

# Generating Generosity

Financing poor relief through charitable collections  
in Dutch towns, c. 1600-1800



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Cover image: drawing in an account book from the Zwolle City Poor Chamber of 1799 (HCO, Stadsarmenkamer, inv. no. 127).

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Vrijgevigheid genereren. De financiering van armenzorg  
door middel van collectes in Nederlandse steden, c. 1600-1800  
(met een samenvatting in het Nederlands)

Proefschrift

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## Chapter 1

### Introduction

With the development of European welfare states from the late nineteenth century onwards, and especially with their rapid expansion in the period after World War II, charity seemed to become a phenomenon of the past. In this period, tax-financed welfare programs set up by national governments brought substantial advancements for European citizens such as income security, a more equal distribution of wealth, and universal access to education and health care, thereby marginalizing the activities of religious charities, urban relief institutions and voluntary associations. However, from the 1980s onwards, changes in economic, social and political circumstances, such as slackening economic growth, population ageing, and globalization, put welfare arrangements under pressure. Structural reforms have since then been considered necessary to keep these provisions financially sustainable for future generations. National governments, seeking to reduce the dominance of the state in organizing social welfare, advocate a larger role for the voluntary sector and community activism.<sup>1</sup>

In Great Britain, for example, the discussion on a more significant role of individuals and voluntary groups in delivering public services, concentrates on the concept of a 'Big Society', launched by Prime Minister David Cameron in 2010. In the society that Cameron envisages, 'people [...] don't always turn to officials, local authorities or central governments for answers to the problems they face, but instead feel both free and powerful enough to help themselves and their own communities'.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Internationally, these developments have attracted the attention of a wide variety of scholars, and have resulted in a large number of publications on the historical background, present-day challenges and future possibilities of welfare states in the Western world, see e.g. Esping-Andersen (ed.), *Welfare states in transition*; Kuhnle (ed.), *Survival of the European welfare state*; Pierson (ed.), *The new politics of the welfare state*; Taylor-Gooby (ed.), *Welfare states under pressure*.

<sup>2</sup> David Cameron, Big Society Speech, delivered in Liverpool on 19 July 2010, <http://www.number10.gov.uk/news/big-society-speech/>, last viewed 30 July 2013.

In the Netherlands, on which this thesis focuses, the newly demanded role to be played by individual citizens as well as civil society has also fostered much public debate.<sup>3</sup> In the last few years several advisory and research reports discussing both the opportunities and difficulties accompanying the retrenchment of the state in organizing social welfare have appeared.<sup>4</sup> According to the current Government, we are now in the middle of a transitional period in which the classic welfare state is slowly but surely evolving into a 'participation society', in which '[e]veryone who is capable of doing so, is asked to take responsibility for his or her own life and environment', and in which 'society's power comes from the people', '[w]ithout being enforced by the state or another authority'.<sup>5</sup>

Based on historical research, several scholars have argued that politicians and policymakers wrongly expect citizens to take initiative themselves in the organization and financing of social care, and that in contrast civil society only flourishes within the context of a governmental and regulatory framework encouraging community-based provision of public services. Simon Szreter, for example, states that '[h]istory indicates that volunteering and charitable activity can only function effectively to improve the social welfare of the poorer sections of society when such volunteers are working within the context of vigorous, responsive local government'.<sup>6</sup> Thus, in the light of welfare state retrenchment, it is interesting to study how the poor and needy were cared for in past societies. Firstly, it can demonstrate the role of local governments, charitable institutions, voluntary associations, and social networks in offering relief to vulnerable groups in society before national governments took up this responsibility. Secondly, now that charity is

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<sup>3</sup> For definitions of the concept of 'civil society' see e.g. Black, *Guild and state*, p. 32; Van der Heijden, *Civic duty*, pp. 14-15.

<sup>4</sup> For examples of recent advisory and research reports on this topic, see e.g. Raad voor Maatschappelijke Ontwikkeling, *Terugreden is vooruitzien*, [http://www.adviesorgaan-rmo.nl/Publicaties/Adviezen/Terugreden is vooruitzien juli 2013](http://www.adviesorgaan-rmo.nl/Publicaties/Adviezen/Terugreden%20is%20vooruitzien%20juli%202013), last viewed 30 November 2013; Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid, *Vertrouwen in burgers*, [http://www.wrr.nl/fileadmin/nl/publicaties/PDF-Rapporten/Vertrouwen in burgers.pdf](http://www.wrr.nl/fileadmin/nl/publicaties/PDF-Rapporten/Vertrouwen%20in%20burgers.pdf), last viewed 30 November 2013; Raad voor het openbaar bestuur, *Loslaten in vertrouwen*, [http://www.rob-rfv.nl/rob/publicaties\\_rob/publicatie\\_rob/184/Loslaten+in+vertrouwen](http://www.rob-rfv.nl/rob/publicaties_rob/publicatie_rob/184/Loslaten+in+vertrouwen), last viewed 30 November 2013.

<sup>5</sup> Translations from: 'Van iedereen die dat kan, wordt gevraagd verantwoordelijkheid te nemen voor zijn of haar eigen leven en omgeving', Speech from the Throne, 17 September 2013, see: <http://www.elsevier.nl/Nederland/nieuws/2013/9/Troonrede-2013-volledige-tekst-1365922W/>, last viewed 30 November 2013; and from: '[...] de kracht van de samenleving uit mensen zelf komt', 'Zonder dat de staat of een andere instantie het oplegt', Mark Rutte, Willem Drees-lezing, 'Sterke mensen, sterk land. Over het bezielend verband in de samenleving', 14 October 2013, see: <http://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten-en-publicaties/toespraken/2013/10/14/sterke-mensen-sterk-land-over-het-bezielend-verband-in-de-samenleving.html>, last viewed 30 November 2013. For the Speech from the Throne, although read by King Willem-Alexander, the Prime Minister carries responsibility.

<sup>6</sup> Szreter, 'Britain's social welfare provision in the long run', p. 41. Also see Charlesworth, 'Big Society, legal structures'.

back on the political agenda, the question arises how relief was financed before the development of the welfare state, and how important charitable giving was in this respect. Lastly, historical research can reveal the circumstances under which people were willing to donate to charitable causes, and which factors helped civil society to flourish. This thesis deals with these topics for the Dutch Republic.

### 1.1 Poor relief in the Dutch Republic

The early modern Northern Netherlands is an interesting case study for research on charity and philanthropy. In its 'Golden Age', a long period of economic growth between roughly 1580 and 1670, the Dutch Republic (1588-1795) became famous for its relatively generous and well-organized poor relief arrangements. Foreigners visiting the country expressed their admiration for the charitable provisions they encountered, of which Sir William Temple's remark about the early modern Dutch that 'Charity seems to be very National among them' is the best-known example.<sup>7</sup> This English diplomat who visited the Northern Netherlands in the late 1660s and early 1670s as ambassador of the English crown, was amazed by the 'admirable Provisions' for the poor that existed, and the 'many and various Hospitals', which were according to him 'in every Man's curiosity and talk that travels their Country'.<sup>8</sup> Jean de Parival, a Huguenot living in the Holland town of Leiden, wrote in 1662 that in Amsterdam yearly 'eighteen tonnes of gold' were set aside to be distributed to the poor, which was 'an immense sum that is afforded by the great riches of the city and the infinite number of merchants, the great affluence of the people, and which testifies to the charitable inclinations of the Dutch'.<sup>9</sup>

Modern historical research confirms that social care in the Dutch Republic was of a relatively high level. Peter Lindert has estimated that per capita expenditure on poor relief in the Northern Netherlands was among the highest in early modern Europe, and that probably only in England were social care provisions of a comparable level.<sup>10</sup> Arguably, the high dependence on wage labour in Dutch society

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<sup>7</sup> Temple, *Observations*, p. 104.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> De Parival, *Les délices de la Hollande*, p. 98, translated in Schama, *The embarrassment of riches*, p. 576.

<sup>10</sup> Lindert, 'Poor relief before the welfare state'. Also see: Lindert, *Growing public*, chapter 3. It must be stated, however, that Lindert's Dutch data only cover the period after the 1790s, and that several European countries, as for example Italy, are missing from the calculations. Still, it can be concluded that at least at the end of the eighteenth century, the level of Dutch poor relief was exceptionally high compared to most other countries in Europe at the time. Moreover, considering its relatively fortunate economic position in the seventeenth century, it is unlikely to have been much different then. Furthermore, recent research at Utrecht University covering the period 1400-1850 confirms Lindert's findings, see: Van Bavel and Rijpma, 'How important were formalized charity and social spending before the rise of the welfare state?'

increased the population's vulnerability to economic hardship.<sup>11</sup> Moreover, as the Dutch tended to live in nuclear households, or did not have a large social network due to migration, institutionalized care was of great importance.<sup>12</sup> In the last few decades, extensive research has been done on the different charitable institutions that existed in the Dutch Republic, as well as on the care that they provided.<sup>13</sup> Although this literature amply demonstrated that even in Dutch towns the support from charitable institutions was never enough to make a living, most researchers do agree that the provisions for those at the bottom of society were an essential element in their survival and were of a relatively high level, compared to most other European countries at the time.<sup>14</sup> Jonathan Israel goes so far as to state that 'few aspects of the Dutch seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were more striking than the elaborate system of civic poor relief and charitable institutions'.<sup>15</sup>

Not only the multitude and munificence of organizations offering assistance to those in need have been qualified, both by contemporaries and present-day historians, as characteristics of early modern Dutch welfare, but also the level of influence and control exercised by secular authorities. For example, James Howell, a seventeenth-century Anglo-Welsh historian and writer who visited the Dutch Republic, noted that 'It is a rare thing to meet with a beggar here', which he explains not only as a result of 'the strictness of their laws against mendicants', but also due to the 'hospitals of all sorts for young and old, both for the relief of the one and the employment of the other' that existed, as a result of which 'there is no object here to exercise any act of charity upon'.<sup>16</sup> Although the near absence of beggars on the streets of early modern Dutch towns must have been an exaggeration, Howell here suggests that charity was not much practiced by giving alms to poor people on the streets, but in fact highly regulated by local authorities who not only combatted begging, but also established poor relief institutions, and ordered the population to contribute to the financing of these charities. Also, Temple's observation about charity being a national trait of the inhabitants of the Dutch Republic is followed by

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<sup>11</sup> See e.g. De Moor and Van Zanden, *Girl power*; McCants, *Civic charity in a Golden Age*, p. 11.

<sup>12</sup> See e.g. De Vries and Van der Woude, *The first modern economy*, p. 657; De Moor and Van Zanden, *Girl power*, especially pp. 23-24.

<sup>13</sup> For an overview of different aspects of poor relief in the Dutch Republic, as well as literature references, see Prak, 'Armenzorg 1500-1800'. For some recent studies on poor relief in the Dutch Republic see e.g. Van Nederveen Meerkerk and Vermeesch, 'Reforming outdoor relief'; Heerma van Voss and Van Leeuwen, 'Charity in the Dutch Republic'; Boele, *Leden van één lichaam*.

<sup>14</sup> See e.g. Noordegraaf, 'De arme', p. 345; De Vries and Van der Woude, *The first modern economy*, pp. 654-664. On the distributions of poor relief institutions and alternative survival strategies of those at the bottom of early modern Dutch society see e.g. Van Wijngaarden, *Zorg voor de kost*; Van der Vlis, *Leven in armoede*.

<sup>15</sup> Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, p. 353.

<sup>16</sup> Howell, *Epistolae Ho-ellianae or the Familiar Letters of James Howell*, pp. 20-21, cited in Sprunger, 'Mennonites and sectarian poor relief', p. 140.

the assertion that 'it be regulated by Orders of the Country, and not usually mov'd by the common Objects of Compassion'.<sup>17</sup> Israel has even qualified 'the overall control from the town hall and highly regulated character of civic welfare' as 'the key feature' of this social care system.<sup>18</sup>

As in the Dutch Republic, due to its decentralized political structure, national legislation on social care was almost absent, the precise role of municipalities in organizing relief differed per locality. While in some towns urban authorities were actively involved in establishing and managing relief institutions, in other localities they limited themselves to monitoring the existing secular or religious charities. Overall, besides the municipality, the main provider of social assistance was the Dutch Reformed Church, which was the privileged 'public Church'.<sup>19</sup> Additionally, Catholics, Lutherans, Mennonites and other religious dissident communities, who were not officially allowed to organize themselves, but whom the authorities often tolerated as long as their gatherings remained under the radar, usually also organized assistance for indigent church members.<sup>20</sup> Moreover, in some localities relief institutions existed which operated with limited interference of town governments and which also did not target specific religious groups.<sup>21</sup> Charitable provisions were thus part of what has been described as a 'mixed economy', in which responsibilities were divided between public, private and religious organizations.<sup>22</sup>

In the last few decades, several studies have appeared on how the various charitable institutions providing relief to the old, poor and sick in early modern Dutch towns financed their activities.<sup>23</sup> What becomes clear from this literature is the importance of charitable gifts for the institutions' income structures. Although charities often had a variety of means at their disposal, in many localities, such as in Delft, Zwolle, Groningen and Sneek, charitable collections made up the single largest source of income of relief institutions.<sup>24</sup> Collection bags were passed around in

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<sup>17</sup> Temple, *Observations*, p. 104.

<sup>18</sup> Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, p. 355.

<sup>19</sup> On the position of the Dutch Reformed Church see e.g. Kooi, *Calvinists and Catholics*.

<sup>20</sup> On the position of religious dissident communities in the Dutch Republic see e.g. Po-Chia Hsia and Van Nierop (eds.), *Calvinism and religious toleration*.

<sup>21</sup> For a more detailed description of the organization of poor relief in the Dutch Republic, see chapter 2.

<sup>22</sup> Van der Heijden, *Civic duty*, p. 15; Van Leeuwen, 'Histories of risk and welfare', pp. 40-43; Van Nederveen Meerkerk and Vermeesch, 'Reforming outdoor relief', p. 135.

<sup>23</sup> See e.g. De Kruif, 'De prijs van de armenzorg'; Prak, 'Goede burens en verre vrienden'; Van Leeuwen, 'Amsterdam en de armenzorg'; Van Leeuwen, 'Overrun by hungry hordes?'. For more references see chapter 3.

<sup>24</sup> Van der Vlis, *Leven in armoede*, pp. 319-321; Van Wijngaarden, *Zorg voor de kost*, pp. 72-73; Buursma, *Dese bekommerlijke tijden*, pp. 77-78; Spaans, 'De gift aan de armen'. It should be noted that for some periods, Van der Vlis identifies the 'possessions' (for a large part consisting of interest on capital and real estate) of the Delft civic relief institution as the largest source of income. However, some revenues included in this category are in this thesis labelled as subsidies,

church during service, or deacons requested alms at the church doors. Moreover, frequent door-to-door collections were organized, either for local charities or for communities in need in other parts of the country or outside the Dutch Republic. Lastly, a large number of poor boxes was located at strategic places, such as inns and the town hall, which could be used for more spontaneous donations. The gifts from these different charitable appeals combined often formed the backbone of the income structures of relief institutions.

Thus, in the Dutch Republic poor relief was organized and regulated at the local level, and the institutions depended financially on the population's benevolence. In contrast, the English welfare system, which was, as stated above, also of a relatively high level within early modern Europe, was based on national legislation, and for a large part financed through a compulsory poor tax.<sup>25</sup> Although the Elizabethan Poor Laws of 1598 and 1601 made the parishes responsible for organizing assistance within their locality, the state came to provide the legal framework, making English welfare provisions more coherent than in any other European country at the time.<sup>26</sup> All parishes in England and Wales were ordered to introduce annual rates on landed property, a progressive taxation to fund the charitable distributions. Although initially charitable gifts continued to be of great importance, the parishes increasingly began to implement the rates, funding the major part of relief at the end of the seventeenth century, and thereby forming the financial backbone of the English relief system.<sup>27</sup>

Within early modern Europe, the Elizabethan Poor Laws were exceptional. Only in England and Wales did extensive national legislation underpin the welfare arrangements, and was donating to charity a legal and fiscal obligation. International comparative literature on the English welfare system often emphasizes the contrast between the uniform and tax-financed relief found in England, and the variety of arrangements financed by voluntary giving which existed on the Continent. These differences in organizational and financial arrangements supposedly also had an impact on the effectiveness and durability of poor relief in the different regions. Peter Solar, for example, has argued that the Elizabethan Poor Laws allowed England to build the most stable and generous poor relief system in early modern Europe, while in many other European countries welfare provision was 'at best rudimentary'.<sup>28</sup>

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thereby diminishing the relative importance of income from possessions. For an explanation on the categorization of the different sources of income of charitable institutions used in this thesis, see chapter 3.

<sup>25</sup> For a more detailed comparison of the early modern Dutch and English welfare systems see Van Nederveen Meerkerk and Teeuwen, 'The stability of voluntarism'.

<sup>26</sup> Solar, 'Poor relief and English economic development', pp. 3-4.

<sup>27</sup> Slack, *The English Poor Law*, p. 26.

<sup>28</sup> Solar, 'Poor relief and English economic development', p. 4.

Larry Patriquin, who puts English social care provisions in a comparative context, also argues that while in England an extensive welfare system existed, '[o]ther European countries [...] did not have substantial assistance'.<sup>29</sup> They thus argue that only national legislation and compulsory poor taxes enable a stable welfare system. The underlying assumption then is that income from voluntary donations equals unstable income streams, and that without an enforcement mechanism for contributing to charitable causes no sustainable relief is possible.

However, this line of thought obviously does not hold for the Dutch Republic. Despite the absence of an obligatory poor tax, the early modern Dutch did manage to build a sustainable and relatively generous welfare system. As this thesis aims to demonstrate, although donations to charitable collections were in principle voluntary and could not be enforced by law, the secular and religious authorities were not without means to exert pressure on the population to give. Town governments, church councils and poor relief administrators were well aware that by creating the right circumstances for giving, as well as by putting pressure on the population to contribute to charitable causes they could generate high levels of generosity. They ingeniously applied a combination of organizational and rhetorical tactics to encourage people to give, which overall proved to be quite successful. This thesis studies both the authorities' policies in organizing collections as well as the effectiveness of these policies.<sup>30</sup>

## 1.2 Research questions

The studies published so far on the financing of poor relief in the Dutch Republic often focus on one charitable institution or on a short time period. A systematic and comparative analysis of the fundraising efforts of secular and religious authorities within early modern Dutch towns is still lacking. Much is unclear about how collections were organized, by which means the authorities tried to encourage the population to contribute, how many people donated, and how much they gave. This thesis aims to fill this lacuna by studying collections for the poor in several Dutch towns, and by thereby examining both the authorities' policies in organizing charitable appeals and the population's giving behaviour. It analyses the income

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<sup>29</sup> Patriquin, 'Why was there no "Old Poor Law" in Scotland and Ireland?', p. 219.

<sup>30</sup> This research project is part of the larger project 'Giving in the Golden Age' (GIGA), financed by the Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research (NWO). Divided into three components, the GIGA-project aims at systematically studying the entire range of gifts, from major gifts (which led to the founding of almshouses) to medium-sized gifts (testamentary bequests) and small gifts (contributions to charitable collections). For an introduction on the project see Heerma van Voss and Van Leeuwen, 'Charity in the Dutch Republic'. For some results from the other subprojects see e.g. Looijesteijn, 'Funding and founding private charities'; Van Nederveen Meerkerk, 'The will to give'.

structures and fundraising efforts of secular as well as religious institutions over a period of two centuries. This thesis does by no means wish to test the reputation of generosity of the inhabitants of the Dutch Republic or to give an all-encompassing explanation for the well-developed welfare provisions within this country. Instead, it focuses on one part of the puzzle, namely on the question of the success of the charitable collections. Thus, the central question of this thesis is: how did the early modern Dutch manage to finance a substantial part of their welfare system through charitable collections, given that contributions could not be enforced by law?

In order to find an answer to this question, first the authorities' policies in the organization of collections are studied. As research on charitable fundraising in present-day society from a variety of disciplines, such as sociology, psychology, economics and anthropology, demonstrates, what people donate to good causes depends on a large number of factors and can moreover be influenced. Some of these factors are connected to the charity in need of contributions, while others relate to the donors' motives and individual characteristics. With regard to organizational factors, overall people give more generously to charitable causes which enjoy public confidence, which are perceived to act efficiently, and which effectively communicate their financial needs to potential donors. Thus, reputation, trust and awareness are key components of a successful fundraising campaign. Also the way in which people are asked to make a donation determines the effectiveness of a charitable appeal. For instance, the frequency of soliciting, the size of the requested sum, and the degree of anonymity all have an impact upon people's willingness to donate.<sup>31</sup>

In the early modern period, secular and religious authorities were also well aware that the outcome of a charitable appeal was not an established fact, and that giving behaviour could be influenced both by the institutions' reputation and by the way collections were organized.<sup>32</sup> As intermediaries between giver and receiver, they wished to create awareness of the importance of giving as well as trust that donations would be well-spent. Authorities moreover tried to channel charitable contributions in the direction of causes they attached great importance to. In their policies of enabling and promoting generosity, they made use of the special character of the collection gift. Although in principle donations to collections are voluntary as

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<sup>31</sup> For overviews of factors influencing charitable giving see e.g. Bekkers and Wiepking, 'A literature review of empirical studies of philanthropy'; Bekkers and Wiepking, 'Who gives?' (part one); Wiepking and Bekkers, 'Who gives?' (part two); Sargeant and Woodliffe, 'Gift giving: an interdisciplinary review'; Vesterlund, 'Why do people give?'

<sup>32</sup> Parallels can be drawn with factors influencing the population's willingness to pay taxes, in which case also the quality of institutions, and public trust in the well-spending of the money play a major role, see: Prak and Van Zanden, 'Tax morale'.

well as anonymous, social pressure in this type of giving is high.<sup>33</sup> Especially in case of face-to-face solicitation at people's homes, collectors were aware when people failed to give, and perhaps even reprimanded misers. In churches, an eye could be kept on whether the person sitting adjacent gave. Structural failing to give probably resulted in reputational damage, especially for those who clearly could afford to miss a few coins. At times municipalities and church boards employed strategies to increase social pressure even further, as well as to lower the degree of anonymity in giving.

Religious and secular authorities used rhetorical means in addition to organizational tactics in an attempt to increase the revenues of church offertories and door-to-door collections. In their announcements of collections taking place, municipalities and church boards wished to convince potential donors of the need to contribute liberally. To generate high revenues, they might, for example, try to invoke a feeling of guilt or compassion with the needy collected for, promise benefactors to be rewarded for generous giving, or attempt to inspire trust in the targeted charitable causes. Arguably the notions of obligation and duty also played a central role in the poor relief discourse regarding collections. For pre-industrial societies several scholars have stressed that giving was always driven by obligation. Anthropologist Marcel Mauss states that gift giving leads to reciprocal exchange and the creation of social bonds. People give out of a sense of obligation to repay for gifts they have received.<sup>34</sup> In line with Mauss' findings, historian Katherine Lynch states that the 'modern notion of altruism' did not yet exist in medieval and early modern Europe. Instead, the 'bond between a rich giver and poor recipient of alms involved reciprocity', and charity could be described as an 'obligation based on love of God and neighbor'.<sup>35</sup> In her study on gift exchange in early modern England, Ilana Krausman Ben-Amos also emphasizes the obligatory character of the charitable act in this period, and states that it is difficult for historians to make a clear distinction between voluntary and involuntary giving.<sup>36</sup> For both secular and religious exhortations to give, this thesis studies what the role was of the notion of duty, and which other rhetorical methods of persuasion were used to influence giving behaviour.

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<sup>33</sup> Research on collections in the present-day Netherlands confirms that social pressure is one of the most important impulses behind the collection gift. Donating to collections is regarded to be 'socially desirable behaviour' and few people refuse to give when they are being asked by the collector on their doorstep to do so: Bekkers and Boonstoppel, 'Toekomstverkenning', pp. 15-19. In 2005, 90 per cent of the Dutch households donated to door-to-door collections, see: Schuyt and Gouwenberg, *Geven in Nederland 2007*, p. 37.

<sup>34</sup> The most famous example of this approach is Mauss, *The gift*. First published as: 'Essai sur le don'. Another important study is: Malinowski, *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*.

<sup>35</sup> Lynch, *Individuals, families, and communities in Europe*, pp. 106-109.

<sup>36</sup> Krausman Ben-Amos, *The culture of giving*, pp. 9-12.

Present-day sociological research demonstrates that besides organizational factors and cultural notions regarding charity, individual characteristics also influence how much a person is able and willing to donate to a charitable cause. For instance, age, gender, education, and wealth all impact on an individual's giving behaviour.<sup>37</sup> As benefactors usually remain anonymous in the archival sources, for early modern society it is impossible to make an in-depth analysis of donor characteristics. Still, sources are available which give insight into the share of the population that contributed to collections, as well as shedding light on how collection strategies influenced giving behaviour. Although early modern poor relief has often been defined as an interaction between two social groups, the elites and the poor, in the early modern Northern Netherlands a far larger part of society must have been involved in the process of charitable giving and receiving.<sup>38</sup> The Dutch Republic was the most urbanized region in Europe at the time, and has often been characterized as the first 'bourgeois society'.<sup>39</sup> At the end of the seventeenth century approximately 45 per cent of the population lived in towns and cities; in the province of Holland, the urbanization rate was over 60 per cent.<sup>40</sup> In these towns the middle class, a diverse group, which included entrepreneurs, small to middling traders, lower urban officials, shopkeepers and skilled craftsmen, probably constituted almost half of the population.<sup>41</sup> Therefore, in the Dutch Republic arguably not only the elites possessed the means to contribute to the financing of charitable provisions, but the middling groups as well.<sup>42</sup>

Thus, apart from the authorities' policies in organizing charitable appeals, this thesis studies whether large parts of the town inhabitants did indeed contribute, how much they gave to different causes, and how effective the applied collection strategies were. To understand how the early modern Dutch managed to finance a substantial part of their relief provisions from charitable donations, three sub-questions are posed. Firstly, which organizational tactics did municipalities, church boards and relief institutions apply to influence giving behaviour? Secondly, which rhetorical tactics did the secular and religious authorities apply to encourage the

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<sup>37</sup> Bekkers and Wiepking, 'Who gives?' (part one); Wiepking and Bekkers, 'Who gives?' (part two).

