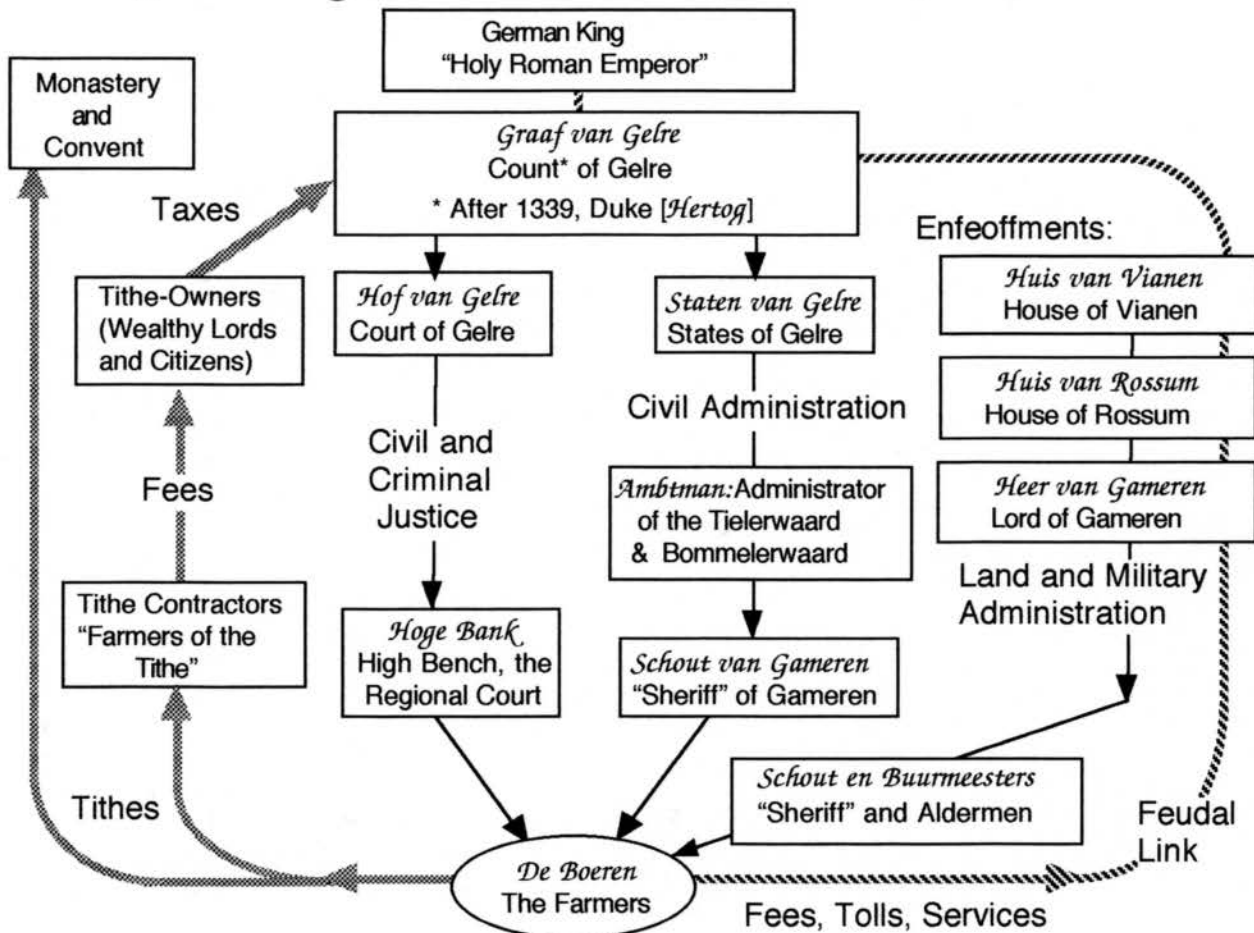


Appendix 3:

***Governing Gameren
In Feudal Times
And After the
Protestant Reformation***

Governing the Medieval Gameren Farmer



In practice, the system governing the people of the Bommelerwaard was incredibly complicated and intertwined, as shown by the following mini-genealogy of the Lords of Gameren, which illustrates the sometimes complex relationship between ecclesiastical, administrative, and political branches of the power structure :

