacobus Koelman (1631–1695): leven en werken” – *Figuren en thema's*, 63–93; Meeuse, *Koelman* (Kampen: De Groot Goudriaan, 2008); Hof, „De Nederlandse vertalers van het oeuvre van Christopher Love” – *Nederlandse liefde voor Christopher Love (1618–1651). Studies over het vertaalde werk van een presbyteriaanse puritein*. Ed. W.J. op 't Hof and F.W. Huisman (Amstelveen, EON Pers, 2013), 235–292, there 237–268.

³⁶ Hof, „Johannes Hoornbeeck als theoloog van de Nadere Reformatie”, 43.

The ministry of Theodor Undereyck offers an appropriate case-study to determine how dissident religious views and practices were received by early modern ecclesiastical and political authorities. Undereyck held the view that only a few rulers and governors truly held God as their highest goal, and that few of the potentates were real Christians. Though they outwardly fulfilled their religious duties, they did not love God more than the world or themselves. Undereyck counted them as practical atheists.³⁷ There appears to be a tension between Undereyck's view of the majority of the political authorities and his strategic use of their support for his religious aims. Further research is needed to gain a fuller understanding of this tension and of the chances of success enjoyed by propagators of religious dissidence such as Undereyck. In terms of methodology, such an investigation should bring together the mapping of the religious, cultural, political, social and economic contexts in which religious dissidence manifested itself, as well as reconstructing networks of supporters and opponents³⁸ of propagators of religious dissidence from within ecclesiastical and political government and wider society.

³⁷ Cf. Undereyck, *Der närrische Atheist*, 596–612.

³⁸ I sought to begin this task by reconstructing the possible supporters and opponents of the vocation of Undereyck's adherent Johannes Duysing (1644–1673) in 1671 as new minister of Bremen's St Paul's Church, Kamp, "*auff bitte und einrahten ...*", 72–73, 394–395. Further investigation is needed to map out the social and genealogical connections of members of the Bremen city council to Undereyck and his adherents in the period from 1670 until 1693 and to determine the religious views of these city council members.