<sup>38</sup> On the role of elites and the poor see e.g. Lis and Soly, *Poverty and capitalism*; De Swaan, *In care of the state*; Van Leeuwen, 'Logic of charity'.

<sup>39</sup> On the Dutch 'bourgeois' society see e.g. Prak, 'The Dutch Republic as bourgeois society'; Price, *Dutch society*, especially chapter 4, 'A bourgeois society?'

<sup>40</sup> De Vries and Van der Woude, *The first modern economy*, pp. 60-61.

<sup>41</sup> Marco van Leeuwen distinguishes five social groups: the elites (less than 10 per cent of the population), the upper middle class (over 10 per cent of the population), the lower middle class (over a third of the population), lower social groups (a little less than a third of the population) and the lowest social groups (over 10 per cent of the population), see Van Leeuwen, *De rijke Republiek*, pp. 40-43.

<sup>42</sup> On the role of middling groups regarding poor relief in the Dutch Republic also see e.g. McCants, *Civic charity in a Golden Age*, especially pp. 8-10.

population to give generously? Thirdly, how did the population respond to the applied collection strategies through donations? For the analysis of the charities' income structures, the authorities' policies in organizing collections, the rhetoric they used in their exhortations, as well as for the population's giving behaviour a wide variety of sources are available, providing a unique insight into early modern fundraising efforts. But before turning to the archival material, first some words on the research design, and on the towns on which this thesis focuses.

### 1.3 Choices and boundaries

For this analysis of the organization of and donating to charitable collections in the Dutch Republic, four towns have been selected, namely Delft, Utrecht, Zwolle and 's-Hertogenbosch. This focus on the urban setting is motivated by both substantive and practical reasons. Firstly, the wealth of the Golden Age was concentrated in towns and cities, and also the almshouses, old people's homes and other charitable institutions about which foreign travellers wrote admiringly could be found here. Moreover, far more is known about the organization of poor relief in urban areas than in the countryside, and archival sources in villages are often less abundantly available. The reasons for choosing these specific towns are not only related to the wide variety of sources available in the archives in these localities, but also because of their geographical spread within the Dutch Republic (see Figure 1.1), as well as differences in their social composition and economic status.

Delft, to start with, was an industrial town in the province of Holland. Although it had been one of the biggest towns in the late medieval period, in the seventeenth century cities such as Amsterdam, Leiden, Haarlem and Rotterdam grew much faster, and with some 24,000 inhabitants at the end of the Golden Age, Delft had become a medium-sized town. Still, Delft can be qualified as dynamic, as it was not only a regional trade centre, but its inhabitants were also actively involved in international trade. This can be seen in the fact that, for instance, one of the departments (or: chambers) of the Dutch East India Company (*Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie*) was located here. Also Delft's earthenware, brewing and textile industries created employment for many of its inhabitants.<sup>43</sup> Consequently, it

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<sup>43</sup> For the demographic and economic development of Delft see: Wijsenbeek-Olthuis, *Achter de gevels van Delft*, chapters 1 and 2. Also see Van der Vlis, *Leven in armoede*, p. 16. For a comparison with the number of inhabitants of other Holland towns in this period, see Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, p. 328.

attracted many migrants, of whom especially the Flemish in this period gave an impulse to the textile industry and the development of the urban economy.<sup>44</sup>

Figure 1.1 – The Dutch Republic



Utrecht, located in the centre of the Republic, and the second town in this sample, benefited far less from the prosperity of the Golden Age. Around 1500, it had been the largest town in the Northern Netherlands, and as the bishop's seat it was also an important political and religious centre.<sup>45</sup> However, over the course of the sixteenth century Utrecht's textile industry, which had been one of its main economic sectors, declined, after which the local markets were mainly visited by traders from surrounding areas.<sup>46</sup> There was no large merchant elite, but still it was by no means a poor town. Utrecht was characterized by its relatively large and wealthy elite of regional nobility, urban patriciate, civil servants and master craftsmen and their

<sup>44</sup> Chotkowski, *750 jaar migratie naar Delft*, pp. 20-21; Parker, *The reformation of community*, p. 68.

<sup>45</sup> For an overview of population sizes of different towns in the late medieval period, see Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, p. 114. On the history of Utrecht see e.g. De Bruin et al. (eds.), *'Een paradijs vol weelde'*; Dekker (ed.), *Geschiedenis van de provincie Utrecht. Tot 1528*; Dekker (ed.), *Geschiedenis van de provincie Utrecht. Van 1528 tot 1780*.

<sup>46</sup> Rommes, *Oost, west, Utrecht best?*, pp. 11-12 and chapter 6.

families.<sup>47</sup> Another distinctive feature of Utrecht's social composition was its relatively large Catholic population, even after the Reformation. It has been estimated that in the mid-seventeenth century, some 10,000 Catholics lived in Utrecht, which was about a third of its inhabitants. In contrast, in Delft probably no more than one fifth to one quarter of the population stayed loyal to the Catholic church.<sup>48</sup>

Thirdly, Zwolle was located in the largely agrarian Eastern part of the Northern Netherlands. Although its population increased quite rapidly from some 9,000 inhabitants in the 1620s to about 13,000 in the 1670s, its economic development was only limited in this period. Many inhabitants were employed in industries, such as in the production of buttons, pins, furniture and wheels. These products were mainly sold on local markets, but Zwolle's large textile industry, which experienced a boom around the 1720s, also attracted traders from other parts of the Dutch Republic. Also its maritime sector flourished in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century, stimulated by the rise of peat digging in the surroundings, which gave an impulse to other economic sectors as well. Employment opportunities within these sectors attracted migrants from the surrounding countryside as well as from German areas, although outmigration was also substantial, with many inhabitants of Zwolle leaving to try their luck in Holland.<sup>49</sup>

's-Hertogenbosch, located at the frontier of the Generality Lands in the South and a flourishing town in the medieval period, is the fourth town studied here. At the start of the Dutch Revolt, it had stayed loyal to the King of Spain, and it was only in 1629 that stadtholder Frederick Henry managed to occupy 's-Hertogenbosch and claim it as Dutch territory. In contrast to the regions that had joined the revolt earlier, 's-Hertogenbosch, as part of 'Brabant of the States', never obtained full rights within the Dutch Republic, and was ruled directly by the States-General. Although after its occupation, the Dutch Reformed Church became the public church in 's-Hertogenbosch and the share of the population adhering to the new faith slowly increased, a vast majority remained Catholic. From 1629 onwards, its economy gradually recovered from the period of war and stagnation, but with some 12,000 inhabitants, 's-Hertogenbosch had become one of the many medium-sized towns in the Dutch Republic.<sup>50</sup>

Apart from these differences in economic, social and political circumstances, the four towns studied here also nicely capture the different arrangements in the

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<sup>47</sup> Kaplan, *Calvinists and Libertines*, pp. 113-132.

<sup>48</sup> Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, pp. 328-332, 377-389.

<sup>49</sup> Van Wijngaarden, *Zorg voor de kost*, pp. 41-43; Slicher van Bath, *Een samenleving onder spanning*, chapter 4.

<sup>50</sup> Vos, *Burgers, broeders en bazen*, p. 25; Kappelhof, 'Laverend tussen Mars en Mercurius', pp. 55-63.

organization of poor relief that existed within the Dutch Republic. Although in the sixteenth century poor relief had gradually become more centralized and rationalized, local circumstances were decisive in the extent to which municipalities increased control over social care provisions within their localities. In both Delft and Zwolle public relief institutions were established shortly after the Reformation, in which almoners and Dutch Reformed deacons closely cooperated, monitored by urban authorities. However, in both Utrecht and 's-Hertogenbosch the role of urban authorities in organizing poor relief was much smaller. In Utrecht, the deaconry of the public church organized the majority of the distributions of money and bread to the indigent, until in 1628 a civic institution was established. Still, even then, the religious charity remained independent, and cared for poor church members without much interference from the town government, leading to semi-centralized arrangements. Lastly, in 's-Hertogenbosch no civic charities were established after the Reformation and a multitude of institutions that had already existed in the medieval period continued to care for the town's poor.<sup>51</sup>

A comparison between these four towns can be used to analyse whether differences in economic development, composition of the population, and the organization of poor relief had an impact on charitable behaviour or the organization of charitable appeals. For example, did differences in the towns' economic performance affect the population's giving behaviour? Were people more inclined to give to smaller, religiously oriented charities, or were civic relief institutions equally successful in collecting money to fund their activities? And what was the influence of the relatively large Catholic populations in 's-Hertogenbosch and Utrecht on the organization and financing of poor relief? Where possible, Amsterdam, the largest city in the Dutch Republic, and other localities on which research has already been done regarding the financing of poor relief and the organization of collections, are included in the comparative analysis.<sup>52</sup>

While in the next chapter the whole spectrum of charitable institutions operating in the Dutch Republic is briefly introduced, the rest of this thesis focuses on outdoor relief institutions. These charities, offering assistance to the poor and needy living in their own homes instead of in institutions such as orphanages or hospitals, were not only responsible for organizing the major part of poor relief, but as shall be seen were also the main recipients of collection revenues. Additionally, some attention is given to orphanages, which often also organized public charitable appeals. Mutual aid within the guild system, where members had to pay a

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<sup>51</sup> For the reorganizational process after the Reformation see: Van Nederveen Meerkerk and Vermeesch, 'Reforming outdoor relief'. Also see chapter 2 of this thesis.

<sup>52</sup> For Amsterdam see e.g. Van Leeuwen, 'Amsterdam en de armenzorg'; Van Leeuwen, 'Overrun by hungry hordes?'; Van Leeuwen, 'Liefdadige giften'; Van Leeuwen, 'Giving in early modern history'.

contribution for fellow-members in need, is not included, because the payments were obligatory and unaffected by external factors.<sup>53</sup>

In total, a period of more than two hundred years is studied, from the emergence of the Dutch Republic in the 1580s, through its decline in the eighteenth century, until its fall in the 1790s. Although the earliest archival material studied is from the 1570s, most sources start at the beginning of the seventeenth century. This enables a long-term analysis, in which comparisons can be made between, for example, periods of economic prosperity and stagnation, and between war and peace situations. Because in the French period (1795-1813) interesting changes occurred, in for example the political and religious situation, the time span is slightly expanded beyond the Dutch Republic's existence, until around 1800, to see how this influenced poor relief policies and giving behaviour. While it would also be interesting to study the income structures of charitable institutions and of the authorities' collection strategies in the first decades of the nineteenth century, the nature of the source material used in this thesis does not enable extending the studied period.

#### 1.4 Methodology and source material

The sources available in the archives of Delft, Utrecht, Zwolle and 's-Hertogenbosch for the analysis of the organization of, and donating to charitable collections are diverse, and are studied both quantitatively and qualitatively. For example, longitudinal series of financial data of religious and secular charitable organizations provide insights into the way poor relief was financed, the importance of collection revenues in this respect, and the shifts therein throughout the early modern period. Account books of both public relief organizations and different religious communities, such as Dutch and English Reformed, Lutheran, Walloon, Remonstrant and Catholic charities are studied. For some civic organizations account books have been preserved for a period of more than 150 years, which enables a long-term analysis of the sources from which they funded their activities and the importance of charitable giving. For religious denominations other than the public church, samples have been taken from the financial data.

Poor relief administrators not only registered in great detail which types of revenues they had at their disposal, and how much they spent on charitable distributions and on other items of expenditure, but also how much was collected on different occasions. Collection lists often specify the date the collection took place, the charitable purpose, how much money was raised, whether open plates were used,

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<sup>53</sup> For literature on poor boxes of guilds, see e.g. Bos, *"Uyt liefde tot malcander"*; Van Zanden and Van der Vleuten, 'Drie golven gilden'; Van Leeuwen, 'Guilds and middle-class welfare'.

and – regarding church collections – the type of service and sometimes the officiating minister. As a result, how much people gave to different purposes and under different circumstances, and how successful the authorities' methods were in stimulating high levels of generosity can be studied. For some localities it is also possible to examine the influence of wealth on charitable giving by linking collection registers, in which a breakdown of revenues per town district is given, to tax records in which the same division is made. Moreover, in both Delft and Zwolle, account books of poor relief institutions have been preserved in which collection yields are specified per type of coin. These registers not only reveal whether small or large coins were put into collection bags and boxes, but also provide insight into the stability of collection gifts, and can even be used to estimate the share of the population that contributed.

Another important source, next to financial data, are the minutes and resolutions of municipalities, church boards and poor relief organizations, which provide insights into the authorities' policy in organizing collections. How often did collections take place, who went door-to-door, for what causes did the city council permit collections, when and for what reasons were requests to collect rejected? Public decrees announcing collections taking place and instructions drawn up for the collectors are also used to answer these questions. Moreover, the announcements as well as sermons on charity are studied for an analysis of both existing ideas on poverty and charity, and different rhetorical methods used by authorities in trying to persuade people to give lavishly. All these sources combined, enable an analysis of both the policy considerations of civic and religious authorities in the Dutch Republic regarding charitable collections, as well as the response of the early modern town-dwellers.

## 1.5 Outline of the thesis

The composition of this study is thematic. To start with, chapter 2 deals with the organization of poor relief in the Dutch Republic, and explains to which institutions people could turn if they needed assistance, and how responsibilities were divided between religious and secular authorities. It presents the main charities in Delft, Zwolle, Utrecht and 's-Hertogenbosch as well as the context in which they operated. Next, chapter 3 focuses on the financing of poor relief. It analyses which sources of income were available to relief institutions, and how important collection gifts were in this respect. It adds to the existing literature by providing a longitudinal and comparative analysis of five charities over a period of almost 200 years. While chapters 2 and 3 focus on poor relief in general, the following three chapters specifically deal with charitable collections. Chapter 4 examines the organizational

tactics used by the authorities to encourage higher levels of generosity, while chapter 5 analyses the rhetorical tactics applied in civic and religious exhortations to give. Chapter 6 moves on to study the donors to collections as well as their donations, in order to scrutinize how the population responded to the collection strategies. Finally, chapter 7 sums up the different findings of the previous chapters and answers the question posed above of how the early modern Dutch managed to fund a substantial part of their poor relief system from collection gifts.



## *Chapter 2*

# Organizing poor relief

### 2.1 Introduction

How was poor relief organized in the Dutch Republic? Which institutions could people turn to if they were unable to make ends meet? How were responsibilities for the care for the indigent divided between city governments and churches? Due to the decentralized political system and the high level of urban autonomy, there are no simple answers to these questions. In the Dutch Republic, poor relief was organized at a local level, and a variety of arrangements existed in the different cities, towns and villages. At times almoners appointed by urban authorities were in full control, while in other localities secular and religious poor relief administrators worked side by side or the churches took responsibility to care for the poor outside of their own communities. This chapter explains the poor relief arrangements that existed in Delft, Zwolle, Utrecht and 's-Hertogenbosch, to provide an insight into the multiform ways in which social care was organized in the Dutch Republic.

The first part of this chapter deals with the reorganization process of medieval poor relief that took place around 1600, where the existing poor relief system was adjusted to the growing demand for social care. Following this, seventeenth-century poor relief provisions are analysed, focusing especially on the various institutions which provided care to the indigent, the division of tasks between public and private charities, and the position of religious dissidents. From the end of the seventeenth century onwards, when the economic boom had reached its end, the existing poor relief system came under pressure. Thus, the last part of the chapter examines how relief agencies dealt with the growing demand for the care they provided and how this influenced the way poor relief was organized.

## 2.2 Reforming medieval social care

The Middle Ages had already seen the establishment of a multitude of institutions providing relief for those in need. However in the sixteenth century, influenced by changing ideas on poverty and poor relief and increasing demands for relief, new reforms were implemented, not only in the Low Countries, but also in other parts of Europe. As explained below, the process of centralization and rationalization that followed, rooted in developments from the late medieval period, was far from linear, and heterogeneous in its outcomes. In this section, firstly a brief characterization of the main facets of medieval poor relief is given. The next part elaborates upon the changes in ideas and circumstances that underpinned the reforms. As a result, it is ultimately demonstrated how the reorganization process led to divergent arrangements in different localities, by explaining how poor relief was organized in Delft, Zwolle, Utrecht and 's-Hertogenbosch.

### 2.2.1 Poor relief in the Middle Ages

Churches and monasteries initially took the lead in organizing poor relief for the indigent population. According to canon law parishes were obliged to care for the poor, and priests had to spend a part of the parish income on charitable distributions.<sup>54</sup> Christian duties included feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, clothing the naked, sheltering the homeless, comforting the sick, visiting the imprisoned and burying the dead.<sup>55</sup> Church officials also preached that giving to the poor would bring the benefactor eternal salvation. As the rich donated alms to the poor, the poor needed to pray for the donors' souls, thereby shortening the rich man's time in purgatory. According to some scholars, this specific attitude towards care for the indigent, in which charity was not only meant to alleviate the suffering of the destitute, but perhaps more to improve the donor's position, helps to explain the far from coherent and often unsubstantial medieval poor relief provisions. Donations did not even always fully benefit the poor, but were often partly used to organize masses to pray for the benefactors' souls after their death.<sup>56</sup>

From the twelfth century onwards, increasing urbanization stimulated a process of laicization of poor relief and the founding of innumerable hospitals, orphanages and almshouses. Municipal control over welfare provisions also increased in this period, although it was usually limited to monitoring existing

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<sup>54</sup> Spaans, *Armenzorg in Friesland*, p. 25.

<sup>55</sup> The first six 'works of mercy' were based on Matthew 25:31-46. Burying the dead was added by the church, see Parker, *The reformation of community*, pp. 43-45.

<sup>56</sup> See e.g. Prak, 'Armenzorg 1500-1800', pp. 54-55.

institutions and anti-begging legislation.<sup>57</sup> Nonetheless, the care these relief institutions provided was fragmented and unspecialized as a rule. Widows, orphans and poor families as well as beggars and vagrants could ask for alms from the different charitable institutions that existed. From the fifteenth century onwards, the care for the wandering poor was restricted, and hospitals became more specialized, offering support to a specific group, such as the elderly or the poor or the sick. For example, the St. Job's hospital in Utrecht was established as a general hospital, but later concentrated on people suffering from smallpox or venereal diseases.<sup>58</sup> The care for the outdoor poor was often the territory of *Heilige Geestmeesters* (Holy Ghost Masters) or *armenmeesters* (masters of the poor), who provided them with some bread, clothes and small sums of money on a weekly, or less regular basis. Their distributions were far from sufficient and sometimes even ineffective; for instance, if the distributions were more extensive in spring than in winter, when it was most needed.<sup>59</sup>

### 2.2.2 Changing circumstances and ideas

In the early sixteenth century, charitable institutions increasingly proved unable to tackle the problem of poverty. In the late Middle Ages, through increased urbanization and proletarianization, the European population gradually became more vulnerable to economic hardship, and wealth less equally distributed within society.<sup>60</sup> The relatively wealthy Low Countries also became more socially polarized in this period, and it has even been stated that, due to the relatively developed markets, the differences between rich and poor were sharper in this region than elsewhere in Europe.<sup>61</sup> In the city of Leiden, for example, the part of the population that was categorized as too poor to pay taxes increased from 13 per cent in 1529 to 40 per cent in 1545.<sup>62</sup> Another indication of growing poverty is the Gini coefficient (a measure used to indicate the distribution of wealth within society, with 0 being fully equal and 1 being fully unequal), which for the province of Holland, based on the rentable value of houses, rose from 0.50 in 1514, to 0.56 in 1561, and further to 0.61 in 1740.<sup>63</sup> In Amsterdam, regarding taxable wealth, it increased from 0.74 in 1585 to

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<sup>57</sup> Lis and Soly, *Poverty and capitalism*, pp. 20-25; Parker, *The reformation of community*, pp. 54-58. Prak, 'Armenzorg 1500-1800', pp. 54-55.

<sup>58</sup> De Bruin, Heurneman and Van der Veeke, *Van aalmoes tot AOW*, pp. 20. Also see pp. 43-44.

<sup>59</sup> Van Nederveen Meerkerk and Vermeesch, 'Reforming outdoor relief', pp. 138-139.

<sup>60</sup> Lis and Soly, *Poverty and capitalism*, chapter 3.

<sup>61</sup> Van Bavel, 'The medieval origins', pp. 72-73

<sup>62</sup> Ligtenberg, *De armezorg te Leiden*, p. 14; Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, p. 123.

<sup>63</sup> Soltow and Van Zanden, *Income and wealth inequality*, p. 29.

0.85 in 1630, when the richest one per cent of the population owned a third of the taxed wealth.<sup>64</sup>

Poverty became more visible in this period, and was increasingly considered as a social problem. Next to social and economic factors, humanism and the Protestant Reformation also gave rise to new ideas about the poor, poverty and poor relief. Humanist thinkers criticized medieval charity, which had been primarily focussed on the givers instead of the receivers of alms. Poverty was less regarded as an inevitable fate allotted by God, but increasingly seen as the responsibility of the paupers themselves. Increasingly a distinction was forged between the 'deserving' poor, who had fallen into poverty due to sickness, old age or other circumstances they could not be held responsible for, and idle beggars, the so-called 'undeserving poor'.<sup>65</sup> Contemporary literature painted an unsavoury picture of this second group of poor, who were degraded to vagrants, beggars and potential criminals, unworthy of receiving alms. These poor were seemingly not victims of social adversity, but threats to social stability.<sup>66</sup>

In Thomas More's (1478-1535) ideal society, as described in his *Utopia* published in 1516, begging would be prohibited and labour required from all able-bodied persons. In *De Subventionem Pauperum*, which appeared in 1526, the Spanish humanist residing in Bruges, Juan Luis Vives (1493-1540), set out a detailed reform plan. According to Vives, indiscriminate giving destroyed incentives to work, and consequently begging should be banned and the idle forced to work. Moreover, free schooling should be provided for poor children, in order to improve their social position. Local governments should take up the role of coordinators of poor relief and establish central institutions examining requests for support and combating fraud. The aim of this reform program was to put an end to the uncoordinated activities of the numerous charitable institutions that had supported the destitute during the Middle Ages.<sup>67</sup>

The criticism of Protestant reformers mainly addressed the theological basis of medieval charity. Almsgiving needed no longer to be considered a method of acquiring salvation, but only as a means to alleviate the suffering of those in need. Generosity was still praised as a Christian duty, but only through faith (*sola fide*) could heaven be earned. The three great reformers helped put these new ideas into practice. In 1523, Martin Luther (1483-1546) played a role in the reorganization of poor relief in the Saxon city of Leisnig, Huldrych Zwingli (1484-1531) contributed to

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<sup>64</sup> Van Bavel, 'The medieval origins', p. 73.

<sup>65</sup> Spaans, *Haarlem na de Reformatie*, p. 169; Prak, 'Armenzorg 1500-1800', p. 56.

<sup>66</sup> Soly, 'Economische ontwikkeling', p. 589; Prak, 'Armenzorg 1500-1800', p. 56.

<sup>67</sup> Parker, *The reformation of community*, pp. 65-66; Prak, 'Armenzorg 1500-1800', p. 56; Soly, 'Economische ontwikkeling', pp. 589-590.

changes in care provisions in Zürich, and John Calvin's (1509-1564) writings inspired reform plans in Geneva.<sup>68</sup> However, as we shall see in chapter 5, although with the Reformation a new religious doctrine on poverty and charity emerged, in practice much stayed the same. Protestant ministers as well promised generous givers to be rewarded in the afterlife, while misery would be punished. Moreover, in spite of the growing control of municipalities over welfare provisions in this period, also the rhetoric of urban authorities in exhorting the town-dwellers to remember the poor showed many similarities with medieval thought, and largely remained religiously inspired.

Although scholars generally acknowledge the impact of humanistic ideas on the reorganization process, there is broad disagreement on which factors, the changing social and economic circumstances and growing poverty on the one hand or the Reformation on the other hand, were decisive in the welfare reforms. According to the traditional view, the changes in social care provisions were an almost direct consequence of the Reformation. Over the last two centuries, many historians have argued that this religious upheaval not only sowed the seeds of a mentality shift, but that also the disappearance of Catholic relief and the expropriation of ecclesiastical possessions enabled a new approach to the problem of poverty.<sup>69</sup>

However during the 1960s and 1970s, without denying the impact that ideas resulting from humanism and the Reformation had on poor relief policy, opponents of this purely religious interpretation argued that reforms were only implemented in localities where the economic circumstances forced the authorities to take action. Research by Natalie Zemon Davis and Brian Pullan, for example, demonstrated that elements of the reform movement were visible as early as the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and that the sixteenth-century reforms were not limited to Protestant regions.<sup>70</sup> Two of the most prominent representatives of this view are Catharina Lis and Hugo Soly, who in *Poverty and capitalism in pre-industrial Europe*, state that 'economic factors appear to have been the greatest determinants' in the reorganization process.<sup>71</sup> They especially point towards the impact of the growth of merchant capitalism in the fifteenth and sixteenth century, and the growing dependence on wage labour in large parts of Europe. According to Lis and Soly, in regions where a process of proletarianization could be observed, people became more vulnerable to economic hardship, which led to increased pressure on charitable

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<sup>68</sup> Soly, 'Economische ontwikkeling', p. 590.

<sup>69</sup> For literature references see e.g. Parker, *The reformation of community*, pp. 9-11; Soly, 'Economische ontwikkeling', pp. 584-585.

<sup>70</sup> Davis, 'Humanism, heresy, and poor relief', pp. 17-64; Pullan, *Rich and poor in Renaissance Venice*. On this also see Parker, *The reformation of community*, pp. 10-11.

<sup>71</sup> Lis and Soly, *Poverty and capitalism*, p. 94.

institutions, and made reforms necessary. However, historians over the last few decades have objected to the socio-economic interpretation by emphasizing the impact of the religious changes in the sixteenth century. Ole Peter Grell even states that '[w]ithout the Reformation the centralisation and increased accountability of poor relief which took place in the sixteenth- and seventeenth centuries would have been unimaginable.'<sup>72</sup> As a result, the debate still remains far from settled.