In 1365, Agnes, widow of Herman Pieck, was granted the *heerlijkheid* [manorial rights] of Gameren, which added to her family's holdings in the Tielerwaard, north of the Waal. Two years earlier, her daughter Elizabeth, married to William of Heukelom, had been granted the *church* of Gameren, along with half its *tithes*. In 1379, Elizabeth - then called *Lady of Gameren* - acquired rights to the *mill*. By 1428 her manorial rights had passed to her nephew or grand-nephew Franck Pieck, a nobleman and soldier who, in 1418, had been commander of the *army of Duke Reinald of Gelre*. In 1421, Franck Pieck was made *Ambtman* of the Tieler- and Bommelerwaard, and in 1465 inherited the *mill* of Gameren [Lords also acted as administrators and soldiers]. He passed the *mill rights* on to his son Aert in 1477, who, as *Lord of Gameren* lived in a small Castle in that village. Aert's sister Jutta married Tielerwaard nobleman Otto van Haeften in about 1465. The *heerlijkheid* passed to their grandson Dirck in 1494.^{1,2,3,4,5}

1 Van Klaveren, G., "Het Geslacht Pieck," Rotterdam 1916, pg. 352. [55 - 61]

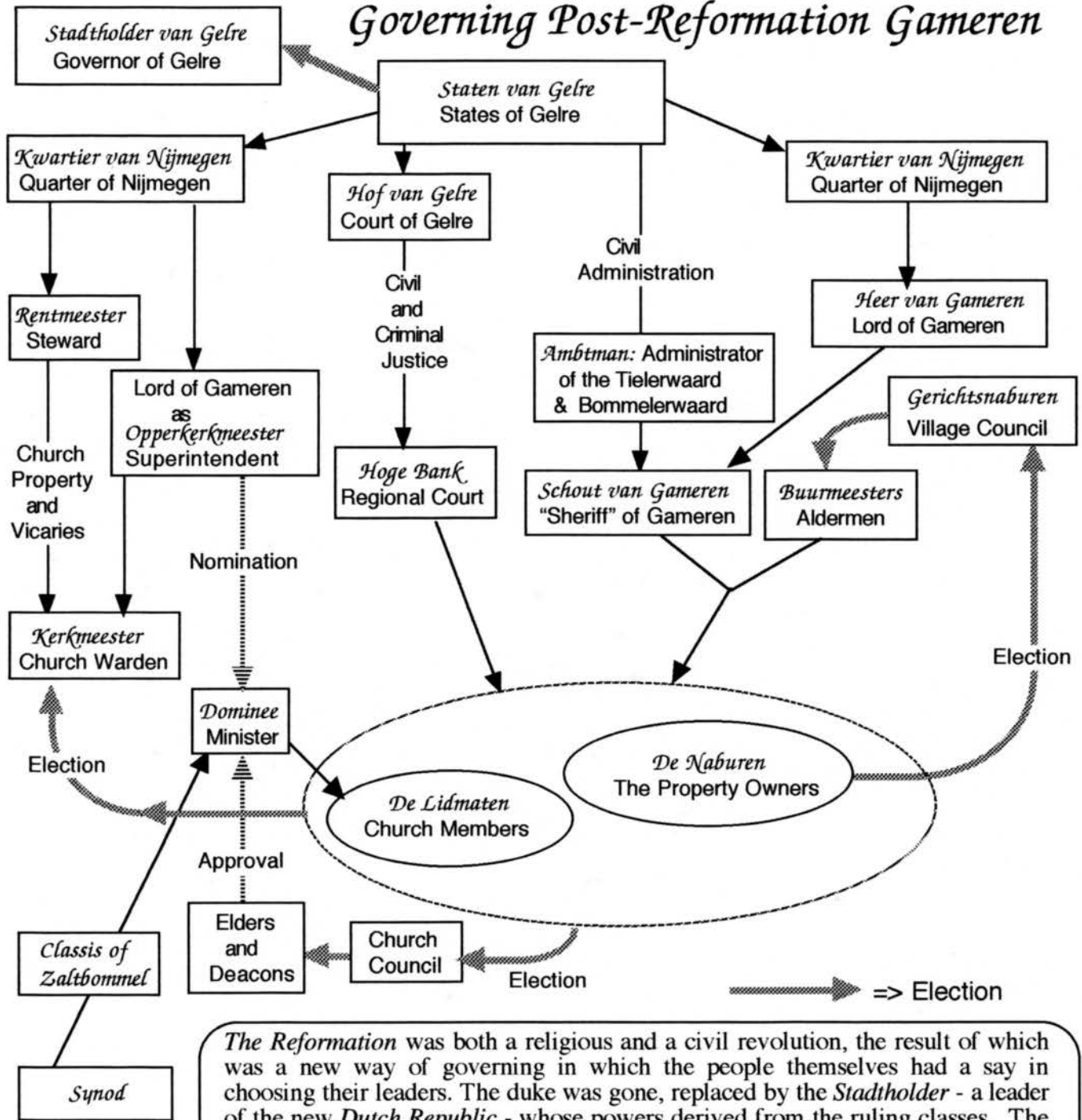
2 Kuys, pg. 352.