### 2.2.3 Different outcomes of the reorganization process

Although most of the reforms showed a similar pattern, large differences between countries and regions can be observed. For example, while begging was prohibited in the Low Countries, and in England parishes were compelled to centralize all existing poor relief funds, in Spain the authorities limited themselves to the regulation of begging.<sup>73</sup> Local circumstances were decisive in how radically authorities implemented reforms. The first towns to experiment with reorganizations between the 1520s and 1550s were located in South-Germany, Switzerland, Italy and Spain. In the Southern Low Countries as well, existing relief arrangements were adapted, supported by the edict that Charles V issued in 1531, prohibiting begging and encouraging towns to centralize their poor relief provisions.<sup>74</sup>

In the Northern Low Countries, where after the start of the Revolt the edict of 1531 remained in place, towns only started to reform their charitable institutions around 1600. The common explanation for this time lag compared to their Southern counterparts is that in the early sixteenth century the need to reform poor relief was absent in provinces that later formed the Dutch Republic. Only after the heart of the economic boom shifted to the North of the Low Countries, and Amsterdam took over Antwerp's role as leading role as trade hub in the late sixteenth century, did pressure on charitable institutions increase and reform become necessary. That only a small part of the Dutch population joined the public church, and municipalities could no longer trust one church to take up responsibility to organize social care for urban society, also encouraged urban governments to increase their influence on poor relief policy, and become more actively involved. Leiden was a front runner in this process, where from 1582 onwards the Reformed deacons were forced to cooperate with city

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<sup>72</sup> Grell, 'The protestant imperative', p. 51.

<sup>73</sup> Soly, 'Economische ontwikkeling', p. 592.

<sup>74</sup> Van Nederveen Meerkerk and Vermeesch, 'Reforming outdoor relief', pp. 138-140; Prak, 'Armenzorg 1500-1800', pp. 56-57.

almoners in a central institution known as the *Huiszittenhuis*, and subsequently many other towns followed suit.<sup>75</sup>

However, even in an area as small as the Dutch Republic, the reorganization process was far from homogeneous. In general, three models can be distinguished: towns and cities that fully centralized all poor relief provisions into a central public institution, localities where secular and religious charities worked side by side, and towns where municipalities were unwilling or unable to increase their control and diaconates were left to their own devices. Charles Parker interprets the reorganization process in several Holland towns as a struggle for power between churches and local governments, which had 'competing visions of Christian community'.<sup>76</sup> The Calvinists' ideal was a small church, which represented the true community of faith. Members of the church had to endorse the Heidelberg Catechism, and submit themselves to church discipline. Church boards and diaconates needed to be able to function independently with limited interference of secular authorities. Libertines, on the other hand, worked to undermine a strong Calvinist church. They wanted the church to be a public church for all believers. City governments, in their view, needed full control over church affairs, in order to limit the impact of orthodox Calvinism on urban society. Also they considered poor relief to be, first and foremost, the territory of secular authorities.<sup>77</sup>

According to Parker, in towns where magistracies were powerful and anti-Calvinist sentiments strong, poor relief was fully centralized. This was for example the case in Leiden and Gouda. In Haarlem and Amsterdam, deacons managed to maintain their independence, but they did have to tolerate a public institution taking care of all non-Dutch Reformed poor. In Dordrecht and Delft, the position of the Calvinist Church was strong, allowing deacons to define their own policy without much interference by magistrates. In these towns, deacons not only cared for church members, but for the poor outside of their religious community as well, and the establishment of a public institution failed to happen or took place relatively late.<sup>78</sup>

Although Parker rightly observes a conflict over poor relief between secular and religious authorities, he bases his model on the assumption that city governments were always willing to take up the responsibility of caring for (a part) of the city poor, which was sometimes not the case. In Utrecht, for example, where a fierce political struggle between the two sides was fought,<sup>79</sup> poor relief provisions

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<sup>75</sup> Van Nederveen Meerkerk and Vermeesch, 'Reforming outdoor relief', p. 140; Parker, *The reformation of community*, pp. 157-162.

<sup>76</sup> Parker, *The reformation of community*, p. 2.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 1-7.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 155-188.

<sup>79</sup> Kaplan, *Calvinist and Libertines*.

remained unaffected. The urban authorities preferred to limit their influence on poor relief policy to monitoring existing charitable institutions and combating begging, and the Reformed deacons were generally free to manage their own affairs. Until the late 1620s, they cared for all poor in the city, irrespective of their beliefs. In fact, only after persistent appeals from the Reformed deacons, the city council decided to establish a public relief institution. Already in 1612, representatives of the Reformed church announced that they were no longer willing to care for the poor of other religious denominations. Not only did they have to deal with major financial problems, but they also encountered increasing resistance in appointing new deacons, as these church officials were often expected to make payments from their own pockets. In 1623, the deaconry suggested the city government to establish a public relief institution, in order to alleviate the pressure facing religious charities. Five years later in 1628, the magistracy finally gave in and founded the Almoners' Chamber (*Aalmoezenierskamer*), functioning next to the Dutch Reformed charity.<sup>80</sup>

It has often been stated that city governments were aware of the benefits of a well-functioning poor relief system, in that it could attract workers from outside the city, who might need to apply for assistance during seasons with a lower demand for labour.<sup>81</sup> Especially in Holland towns, the economic boom was partly the consequence of the influx of migrants from the Southern Low Countries, which then encouraged municipalities to take up the responsibility of organizing poor relief themselves. However, to reverse the argument, in towns that depended less on the economic impact of immigrants, local authorities might have been more hesitant in offering assistance next to church charity. Compared to some Holland magistracies, the attitude of the Utrecht town government towards migrants was relatively hostile. Not only were inhabitants of Utrecht forbidden to offer housing to strangers, and people from outside of town charged more if they wanted to obtain citizenship, access to poor relief was also already restricted to those who had been living in town a certain number of years as early as the late sixteenth century. In contrast to Holland, Utrecht hardly reaped the economic benefits of migration. Aside from the smaller influx of migrants, the majority of the new inhabitants had German roots, and were in general poorer than their Flemish counterparts who massively found their way to cities such as Leiden and Amsterdam.<sup>82</sup>

In Delft too, the Reformed Diaconate, established in 1573, initially made charitable distributions to adherents as well as to poor outside the church. After the Reformation, the *Heilige Geestmeesters* stayed in practice, but increasingly focussed

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<sup>80</sup> Teeuwen, 'Vande groote swaricheyt', pp. 53-59.

<sup>81</sup> See e.g. Van Leeuwen, 'Amsterdam en de armenzorg', pp. 133, 151; De Vries and Van der Woude, *The first modern economy*, pp. 659-660.

<sup>82</sup> Teeuwen, 'Vande groote swaricheyt', pp. 57-59.

on orphan care, while the deacons became primarily responsible for offering assistance to the outdoor poor.<sup>83</sup> Partly this situation resulted from the Diaconate's strong wish to remain independent and the church's resistance to losing control over a proportion of the town's welfare provisions.<sup>84</sup> Moreover, as they would be unable to keep the charity's budget afloat without municipal grants as well as revenues from door-to-door collections, to which non-members also contributed, the church authorities also felt it to be their responsibility to offer relief outside of the congregation, instead of limiting distributions to Calvinist families.<sup>85</sup>

During the first two decades after its establishment, the Delft Diaconate experienced a great degree of autonomy. However during the 1590s, as this charity had to deal with increasing budgetary problems, while at the same time the magistracy was unable to influence its policy, the urban authorities became aware of the need to increase their role in organizing poor relief. In 1596, the town council began to make plans to establish a public relief institution, the Chamber of Charity (*Kamer van Charitate*), in which the municipality and the Reformed Diaconate would cooperate. Assistance would only be granted to town inhabitants, begging only allowed to a specific group of people, and the decision-making process centralized. However, the deacons successfully resisted losing their autonomy and when the Chamber was established in December 1597, the Reformed charity remained the main provider of relief, while the almoners concentrated on fighting begging. This new situation in which poor relief provision had only become more fragmented, was unsatisfactory for the municipality and in 1614, after continuing financial problems, the Dutch Reformed charity was incorporated into the Chamber of Charity, after which religious and secular administrators had to cooperate under the supervision of the city authorities.<sup>86</sup> Also in Zwolle, when the City Poor Chamber (*Stadsarmenkamer*) was established in 1581, the Dutch Reformed deaconry initially managed to maintain its independent position. Here poor relief was fully centralized in 1616, when the deacons became part of the civic institution, and together with the almoners provided assistance to all poor in town, regardless of their religious denomination.<sup>87</sup>

Whereas the charities established after the Reformation in Utrecht, Delft and Zwolle (namely the Reformed deaconries and civic relief institutions) became the main providers of poor relief around 1600, in 's-Hertogenbosch the situation

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<sup>83</sup> Abels, *Nieuw en ongezien*, vol. 2, p. 234.

<sup>84</sup> Parker, *The Reformation of community*, pp. 179-187.

<sup>85</sup> Abels, *Nieuw en ongezien*, vol. 2, pp. 215-219. Parker, *The reformation of community*, pp. 184-187.

<sup>86</sup> Van der Vlis, *Leven in armoede*, pp. 35-42; Parker, *The reformation of community*, pp. 175-187; Abels, *Nieuw en ongezien*, vol. 2, pp. 229-247.

<sup>87</sup> Van Wijngaarden, *Zorg voor de kost*, p. 52.

remained largely unchanged. Apart from several diaconates that were created, no new poor relief institutions were established at the end of the sixteenth century, and the charities that had been organizing welfare in the late medieval period continued to do so until the early nineteenth century. The House of Giving (*Geefhuis*) was the biggest poor relief institution in this Brabant town. From the late thirteenth century onwards, the Table of the Holy Spirit (*Tafel van de Heilige Geest*) as this originally parochial institution was officially called, had distributed loafs of bread from a table in St. John's Cathedral. Shortly after its establishment, it came under the supervision of the town government, and distributions were made to a large proportion of the city poor. Next to this House of Giving nine district-based organizations functioned, the Nine Blocks (*Negen Blokken*), originally established in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.<sup>88</sup> Initially, poor relief was just one of several tasks of the Block masters, next to (among other things) fire prevention, maintenance of water pumps and of the stairs to the River Dieze, but over the course of the centuries it came to be the main task of the Blocks. These nine organizations functioned separately from any ecclesiastical interference and the municipality also hardly interfered with their policy.<sup>89</sup>

Why was the medieval poor relief system not reorganized in 's-Hertogenbosch around 1600? Firstly, this town only joined the side of the Republic in 1629. It was only then that the religious situation changed drastically, and that the Dutch Reformed Church became the public church. Additionally, even after this religious and political upheaval, a large majority of the town's population remained loyal to the Catholic church. Secondly, due to the stable financial basis of both the House of Giving and the Blocks, with, as we shall see in chapter 3, large funds to finance their provisions from, the need for radical reforms was probably lacking. When from 1629 onwards, the Calvinists started to care for the indigent church members, welfare provisions in 's-Hertogenbosch became even more fragmented. In the following year, representatives of the different institutions decided, in a joint consultation, that the deacons would take care of poor members of their church, the House of Giving would be responsible for soldiers' families – which considering that 's-Hertogenbosch was a garrison town, was not an unsubstantial group – and the Blocks for all other poor. However, in practice the division was not this strict.<sup>90</sup> Together, the four towns studied in this thesis represent the three different types of arrangements that existed in the Dutch Republic: centralized (Zwolle and from 1614 onwards Delft), semi-

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<sup>88</sup> The Blocks were designated with a letter and the name of the district: A. Markt, B. Orthenstraat, C. Hinthamerstraat, D. Hinthamereinde, E. Kerk en Verwerstraat, F. Weversplaats, G. Vismarkt, H. Vugtherstraat en I. Vugterdijk.

<sup>89</sup> Prak, 'Goede buren en verre vrienden', pp. 150-151; Prak, 'Overvloed of onbehagen?', pp. 13-14.

<sup>90</sup> Vos, *Burgers, broeders en bazen*, p. 318.

centralized (Delft between 1597 and 1614 and Utrecht) and decentralized ('s-Hertogenbosch).

### 2.3 Poor relief in a Golden Age

As described in the previous chapter, the Dutch Republic was famous for its poor relief system, and Dutch social care was considered to be at a high level compared with most other countries in early modern Europe. However, due to the scarcity of data on poor relief expenditure, it is difficult to establish with full certainty how the situation in the Northern Netherlands deviated from elsewhere in Europe at the time. In fact, over the course of the medieval and early modern period, institutions were established in many parts of Europe, similar to those in Dutch towns, offering indoor or outdoor relief to the destitute. Also across many regions in sixteenth-century Europe, reforms were implemented to centralize and rationalize these provisions. Nevertheless, in light of the literature on welfare arrangements in Europe in the preindustrial period, several distinctions can be made, both in the way poor relief was organized and in the level of assistance provided.

For example, a distinction can be made between on the one hand Northern European countries where, generally speaking, over the course of the early modern period local and central governments became increasingly involved in organizing poor relief, and on the other hand the South of Europe where poor relief schemes mainly had a confessional and associational character.<sup>91</sup> Also often a contrast is emphasized between the uniform and tax-financed relief system which existed in England, and the locally organized, and on voluntary donations dependant welfare provisions on the Continent.<sup>92</sup> Lastly, distinctions are made between regions with relatively well-developed welfare arrangements, and parts of Europe where provisions for the poor, elderly and sick were of a much lower level. As Lindert's calculations indicate, both in England and the Dutch Republic, per capita expenditure on poor relief was high, while in early modern Scotland provisions were minimal for example.<sup>93</sup>

However, despite well-developed arrangements for the indigent in early modern Dutch towns, even within these localities was there no universal right to

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<sup>91</sup> Grell and Cunningham, 'Health care and poor relief', p. 3. On social care provisions between 1700 and 1900 in Southern European Countries, see e.g. Grell, Cunningham and Roeck (eds.), *Health care and poor relief in 18th and 19th century Southern Europe*.

<sup>92</sup> For a comparison between the English and Dutch poor relief systems in the early modern period, see Van Nederveen Meerkerk and Teeuwen, 'The stability of voluntarism'.

<sup>93</sup> Lindert, 'Poor relief before the welfare state'. According to Rosalind Mitchison 'little or nothing was done for any of the poor in most parts of Scotland' in the early modern period, see Mitchison, 'Poor relief and health care in Scotland', p. 220.

assistance, and no homogenous way of treating the poor. Not only between towns but even on a city level, large variations existed between the level of assistance that different groups of poor received. This section provides an overview of the welfare provisions that existed in the early modern Northern Netherlands, with an emphasis on differences between indoor and outdoor institutions, between provisions for citizens and those without urban citizenship, and between arrangements for Dutch Reformed poor and the destitute of other religious denominations. Special attention is also given to the role of both city governments and the church boards in organizing poor relief for poor town inhabitants.

Of all the charities, foreign visitors of the Dutch Republic most admired the hospitals, almshouses and old people's homes they encountered. These indoor relief institutions were numerous. In Delft, for example, next to the Calvinist orphanage, which housed boys and girls of Dutch Reformed families irrespective of their family's socioeconomic position, functioned a separate girls' home (the *Meisjeshuis*), two hospitals which sheltered poor travellers and sick people, a house of correction and a workhouse in which the poor were put to work, an old people's home (the *Sint Christoffelhuis*), and several almshouses.<sup>94</sup> In 's-Hertogenbosch, next to a civic and (from the 1770s onwards) Catholic orphanage, at least some 40 hospitals and almshouses existed, which were mostly founded on private initiative.<sup>95</sup> Although it was more common for outdoor relief institutions to collect in the churches or door to door, in the four towns studied here, orphanages in particular requested charitable contributions on a frequent basis.<sup>96</sup>

As Anne McCants has pointed out, some of these institutions were not meant to alleviate the suffering of the real poor, but protected the middling sorts from downward social mobility. Some institutions such as civic orphanages were only accessible for people who were *burger*, those with urban citizenship,<sup>97</sup> which was only a minority of the towns' populations; for other charities entrance fees were requested, a common practice among almshouses.<sup>98</sup> The level of care in these institutions was usually higher than in charities accessible for all the towns' inhabitants. For example, the civic orphanage in Amsterdam, the *Burgerweeshuis*, offered artisan training for boys, as well as a diversified diet, containing fish, meat

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<sup>94</sup> Van der Vlis, *Leven in armoede*, pp. 44-47.

<sup>95</sup> Based on the Dutch Almshouses Database, with thanks to Henk Looijesteijn. For more information on Dutch almshouses: Looijesteijn, 'Funding and founding private charities'.

<sup>96</sup> See chapters 4 and 6.

<sup>97</sup> For an overview of how urban citizenship could be obtained in the Dutch Republic and the advantages it offered see: Prak, 'The Dutch Republic as a bourgeois society'. On the history of civic orphanages, also see Van der Vlis and Rinsema, *Weeshuizen in Nederland*, pp. 18-19.

<sup>98</sup> Looijesteijn, 'Funding and founding almshouses', p. 222; Van Leeuwen, Van Nederveen Meerkerk and Heerma van Voss, 'Provisions for the elderly'.

and dairy products. The caloric intake of the civic orphans was almost twice as high as of the boys and girls living in the *Aalmoezeniersweeshuis*, which accommodated children from poorer families. Death rates were five times higher among the almoners' orphans.<sup>99</sup> Guild welfare also prevented the middling sorts from the humiliation of having to apply for public poor relief. Moreover, the guilds' distributions in times of sickness, widowhood and old age, were often more generous than the doles offered by almoners and deacons.<sup>100</sup>

However, notwithstanding the important role the orphanages, hospitals and almshouses played in early modern Dutch poor relief and their dominant position in art and travel reports in which charities were depicted or mentioned, only a minority of the destitute in the Dutch Republic was institutionalized. Most of the poor lived in independent households, either paying rent for a small house, single room, basement or attic, or benefiting from free housing organized by local charities.<sup>101</sup> Among the assisted households, women, old and sick people, widows and widowers, as well as families with many children were overrepresented.<sup>102</sup> Usually they could line up for distributions by almoners and deacons on a weekly basis, receiving small sums of money, bread, and sometimes clothing, shoes and peat. The disbursements were generally modest and not enough to make a living from, but supplementary to income from labour, often earned in the textile industry, and support from family, friends and neighbours.<sup>103</sup> Van der Vlis calculated that halfway through the seventeenth century in Delft, more than sixty per cent of the families assisted by the Chamber of Charity received no more than one guilder weekly,<sup>104</sup> while the costs of living have been estimated at two guilders per week for adults and one guilder per week for children.<sup>105</sup> In wintertime, doles were usually higher and additional peat and clothing were distributed to keep the poor warm.<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> McCants, *Civic charity in a Golden Age*, chapters 3 and 4.

<sup>100</sup> Van Leeuwen, 'Guilds and middle-class welfare'. On guild welfare also see Bos, "*Uyt liefde tot malcander*".

<sup>101</sup> In a tax register from Leiden from the year 1749, 1,919 out of a total of 7,029 as poor registered people, which was 27.3 per cent, lived in almshouses, hospitals, orphanages or other charitable institutions, while the vast majority lived in their own homes, see Tjalsma, 'Een karakterisering van Leiden in 1749', pp. 31-35. In Groningen, around the year 1700, slightly more than 20 per cent of the poor were institutionalized, see Buursma, '*Dese bekommerlijke tijden*', p. 252. In Amsterdam in the period 1829-1854, 90 per cent of the assisted poor were outdoor poor and only ten per cent lived in institutions, see Van Leeuwen, *Bijstand in Amsterdam*, pp. 170-172 and Van Leeuwen, 'Surviving with a little help', p. 320.

<sup>102</sup> Van Wijngaarden, *Zorg voor de kost*, pp. 87-95, 151-179; Van der Vlis, *Leven in armoede*, pp. 73-86 and 183-214; Prak, 'Armenzorg 1500-1800', pp. 76-78.

<sup>103</sup> Prak, 'Armenzorg 1500-1800', pp. 71-75. In the eighteenth century, the idea gained ground that assistance was given indiscriminately, which had led to the emergence of a lazy underclass living on doles, see chapter 5, section 5.2.

<sup>104</sup> Van der Vlis, *Leven in armoede*, p. 113.

<sup>105</sup> Van der Vlis, 'Verzorgingsstaat avant la lettre', p. 22.

<sup>106</sup> See e.g. Van Wijngaarden, *Zorg voor de kost*, p. 111.

A systematic policy was considered necessary to deal with the problem of poverty. Urban authorities divided towns into districts, where one or several almoners were responsible for keeping track of where the poor lived, how the household was composed, and how much income from labour and other forms of assistance they received. These different criteria influenced the level of assistance that was granted. In most towns, an extensive examination of the supported families' living conditions every year established whether the level of assistance was still sufficient or if it had to be adjusted upwards or downwards. Moreover, social control prevented that doles were given to poor who went out begging, walked the streets drunk, or would in other respects be unworthy of receiving poor relief. In those cases where assisted families were caught exhibiting indecent behaviour, almoners and deacons could cut their allowance.<sup>107</sup>

In some localities, authorities also monitored to ensure that families did not receive support from several institutions at the same time. The treasurer of the Utrecht Almoners' Chamber was assigned to combat fraud fiercely, for which regular deliberation between the different poor relief institutions was necessary.<sup>108</sup> However, coordination between the charities in 's-Hertogenbosch was almost non-existent, as a result of which it was possible for families to benefit from doles from the House of Giving, the Blocks as well as the Reformed deaconry simultaneously. Consequently, the Calvinists were better off here than the poor who were not registered as member of the Dutch Reformed Church, because they could apply for assistance at three different charities. Moreover, the deacons were more generous in their distributions than the almoners of the public institutions.<sup>109</sup> In Zwolle, where all the poor had to turn to the City Poor Chamber, Dutch Reformed families were also favoured as they were granted additional doles four times a year.<sup>110</sup>

In spite of the Calvinist character of public institutions in the Dutch Republic, the Catholic, Mennonite, Lutheran, and Walloon poor could in principle also turn to civic administrators for assistance. However, as described below, over the course of the early modern period, public charity provisions became less and less accessible for members of dissident religious communities as well as for migrants. In addition to the distributions organized by civic almoners, charitable arrangements often existed within religious communities. Due to the scarcity of archival sources, it is not always clear when deaconries began their distributions, how many households were supported and how extensive their relief was. As shall be demonstrated in chapter 3,

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<sup>107</sup> Prak, 'The carrot and the stick'; Parker, *The reformation of community*, pp. 123-146; Van Wijngaarden, *Zorg voor de kost*, pp. 141-143.

<sup>108</sup> HUA, SA II, inv. no. 1824, 1 September 1628.

<sup>109</sup> Prak, 'Overvloed of onbehagen?', pp. 15-16.

<sup>110</sup> Van Wijngaarden, *Zorg voor de kost*, pp. 54-56.

large budgets were available for charitable distributions in some churches, while in other cases only a small number of families received some bread or coins on a weekly or less regular basis. To qualify for assistance from religious charities, membership was required. In the case of the Dutch Reformed Church, this meant that the head of the household had to commit him- or herself to the church by means of a public profession of faith, which also gave access to the Lord's Supper.<sup>111</sup>

Poor relief administrators of religious denominations other than the public church often designed their own policy, without fear of major interference from urban officials. They were in principle only responsible to church boards and to authorities at other levels within the churches' hierarchy.<sup>112</sup> The practices of Dutch Reformed charities were monitored more closely, especially when their responsibilities exceeded the boundaries of the church community. In some localities, municipalities had a say in the appointment of elders and deacons of the public church. In 's-Hertogenbosch, for example, the church board elected new church officers in consultation with the urban authorities.<sup>113</sup> In some other towns the influence of town councils went even further, such as in Nijmegen, where half the number of elders had to be chosen from the municipality, and in Middelburg, where the urban authorities appointed one-thirds of the church board themselves.<sup>114</sup>

Another way in which urban authorities could influence church affairs was through familial linkages between members of city councils and church boards. Both elders and deacons were recruited from a variety of social backgrounds. Although among deacons especially, a middle class background was not uncommon, and many made a living as, for example, craftsman or shopkeeper, overall there was a clear overlap between the families that governed church and town.<sup>115</sup> For example, in Delft in the period 1572-1621, the great majority of elders and deacons had family ties with members of the municipality, which according to Wouters was favourable for the understanding and communication between both bodies.<sup>116</sup>

City governments interfered most in the affairs of civic relief institutions. They not only monitored income and expenditure, and intervened in times of financial difficulties, but also appointed poor relief administrators. Cooperation between deacons and municipal regents within a single institution sometimes led to

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<sup>111</sup> Wouters, *Nieuw en ongezien*, vol. 1, part 2.

<sup>112</sup> There are exceptions to this. As will be discussed in chapter 4, in early eighteenth-century Delft, on several occasions representatives of the Walloon church asked the city government for permission to organize collections within their church for persecuted co-religionists abroad.

<sup>113</sup> Vos, *Burgers, broeders en bazen*, pp. 252-255.

<sup>114</sup> Groenhuis, *De predikanten*, p. 26.

<sup>115</sup> Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, p. 368. On the social background of elders, deacons, and almoners see e.g. Prak, 'Armenzorg 1500-1800', pp. 64-67; Van Wijngaarden, *Zorg voor de kost*, pp. 67-70; Vos, *Burgers, broeders, bazen*, pp. 315-318; Van Leeuwen, *The logic of charity*, pp. 54-68.

<sup>116</sup> Wouters, *Nieuw en ongezien*, vol. 1, pp. 388-417.

disturbances. In the merger between the Dutch Reformed Diaconate and the Delft Chamber of Charity in 1614, the urban authorities decided that eight deacons would be appointed next to twelve urban almoners. Moreover, two years later the town government acquired control over the appointment of elders and deacons. The church board resisted tenaciously and fought to gain equal representation in the Chamber as well as autonomy in selecting its own members. In 1617, the dispute was settled: six deacons would function next to six almoners, and, although the burgomasters first needed to approve the list of candidates, the church board remained responsible for the appointment of church officers.<sup>117</sup>

Also cooperation between almoners of different religious backgrounds could cause difficulties. In Utrecht, eight Dutch Reformed as well as eight Catholic almoners were appointed, which was an unusual situation.<sup>118</sup> An explanation can most probably be found in the relatively large share of the Utrecht population that remained loyal to the old church. For 1635, the adherents of the Catholic church have been estimated at about 9,000 people, which was approximately a third of the town's population.<sup>119</sup> One of the reasons for the establishment of this public relief institution, next to the deacons' financial problems and their strong wish to give up the care for the poor outside of their religious community, had been to meet the demands of Catholic inhabitants who had complained that the deacons favoured the Calvinist poor, as a result of which they were less willing to contribute financially.<sup>120</sup> However, when the municipality in 1637 decided that Catholic regents of hospitals would no longer be tolerated and that religious sculptures and ornaments had to be removed, the appointment of new Catholic almoners caused problems. They were only willing to accept the position if the magistrates retracted their decision. When this demand was rejected, the cooperation between Calvinists and Catholics within the Almoners' Chamber ended and was only reinstated in 1660. However, from then on the division of tasks and responsibilities between both groups was unequal, as only two Catholic almoners were appointed.<sup>121</sup>

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<sup>117</sup> Parker, *The reformation of community*, pp. 182-183. Also see Wouters, *Nieuw en ongezien*, vol. 1, pp. 329-355.

<sup>118</sup> The only other example that I know of is the Blocks in 's-Hertogenbosch, where both Dutch Reformed and Catholic Block masters were appointed.

<sup>119</sup> Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, p. 380.

<sup>120</sup> HUA, SA II, inv. no. 121, 6 August 1627.

<sup>121</sup> HUA, SA II, inv. no. 121, 28 August 1637, 6 November 1637, 27 September 1637 and HUA, SA II, inv. no. 1825-13.

## 2.4 The system under pressure

The move towards centralization that took place in a multitude of localities in the sixteenth and early seventeenth century was halted and often even reversed from the last decades of the seventeenth century onwards. After 1670, the economic boom of the Dutch economy had come to an end, which resulted in rising poverty. As the income of charities could not keep pace with the increasing demands for relief, charitable institutions encountered major financial problems, forcing them to make changes to their poor relief policy as well as in their financial management. The implications for the income and expenditure of relief institutions is discussed in chapter 3. In this section it is shown how almoners and deacons attempted to restrict entitlements to poor relief provisions from the late seventeenth century onwards, in order to prevent the charitable system from collapsing.

One aspect of the new poor relief policy was limiting assistance to the local population. Over the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, many charities increased the criteria for migrants to qualify for relief. For example, while in Amsterdam the period a person had to have lived in the city before civic relief institutions granted assistance was two years in the 1620s, it was gradually increased, and amounted to seven years from the 1670s onwards. Similarly, the Dutch Reformed charity in this city initially assisted all poor members, but adjusted its policies according to economic circumstances, and in the second half of the eighteenth century only those who had been living in Amsterdam for five years were eligible for relief, while for those born outside of the Netherlands even six years of residence were required.<sup>122</sup>

In the towns studied in this thesis this method was also applied to restrict access to poor relief provisions. For example, in eighteenth-century 's-Hertogenbosch, the House of Giving only assisted people born in the town or had been living there for a minimum period of fifteen years. In 1775, the urban authorities decided that they needed a better control system regarding the settlement period, and for all inhabitants they recorded the place of birth, and for migrants also the years of residence in 's-Hertogenbosch.<sup>123</sup> In Utrecht, the municipality announced already in 1583 that only those who had been living there for a minimum of three years were eligible for assistance. The other poor were ordered to leave town within three days. In 1604, 1628 and 1654 the required period

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<sup>122</sup> Van Leeuwen, 'Amsterdam en de armenzorg', pp. 154-155.

<sup>123</sup> The other charities in this town did not introduce these kinds of barriers, see Prak, 'Overvloed of onbehagen?', pp. 13-15.

was raised respectively to four, six and eight year.<sup>124</sup> A possible explanation why this development took place far earlier in Utrecht than in most other Dutch towns can be found in the large influx of poor migrants in this town, who were considered harmful to the town's economic development.<sup>125</sup>

In 1682, the States of Holland decided that these policies to reduce the influx of newcomers should no longer be limited to the local level.<sup>126</sup> From this year onwards, migrants needed a letter of surety (*acte van indemniteit*) in order to settle in a new locality within this province, or would otherwise be sent back. This letter was usually issued by the city council or a poor relief institution in the locality of origin, and stated that if the migrant fell into poverty within a specified number of years after moving, the home town would refund the costs for assistance. With the notable exception of Amsterdam, where the authorities feared that this policy would harm the influx of flexible wage workers, most towns started requesting these documents from migrants. Other provinces followed the example of Holland, and introduced similar arrangements.<sup>127</sup>

Another way in which city councils attempted to keep local charities financially sound was by increasingly excluding religious groups from relief. From the late seventeenth century onwards, poor relief became more and more divided along religious lines, a process which has been referred to as 'confessionalization' of poor relief.<sup>128</sup> In the early period of the Dutch Republic, officially only the public church was allowed to establish charities, organize collections, and receive gifts and testamentary bequests, although in some localities urban authorities turned a blind eye when religious dissident communities also offered assistance to poor church members. For example, in Amsterdam, Catholic charities were already allowed to receive charitable donations from 1620 onwards, and the decree which prohibited them to do so was officially revoked in 1661. The climate of tolerance in this city also becomes clear when looking at the wide variety of institutions that existed for the care of orphans. Over the course of the early modern period, next to the Civic and Almoners' Orphanages, also the Catholics, Lutherans, Mennonites, Walloons, English

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<sup>124</sup> Vande Water, *Groot placaatboek*, vol. 3, pp. 546, 549-551, and 555-559; Adriani, *De Stads-Aalmoezenierskamer*, p. 18.

<sup>125</sup> On this see Teeuwen, 'Vande groote swaricheyt'.

<sup>126</sup> In some other provinces, such as in Friesland, already in the sixteenth century the Provincial States interfered with local poor relief provisions, and set up regulations regarding begging and labour migration, see Spaans, *Armenzorg in Friesland*, chapters 3 and 9.

<sup>127</sup> Looijesteijn and Van Leeuwen, 'Establishing and registering identity', pp. 227-232; Van Leeuwen, 'Amsterdam en de armenzorg', pp. 148-154.

<sup>128</sup> Van Nederveen Meerkerk and Vermeesch, 'Reforming outdoor relief', p. 142.

Reformed and Scottish Reformed established institutions to care for the orphans within their communities.<sup>129</sup>

Also in many other localities, civic charity became more and more restricted to members of the Dutch Reformed Church. While dissident communities had first been unable to organize relief for poor co-religionists, or were only allowed to do so out of sight of the urban authorities, from the late seventeenth century they were increasingly forced to set up their own relief institutions. In Utrecht, for example, the municipality decided as early as 1658 that the Almoners' Chamber would no longer support the Walloon poor.<sup>130</sup> This poor relief institution experienced significant financial difficulties earlier and more vehemently than the other institutions studied in this thesis.<sup>131</sup> Around 1650, this even led to a debate as to whether the Chamber should be dissolved, and the diaconate made responsible for all city poor again, a plan which the Calvinist charity successfully resisted.<sup>132</sup> After the 'disaster year' of 1672, when the Dutch Republic was attacked simultaneously by England, France, and the bishops of Münster and Cologne, problems increased and the financial situation became untenable. In the summer of 1674, the town council temporarily disestablished the civic institution, after which Catholic poor were no longer able to apply for assistance. Only a few months later, members of the Catholic elite, who made no secret of their discontent with the new situation, established the Roman Catholic Almoners' Chamber.<sup>133</sup>

In Zwolle, the Catholics encountered a comparable attitude from the urban authorities. In 1683, the municipality announced that as the Catholic part of the population was considered to be too miserly in their contributions to the collections of the City Poor Chamber, the almoners would from then on pass by their doors when asking for charitable gifts, but would also stop their distributions to the Catholic poor.<sup>134</sup> In 1710, Catholics were again allowed to apply for assistance at the civic relief institution, but only if they as a group would contribute 900 guilders a year. The town government rightfully declared that a large part of the support was paid from church collections, to which self-evidently only Dutch Reformed town inhabitants donated. The Catholics were now supposed to organize their own collections in order

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<sup>129</sup> Van der Vlis and Rinsema, *Weeshuizen in Nederland*, pp. 20-22.

<sup>130</sup> HUA, SA II, inv. no. 121, 29 March 1658.

<sup>131</sup> For a more extensive account of the financial situation of the Utrecht Almoners' Chamber see chapter 3.

<sup>132</sup> HUA, SA II, inv. no. 1045, 1 October 1649 and 1 April 1651.

<sup>133</sup> Verhey, *300 jaar aalmoezenierszorg* p. 15.

<sup>134</sup> HCO, SA, inv. no. 71, 22 February 1683.

to financially meet the demands of the City Poor Chamber.<sup>135</sup> In 1736, their yearly required subsidy was raised to 1,200 guilders.<sup>136</sup>

Finally, in 1739 the support of Catholic households by municipal almoners came to an end and the Roman Catholic Poor Chamber was established. Also Lutherans were excluded from civic poor relief in this period.<sup>137</sup> In Zwolle, the confessionalization process even went as far as forcing Calvinists to organize their own poor relief. Here, indigent Dutch Reformed church members had been favoured above other poor with additional distributions, but in 1738 the municipality decided that these extraordinary doles, financed from money collected in the churches, was sufficient for the care of this group. In 1756, the *Nederduits gereformeerde armenledematenkamer* was established, as a result of which the responsibility of the civic almoners became even more limited.<sup>138</sup> In theory, only those families who were not a member of a religious community or had joined too recently to be eligible for assistance, could then apply for distributions from the City Poor Chamber.

In Delft, a comparable process could be observed with the Walloon, English Reformed and Catholics having to organize poor relief within their own communities from the late seventeenth century onwards.<sup>139</sup> However, the situation deviated in 's-Hertogenbosch. Here, due to the decentralized character of poor relief provisions, religious minorities cared for their own poor from early on, next to which public assistance for all poor existed. Probably resulting from the dominance of the Catholic population in this town, no negative sentiments towards the poor of this group can be observed in the eighteenth century. Here, the House of Giving, the nine Blocks and several religious charities, with the Dutch Reformed deaconry being the biggest, continued their distributions until all provisions were centralized in the French period.<sup>140</sup> In many other towns, both by responsible financial management, as shall be demonstrated in chapter 3, and by restricting entitlements to poor relief, authorities prevented the poor relief system from collapsing, even in times of increased distress. Although after 1795 attempts were made to reduce ecclesiastical influence on welfare policy and implement national legislation, the locally organized and fragmented poor relief system stayed in place until at least the early nineteenth

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<sup>135</sup> HCO, SA, inv. no. 78, 16 July 1710. This practice also existed in other towns, see e.g. on Haarlem: Spaans, 'Katholieken onder curatele', p. 113.

<sup>136</sup> HCO, SA, inv. no. 84, 30 November 1736.

<sup>137</sup> HCO, SA, inv. no. 85, 12 November 1739 and 13 November 1739. Also see: HCO, Roman Catholic Poor Chamber.

<sup>138</sup> HCO, SA, inv. no. 47, 24 June 1738 and HCO, SA, inv. no. 88, 6 February 1756.

<sup>139</sup> Van der Vlis, *Leven in armoede*, p. 61.

<sup>140</sup> Prak, 'Overvloed of onbehagen', pp. 17-21; Prak, 'Goede buren', pp. 158-162.

century, and traces of these charitable provisions can even be found until far into the twentieth century.<sup>141</sup>

## 2.5 Conclusion

Due to the fragmented political system in the Dutch Republic, the almost absence of national legislation on social care, as well as the religious diversity that characterized society, a wide variety of poor relief arrangements existed. Around 1600, increasing poverty as well as the emergence of Protestantism gave rise to a reorganization process in which poor relief gradually became more centralized and rationalized. However, local circumstances were decisive in the extent to which municipalities increased their control over social care provisions within their communities. While in some cities, towns and villages municipalities became actively involved in organizing social care for the old, poor and sick, in other localities urban authorities limited themselves to monitoring existing private and religious charities. The four towns studied here represent the different arrangements that existed within the Dutch Republic, with (in the end) centralization in Zwolle and Delft, semi-centralized provisions in Utrecht, and decentralization in 's-Hertogenbosch.

Additional to the care provided by public relief institutions and Dutch Reformed charities, on a smaller scale distributions were often organized within communities of other religious denominations, such as within Walloon, Lutheran, Mennonite, and Catholic churches. As a result, the Dutch poor relief system remained highly fragmented after the Reformation, and religious charities still played an important role. From the late seventeenth century onwards, as a policy to keep relief institutions financially sustainable in times of growing poverty, religious minorities were even increasingly excluded from the assistance organized by public charities, and consequently forced to take care of their own poor. Migrants also suffered from the increased restriction of public welfare provisions. Arguably, this fragmented system led to increased cohesion and solidarity within mainly small religious communities, and protected urban societies from the influx of large numbers of wandering poor, which encouraged higher levels of generosity. The next chapter examines how charitable institutions financed their activities, and also whether organizational structures influenced the population's giving behaviour.

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<sup>141</sup> Van Leeuwen, 'Armenzorg 1800-1912'.



## Chapter 3

# Financing outdoor poor relief

### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the financing of outdoor poor relief in four early modern Dutch towns. The aim of this chapter is threefold. Firstly, it provides an insight into the importance of collection gifts for the financing of charitable distributions, observing differences between localities and developments over time. Secondly, it shows the different items of expenditure of relief institutions and particularly the extent to which donations were actually spent on assistance. This is important as decisions on the spending of charitable funds may have impacted on the population's willingness to give. Thirdly, within this context, the charities' financial management strategies are examined. Analysis of how well charitable funds were maintained, how relief administrators dealt with financial difficulties, as well as the role of secular and religious authorities in the monitoring of the charities' accounts, provides some indication as to whether the town inhabitants could entrust their donations to these institutions without concern.

Over the past few decades, several studies have been published on the financing of poor relief in early modern Dutch towns, however, often by focussing on only one locality or a limited time period.<sup>142</sup> This chapter adds to the existing literature by offering a longitudinal analysis of the income structures of five charitable institutions in four different towns over a period of almost two centuries. The first part of this chapter deals with the income structures of poor relief institutions in Delft, Utrecht, Zwolle and 's-Hertogenbosch. It focuses not only on the main relief institutions such as the public and Dutch Reformed charities, but also on charities of other religious denominations. The second part of this chapter elaborates

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<sup>142</sup> See e.g. Van Leeuwen, 'Amsterdam en de armenzorg'; Buursma, *'Dese bekommerlijke tijden'*, part A chapter 4; Spaans, 'De gift aan de armen'. Also on Delft, Zwolle and 's-Hertogenbosch already some research has been done on the ways charities financed the care for the poor and needy, see e.g. Van der Vlis, *Leven in armoede*, pp. 315-345; Van Wijngaarden, *Zorg voor de kost*, pp. 72-76; Kappelhof, 'Het Bossche Geefhuis'; De Kruif, 'De prijs van de armenzorg'.

upon the expenditure of relief institutions, while the third and final section examines the almoners' and deacons' financial management strategies as well as at the role of municipalities in monitoring these policies. The main sources used are account books of poor relief institutions, in which income and expenditure were often registered in great detail. Additionally, minutes and resolutions of both charities and city governments on financial management issues are analysed.

### 3.2 Income

For this chapter, the source material includes a number of account books for the period between 1600 and 1800 from the civic institutions in Delft, Zwolle and Utrecht, as well as from the Dutch Reformed charities in Utrecht and 's-Hertogenbosch. In some towns an abundance of archival material is available. The financial administration of both the Delft Chamber of Charity and the Utrecht Almoners' Chamber are most complete, as for both charities data could be collected for no less than 165 years. In Delft, the archives of the civic institution contains some data from the 1620s, as well as a full series of account books for the period from 1641 to the early nineteenth century. In Utrecht, the financial administration has survived for the period 1630 to 1799, notwithstanding a minor absence of five years' worth of data. In addition, the financial administration of the Zwolle City Poor Chamber is available for a period of almost 90 years. The income structure of the Dutch Reformed charity in Utrecht could be retrieved for only a quarter of the eighteenth century, while for its counterpart in 's-Hertogenbosch data are available for two-thirds of this century.

As the House of Giving in 's-Hertogenbosch did not organize collections at all, the analysis of its income and expenditure is based on secondary literature instead of on new archival sources. For the Blocks, for which nine different financial administrations exist, samples are used from the institutions' accounts for every ten years because extensive research on their income and expenditure would be unfeasible within the time constraints of the research. Moreover, data have only been gathered on the importance of collection gifts for the financing of the activities of these district-based charities. For the analysis of other sources of income, existing literature is used, mainly focussing on the second half of the eighteenth century, which enables at least a general comparison between these institutions and the other charities studied in this thesis. The analysis of the income of religious charities other than those of the Dutch Reformed Church is also based on samples from their financial administrations. More information on the archival sources used from the

different charitable institutions, and for which precise years samples were taken, can be found in Appendix A.

In the analysis of the income structures of early modern charities, four different categories are identified: collection gifts; other donations (*inter vivos* gifts and testamentary bequests); income from capital and real estate; and subsidies. For all relief institutions in this study, some minor revenues could not be incorporated into this basic categorization. These are, for example, the wages of outdoor working orphans, or revenues from the sale of possessions of the deceased poor, which were handed over to the charities from which they had received assistance. Apart from this 'miscellaneous' category, which usually constituted no more than a few per cent of the total income, all types of revenues are discussed in detail here. The figures in Appendix B, which give an overview of the income of the main relief institutions of Delft, Utrecht, Zwolle and 's-Hertogenbosch in guilders, and in Appendix C, where these data are corrected for inflation, include all revenues. In these appendices, these minor sources of income are classified as 'other'.

Another category which can be found in the figures shown in Appendices B and C, and which needs some clarification, is the income from a so-called estate agent (*rentmeester*). Both the treasurers of the Delft Chamber of Charity (for the period up to 1716), and of the Zwolle City Poor Chamber (for the entire period) listed this income item yearly. Usually an estate agent managed the charities' properties, which implies that this type of income should be categorized as interest on capital and real estate. However, when studying the estate agents accounts, from which a separate financial administration was kept, it becomes clear that he sometimes also administered income from municipal subsidies. For Delft, to be able to establish which part of these revenues needs to be labelled as income from property and which part as municipal grants, samples were taken from the estate agent's accounts in order to calculate the share of these two categories in the total revenues. More information on the sources and the selection of the samples can be found in Appendix A.

For the civic institution in Zwolle, the revenues of the estate agent are fully counted as income from capital and real estate. The first reason for this is that the accounts are often too chaotic to make much sense of, making their study an extremely labour intensive task. Moreover, for this charity these revenues were quite marginal, on average only some 8 per cent of the total yearly income. In contrast, in Delft these revenues made up about a third of the yearly budget. Still, although the importance of property income and subsidies for the financing of the civic charities in Delft and Zwolle are approximations, they likely resemble the general trend. In

Appendices B and C the revenues of the estate agent are recorded as a distinct category.

The first part of this section examines the importance of collection gifts for the financing of early modern poor relief. Secondly, the next source of income, namely testamentary bequests and *inter vivos* gifts, is discussed. The third part elaborates upon income from capital and real estate, while the last category concerns governmental subsidies. Next, the developments over time are analysed, giving special attention to the changes in dependence on charitable giving for the care of the poor and needy in society. The last part of this section deals with the ways in which religious charities other than those from the public church financed the assistance of poor members of their congregations.

### 3.2.1 Collections and alms boxes

In recent years, several case studies on the financing of social care in early modern Dutch towns have demonstrated the importance of money collected in churches and on the streets as a source of income of public as well as religious charitable agencies. These studies indicate that, at least during the seventeenth century in many localities in the Dutch Republic, collection gifts formed the single largest source of income of poor relief institutions. In Groningen, where no civic relief institution existed, and as a result the Reformed charity assisted the majority of the needy, just under half of the income came from charitable collections.<sup>143</sup> In the Frisian town Sneek, money put into collection boxes and bags was the most important source of income for the poor relief administrators in the seventeenth century.<sup>144</sup> In eighteenth-century Amsterdam, the Lutheran charity depended for some two-thirds of income on collection gifts, while for the Dutch Reformed charity this was around 40 per cent.<sup>145</sup> In the small Holland town of Weesp, collections were also the major source of income in this period.<sup>146</sup>

Likewise, in three out of the four towns studied in this thesis, at least in the seventeenth century, collection proceeds formed the main source of income for the almoners and deacons. In this century, even two-thirds of the income of the City Poor Chamber in Zwolle was derived from collection revenues; in Delft and Utrecht their share averaged over 40 per cent (see Table 3.1 and Figure 3.1). No financial administration has been preserved for the Dutch Reformed Diaconate in Utrecht for

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<sup>143</sup> Buursma, *'Dese bekommerlijke tijden'*, p. 77.

<sup>144</sup> Spaans, *'De gift aan de armen'*, pp. 386-391.

<sup>145</sup> Van Leeuwen, *'Amsterdam en de armenzorg'*, 139-140. Also see: Van Leeuwen, *'Giving in early modern history'*, p. 308.

<sup>146</sup> Zondergeld-Hamer, *Een kwestie van goed bestuur*, pp. 131-135.

the seventeenth century, but considering that in the eighteenth century 60 per cent of its income came from collection gifts, most probably this charity heavily depended on the revenues from church offertories also a century earlier. As we shall see when discussing the income structures of congregational charities other than those from the public church, it was a common situation that deacons funded a large part of their activities from donations from church members.

Table 3.1 – Revenues from poor relief institutions derived from church offertories, door-to-door collections and alms boxes as average percentage of yearly income, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries

<b>Town</b>	<b>Institution</b>	<b>17<sup>th</sup> century</b>	<b>18<sup>th</sup> century</b>
Delft	Chamber of Charity	45	37
Zwolle	City Poor Chamber	66	42
Utrecht	Almoners' Chamber	42	13
	Reformed Diaconate	No data	60
's-Hertogenbosch	House of Giving	0	0
	Blocks	17	21
	Reformed Diaconate	No data	26

*Sources:* see Appendix A.

Three different types of collection revenues can be distinguished; namely proceeds from church offertories, income from door-to-door collections, and donations put into alms boxes. In both Delft and Zwolle, where urban authorities fully centralized provisions and incorporated Reformed diaconates in civic institutions, all revenues from collections in Dutch Reformed Churches were handed over to the civic charities. During the seventeenth century in these two towns, these church collections made up the major part – some 70 per cent – of collection revenues. In the eighteenth century in Zwolle, this level remained unchanged, but in Delft the money collected door-to-door gradually came to exceed the revenues from the church collections. In Utrecht, there was a clear division between where and when the public and religious charities could appeal for charitable donations: the Almoners' Chamber only collected on the streets, while the Reformed deacons, with the exception of occasional door-to-door collections in times of major financial problems, had to content themselves with the donations of churchgoers. Alms boxes usually only contributed small amounts of money to the charities' budgets. In Delft, poor boxes only made up a yearly average of around six per cent of the collection revenues in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In Zwolle this was about four per cent, and for the Utrecht Almoners' Chamber no more than two. As a share of the total income of the civic charities in

Delft, Zwolle and Utrecht, the revenues from alms boxes only constituted respectively 2.4, 1.8 and 0.3 per cent.<sup>147</sup>

Over the course of two centuries, the yearly income from collections often stayed remarkably stable until the last decades of the eighteenth century (see Appendix B). For example, in Delft the yearly revenues from church offertories, door-to-door collections, and alms boxes combined, fluctuated around 22,500 guilders throughout the entire period.<sup>148</sup> In 70 per cent of the years for which data are available between 20,000 and 25,000 guilders were collected. In Zwolle, in almost 90 per cent of the years the income from collections varied between 7,000 and 10,000 guilders, with an average of 8,600 guilders. In eighteenth-century 's-Hertogenbosch, the Reformed deacons collected between 3,000 and 5,000 guilders in most years. Considering the overall stability of the funds from collections, poor relief administrators more or less knew what they could count on and could adjust their expenditure accordingly. However, when looking at the multitude of factors that could influence the populations' giving behaviour, which shall be discussed in chapter 6, this stability is most remarkable.

To start, while the seventeenth century until approximately 1670 was a period of economic boom, the Dutch economy stagnated in the eighteenth century. It seems logical that with this downward economic trend, and increasing poverty in the eighteenth century, people had less to spend and also had to cut back on their donations to poor relief institutions.<sup>149</sup> Moreover, the number of town inhabitants were not always stable and could fluctuate largely within a timespan of two centuries. For example, while Delft had a population of some 25,000 in the mid-seventeenth century, a century later only some 14,000 people inhabited this town.<sup>150</sup> Zwolle experienced an opposite development, with some 9,000 town-dwellers around 1650, and some 12,000 inhabitants in the second half of the eighteenth century.<sup>151</sup> Both these economic and demographic developments, however, hardly impacted on the charities' collection income in terms of actual money collected.

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<sup>147</sup> For Delft and Utrecht samples have been taken from the years 1641-1650, 1671-1680, 1701-1710, 1731-1740, 1761-1770, 1791-1800 (although for Utrecht no data are available for the years 1795-8 and 1800); for Zwolle from the years 1661-1670, 1751-1760, 1771-1780, 1791-1800. For the sources see Appendix A.

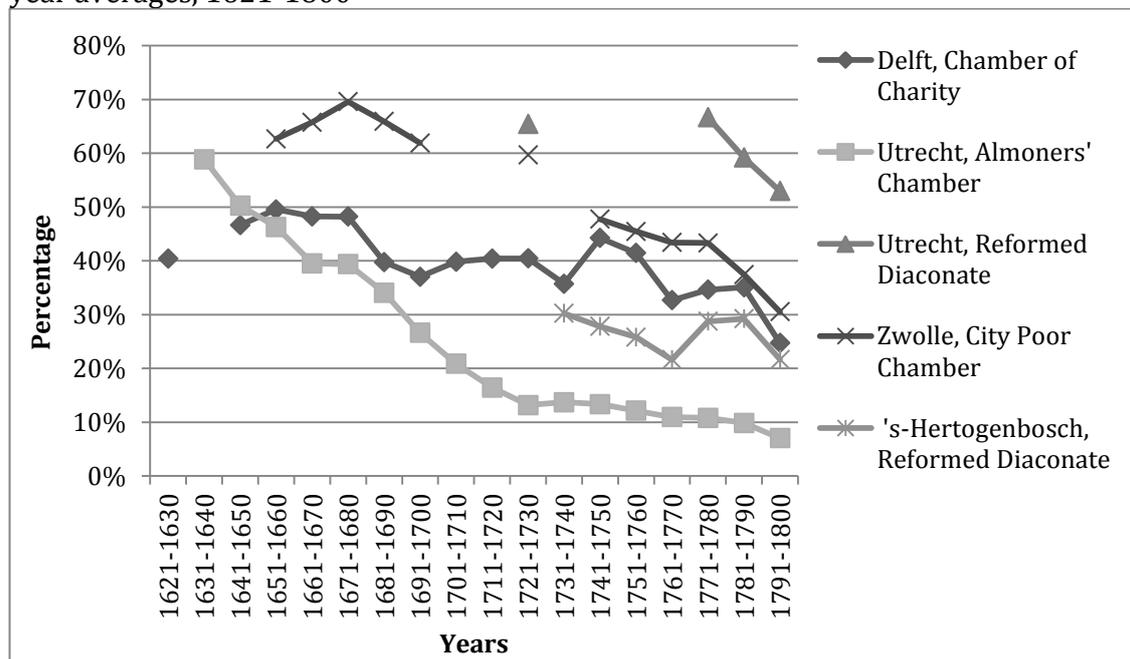
<sup>148</sup> To give an idea about the real value of these amounts: in urban areas in the Western part of the Northern Netherlands, a yearly wage of an unskilled labourer was approximately 250-350 guilders, while in the Eastern provinces this was about 60-70 per cent less. For middle class families in towns in the Western provinces, the yearly income amounted to some 350-600 guilders. Only some 20 per cent of the urban population earned more than 600 guilders per year: De Vries and Van der Woude, *The first modern economy*, pp. 562-564.