3 Sloet, J.J.S. et al. "Register op de Leenakten Boeken van het Vorstendom Gelre en Graafschap Zutphen; Het Kwartier van Nijmegen," Arnhem, 1924, pg. 657-8.

4 Algemeen Rijksarchief, Archief Mackay van Ophemert, 1643; Extract uyt het Leenboek van Rossum van de Heerlyckheit van Gameren.

5 Nederlands Adelsboek 1914, pp. 54-58.

Governing Post-Reformation Gameren



The Reformation was both a religious and a civil revolution, the result of which was a new way of governing in which the people themselves had a say in choosing their leaders. The duke was gone, replaced by the *Stadtholder* - a leader of the new *Dutch Republic* - whose powers derived from the ruling classes. The *Schout* was appointed through what remained of the feudal hierarchy, while the *Buurmeesters* were still chosen by the property owners. The *Hoge Bank* was still part of the state judicial system, with the judges being local people, as before. Perhaps the biggest change was in the church. Gone were the monasteries and convents, gone were the bishops, gone was the Spanish orthodoxy. Taking their place was a complex hybrid system of local and episcopal control, one in which the church members had a say in who their minister would be and who would administer their church's property. There was still oversight and control from the state and from the professional clergy, of course, but *electing* church officials was something new, and people started to get used to the idea that not all church power should be in the hands of ecclesiastics.

A Slow Reformation...

The transition from Catholicism to Protestantism might be likened to a modern-day corporate conquest: it took a while (a couple of generations, in fact) for the new management to really gain control.

First, there were the re-organizations. In 1572, the Bommelerwaard reported to the national synod of Dordrecht; in 1578, the classis of Gorinchem; by 1603, the classis of Nijmegen; 1606, Tiel/Zaltbommel; 1614, the classis of Zaltbommel. [A *classis* is like a modern-day *presbytery*].

Second, there were personnel problems. In the villages like Gameren and Brakel, the ministers were unsuitable - often they were former Catholic priests, and their behavior didn't always measure up to Calvinist standards. In 1592, Johannes Leo, the minister at Zaltbommel put it plainly when speaking of the village situation: "...*they* [the ministers] *are our enemies*" he stated, going on to complain that the parishioners were ignorant of the Protestant faith, and that many of them were drifting back to Catholicism. The situation was much the same in 1607, as reported at the synod of Gelre in Zaltbommel. It took the new church many years to appoint "reliable" ministers to the village parishes: Rev. Cornelius to Brakel in 1615; Rev. Vogel to Aalst/Poederoyen in 1617; Nederhemert, 1631; Zuilichem, 1640; Gameren, 1642.

Third, there was the matter of church property. Besides owning a large portion of the real property in many villages - a holdover from the days of the monasteries, no doubt - the church derived income from the *vicaries*, those endowments set up years before by wealthy families wherein they donated the income from property - but not the property itself - to the church. In 1595, two-thirds of the *vicarie* income was used to support divinity students and one-third to support the local church and school. But by a century later, the educational benefit had disappeared, and the *vicaries* were paying solely for church expenses.

Fourth, there was the matter of coordination with the state - which after all, was the church's new "owner". In 1581 the States General assigned former Catholic properties to the provinces, and the States of Gelre promulgated rules for administering the property. But the Bommelerwaard was still in a state of war, so there was some delay. By 1603, Gelre proclaimed that income from church properties would be used to support ministers, but this decision raised protest from the local lords who feared loss of property income to themselves. A political compromise for the Tielerwaard and Bommelerwaard was struck in 1619: the administration of church property would be a shared responsibility between the local lords and church/state officials called *kerkmeesters*. Churchmembers would have a say in the selection of the *kerkmeesters*, and the local lord would be given the title *opperkerkmeester*, along with some supervisory power. In Gameren, this bit of church politics was consummated by 1620 - long before the local church got its own minister in 1642.

But when the reorganization was complete, a new and fundamentally different way of governing was in place [see opposite]. A form of limited self-determination had been introduced into both local and national affairs of church and state, and a new *Calvinistic* ethic was on the rise.

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