<sup>149</sup> Present-day research demonstrates that recessions can have a negative impact on giving behaviour, see e.g. Breeze and Morgan, 'Philanthropy in a recession'.

<sup>150</sup> Wijsenbeek-Olthuis, *Achter de gevels van Delft*, p. 27.

<sup>151</sup> Van Wijngaarden, *Zorg voor de kost*, p. 40.

Figure 3.1 – Revenues from poor relief institutions derived from church offertories, door-to-door collections and alms boxes as average percentage of yearly income, 10-year averages, 1621-1800



Sources: see Appendix A.

NB: Due to incompleteness of the archival material, the 10-year averages sometimes cover a shorter period. See Appendix A for the years for which account books were available.

Furthermore, as discussed above, in contrast to the overall stability of the total income from collections, in some towns changes did occur in the revenues of one type. For example, when in Delft over the course of the eighteenth century the income from church collections decreased from some 11,500 guilders in the 1710s to about 8,400 in the 1760s, at the same time door-to-door collections became more profitable, and the total income from donations in the churches and on the streets stayed more or less the same. This overall stability seems to indicate that poor relief administrators were able to influence the populations' giving behaviour according to the charities' need for funds. In times of financial problems, they could ask for permission to organize extra collections, or communicate the charities' difficulties in balancing income and expenditure to the town-dwellers and urge them to give more generously. Which tactics were applied and how they impacted on the population's giving behaviour are discussed in chapter 4 and 6.

However, as a share of the total income, collection revenues declined notably in most towns during the eighteenth century (see Figure 3.1). For the Utrecht Almoners' Chamber this development is most striking. When in the 'disaster year' of 1672 the armies of England, France, and the bishops of Münster and Cologne left a trail of destruction in large parts of the country, collection revenues collapsed in many localities. In 1673 the Utrecht almoners collected only about 50 per cent of the

level prior to the disaster year. While in other towns the collection proceeds went up again after the war, the door-to-door collections in Utrecht never recovered to their previous level, probably due to the exclusion of the Catholics from public relief provisions in 1674, as already described in chapter 2. Apparently, the large number of Catholics in the town not only contributed to the problem of poverty in Utrecht, but at the same time they formed a large part of the donors to charity. In Utrecht in the eighteenth century, on average only 13 per cent of the income came from collections, a large decline from the 42 per cent seen in the previous century.

In Delft and Zwolle the relative share of collection gifts as part of the total income also decreased, although there this development was less dramatic than in Utrecht. In both towns, in the eighteenth century still some 40 per cent of the total income came from donations put into collection bags and alms boxes. Moreover, unlike in Utrecht, here no sudden decline in an absolute sense can be observed, and in the eighteenth century more or less the same amounts were collected on a yearly basis as in the previous century (see Appendix B). In both Delft and Zwolle, the decreasing dependence on collection gifts was entirely due to rising budgets, resulting from a growing demand for assistance, and the increasing importance of other sources of income; namely of interest on financial and real estate possessions and subsidies for the financing of poor relief. Especially in Zwolle the total income rose remarkably. While in the seventeenth century the budget on average had been some 13,000 guilders, in the eighteenth century the almoners had well over 21,000 guilders to spend yearly, which was an increase of more than 50 per cent. Additionally, the Dutch Reformed charity, established in 1756, had a budget of more than 4,000 guilders, of which more than 60 per cent derived from money collected among churchgoers.<sup>152</sup>

In the town of 's-Hertogenbosch charitable donations were far less important for the financing of poor relief. In the second half of the eighteenth century less than 15 per cent of the total income of the major charitable institutions – the House of Giving, the Blocks, and the Dutch Reformed Diaconate – proceeded from collection gifts and other donations.<sup>153</sup> The House of Giving, which was the largest institution, did not organize collections at all.<sup>154</sup> The Blocks organized door-to-door collections in

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<sup>152</sup> HCO, Hervormde gemeente, inv. no. 323. Based on samples from the years 1770, 1780, 1790 and 1800.

<sup>153</sup> Calculation made for the years 1750, 1760, 1770, 1780, 1790 and 1800 and based on SH, Diaconie, inv. nos. 258, 259, 264, 274, 284 and 294 and De Kruif, 'De prijs van de armenzorg'. For the House of Giving and the Blocks, De Kruif gives numbers for collection gifts and other donations (*inter vivos* gifts and testamentary bequests) combined, as a result of which no distinction between these two types of donations can be made.

<sup>154</sup> See De Kruif, 'De prijs van de armenzorg' and Kappelhof, 'Het Bossche Geefhuis'. For the financial administration of the House of Giving see SH, Geefhuis, inv. nos. 405a-607.

the nine town districts and the Dutch Reformed deacons collected in the churches. However, for the Blocks this only made up about 20 per cent of their total income in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and for the charity of the public church approximately a quarter in the period from 1735 to 1800. Especially for a congregational charity this was an exceptional situation, for which collection revenues usually were the main source of income. As shall be demonstrated later in this chapter, the House of Giving, the Blocks as well as the Dutch Reformed Diaconate could all rely on large funds, and financed the major part of their activities from income from capital and real estate.

### 3.2.2 Testamentary bequests and *inter vivos* gifts

Putting money into collection bags or alms boxes was not the only possibility for town-dwellers to donate money to charity. They could also include a bequest to one or several poor relief institutions in their will or, what was probably less common, make an one-off donation (*inter vivos*).<sup>155</sup> In the account books, these two types of gifts were usually registered under one entry. Contrary to what one might expect, the money given this way not only came from the upper class of urban society. For example, in eighteenth-century Amsterdam, middling groups also bequeathed money to the poor.<sup>156</sup> In early modern Leiden, Zwolle and Utrecht, especially in the seventeenth century, these groups were even overrepresented among testators, and sometimes also people from lower social groups stipulated in their wills that they wished to make a charitable donation.<sup>157</sup>

Other than in giving to collections, in which case potential donors were specifically asked to make a contribution, and where members of the urban or religious community could notice if a person failed to give, making a charitable bequest or a one-off donation was most often a private decision. Probably as a result of the lack of social pressure, these types of gifts did not occur very frequently. As Elise van Nederveen Meerkerk has demonstrated, in the towns of Leiden and Utrecht only some 10 to 20 per cent of wills contained testamentary bequests to poor relief institutions, and as not every town-dweller made a will, the part of the population that bequeathed money to the poor must have been even lower. In contrast in Zwolle, where people drew up their last wills at the Bench of Aldermen instead of at private notaries, and were specifically asked to remember the poor, the percentages were considerably higher, demonstrating the role of social pressure in giving. In 1670 in this town, even 76 per cent of the examined wills contained a testamentary bequest.

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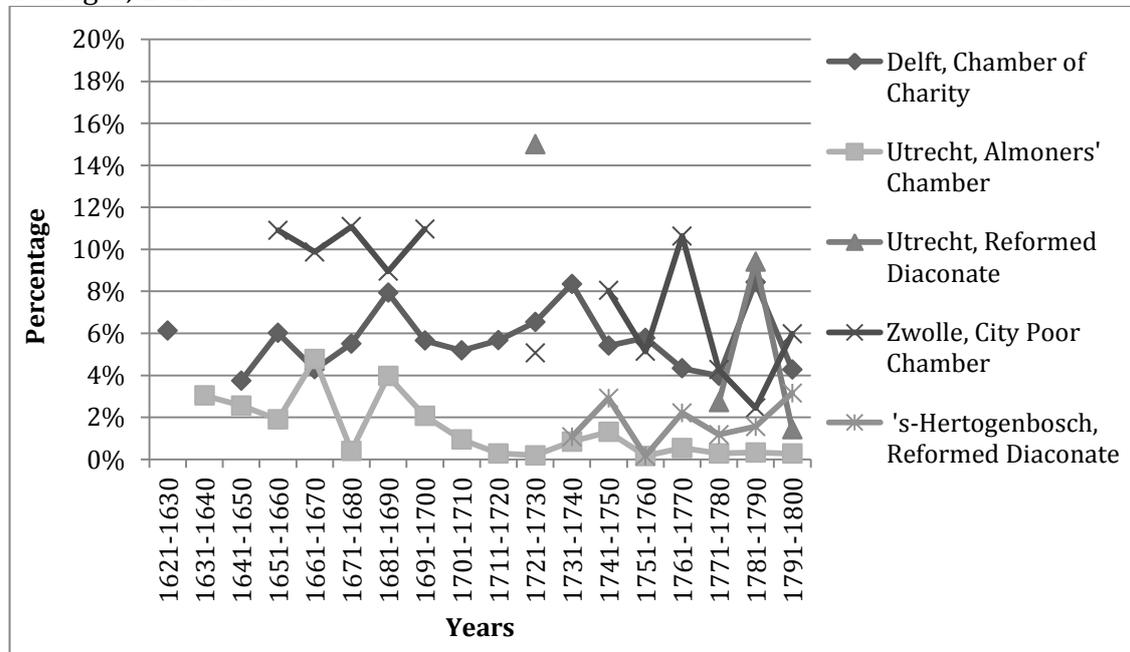
<sup>155</sup> Van Nederveen Meerkerk, 'The will to give', pp. 254-255.

<sup>156</sup> Van Leeuwen, 'Liefdadige giften in Amsterdam', pp. 418-426.

<sup>157</sup> Van Nederveen Meerkerk, 'The will to give', pp. 256-261.

However, at the same time, the donated amounts were also much smaller than in Leiden and Utrecht.<sup>158</sup>

Figure 3.2 – Revenues from poor relief institutions derived from testamentary bequests and *inter vivos* gifts as average percentage of yearly income, 10-year averages, 1621-1800



Sources: see Appendix A.

NB: Due to incompleteness of the archival material, the 10-year averages sometimes cover a shorter period. See Appendix A for the years for which account books were available.

Occasionally large amounts of money were bequeathed or donated to poor relief institutions. In the years 1732 and 1790, for example, the Delft Chamber of Charity received sums of about 20,000 guilders. In the late 1780s the Reformed deacons in Utrecht even received a bequest of more than 30,000 guilders, donated by the wealthy widow Wilhelmina Johanna van Vianen, whose husband Jacobus Engel had been a minister there.<sup>159</sup> However, in most years charitable agencies received a negligible amount or nothing in this way. As a result, testamentary bequests and *inter vivos* gifts did not constitute a substantial source of income of relief institutions (see Figure 3.2). For the institutions studied here, the share of gifts and legacies never exceeded 15 per cent of the 10-year averages of total revenues, and commonly fluctuated between 0 and 10 per cent. Consequently, although the income from these donations could give an unexpected and well-needed boost to the relief

<sup>158</sup> Van Nederveen Meerkerk, 'The will to give', p. 253.

<sup>159</sup> The bequest was registered in the financial year July 1788-July 1789: HUA, Diaconie, inv. no. 546.

administrators' budgets, revenues from *inter vivos* gifts and bequests formed an unreliable source of income on which they could never depend.

### 3.2.3 Income from capital and real estate

Early modern Dutch charitable organizations often depended to a greater or lesser degree on interest on capital and landed property to finance their activities. For indoor relief institutions such as orphanages, old people's homes and hospitals, these revenues were often the main source of income. Although especially for orphanages it was not uncommon to organize charitable collections, receive bequests or to gain income from alms boxes, which were usually located within their own buildings, donations were often only a supplementary source of income. For the Amsterdam *Burgerweeshuis*, one of the few indoor relief institutions on which extensive research has been done on its finances, we know that in the period from 1639 to 1812, it received only some 16 per cent of its income from charitable gifts. At the same time, the civic orphanage's investment portfolio, which constituted of rental property as well as financial assets, had an estimated value of some 2.5 million guilders, and contributed to almost 70 per cent of the charity's total income. Up to the 1720s the treasurers predominantly invested in real estate; from the early eighteenth century onwards public and private securities gradually became equally important.<sup>160</sup>

All outdoor relief institutions studied here also generated at least some income from capital and real estate. The situation in 's-Hertogenbosch was no doubt unique: in the second half of the eighteenth century, about 95 per cent of the income of the House of Giving and approximately 75 per cent of revenues of the Blocks were derived from interest on financial assets and landed property.<sup>161</sup> In this town, even the Dutch Reformed deacons, who in other localities often mainly relied on charitable donations, in the eighteenth century received almost half of their income from bonds and annuities. Although these funds of the House of Giving and the Blocks had for the major part been accumulated during the Middle Ages from donations of rich citizens, they were never static and always subject to change. During the seventeenth century the House of Giving mainly invested in farms and estates in the Meierij, but over the course of the eighteenth century the balance gradually shifted towards public bonds. Where it had owned 53 farms in 1660, this number had decreased to 38 in 1725 and to only four fifty years later. The Blocks, instead of investing in landed property,

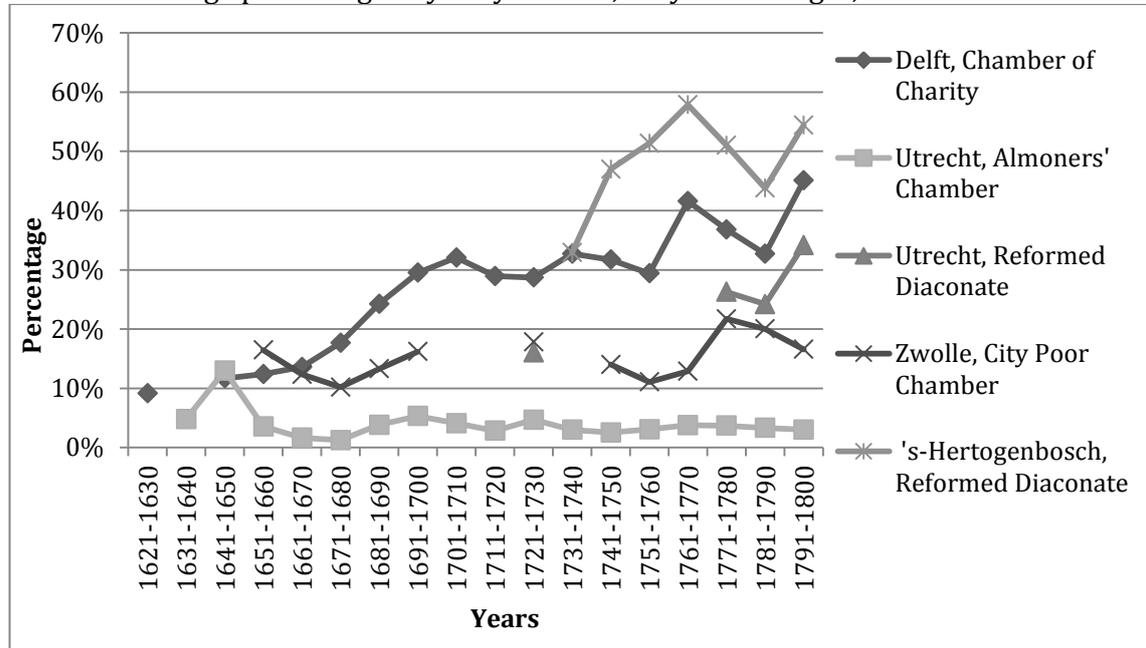
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<sup>160</sup> McCants, *Civic charity in a Golden Age*, pp. 151, 174; Gelderblom and Jonker, 'With a view to hold', pp. 73-78, 82.

<sup>161</sup> De Kruif, 'De prijs van de armenzorg'. Also see: Prak, 'Armenzorg 1500-1800', p. 70.

preferred to buy houses within town, and over the course of the early modern period also increasingly bought public bonds.<sup>162</sup>

Figure 3.3 – Revenues from poor relief institutions derived from capital and real estate as average percentage of yearly income, 10-year averages, 1621-1800



Sources: see Appendix A.

NB: Due to incompleteness of the archival material, the 10-year averages sometimes cover a shorter period. See Appendix A for the years for which account books were available. The data for Delft up to 1716 are estimates based on samples of the accounts of the estate agent. On these samples also see Appendix A. The data for Zwolle include the full revenues of the estate agent.

For the public and Dutch Reformed charities that had been established around 1600, the situation was different. The possessions of the Catholic Church that had been expropriated by the municipalities after the Reformation were sometimes partly handed over to charity agencies, as was for example the case for the Zwolle City Poor Chamber, but this usually did not constitute a significant stream of income.<sup>163</sup> Initially, income from capital and real estate was often of negligible importance for these relatively new institutions. The civic charities in Zwolle, Delft and Utrecht, for which some data are available for the first half of the seventeenth century, all derived no more than 20 per cent of their income from investments in this period (see Figure 3.3). However, from the last decades of the seventeenth century onwards, most of the institutions studied here managed to build up substantial funds. For example, in the eighteenth century the Delft Chamber of Charity received roughly 20,000 guilders

<sup>162</sup> Kappelhof, 'Het Bossche Geefhuis', pp. 18-35.

<sup>163</sup> In Zwolle a part of the Catholic estates was given to the City Poor Chamber, while another part was managed by a municipal committee, from which the charity received an annual subsidy. See: Van Wijngaarden, *Zorg voor de kost*, p. 72. Also see section 3.2.4 of this chapter.

yearly from interest on capital and landed property, which constituted more than a third of the organizations' total income. The deaconries in Utrecht and 's-Hertogenbosch came to depend respectively for about a third and half of their income on their investments by the end of the eighteenth century. In contrast, the Utrecht Almoners' Chamber, which was due to its persistent financial problems unable to save budgetary surpluses, hardly invested at all. In the period from 1630 to 1799, on average only some four per cent of the income of this civic institution came from interest on property. This situation then arguably only increased its financial difficulties for it had to cope without the stable and substantial income stream from an investment portfolio.

The income from capital and real estate of the charities studied here mainly came from public and private securities. For example, the Delft Chamber of Charity owned bonds issued by the municipality and the States of Holland, as well as shares in the Dutch East India and the Dutch West India Companies, and issued loans to private parties. The City Poor Chamber in Zwolle invested in bonds issued by the local and provincial governments and the civic orphanage. Real estate usually formed a marginal component of their portfolios. In the eighteenth century the civic institution in Delft derived less than one per cent of its income from the houses and landed property it owned. For the Reformed charities in Utrecht and 's-Hertogenbosch, this was respectively 9 and 4.4 per cent in the eighteenth century. As described above, even the institutions in 's-Hertogenbosch, for which real estate had formed a substantial part of their possessions during the Middle Ages, increasingly preferred to invest in financial assets in the early modern period. The Utrecht Almoners' Chamber was again an exception: a bit over half of its investment income, which was marginal in size, consisted of landed property.

For the Amsterdam *Burgerweeshuis* several reasons have been given to explain the increasing preference for financial assets over real estate. Firstly, although landed property could be more profitable, securities were, with the growing numbers of borrowing facilities, easy to obtain, and they were also easier to manage. Moreover, with the rapid development of the financial markets in the Dutch Republic, bonds became almost as liquid as cash, and could be sold again without much effort. The orphanage's board could as a result keep the level of cash holdings low without having to fear negative effects for its ability to fulfil payments. While the institution's yearly surplus had been around 60-80,000 guilders until 1660, during the eighteenth century it was on average only some 4,000 guilders. Furthermore, as after the Golden Age the population of Amsterdam stagnated, investing in the city's real estate market

became more risky and less profitable. Financial assets then proved to be a reliable and beneficial alternative.<sup>164</sup>

### 3.2.4 Subsidies

Most public and Dutch Reformed poor relief institutions profited to a greater or lesser extent from governmental subsidies. The city-run charities in Delft, Zwolle and Utrecht all received a share of the municipal excise tax income. For example in the eighteenth century, the Zwolle municipality awarded a third of the town's excise income on peat to the City Poor Chamber, which for this charity evolved into a steady income stream of about 4,000 guilders per year. The Delft Chamber of Charity gained income from taxes on both peat and wine. In these three towns, various fines and small fees paid to the municipality such as on getting married outside of town and on burying the dead within church buildings were also handed over to the civic charities.

The town council of 's-Hertogenbosch surprisingly chose not to transfer tax revenues and municipal fines and fees to the Blocks or the House of Giving, but to the Dutch Reformed Diaconate. One explanation why the charity of the public church in this locality was privileged with municipal grants could have been the large Catholic population of 's-Hertogenbosch, which made the urban authorities more lenient towards the poor of their own religious denomination. Moreover, due to their large funds, the House of Giving as well as the district-based charities managed to hold their own without having to depend on municipal grants, while the deacons could use a bit of extra support in financing assistance for needy church members. In contrast, for the Dutch Reformed charity in Utrecht, which also profited from fines and small fees, the major part of the subsidies they received did not directly come from municipal funds, but consisted of a financial contribution from the local old people's home. In other localities too, relief institutions subsidies or surpluses were handed over from one charity to another. For example, from 1725 onwards the Delft Chamber of Charity received a yearly subsidy of 600 guilders from the civic orphanage.

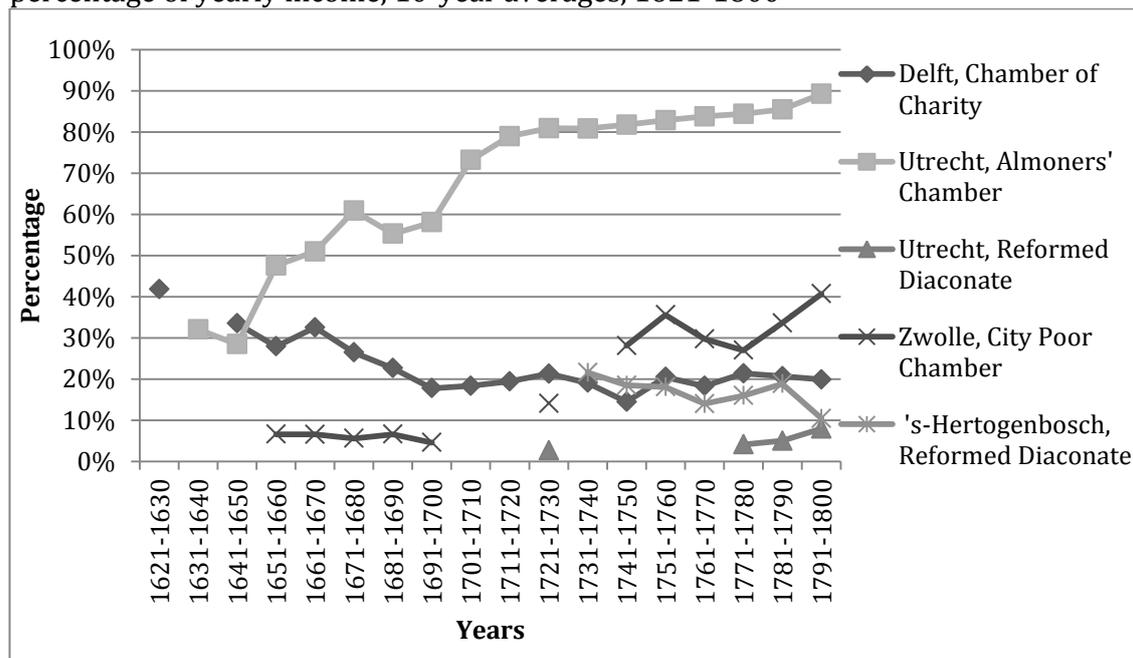
In some towns a more direct poor tax also existed such as in Delft, where the best garment of a deceased person had to be donated to the Chamber of Charity. In most cases families decided to pay off the duty in cash. In 1616, three years after its implementation, the poor tax had led to disorder on the streets. During a tax revolt caused by an increase in grain prices, the population participating in the rebellion also demanded the abolition of the tax. After the storming of the town hall, the authorities gave in to the demands, but when the peace had returned this decision

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<sup>164</sup> Gelderblom and Jonker, 'With a view to hold', pp. 76-78, 94.

was reversed. An analysis of the registration books has demonstrated that only a minority of the inhabitants of Delft were able to fulfil their obligation towards the civic charity. It was often noted down that people were too poor to donate a garment or make a contribution in cash.<sup>165</sup> In the end, the tax only formed a small proportion of the institution's income, yielding on average some 1,500 guilders per year, which was approximately 2.5 per cent of the total revenues.

Figure 3.4 – Revenues from poor relief institutions derived from subsidies as average percentage of yearly income, 10-year averages, 1621-1800



Sources: see Appendix A.

NB: Due to incompleteness of the archival material, the 10-year averages sometimes cover a shorter period. See Appendix A for the years for which account books were available. The data for Delft up to 1716 are estimates based on samples of the accounts of the estate agent. On these samples also see Appendix A. The data for Zwolle do not include the revenues of the estate agent.

For most institutions studied here, subsidies constituted no more than a third of their income. Overall, town councils tried to limit their financial involvement to granting tax money and extraordinary subsidies in times of acute financial troubles. Especially in the seventeenth century, direct subsidies from the municipalities' funds to relief institutions were rare. However, with the downward economic trend in the eighteenth century, leading to increasing urban poverty, some poor relief institutions more and more came to depend on public funding. Most striking in this respect is the Utrecht Almoners' Chamber, for which municipal subsidies became the most important source of income in the last decades of the seventeenth century (see

<sup>165</sup> Van der Vlis, "Hebben wij niet schade genoeg geleden?"; idem, *Leven in armoede*, pp. 326-341. This poor tax also existed in Schiedam.

Figure 3.4). As collection revenues decreased dramatically in the 1670s, and as the almoners also did not profit substantially from interest on capital and real estate, the city council had to step in to prevent the institution from going bankrupt. In 1729 subsidies of the urban and provincial authorities reached – at least in absolute terms – its zenith of over 50,000 guilders, which constituted more than 85 per cent of the total income that year. For the Zwolle City Poor Chamber too, we can observe a clear upward trend over time. While in the seventeenth century less than 10 per cent of its income came from municipal subsidies, in the second half of the eighteenth century this had increased to about a third.

In contrast, for the Delft Chamber of Charity a reverse development can be observed. While during the mid-seventeenth century the town government was accountable for almost a third of its income stream, a century later this had dropped to about 20 per cent. This decrease was mainly a relative one, and resulted from the growing importance of interest on capital and real estate for the financing of the charity's activities. As for the Dutch Reformed Diaconates in both Utrecht and 's-Hertogenbosch only eighteenth-century data are available, no real changes over time can be established. In none of the years for which accounts were available, did the Reformed deacons in Utrecht finance more than 13 per cent of their charitable activities from subsidies, and on average it was only around 5 per cent. As mentioned above, the Dutch Reformed charity in 's-Hertogenbosch, for which subsidies constituted some 18 per cent of its yearly income, profited from more substantial public funding, while both the House of Giving and the Blocks hardly received any municipal grants at all.<sup>166</sup>

### 3.2.5 Developments in the financing of poor relief over time

Secular and religious outdoor relief institutions in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries had a variety of ways to finance social care. In three out of the four towns studied here, charities initially relied for a large part on charitable contributions to pay for the care of the indigent. During the seventeenth century, the civic institutions in Zwolle, Utrecht, and Delft depended for some 40 to 60 per cent on money collected in the churches and on the streets. The same was true for the Dutch Reformed Diaconate in Utrecht for which only eighteenth-century data are available. The charities in 's-Hertogenbosch seem to have been an exceptional case within the Dutch Republic: both the Blocks and the House of Giving had built up substantial funds from

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<sup>166</sup> According to Kappelhof both the House of Giving and the Blocks did not receive any subsidies in the period up to 1800, but for the second half of the eighteenth century De Kruif mentions income from governmental arrangements of a few per cent of the institutions' total yearly budget: Kappelhof, 'Het Bossche Geefhuis', pp. 18, 31 and De Kruif, 'De prijs van de armenzorg', pp. 29-32.

which they could finance the major part of their activities, and in the eighteenth century as much as half of the budget of the charity of the public church came from interest on real estate and financial assets.

From the late seventeenth century onwards, a shift in the institutions' income structures can be observed. For all three civic charities the relative income from money collected in the churches and on the streets declined. Also for the Dutch Reformed charities in Utrecht and 's-Hertogenbosch, for which data are only available for parts of the eighteenth century, a downward trend in the importance of collection gifts is visible in the last decades of this period. However, it is important to emphasize again that up until the political turmoil of the 1790s the collection income in guilders were in fact overall remarkably stable (see Appendices B and C), and that the decreasing share of gifts in the total income was mainly the result of rising budgets and increasing revenues from both property income and subsidies.

For example, as mentioned above, while the Zwolle City Poor Chamber had 13,000 guilders to spend on a yearly basis in the seventeenth century, this increased to more than 21,000 guilders per year between 1700 and 1800. Such an increase cannot be explained by changes in population size, as Zwolle had some 11-12,000 inhabitants both around 1670 and halfway through the eighteenth century, and in between these two dates population was likely even lower.<sup>167</sup> For the Delft Chamber of Charity the increase of the annual budget was not as sharp, moving from approximately 53,000 guilders in the seventeenth century to slightly under 60,000 guilders in the eighteenth century, but here also the share of collection gifts in the total income dropped less dramatically, namely from 45 to 37 per cent (see Table 3.1). Moreover, as the number of inhabitants decreased from some 25,000 in the 1670s to about 14,000 by the mid-eighteenth century, the approximate figure of 25,000 guilders collected annually was raised by a far smaller urban population. In fact, the income of Delft's civic charity even more than doubled per inhabitant, which can only partly be explained by inflation, which was roughly 20 per cent between 1650 and 1750.<sup>168</sup> The budget of the civic institution in Utrecht also rose over the course of the early modern period from some 28,000 guilders in the seventeenth century to approximately 44,000 guilders in the eighteenth century, while the population size stayed more or less the same. Here, however, as explained above, collection revenues also declined in an absolute sense.

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<sup>167</sup> The same budget rise has been observed for Amsterdam charities: Van Leeuwen, 'Giving in early modern history', pp. 304-309. For population figures see Lourens and Lucassen, *Inwoneraantallen van Nederlandse steden*.

<sup>168</sup> See the consumer price index for the early modern period for the western part of the Netherlands as calculated by Jan Luiten van Zanden: <http://www.iisg.nl/hpw/brenv.php>, last viewed 18 October 2013.

Thus after 1670, when the Dutch economy was past its zenith, charitable donations – however stable – increasingly proved to be insufficient to meet the growing demands for poor relief. Where did almoners and deacons then find the extra income they needed? Two developments can be identified: some institutions were able to build up investment portfolios to finance an increasing part of the care they provided, while others came to depend more and more on municipal subsidies. The Chamber of Charity in Delft as well as the congregational charities in Utrecht and 's-Hertogenbosch increasingly funded their activities from interest on their financial assets. Looking at this development from a present-day perspective, it might be regarded as 'odd' that relief institutions apparently were permitted to use parts of their income, and thus also the revenues from charitable donations, for expanding their investment portfolios instead of assisting the poor and needy. However, financing substantial parts of poor relief from interest on property was by no means new to the early modern period, and had been the rule rather than the exception in the period before the reorganization process. During the late Middle Ages, for charitable foundations in Holland property income, and more precisely landownership, had been the most important source of income.<sup>169</sup> The same was true for 's-Hertogenbosch.<sup>170</sup>

Apparently, there was a discontinuity in the ways late-medieval and seventeenth-century relief institutions financed the care they provided. The civic as well as Dutch Reformed charities that were established around 1600, with the exception of some expropriated ecclesiastical possessions given to them by municipalities, had to start from scratch and needed at least several decades, and some even more than a century, to be able to build up substantial funds. What was new, however, was the preference for financial assets over real estate. This was in line with a broader development within Dutch society in which not only charities, but also other institutions as well as private citizens, became increasingly active on capital markets over the course of the early modern period and invested in government and other bonds.<sup>171</sup> Some guilds, for instance, which had initially financed the provisions in case of sickness, old age and widowhood from obligatory contributions to their mutual funds, managed by these means to build up endowments to fund part of their welfare provisions. By the late eighteenth century,

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<sup>169</sup> Rijpma, 'Funding public services', pp. 89-137.

<sup>170</sup> Kappelhof, 'Het Bossche Geefhuis'.

<sup>171</sup> For institutional investors see e.g. Gelderblom and Jonker, 'With a view to hold', pp. 93-4. For private investors see e.g. Van der Heijden, *Geldschietters van de stad*.

the Amsterdam surgeons' guild owned bonds with a total value of about 100,000 guilders, from which it could pay for old age and widow allowances.<sup>172</sup>

Arguably the rising poverty from the late seventeenth century onwards, as well as the fact that collection revenues did not grow to the same extent as demand for assistance, were strong incentives for the charities' increased activity on financial markets. Judging from the institutions' account books as well as from resolutions on financial management issues, even in times of budgetary difficulties, relief administrators attached great importance to the maintenance or even expansion of their investment portfolios. The stable income from interest on property helped relief institutions to overcome financial difficulties in the future and to stay financially healthy in the long run.<sup>173</sup> For the charities in both Delft and 's-Hertogenbosch in the eighteenth century, this source of income was of major importance in balancing their account books and keeping their budgets afloat.

Conversely, for the public institutions in Utrecht and Zwolle it was not property income, but municipal subsidies that were used to respond to the growing demand for assistance. Especially for the Utrecht Almoners' Chamber where the income from collections dropped quite dramatically and public funding even became the major income stream, a question can be raised as to what extent the rising subsidies only resulted from decreasing collection revenues, or whether the population's giving behaviour was also negatively influenced by growing government involvement, which then again led to an increasing need for municipal support. In eighteenth-century Leiden, where subsidies constituted about a third of the civic charity's income stream, fear for such a 'crowding out' effect of public money on private donations was explicitly voiced.<sup>174</sup> Here the city council worried that through increasing municipal involvement, the *Huiszittenhuis* had lost its independent character, making the population less willing to donate.<sup>175</sup> However, at least for the four towns studied here, the causality instead seems to have been reverse: once private donations were no longer sufficient, the government had to step in. It was, for example, only after the collapse of the collection revenues in the 1670s that for the Almoners' Chamber subsidy income rose to unprecedented proportions and the town council became its main financial resource.

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<sup>172</sup> Bos, *"Uyt liefde tot malcander"*, pp. 76-79; Gelderblom and Jonker, 'With a view to hold', pp. 86-90. On social provisions within guilds also see Van Genabeek, 'De afschaffing van de gilden'.

<sup>173</sup> For example, when the Delft Chamber of Charity experienced financial problems in the 1660s, it requested to be permitted to expand its investment portfolio, as this would solve their budgetary difficulties: see Van der Vlis, *Leven in armoede*, p. 60

<sup>174</sup> On the 'crowding out' effect see e.g. Abrams and Schitz, 'The 'crowding-out' effect'; Andreoni and Payne, 'Do government grants'; Simmons and Emanuele, 'Does government spending'. Sometimes, the crowding out effect is also investigated in a historical perspective, see e.g. Gruber and Hungerman, 'Faith-based charity'.

<sup>175</sup> See Van Nederveen Meerkerk and Teeuwen, 'The stability of voluntarism', pp. 92-93.

### 3.2.6 Tolerated religious charities

How did Walloon, Lutheran, Mennonite, English-Reformed, Remonstrant and Catholic charities finance the care they provided? Separate accounts were not kept in all of these churches. Especially when distributions to the poor were unsubstantial, income and expenditure on social care were registered as part of the church's general financial administration. For example, in the Remonstrant church in Delft, where in the combined years of 1734 and 1735 only around 150 guilders was spent on poor relief, amounting to just seven per cent of the church's total expenditure, no separate accounts were kept.<sup>176</sup> However, the Walloon deacons in Utrecht, who had a yearly budget of about 10,000 guilders in the second half of the eighteenth century, kept their own financial administration.<sup>177</sup>

Account books of religious charities other than those of the public church have not been preserved in abundance and are mainly available for the eighteenth century, which makes it difficult to observe trends over a longer period of time. However, for ten tolerated congregations in Delft, Zwolle, Utrecht and 's-Hertogenbosch, sufficient account books can be studied to enable an analysis of the ways in which their deacons financed the assistance of poor church members. These concern the Remonstrant, Lutheran and Walloon church in Delft, the Mennonite and Catholic charities in Zwolle, the Lutheran Diaconate in 's-Hertogenbosch, and the Mennonite, English Reformed, Remonstrant and Walloon relief provision in Utrecht. As examining all their accounts would be too labour-intensive, samples are used from the charities' or churches' financial administrations. In Appendix A an explanation is given on the selected accounts which have been studied and in which archives these sources can be found.

Overall collections were the most important source of income for the social care provided within other congregations. The Utrecht Mennonites funded two-thirds of their poor relief from collection gifts in the first half of the eighteenth century,<sup>178</sup> and for the English-Reformed in that town in the second half of the same century the share was more than 70 per cent.<sup>179</sup> The only Catholic charity in the towns studied here for which data are available, the Catholic Poor Chamber in Zwolle, derived some 40 per cent of its income from collection gifts after its establishment in 1739 and another 30 per cent from other types of private donations.<sup>180</sup> In some cases

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<sup>176</sup> HUA, Remonstrants-Gereformeerde gemeente, inv. no. 116. The account runs from 1 January 1734 to 1 March 1736.

<sup>177</sup> HUA, Waalse gemeente, inv. nos. 229 and 232. The total income in 1760 was 8503.3 guilders and in 1790 10814.1 guilders.

<sup>178</sup> HUA, Doopsgezinde gemeente, inv.no. 316.

<sup>179</sup> HUA, Engelse kerk, inv. no. 849.

<sup>180</sup> Based on data from 1765 onwards, see: HCO, Rooms-katholieke armenkamer, inv. no. 43.

all distributions to the poor were financed from church donations, as was for example the case in the Lutheran church in Delft in the eighteenth century.<sup>181</sup> The Remonstrant deacons in that town even collected more money than they needed for the support of their poor church members. In the year 1705, 725 guilders were collected during services of which only 97 were divided among the needy.<sup>182</sup> The rest of the donated money was used for the general expenses of the church such as the ministers' salaries and the maintenance of the building.

The income structure of the Walloon Diaconate in Utrecht shows a different picture. Not charitable donations but income from capital and real estate formed its largest income stream. In 1760 some 75 per cent and in 1790 more than 80 per cent of its revenues came from interest on financial assets and landed property.<sup>183</sup> However, this seems to have been an exception. Although it was not uncommon for churches to gain income from interest on property, in general poor relief was financed from charitable gifts. Especially when public poor relief offered by municipal institutions was accessible for the indigent of all religious denominations, the money collected in the churches was often sufficient to provide the poor with some additional care, making the building up of investment portfolios unnecessary. Subsidies to these charities were rare. In most cases, only public and Dutch Reformed institutions could rely on municipal grants, and deacons of other religious denominations had to cope without assistance from the town governments. The Zwolle Catholic Poor Chamber was an exceptional case: in 1765 it received 500 guilders from the municipality. For the other years that have been scrutinized this income source was absent from the account books. Only in the French period from 1795 onwards did municipal grants for Catholic poor relief administrators obtain a permanent character.<sup>184</sup>

### 3.3 Expenditure

Adding up the revenues from the four different sources of income, almoners and deacons often had a substantial budget at their disposal. The organization with the largest budget was the Delft Chamber of Charity, which had a yearly income of on average around 57,000 guilders (see Appendix B), and when including the previous years' surpluses the budget even totalled some 68,000 guilders. Resulting from the decentralized and multiform provisions in 's-Hertogenbosch, the revenues of the House of Giving, the Blocks and the Dutch Reformed charity in this town were the

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<sup>181</sup> AD, Evangelisch-Lutherse gemeente, inv. no. 537.

<sup>182</sup> AD, Remonstrants-Gereformeerde gemeente, inv. no. 115.

<sup>183</sup> HUA, Waalse gemeente, inv. nos. 229 and 232.

<sup>184</sup> HCO, Rooms-katholieke armenkamer, inv. no. 43.

least extensive, together making up some 10-20,000 guilders a year. However, when comparing the charities' budgets with estimates of population size, an exercise possible for the period around 1750 when both types of data are available for all four towns, it becomes clear that the expenditure on poor relief per town inhabitant in Delft and 's-Hertogenbosch was actually quite comparable, and that also in Utrecht the civic and congregational charities combined had a substantial budget (see Table 3.2). In these three towns, the main relief institutions had approximately four guilders to spend per inhabitant. In contrast, for the Zwolle City Poor Chamber, which on average had some 19,000 guilders at its disposal while the town population was only slightly smaller than in Delft and 's-Hertogenbosch, it was less than half that figure. This difference can of course partly be explained from the lower costs of living in the Eastern provinces, where, for example, bread prices were anything from 20 to 50 per cent lower than in Holland.<sup>185</sup>

Table 3.2 – Per capita budget of poor relief institutions in guilders, ca. 1750

Town	Institution	Budget in 1750	Estimation of urban population, ca. 1750	Budget per inhabitant
Delft	Chamber of Charity	58,901	14,000	4.2
Zwolle	City Poor Chamber	18,664	12,000	1.6
Utrecht	Almoners' Chamber	43,002	25,500	3.9
	Reformed Diaconate	56,399		
's-Hertogenbosch	House of Giving	19,914	12,500	4.1
	Blocks	11,323		
	Reformed Diaconate	19,830		

Sources: for archival material on the charities' budgets see Appendix A; for population data see Lourens and Lucassen, *Inwoneraantallen van Nederlandse steden*.

NB: The charities' budgets consist of the total income for the year 1750 including the surplus of the previous year. As for the Dutch Reformed Diaconate in Utrecht no data are available for the year 1750, data from the years 1730-1731 and 1776-1777 have been used to make an interpolation.

How was this money spent? The major part of their budgets benefited the poor directly. For the Delft Chamber of Charity this was on average more than 80 per cent, and this institution seems to have been in an average position.<sup>186</sup> The House of Giving in 's-Hertogenbosch only spent some 70 per cent of its budget on the assistance of the destitute, while for the Utrecht almoners this figure was over 95 per cent.<sup>187</sup> This mainly concerned the weekly allowances of money and bread, but also additional distributions of peat, clothing and shoes. Some poor could count on care all year long,

<sup>185</sup> Van Zanden, 'Kosten van levensonderhoud', pp. 313-318.

<sup>186</sup> Based on sixteen samples from the period 1650-1800.

<sup>187</sup> The figure for the House of Giving in the second half of the eighteenth century, see: De Kruif, 'De prijs van de armenzorg', pp. 32-35; for the Utrecht Almoners' Chamber this figure is based on samples from the period 1671-1680, 1721-1730 and 1771-1780.

while others were only assisted during the winter. As a result, expenditures of charities were higher during the coldest months of the year. Additionally, charities often offered free medical care, education, maternity care and funerals. Money was also spent on the care for orphans living in institutions or with foster families. Occasionally, poor families who could not afford to pay their own rent could count on an extra housing allowance.

Apart from on assistance of the poor and needy, most poor relief organizations spent money on the acquisition of financial assets and real estate and during times of financial difficulties, on interest on loans. For the Delft Chamber of Charity, this was only a small proportion of its expenditure, making up less than five per cent of its total outgoing money.<sup>188</sup> However, there were large variations, as this institution in some years had no expenditure of this kind, while in other years it was some 17 per cent of its budget. Also often no more than a few per cent was spent on overhead costs such as the maintenance of buildings and salaries. Due to the large number of estates and farms, for the House of Giving this figure amounted to 15 to 20 per cent, and even occasionally to more than 40 per cent of its total expenditure.<sup>189</sup>

### 3.4 Financial management

In his book on welfare in Europe and the United States from the late Middle Ages to the twentieth century, Abram de Swaan has characterized poor relief in early modern Europe as fragile and instable. He argues that charity in this period suffered from periodic breakdowns caused by wandering poor, who in times of economic hardship tried their luck elsewhere and ruined formerly well-functioning institutions.<sup>190</sup> Maarten Prak and Marco van Leeuwen have rejected this thesis for the Dutch Republic, respectively for the towns of 's-Hertogenbosch and Amsterdam, by arguing that the system, in spite of financial difficulties, never collapsed, mainly because of the institutions' financial management strategies.<sup>191</sup> Similar to 's-Hertogenbosch, poor relief arrangements in Amsterdam were never centralized. Here two civic charities operated next to several other religious organizations.<sup>192</sup> Does this observation of the stability of charitable funds also hold for the civic and congregational institutions in Delft, Zwolle and Utrecht? This section analyses the

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<sup>188</sup> Based on sixteen samples taken every ten years from the period 1650-1800. For sources see Appendix A.

<sup>189</sup> De Kruif, 'De prijs van de armenzorg', pp. 32-35. Also see: Prak, 'Armenzorg 1500-1800', p. 72.

<sup>190</sup> De Swaan, *In care of the state*, pp. 28-32.

<sup>191</sup> Prak, 'Goede burenen verre vrienden', pp. 147-169; Van Leeuwen, 'Amsterdam en de armenzorg'. An *Akte van indemniteit* ('Act of surety') was a letter guaranteeing that the municipality or poor relief institution in a migrants' former residence would pay for poor relief if he would fall into poverty within a certain time period (on this also see chapter 2).

<sup>192</sup> See e.g. Van Leeuwen, 'Amsterdam en de armenzorg', pp. 134-135.

financial management strategies of relief institutions and their ability to overcome budgetary difficulties. It is firstly studied to what extent charities were successful in balancing income and expenditure year after year, or whether many deficits existed. The second part deals with the institutions' crisis management. How did relief administrators act in times of financial difficulties, by which means did they try to increase their income or cut on their expenditure, and which policies did they prefer?

Public and religious authorities as well as poor relief administrators seem to have been well aware of the importance of sound financial management for the maintenance of the relief institutions. The income and expenses were registered accurately and, once or twice a year, treasurers of charitable institutions had to undergo an inspection of the account books.<sup>193</sup> The financial administration of public institutions was monitored by urban authorities. Not only was it at least partly municipal money from which the almoners financed the care they provided, it was moreover of great public interest that these charities would also in the future remain able to assist the poor and needy in society. Congregational charities had to exercise transparency towards church boards, and Reformed deacons were moreover accountable to the *classes* (regional synods). When in times of severe financial difficulties charities requested additional municipal subsidies, sometimes extra inspection of the account books took place, as was for example the case in Zwolle in 1735. In this year, the City Poor Chamber expressed a deep concern about its large financial deficits, which had risen to some 4,500 guilders yearly, and a municipal committee was given access not only to the charity's accounts, but also to more detailed administrations such as the distributions to the poor.<sup>194</sup> Relief institutions also profited from these inspections themselves, as the involvement of urban and religious authorities increased their perceived reliability to the town-dwellers who were requested to contribute to charitable collections.

However, usually the interference of town governments and church boards was not restricted to only a yearly inspection of the institutions' financial administration and went a lot further. Civic relief institutions could not just manage their own affairs as they saw fit, but needed permission from the municipality to be able to borrow money or to make investments. For example, in 1666 the relief administrators of the Delft Chamber of Charity considered investing the full revenues of the poor tax on the best garments of deceased persons in financial assets.

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<sup>193</sup> In spite of accurate registering of income and expenditure, occasionally miscalculations were mentioned in the accounts. Usually, these were small amounts, but in Delft in 1675 over 1,400 guilders were missing of which the treasurer had no idea what they had been spent on, see AD, Kamer van Charitate, inv. no. 287.

<sup>194</sup> HCO, SA, inv. no. 84, 12 August 1735. For the 1730s no account books of the City Poor Chamber have been preserved, which explains why in Table 3.3, despite of the deficits in this period, none are mentioned for the eighteenth century.

However, the burgomasters opposed this plan, and decided that no more than a 1,000 guilders could be invested, while the rest had to be saved for a period with higher interest rates.<sup>195</sup> In the same locality in 1787, when financial problems had grown to massive proportions, the town council gave permission to the almoners to issue bonds with a total value of 10,000 guilders.<sup>196</sup> Especially in hard economic times, which were often accompanied by large budgetary problems for charitable institutions, town councils wished to increase their influence on poor relief policies and on the management of charitable funds. To give another example from Delft, as a response to a period with high prices in the aftermath of the 'disaster year' of 1672, a municipal committee was established in 1677, which was assigned to monitor the financial situation of both indoor and outdoor relief institutions extra carefully as well as the settling of newcomers in town and their entitlements to relief provisions.<sup>197</sup>

Occasionally municipalities had to intervene in times of disputes and accusations of mismanagement. In the 1770s, the Catholic priests and poor relief administrators of Amsterdam were in conflict over who could decide how the collected money should be spent. According to the priests, the charity had mainly used the revenues for the benefit of its capital instead of for the poor, which had caused the churchgoers to be abstinent in giving. After city councillors, and later also the priests, inspected the accounts, and no signs of mismanagement were found, the poor relief administrators were exonerated.<sup>198</sup> On other occasions, however, governmental interference did not lead to a more harmonious state of affairs, but in fact gave rise to frictions between urban authorities and relief administrators. In the early 1660s, when the Delft Chamber of Charity experienced large financial difficulties, the municipality proposed a whole package of measures which would dissolve the institution's budgetary problems. The main solution in the eyes of the urban authorities was restricting access to relief by, for example, excluding families with only three children from summer distributions, counting children older than fifteen as adults, and only granting assistance to families who had been living in town for a minimum period of four years. The almoners resisted these plans as well as the municipalities' wish for closer cooperation between different charitable institutions, and refused to give up their independent position.<sup>199</sup>

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<sup>195</sup> Van der Vlis, "Hebben wij niet schade genoeg geleden?", pp. 403-404. For requests of the almoners of the Chamber of Charity to be allowed to borrow money, see AD, Kamer van Charitate, inv. no. 198.

<sup>196</sup> AD, Kamer van Charitate, inv. no. 203, 13 December 1787.

<sup>197</sup> Van der Vlis, *Leven in armoede*, p. 52; AD, OA I, inv. nos. 1887-1888 and AD, Kamer van Charitate, inv. no. 199.

<sup>198</sup> Van Leeuwen, 'Giving in early modern history', p. 330.

<sup>199</sup> Van der Vlis, *Leven in armoede*, pp. 59-60.

It was not only the great value that public and religious authorities attached to the activities of poor relief organizations, which made them strictly monitor their income and expenditure. They were also aware how the public's giving behaviour could be influenced by the financial situation of the charities. For example, when in Delft in 1574 a surplus of some 400 guilders existed, it was spent on wool, sheets and shoes for the poor because a surplus could potentially discourage churchgoers from giving.<sup>200</sup> Not only the authorities but all town-dwellers had the possibility to learn about the way charities spent the money they had donated. In the Dutch Reformed Church in Utrecht, the opening of the deaconry's accounts was announced from the pulpit during Sunday service in order to give anyone who would be interested the opportunity to gain an insight into the deacons' financial administration.<sup>201</sup> It remains unclear to what extent people actually made use of this possibility, but there is no doubt that due to the dependence of many charities on charitable gifts, sound financial management was felt to be of great importance.

#### 3.4.1 Balancing income and expenditure

Judging from the frequency with which poor relief administrators found their way to the town councils to complain about the financial difficulties under which they had to operate, one would expect the charities to have suffered from deficits on a regular basis. However, when studying the institutions' financial administrations, it becomes clear that during the major part of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, most charities managed to balance income and expenditure year after year. For example, in the periods 1624-1628 and 1641-1800 for which all account books have been studied, only twice did the Delft Chamber of Charity have to contend with a slight financial shortage (see Table 3.3). For the Zwolle City Poor Chamber and the Reformed Diaconate in 's-Hertogenbosch as well, hardly any deficits could be found, which demonstrates how cautiously charitable funds were managed.

Still, following on from the overall absence of budgetary shortages of these institutions in Delft, Zwolle and 's-Hertogenbosch, it should by no means be concluded that financial difficulties were just as rare. It was not without reason that almoners and deacons requested municipal financial assistance on a regular basis. The City Poor Chamber in Zwolle, for example, in most years only just managed to stay out of the red. Especially at the end of the seventeenth century and halfway through the eighteenth, surpluses were often extremely small, and occasionally no more than just a few guilders. Only by delaying payments and borrowing money, the

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<sup>200</sup> Abels, *Nieuw en ongezien*, vol. 2, p. 217.

<sup>201</sup> HUA, Diaconie, inv. no. 157.

treasurers managed to balance the account books. Moreover, the incompleteness of this charity's financial administration also gives a distorted picture, as the municipalities' resolution books reveal that in the 1730s, for which no accounts have been preserved, deficits of about 4,500 guilders in fact existed.<sup>202</sup> Even for the Delft Chamber of Charity, balancing income and expenditure could be extremely difficult. In 1652, relief administrators of this institution were worried that they would not be able to continue the weekly distributions to poor households due to financial problems. Furthermore in the early 1660s, they even expressed the fear that without additional funding the institution would have to close down, which of course also may have been an example of exaggerated rhetoric in order to persuade the urban authorities to grant the Chamber with extra subsidies.<sup>203</sup>

Table 3.3 – Deficits of poor relief institutions, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries

Towns and institutions	17 <sup>th</sup> century		18 <sup>th</sup> century	
	<i>years known</i>	<i>years with a deficit</i>	<i>years known</i>	<i>years with a deficit</i>
Delft, Chamber of Charity	67	1 (1%)	100	1 (1%)
Utrecht, Almoners' Chamber	70	37 (53%)	94	8 (9%)
Utrecht, Reformed Diaconate	0	-	28	7 (25%)
Zwolle, City Poor Chamber	30	1 (3%)	59	0
's-Hertogenbosch, Reformed Diaconate	0	-	67	1 (1%)

Sources: see Appendix A.

On two occasions in particular did most charities suffer from severe financial difficulties; first in the years following the 'disaster year' of 1672, and then in the French period from 1795 onwards. In these periods, collection revenues often collapsed, while at the same time the demand on charities increased, due to impoverishment of the population. Still, even then almost all charities studied here managed to keep their budgets afloat or to limit deficits to small amounts. Thus, also in times of crisis, poor relief administrators tried to balance income and expenditure painstakingly. Moreover, treasurers even tried to keep budgetary surpluses if possible. For example, on a budget of on average almost 60,000 guilders, the Delft Chamber of Charity had a yearly surplus of approximately 5,000 guilders in the seventeenth century and more or less 15,000 guilders in the eighteenth century. Rather than investing it all in assets, the almoners apparently preferred a financial buffer for unforeseen costs. In contrast, the board of the Amsterdam *Burgerweeshuis* that could provide for a fixed number of children and was as a result far more capable

<sup>202</sup> HCO, SA, inv. no. 84, 12 August 1735.

<sup>203</sup> Van der Vlis, *Leven in armoede*, pp. 59-60.

of predicting total expenditure, ran an average surplus of 4,000 guilders on a total yearly budget of approximately 120,000 guilders in the eighteenth century. The regents of this institution chose to keep cash holdings at a minimum and preferred to invest instead.<sup>204</sup>

In Utrecht, the situation was completely different, and charities experienced large problems to keep their budgets afloat. Especially for the Utrecht Almoners Chamber, which did not profit from church collections and also hardly possessed property income, the financial basis proved to be extremely fragile. In the seventeenth century this charity ran a deficit in more than half of the years data are available for. Financial shortages could rise to over 6,000 guilders, which was between 20 and 30 per cent of the yearly budget during that time. Around 1650, these budgetary problems triggered the debate on whether this institution had to be dissolved, and the Dutch Reformed deacons again had to be entrusted with the care for the poor outside of the congregation as well, against which representatives of the public church protested successfully.<sup>205</sup> However, the situation even worsened when in 1672 revenues from their door-to-door collections fell dramatically, and stayed on a consistently low level when in 1674 the Catholics were excluded from the urban relief provisions. The town government then had to intervene to prevent the institution from going bankrupt. In the eighteenth century when the urban magistracy substantially subsidized the institution and closely monitored the income and expenditure, the Almoners' Chamber managed to stay within budget in most years.

### 3.4.2 Crisis management

What choices did charitable institutions make when the demand for assistance increased or the means to offer assistance declined? When money was in short supply, the charities had several options to increase revenues. They could sell assets, borrow, postpone payments or request municipal aid. Minutes and resolutions of the town governments reveal that almoners and deacons asked for the urban authorities' support on a regular basis. The unfortunate combination of increasing poverty and diminishing collection revenues was the most common reason mentioned by poor relief administrators to explain their petition to the municipality.<sup>206</sup> The requests for additional public funding were, however, not always granted. Town governments

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<sup>204</sup> Gelderblom and Jonker, 'With a view to hold', 77-78; McCants, *Civic charity in a Golden Age*, pp. 160-162, 178.

<sup>205</sup> HUA, SA II, inv. no. 1045.

<sup>206</sup> See for example: SH, Diaconie, inv. no. 1, 7 January 1689; HCO, SA, inv. no. 806, 12 November 1739; HUA, Diaconie, inv. no. 17, 23 November 1776.

first tried to find alternatives to gain extra income for the relief institutions. Giving permission to take up extraordinary door-to-door collections was often the easiest – albeit non-structural – solution: the charities’ income increased without the municipalities having to pay for it. In Delft in the 1590s, Reformed deacons asking for financial support in this period were allowed at least ten times to go door-to-door with collection boxes.<sup>207</sup> In the 1750s in ’s-Hertogenbosch, extraordinary collections were organized several times to finance additional distribution to the poor because of the extreme cold.<sup>208</sup>

Another option was organizing lotteries. Especially during the lottery heydays in the decades around 1600 and in the 1690s, money was raised in many towns for local charities by selling lottery tickets. Despite restrictive measures applied by Calvinist synods as well as by local and regional governments fearful that this type of gambling would promote worldly greed, lotteries were still organized on an inconsistent basis throughout the early modern period.<sup>209</sup> In Delft in the winter of 1712-1713 for instance, more than 10,000 lottery tickets were sold for the Chamber of Charity. In total over 100,000 guilders were raised and after deduction of prize money and other costs over 5,000 guilders could be spent on the assistance of the urban poor.<sup>210</sup> In Utrecht, a lottery was organized at least three times for the civic charity. Halfway through the seventeenth century, when the Almoners’ Chamber had to deal with the aforementioned large deficit, over 17,000 guilders were raised, which nevertheless could not solve all financial problems as the financial year of 1650 still ended with a slight money shortage.<sup>211</sup> In 1695 over 22,00 guilders could even be added to the charity’s income, and in 1719 a lottery gained some 4,600 guilders.<sup>212</sup>

However, sometimes these *ad hoc* solutions as lotteries and extra collections were insufficient, and urban authorities had to find ways to support the charities more structurally. In Zwolle in 1697, the City Poor Chamber was granted the revenues of a tax on coffins, and in 1700 the assets of a former pest house were assigned to the almoners.<sup>213</sup> Only as a last resort and when all other avenues had been exhausted, did the urban authorities subsidize poor relief institutions from their own budget. Due to the immense budgetary problems of the Almoners’ Chamber, the

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<sup>207</sup> Abels, *Nieuw en ongezien*, vol. 2, p. 223.

<sup>208</sup> For example on 25 January 1753, 31 December 1753, 8 February 1754, 28 January 1755 and 21 February 1755, see: SH, Blok van de Vismarkt, inv. no. 153F.

<sup>209</sup> On lotteries in the Dutch Republic see e.g. Huisman and Koppenol, *Daer compt de Lotery*; Hooglander-Bijvank, ‘Het lot als spiegel van de ziel’; Kilian, ‘De Haarlemse loterij van 1606-1607’.

<sup>210</sup> AD, Kamer van Charitate, inv. nos. 288 and 438-439. The lowest prize was 25 guilders, the highest 10,000 guilders.

<sup>211</sup> HUA, Aalmoezenierskamer, inv. no. 1827-5.

<sup>212</sup> HUA, Aalmoezenierskamer, inv. nos. 1827-9 and 1827-18.

<sup>213</sup> Van Wijngaarden, *Zorg voor de kost*, p. 76.

Utrecht city government had no choice but to intervene, after which, as has been stated above, the municipal subsidies evolved into its most important income stream, and the almoners totally came to depend on public money.

When charities were left to their own devices to solve their acute financial problems, borrowing money was a common strategy to overcome the worst troubles. This tactic was preferred over selling property, as the almoners were well aware that this would solve financial difficulties in the short run, but would cause even bigger problems in the years to come. In 1797, the Utrecht Reformed deacons assumed some church members would be in favour of selling a part of the charities' property to increase income, but they emphasized that this would ultimately not solve the problems. Instead, the congregation was requested to lend money to the deacons, preferably without interest, but with a maximum of four per cent.<sup>214</sup> Likewise, when in Delft charitable donations in 1795 diminished to almost half of the level of the previous year, the poor relief administrators borrowed money to balance the accounts. Between 1794 and 1800, interest on debts rose from approximately 700 guilders a year to more than 4,000 guilders. By these means, they managed to compensate for the lower collection revenues which occurred in these years, and even increased income to meet the augmenting demand for charity.

Another way to stay out of the red when income was insufficient was cutting expenditure. Since the major part of the charities' budgets was spent on assistance to the poor, a question can be raised as to what extent financial difficulties affected the level of social care. It has been asserted that outdoor relief institutions, in contrast to orphanages for example, could quite easily cut their expenditure level by lowering the weekly endowments to the poor.<sup>215</sup> Did they indeed choose to do so, or did they prefer other strategies to avoid financial deficits? Samples from the expenditure of the Delft Chamber of Charity taken every ten years from its accounts, demonstrate that monetary charitable distributions were often stable here, and hardly responded to swings in income and cash holdings (see Figure 3.5). Especially the distributions in kind, mainly as a result of fluctuating grain prices, but also expenditure on the purchase of financial assets and on the repaying of loans, were far more subject to variations. As far as financial resources allowed them to do so, poor relief administrators even increased their expenditure on the poor when poverty increased. In Delft, in the 'disaster year' 1672, charitable expenditure rose. The number of assisted families increased with 24 per cent compared with 1671 and in 1673 even almost 40 per cent more households relied on the Chamber of Charity

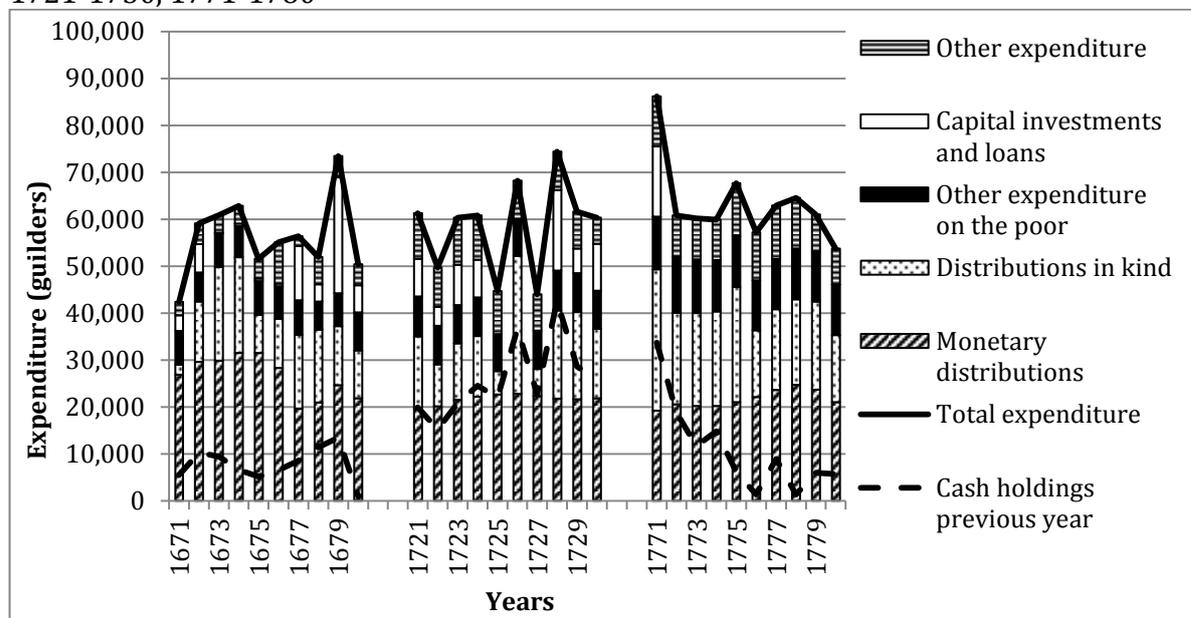
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<sup>214</sup> HUA, Diaconie, inv. no. 23, 6 April 1797. The administrators of the Amsterdam *Burgerweeshuis* also preferred to borrow money rather than sell assets, see: Gelderblom and Jonker, 'With a view to hold', pp. 74-75 and McCants, *Civic charity in a Golden Age*, pp. 165-170.

<sup>215</sup> See e.g. McCants, *Civic charity in a Golden Age*, p. 152.

than in the year prior to the 'disaster year'.<sup>216</sup> In this city, which was located safely behind the Dutch Water Line, the general feeling of distress led to higher collection revenues, enabling the almoners to expand their activities.<sup>217</sup>

Figure 3.5 – Expenditure in guilders of the Delft Chamber of Charity, 1671-1680, 1721-1730, 1771-1780



Sources: see Appendix A.

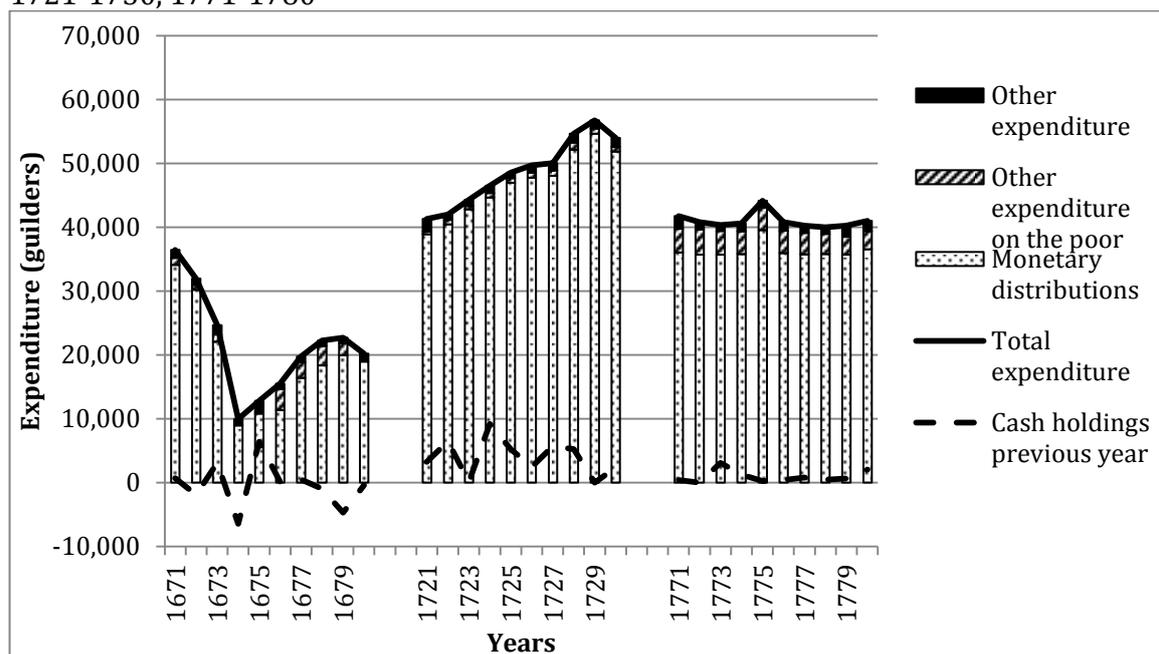
NB: The distributions in kind concern expenditure on grain, peat and clothing; other expenditure on the poor includes costs for burying deceased poor, for the care of orphans and elderly living with foster families, for maternity care, for medical assistance, and for alms given to wandering poor; other expenditure mainly concerns costs for house rents, maintenance of buildings and salaries.

However, in times of diminished income or increased demand for assistance, cuts to poor relief were sometimes unavoidable. For example, where collection revenues declined drastically in Utrecht in the 1670s, the poor relief administrators had no choice but to reduce charitable distributions. At first, the almoners, who probably hoped the difficulties would be of short duration, tried to bridge the gap between income and expenses by financing charitable distributions partly from their own pockets. In 1672 they managed to keep distributions at the same level as the year before. However, in the next two years the income of the Almoners' Chamber collapsed so drastically that their efforts proved to be insufficient. In 1675, less than one-third of the money was distributed to the poor compared to the beginning of the decade (see Figure 3.6).

<sup>216</sup> Van der Vlis, *Leven in armoede*, pp. 363-365.

<sup>217</sup> On this see Teeuwen, 'Collections for the poor', p. 289.

Figure 3.6 – Expenditure in guilders of the Utrecht Almoners’ Chamber, 1671-1680, 1721-1730, 1771-1780



Sources: see Appendix A.

NB: These figures do not include the additional private expenses of the almoners, which were indeed mentioned 'pro memoria', but not included in the regular financial administration. See Figure 3.5 for a clarification of the different categories of expenditure items. As both categories were only small in proportion, distributions in kind have been incorporated into the other expenditure on the poor, and the expenditure on capital investments and loans into the other expenditure.

Whether the Utrecht Almoners' Chamber achieved the budget cuts by distributing to a smaller number of people, by diminishing the level of distributions per household, or by a combination of these two measures could not be established. It is known that both tactics were employed on occasion. In times of financial hardship, authorities sometimes urged the almoners to do a full investigation of all assisted families, administrating the size of the households, what other types of income they had, and whether they received allowances from several charities at the same time, in order to limit the number of supported families to those who really could not live without some help. In 1660 it was decided that all charitable distributions of the Utrecht almoners were to be suspended, and that the poor, who would all have to reapply for assistance, subjected to a thorough investigation.<sup>218</sup> In 1672 it was decided that the winter distributions should no longer exceed the summer allowances in order to diminish expenditure.<sup>219</sup>

The stability of the monetary charitable distributions in Delft over the course of the early modern period seems to suggest that in times of rising demand for

<sup>218</sup> HUA, Aalmoezenierskamer, inv. no. 1824, 24 April 1660.

<sup>219</sup> HUA, Aalmoezenierskamer, inv. no. 1825, 20 November 1672.

assistance in that town, poor households had to survive on lower allowances, as approximately the same amount had to be divided among a larger number of families. However, as described in the previous chapter, when poverty increased from the late seventeenth century onwards, public charities also chose to restrict access to their provisions for both migrants and religious minorities, as a result of which it is difficult to assess how many poor families were assisted in the different periods, and how much these households received. More research, especially a long-term analysis on poor relief policies, is necessary to establish how these mechanism of exclusion and reducing expenditure worked precisely. That limiting access to poor relief was not without risk and also involved losing these groups' charitable donations became apparent with the exclusion of the Catholics in Utrecht in the 1670s.

### 3.5 Conclusion

Especially in the seventeenth century, the revenues from collections organized in the churches and on the streets were often of major importance for the financing of charitable distributions. In three out of the four towns studied here, collection gifts even formed the single largest source of income in this period. Only in 's-Hertogenbosch, where the major part of poor relief was financed from property income, did the picture deviate. Although in the other localities in the eighteenth century the importance of interest on real estate and especially on financial assets also grew, or charities increasingly came to depend on municipal subsidies, charitable donations remained to be an indispensable source of income. The civic charities in Delft and Zwolle still financed over 40 per cent of their activities from collection gifts and for the Reformed Diaconate in Utrecht this was even 60 per cent.

When looking at the institutions' financial performance it turns out that in spite of the structural budgetary difficulties under which the treasurers had to operate, they in fact managed to balance income and expenditure in most years. Sound financial management was considered to be of great importance for the survival of the charities, as mismanagement could undermine the donors' trust that their money was being spent wisely. For this reason, urban as well as religious authorities monitored the income and expenditure of charities carefully. However, in spite of the treasurers' efforts and the control exercised by municipalities and church boards, not all institutions were able to keep their budgets afloat. Especially the large numbers of years that the Utrecht Almoners' Chamber suffered from deficits in the seventeenth century is striking. Arguably, the declining income from collection gifts not only contributed to the financial problems, but the continuous difficulties consequently also made the population less inclined to give.

Not only for the regular financing but also in the charities' crisis management, collections played an important role. As municipalities were not always willing to solve the institutions' financial difficulties by granting more subsidies, they often allowed extraordinary collections to take place. In these situations, the urban population was extensively informed about the need for additional funding, and were urged to contribute. How these collections were organized and which organizational tactics the authorities applied to influence the populations' giving behaviour and to encourage higher levels of generosity, is analysed in the next chapter.

## *Chapter 4*

# Organizing collections

### 4.1 Introduction

Having established the importance of charitable collections for the financing of both secular and religious relief institutions in early modern Dutch towns, as well as variations herein between different localities and developments over time, this chapter examines how the collections were organized. The aim of this chapter is twofold. It firstly explains which types of collections existed, how frequently they took place, as well as what the role of secular and religious authorities was in the organization of these charitable appeals. Secondly, it analyses the authorities' policies in the planning, regulation, and advertisement of collections, and how they by these means tried to create favourable conditions for donating. Thus, the question this chapter aims to answer is: which organizational tactics did municipalities, church boards and relief institutions apply to influence giving behaviour?

The first part of the chapter elaborates upon the different types of collections that took place in early modern Dutch towns, as well as on how frequently they were organized. Subsequently, the division of responsibilities between municipalities, provincial estates and the States-General on the one hand and church boards on the other hand, and what their policy was in the regulation and controlling of collections are analysed. The last part of the chapter discusses the methods applied to maximize revenues, such as increasing pressure on the population to donate and decreasing the level of anonymity in giving. The main sources used for this chapter are minutes and resolutions of municipalities, church boards and poor relief organizations, public announcements in which people were made aware of collections taking place, and, lastly, instructions for collectors. These sources enable an analysis of who was responsible for organizing collections, where, when and how often they took place, who went door-to-door, and which organizational tactics were used to enable and promote charitable giving.

## 4.2 Types and frequency

In the Dutch Republic, collections took place on a frequent basis. Mostly, collections for a specific charitable cause were organized locally, either during or after church service or in the streets, but occasionally money was raised on a provincial or national level. This section elaborates upon the different purposes for which collections were organized, which could vary from raising money for local diaconates from the different religious denominations or public indoor or outdoor relief institutions, to neighbouring localities in need after a disaster, and persecuted Protestants in France, Italy or other parts of Europe. Also the frequency with which these different types of charitable appeals took place is discussed. The policy behind the collection schedules, and the decisions made by the authorities in organizing collections, shall be analysed in the next section of this chapter.

The first of type of collections to be discussed here are church offertories. Collection bags were passed in Dutch Reformed Churches during services, which could be held up to six times a week. For example, in the *Oude Kerk* and *Nieuwe Kerk* in Delft, services took place not only Sunday mornings, afternoons and evenings, but also on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays. In the Reformed Churches of 's-Hertogenbosch, the same pattern can be observed.<sup>220</sup> Moreover, churchgoers were expected to make a donation for church or city poor, not just during regular services but also on Christian holidays, at the Lord's Supper and catechism study. In the second half of the eighteenth century, Zwolle's main church (the *Grote Kerk*) even had two simultaneous collections, one for the City Poor Chamber and one for the Dutch Reformed Poor.<sup>221</sup> In the early years of the Dutch Reformed Diaconate in Utrecht, deacons had asked for charitable donations at the church doors, but because they complained about the strong winds as well as many churchgoers failing to give, in 1612 the church board decided that from then on collections would take place during service.<sup>222</sup> Going round with collection bags during or immediately after the sermon, became common practice in Dutch Reformed Churches.

Next to these charitable appeals within churches, frequent door-to-door collections were organized, for a variety of purposes. Firstly, civic as well as religious charities made their rounds on a regular basis (see table 4.1). Many institutions went door-to-door in the entire town, or in parts of it, once per month or per year. For

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<sup>220</sup> This can be concluded from lists of collection revenues in which a division per church service has been made. See e.g. AD, Kamer van Charitate, inv. nos. 373-384; SH, Diaconie, inv. nos. 452-458.

<sup>221</sup> HCO, SA, inv. no. 88, 5 February 1756. The second collection was held from 1756 onwards, but its revenues were granted to the City Poor Chamber from 1768 onwards. The Dutch Reformed Diaconate was then given the income of an extra collection held in the service on Sunday evening: HCO, SA, inv. no. 91, 7 November 1768 and HCO, SA, inv. no. 201, 7 November 1768.

<sup>222</sup> HUA, Kerkenraad, inv. no. 2, 24 October 1612.

other charities, people could even expect a collector on their doorstep once or twice a week. For example, in Utrecht, weekly door-to-door collections were organized by the Almoners' Chamber in all the city districts and extra collections were held four times a year. The inhabitants of Delft were also asked weekly to donate to the city poor, as well as on the 26th of December. The City Poor Chamber in Zwolle collected every four weeks, while the Reformed Poor Chamber held a yearly public collection from 1772 onwards. In 's-Hertogenbosch, the Blocks arranged a charitable appeal at Easter and Christmas in addition to weekly collections that were held from 1652 onwards. For some institutions, such as for the public charities in Delft and Utrecht, it was specifically mentioned that they also went door-to-door outside of the town walls, which demonstrates that public collections were not strictly an urban phenomenon.<sup>223</sup>

Other religious denominations, such as the Walloons, Lutherans, Catholics and Mennonites, were often restricted to organizing collections in their churches. Stemming from fear that these dissident religious communities would become too visible and that the revenues would benefit religious fanaticism, public authorities did not allow them to take up collections in the streets. For example, in 1612, the States-General announced that those who, without consent of Provincial authorities, raised money for foreign Catholic institutions, would be severely punished.<sup>224</sup> In the early years of the Republic, in 1581, Catholic services and gatherings had already been forbidden.<sup>225</sup> In 1622, a decree was issued against collections for Catholic organizations within the Dutch Republic as well.<sup>226</sup> Three years earlier the Remonstrants had also been prohibited to organize themselves and to raise money to fund their activities.<sup>227</sup> Some of these groups preferred not to hold collections during service, but had alternative ways of raising money. For Mennonites it was common to

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<sup>223</sup> Also when one-off collections were organized on a provincial or national level, such as for persecuted co-religionists abroad, they usually took place in both urban and rural areas; see e.g. the revenues from both towns and villages of a collection for the Waldenses organized in 1687: AD, OA I, inv. no. 1229. On church collections organized in a village for the assistance of the poor also see e.g. Van Deursen, *Een dorp in de polder*, pp. 216-218.

<sup>224</sup> Knuttel, *De toestand der Nederlandsche Katholieken*, pp. 97-98.

<sup>225</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 1-3.

<sup>226</sup> This decree (which was also published in 1641) was probably a follow-up of decrees already existing on a local level: *Placcaet vande hooge ende mog: heeren Staten Generael der Vereenighde Nederlanden, inhoudende verboth dat gheene Iesuijten, priesters, papen, monicken, of andere geordende Persoonen vande Roomsche gesinden, in dese landen en sullen mogen kommē ofte verblijven, ...* (The Hague, 1641): Knuttel, *Catalogus van de pamfletten-verzameling*, pamphlet nos. 4783 and 4784, [http://tempo.idcpublishers.info/content/coll\\_pamphlets.php](http://tempo.idcpublishers.info/content/coll_pamphlets.php), last viewed 22 May 2013.

<sup>227</sup> *Placcaet vande hooge ende mo. heeren Staten Generael der Vereenighde Nederlanden, daer by alle inghesetenen der selver landen, verboden werdt te houden eenighe aparte vergaderingen ofte conventiculen, onder deksel van oeffeninghe vande leere inde vijf bekende controversie religions poincten vervatet* (The Hague, 1619): Knuttel, *Catalogus van de pamfletten-verzameling*, pamphlet no. 2936, [http://tempo.idcpublishers.info/content/coll\\_pamphlets.php](http://tempo.idcpublishers.info/content/coll_pamphlets.php), last viewed 22 May 2013.

just place an collection box at church doors.<sup>228</sup> The deacons of the Lutheran church in 's-Hertogenbosch registered charitable donations in a 'contribution book', and four times a year asked people leaving the church for additional gifts.<sup>229</sup>

While initially religious minorities were disadvantaged by prohibiting the establishment and funding of their own relief institutions, another form of exclusion can be observed from the late seventeenth century onwards. As discussed in chapter 2, in order to keep public charities financially sustainable in times of growing poverty, members of churches other than the Dutch Reformed were increasingly forced to organize their own social care. By the eighteenth century, municipalities often also allowed Catholic institutions to organize collections in the streets, in which they were, however, restricted to families of their own religious denomination. In eighteenth-century Zwolle, the Catholic Poor Chamber held collections every four weeks and every three months, visiting only Catholic homes. In 1795, calling upon the principle of equality, the Catholic almoners complained about this policy in favour of the Dutch Reformed and requested to be permitted to organize public collections as well. The municipality's decision regarding this specific case is unknown, but it is beyond doubt that the emancipation of the Catholics in the French period increased their opportunities to organize charitable appeals.<sup>230</sup>

It was not only charities entrusted with the care of the outdoor poor that made their rounds through the towns; sometimes other institutions, such as orphanages, followed suit. In Zwolle, representatives of the *Holdehuis* went door-to-door every other week from 1651 onwards. In 's-Hertogenbosch, the Civic Orphanage organized public collections at Easter and Christmas. From the late 1770s onwards, the Catholic Orphanage did the same in May and November, although these collectors were restricted to visiting only Catholic homes. Again in 's-Hertogenbosch, collectors for a rather peculiar charity, namely of an organization that assisted poor prisoners, even went door-to-door twice a week. However, as we shall see in chapter 6, for them raising enough money was quite a challenge. Adding up the collections which were organized for the outdoor as well as indoor charitable institutions, the inhabitants of the towns studied here could expect a collector at their doorstep at least once a week.

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<sup>228</sup> On the Mennonites in Delft see NA, Departement van Binnenlandse Zaken, inv. no. 195. On the Mennonites in Amsterdam see Groenveld, "Geef van uw haaf", p. 37. The Mennonites in Zwolle presumably also did not collect during service, see: HCO, Doopsgezinde gemeente, inv. no. 155.

<sup>229</sup> SH, Evangelisch-Lutherse kerk, inv. no. 144, 10 June 1694.

<sup>230</sup> HCO, SA, inv. no. 730, 3 August 1795.

Table 4.1 – Regular public collections

<b>Town</b>	<b>Institution</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Where</b>
Delft	Chamber of Charity	- Every week - Christmas (the 26th of December)	Door-to-door in both Delft and the surrounding hamlets
Zwolle	City Poor Chamber	The frequency was gradually increased from four times a year in the early sixteenth century, to seven times a year around 1650, ten times a year in the 1680s and thirteen times a year in the 1690s.	Door-to-door
	Catholic Poor Chamber	Every four weeks (from 1739 onwards)	Catholic homes in both Zwolle and the surrounding hamlets
		Every three months (from 1739 onwards)	In the neighbouring village of Wijthmen
	Reformed Poor Chamber	Once a year (from 1772 onwards)	Door-to-door
	<i>Holdehuis</i> (orphanage)	Every two weeks (from 1651 onwards)	Door-to-door
Utrecht	Almoners' Chamber	- Every week - Four times a year	Door-to-door in both Utrecht and the surrounding hamlets
	St. Job's hospital	Twice a year (until 1634)	Door-to-door
	Chamber of Crafts (transformed into an orphanage, the <i>Stadskinderhuis</i> , in 1675)	Twice a year in the period from 1634 until the early eighteenth century, and from then on four times a year	Door-to-door
's-Hertogenbosch	Blocks	- Easter and Christmas - Every week (from 1652 onwards)	Door-to-door
	Poor Prisoners	Twice a week	Door-to-door
	Civic Orphanage	Easter and Christmas	Door-to-door
	Catholic Orphanage	May and November (from 1779 onwards)	Catholic homes

Sources: AD, Kamer van Charitate, inv. nos. 287-290; HCO, SA, inv. nos. 10105-10111 and 10124-10125; HCO, Stadsarmenkamer, inv. nos. 90-91; HCO, Rooms-katholieke armenkamer, inv. no. 43; HCO, Hervormde gemeente, inv. no. 323; HCO, SA, inv. no. 68, 24 August 1651; HUA, Aalmoezenierskamer, inv. no. 1827; HUA, SA I, inv. no. 121, 18 August 1634; HUA, Ambachtskamer, inv. nos. 1887-1888; Bok, *Vijfendertig Utrechtse kunstenaars*, p. 38; Adriani, *Het Stads-Ambachtskinderhuis*, pp. 136-137; SH, Negen Blokken, annual account books (see Appendix A); SH, Arme gevangenen; inv nos. 30-59; SH, OA, inv. nos. 8289-8413; SH, Rooms-katholiek weeshuis, inv. nos. 187-205.

Next to regular door-to-door collections, occasionally one-off collections took place. As discussed in chapter 3, for charitable institutions, collections were not only a stable source of income, but also a way to raise extra money in times of financial troubles. On occasion this tactic was used to raise the start-up capital for new institutions, as was the case in Zwolle in the 1660s for the *Holdehuis*.<sup>231</sup> Due to incomplete archival sources, it is difficult to precisely state how often urban charities resorted to extraordinary collections to supplement their incomes. Moreover, indexes on minutes and resolutions of city governments are sometimes lacking, which makes it more difficult to find the dates on which one-off collections were mentioned. Although in some periods no extraordinary collections could be found for twenty or thirty consecutive years, at other times, they were organized for several years in a row. For example, in Delft in the 1590s, Reformed deacons were allowed to go door-to-door with collection boxes at least ten times.<sup>232</sup> Especially in winter time, when demands for assistance increased, taking up an extra collection was an often practiced solution to make ends meet. Of the 59 extraordinary collections for civic and religious poor relief institutions of the towns studied here, 47(81 per cent), were organized during the usually cold months of November until March.

Occasionally collections were organized for external purposes, such as for towns and villages in other parts of the Dutch Republic that needed financial support. These collections can be seen as a form of mutual solidarity, or perhaps even as mutual insurance, in case of disasters, and were, amongst others, organized after destructive fires, floods and wars.<sup>233</sup> When in 1766 a fire had devastated the church and a large number of houses in the town of Hilversum, the population of Utrecht was asked to commiserate with the victims and make a donation.<sup>234</sup> Money was sometimes also collected for the building of churches and orphanages in other localities, as happened in Delft in 1618 for a new orphanage for Sluis, located in Zeeland.<sup>235</sup> Often these collections were meant for neighbouring localities, villages or towns located in the same province. In the town of Utrecht, money was raised for Montfoort, Mijdrecht and Uithoorn, while in Zwolle collectors went door-to-door for the villages of Genemuiden, Grafhorst and Hasselt among others, all within 30 kilometres radius of their benevolent towns.<sup>236</sup> Proximity seems to have played a

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<sup>231</sup> HCO, SA, inv. no. 42, 24 June 1664 and inv. nos. 11276-11279.

<sup>232</sup> Abels, *Nieuw en ongezien*, vol. 2, p. 223.

<sup>233</sup> On this also see Van Leeuwen, 'Liefdadige giften in Amsterdam', pp. 434-438.

<sup>234</sup> HUA, SA II, inv. no. 121, 10 July 1766, 29 September 1766 and 20 October 1766.

<sup>235</sup> AD, OA I, inv. no. 1.6, 14 October 1618.

<sup>236</sup> For the collection in Montfoort see: HUA, SA II, inv. no. 153-5, 23 April 1629; for Mijdrecht and Uithoorn see HUA, SA II, inv. no. 121, 9 November 1778; for Grafhorst see HCO, SA, inv. no. 199, 3 July 1710; for Genemuiden see HCO, SA, inv. no. 200, 26 May 1741; for Hasselt see HCO, SA, inv. no. 806, 24 October 1725.

major role in the solidarity with inhabitants of other localities. When disasters occurred, neighbouring towns offered a helping hand, perhaps expecting that the support would be reciprocated should anything untoward befall their own territories. Remarkably, however, in Delft collections were sometimes organized for villages which were located at a far greater distance, such as for Heukelum to the east and Strijen to the south of Rotterdam.<sup>237</sup> Arguably, the prosperity in Holland towns attracted representatives from localities in need from larger parts of the country.

Beyond the borders of the Dutch Republic, people could also occasionally count on the benevolence of the Dutch. These collections for international purposes were almost exclusively of a religious nature. Many were aimed at assisting Protestant minorities in other parts of Europe, such as coreligionists in the Southern Low Countries, France or Ireland. Likewise, for the Waldenses, a group of persecuted protestants living in the Piedmont valley in the Northwest of Italy, collections were organized several times during the early modern period, especially in the late seventeenth century.<sup>238</sup> Occasionally, they even took place door-to-door in every city, town and village of the Dutch Republic, raising large amounts of money. In February 1699, for example, a collection for these persecuted coreligionists, which was preceded by a Day of Prayer, yielded more than 200,000 guilders in the province of Holland alone.<sup>239</sup> The Delft archives hold an overview of the collected amounts in all towns and cities of the province of Holland and their surrounding villages. It reveals that while in Delft the collection yielded some 7,600 guilders, in the surrounding countryside over 5,000 guilders were collected, and that in Amsterdam as much as 70,000 guilders was raised.<sup>240</sup>

The only collections organized for international purposes with a non-religious character, found for the four towns studied here, were those aimed at raising money to free Dutch people held captive abroad. For enslaved seamen ransom needed to be paid, which could vary from one hundred to several thousand guilders, depending on the age, capacities and physical condition of the prisoner, as well as on the status of the person who had bought him on the market. Only when, in the context of a peace treaty, all Dutch seamen taken prisoner had to be bought out of slavery, the States-General, in cooperation with the States of Holland, organized a general collection

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<sup>237</sup> AD, OA I, inv. no. 17.6, 9 September 1756 and 25 September 1759.

<sup>238</sup> For a history of the Waldenses see e.g. Biller, *The Waldenses*; Tourn, *De Waldenzen*.

<sup>239</sup> A 'Day of Prayer' is a Dutch Protestant day of contemplation, announced by provincial or national authorities, on which gratitude to the Lord is expressed and prayers are said to victims of wars, famine and disasters.

<sup>240</sup> AD, OA I, inv. no. 1229. In this document a total amount of some 206,080 guilders is given, while Kist mentions a yield of 240,720 guilders: Kist, *Neêrlands bededagen*, vol. 1, p. 335. Also in Zwolle and 's-Hertogenbosch, this collection was organized in February 1699, however in Utrecht it probably took place in December 1698: HCO, SA, inv. no. 805, 6 February 1699; SH, SA, inv. no. 463, 14 February 1699; HA, SA I, inv. no. 121, 9 December 1698.

within all localities of the province.<sup>241</sup> In other cases, however, ransom was regarded a private matter, which had to be solved without political interference. Some towns had special funds from which the ransom money could be paid, and the town of Hoorn organized several lotteries in the late 1690s. It was more common to raise money through collections, which were organized on private initiative, usually by family members of the prisoner.<sup>242</sup>

In the town of Delft, several collections were organized in the 1680s and 90s for city-dwellers held captive on the Barbary Coast. In 1697, for example, the mother of Anthony Noorberger received permission to collect money for her son, who on his way back from Málaga was enslaved by an 'Algerian robber'.<sup>243</sup> As was common with collections for these purposes, people first signed up for a certain amount, and only after a commercial party had advanced the necessary sum and the prisoner had safely returned home, would the actual donations be collected. However, in the case of Noorberger, it never came to that, as he died before he could be freed. Many people declared that they still wished to make a donation, as financial compensation for his mother.

In total, 134 one-off collections in Delft, Zwolle, Utrecht and 's-Hertogenbosch in the period between 1576 (which was the first year for which a collection could be found) and 1800, could be detected, an average of 33.5 per town (see Table 4.2). This means that there was an extraordinary collection at least once every six or seven years. However, they were probably organized much more frequently. Research on eighteenth-century Amsterdam has demonstrated that one-off collections only for purposes outside of the city took place, on average, once a year.<sup>244</sup> On the one hand, the lower frequency found in the towns studied here could indicate that Amsterdam, being the largest and wealthiest city in the country, attracted more representatives of localities in need asking permission to hold collections than other towns in the Dutch Republic. However, on the other hand, the difference can probably at least partly be explained by difficulties with the accessibility of the archival material in the four towns studied here.

For eighteenth-century Amsterdam, archivist Johannes Christiaan Breen (1865-1927) meticulously studied the municipality's and burgomasters' resolutions,

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<sup>241</sup> See e.g. AD, OA I, inv. no. 1229, September 1681.

<sup>242</sup> Den Ridder, 'Gedenk de gevangenen'; Davids, 'De zeeman'; Van Leeuwen, *De rijke Republiek*, pp. 231-232.

<sup>243</sup> AD, OA I, inv. no. 1229. Translation from: 'Algierschen Rover'. Here, three more examples can be found of collections held to redeem city-dwellers on the Barbary Coast, such as for Abrahamsz de Goede in 1684 and Elisabeth van Hurck in 1685.

<sup>244</sup> Van Leeuwen, 'Liefdadige giften in Amsterdam', pp. 434-439. This is based on Breen, 'Collecten te Amsterdam', pp. 129-152.

which would go beyond the scope of this thesis.<sup>245</sup> In contrast, in Delft, Utrecht, Zwolle and 's-Hertogenbosch, we have to rely on available indexes to these resolution books, which are often far from complete. However, as in these towns the same searching methods were applied and comparable numbers of one-off collections were found, it can be concluded that this type of collections took place across the Dutch Republic, and at least in these four towns probably with a comparable frequency.

Table 4.2 – Extraordinary collections found in the archival sources per town (1576-1800)

<b>Town</b>	<b>Number of collections</b>
Delft	41
Zwolle	30
Utrecht	26
's-Hertogenbosch	37
<b>Total</b>	<b>134</b>

*Sources:* AD, SA I, inv. nos. 1, 15-17, 1229 and 1231; AD, SA II, inv. no. 1; HCO, SA, inv. nos. 40-51; 67-101; 198-202; 803-809; HCO, Stadsarmenkamer, inv. no. 59-62; HUA, SA I, inv. nos. 121 and 153; SH, SA, inv. nos. 261-416; SH, Diaconie, inv. no. 1; SH, Kerkenraad, inv. no. 1; SH, Negen Blokken, minutes and resolutions of the Blocks A to I.

NB: As only collections have been included which are mentioned in indexes to town councils' and charities' resolution books, which are often far from complete, or in existing literature, most probably a large number of collections are missing. Collections organized on a national level have only been counted for the towns for which references could be found in the archives. In case a collection was mentioned in, for example, three towns, it has also been counted three times. This concerns three collections for Waldenses, one of which in 1655 in Zwolle, Utrecht and 's-Hertogenbosch, one in 1687 in Delft, Utrecht and 's-Hertogenbosch, and one in the winter of 1698-1699 in Utrecht, Delft and Zwolle, as well as a collection that was organized in 1749 in Delft, Utrecht and 's-Hertogenbosch for the assistance of victims of the War of the Austrian Succession in Brabant and Flanders and the rebuilding of devastated churches: HCO, SA, inv. no. 804, 19 August 1655, and inv. no. 805, 6 February 1699; HUA, SA I, inv. no. 121, 9 August 1655, 13 October 1687, 9 December 1698, and 7 May 1749, and inv. no. 1229; SH, SA, inv. no. 301, 28 December 1655, inv. no. 320, 4 November 1687, and inv. no. 369, 7 June 1749; AD, SA I, inv. no. 1.9, 4 November 1687, and inv. no. 1.10, 8 June 1749.

If we analyse the purposes for which one-off collections took place and distinguish between local, national and international purposes, as well as between those organized in the seventeenth and in the eighteenth century, some interesting results can be observed (see Table 4.3).<sup>246</sup> Firstly, in both centuries, at least forty per cent of the extraordinary collections were aimed at giving financial aid to charitable institutions located in the towns where the collections took place. Secondly, while in the seventeenth century more than half of the extraordinary collections had an

<sup>245</sup> Breen, 'Collecten te Amsterdam'.

<sup>246</sup> The six extraordinary collections found for the period 1576-1600 have not been included in Tables 4.3, 4.4 and 4.5, in which only comparisons are made between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. For the (late) sixteenth century, not enough data are available to make a comprehensive analysis.

international purpose, in the eighteenth century only 9 per cent of the collections were organized for indigent outside of the Dutch Republic, and almost half for national purposes. A distinction can also be made between collections held for religious and for secular purposes (see Table 4.4). The former category includes the assistance of persecuted Protestants in other parts of Europe and the building of churches. In the latter case one can think of aid to victims of wars, fires and floods or the building of civic poor relief institutions, such as orphanages. While in the seventeenth century, about two-thirds of the collections were organized for religious purposes, in the eighteenth century, 77 per cent was held for secular purposes.

Table 4.3 – Extraordinary collections in Delft, Zwolle, Utrecht and 's-Hertogenbosch per targeted beneficiary in terms of location

	<b>17<sup>th</sup> century</b>	<b>18<sup>th</sup> century</b>
Local	20 (40 %)	34 (44 %)
Dutch Republic	4 (8 %)	37 (47 %)
International	26 (52 %)	7 (9 %)
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>78</b>

Sources: see Table 4.2.

Table 4.4 – Extraordinary collections in Delft, Zwolle, Utrecht and 's-Hertogenbosch for national and international purposes per type

	<b>17<sup>th</sup> century</b>	<b>18<sup>th</sup> century</b>
Religious	20 (67 %)	10 (23 %)
Secular	10 (33 %)	34 (77 %)
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>44</b>

Sources: see Table 4.2.

This indicates that over the course of the early modern period, the character of one-off collections became more nationally and more secularly orientated, a trend which can also be found over the course of the eighteenth century. While in the period 1701-1750 19 per cent of the organized extraordinary collections had an international purpose, this diminished to only 4 per cent in the second half of the eighteenth century. Likewise, while in the first half of the eighteenth century 43 per cent of the collections organized for national and international purposes had a religious character, in the period 1751-1800 this decreased to 13 per cent. In the French Period, no mention at all of collections held for either international or religious purposes could be found in the archives of the four towns studied in this thesis.

This development is in line with Van Leeuwen's research on collections in eighteenth-century Amsterdam. Using the data gathered by Breen, he finds that while in the period 1724-1759 more than 80 per cent of the extraordinary collections for non-local purposes had a religious character, in the period 1760-1799 this was only

slightly over a third. Over the course of the eighteenth century, collections were increasingly organized for secular and national causes.<sup>247</sup> The main explanation for this development must be found in the fact that the last great expulsion of Protestants took place in the early 1730s, when the Protestant inhabitants of the principality of Salzburg were forced to move abroad.<sup>248</sup> Arguably, also the stagnation of the Dutch economy and growing poverty from the late seventeenth century onwards helps to clarify why authorities in the eighteenth century became less willing to organize collections for purposes abroad, and more focussed on those in need within the Dutch Republic. The complete absence of collections for religious purposes in the French Period can be explained by a more hostile attitude towards the Churches in this revolutionary era, as well as by the fact that from 1795 onwards the Dutch Reformed Church lost its privileged position and all religious denominations were treated equally.<sup>249</sup>

Next to collections in churches and in the streets, small coins were also collected more passively. For those who wished to make a spontaneous charitable donation, an extensive network of alms boxes existed. In 's-Hertogenbosch, in the second half of the eighteenth century, the Blocks could dispose of the revenues of at least 57 alms boxes, of which many were situated in inns. In this period, the five boxes owned by the Dutch Reformed Diaconate were mainly located in ministers' homes. A poor box could also be found in the Roman Catholic Orphanage. So not only outdoor, but indoor charitable institutions also profited from these types of gifts. In other localities, examples can be found of boxes located in the town hall, in or at the departure point of ferries, and within orphanages, churches, parish schools, and minting houses. In 's-Hertogenbosch, a network of over 60 poor boxes covered the town, and in the city of Amsterdam there were about 450 boxes, which is one box per 200 and 400 (approximately) inhabitants respectively.<sup>250</sup> In 1606, the Zwolle City Poor Chamber profited from the income of 34 poor boxes, which given some 7,000 inhabitants was also slightly over 200 inhabitants per box.<sup>251</sup>

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<sup>247</sup> Van Leeuwen, 'Liefdadige giften in Amsterdam', pp. 434-439.

<sup>248</sup> On the expulsion of the Protestants from Salzburg in 1731-1732 see e.g. Ward, *Christianity under the Ancien Régime*, pp. 105-110; Lehman, 'Continental Protestant Europe', pp. 47-48.

<sup>249</sup> On the impact of the French Revolution on the position of the Churches and on religious life see e.g. Bijleveld, *Voor God, Volk en Vaderland*; Aston, *Christianity and revolutionary Europe*.

<sup>250</sup> The number of poor boxes are sometimes mentioned in the account books of the charitable institutions: SH, Negen Blokken, annual account books (see Appendix A), SH, Diaconate, inv. nos. 257-294. For the alms boxes in Amsterdam, see Van Leeuwen, 'Giving in early modern history', pp. 318-319.

<sup>251</sup> HCO, Stadsarmenkamer, inv. no. 90. For estimations of the number of inhabitants in these towns in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries see Lourens and Lucassen, *Inwoneraantallen van Nederlandse steden*.

With the combination of these large numbers of alms boxes in the towns, the collection bags in churches, regular door-to-door collections as well as those organized incidentally, it is hardly an exaggeration to state that the early modern Dutch had the opportunity to make a charitable donation on a daily basis. However, the overall low yields of the alms boxes demonstrates that without being specifically asked, they were not always willing to do so. To take the example of Zwolle, here often no more than a few hundred guilders were donated to these boxes annually, which was less than four per cent of the Poor Chamber's collection income.<sup>252</sup> Apart from personal solicitation, certain collection strategies, such as strict control and regulation and increasing social pressure in giving, helped to encourage the inhabitants of the Dutch Republic to give. How these tactics were applied shall be discussed in the following two sections.

#### 4.3 Regulation and control

In the Dutch Republic, collections were well-organized. The multitude of institutions depending on the population's generosity could easily have led to chaos in which the plethora of collectors bumped into each other in the streets. However, public authorities monitored collections with great care and made sure to prevent such disorder. Collections could be issued by town councils, provincial states or the States-General. To collect within a single locality, the permission of the municipality was required. For a larger area, requests had to be sent to provincial authorities or the States-General, which in case of a positive decision then informed the city governments, sending them full reports of copies of the requests and on the procedure that needed to be followed. Municipalities then also needed to give permission, and they were free to schedule the collection as they saw fit.

When churches or localities were in need, representatives, sometimes even ministers or burgomasters, travelled across the country to ask for financial assistance. Public authorities appraised themselves of the seriousness of the situation. For example, before a collection was permitted for the partially burnt-down town of Heukelum in 1772, the States of Holland sent a 'capable and trustworthy person' to draw up a list of all the houses and buildings that had been damaged or destroyed, to estimate how much money would be needed for their repair or rebuilding, and how large the funds of local charities were. It was concluded

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<sup>252</sup> Based on samples from the years 1661-1670, 1751-1760, 1771-1780 and 1791-1800, see HCO, SA, inv. nos. 10105-10106, 10125-10125 and HCO, Stadsarmenkamer, inv. no. 91.

that more than 80,000 guilders would be necessary and that the local Dutch Reformed deaconry was far from capable of paying for this without help.<sup>253</sup>

When a door-to-door collection was allowed, municipalities kept a close eye on the procedure. It was common that supervisors, most often city messengers, of the town in which the collection took place, would accompany the collectors on their rounds through town, and that afterwards the collected money would be handed over to the town's treasurer, be counted, administered, and safely kept in closed boxes until the collectors travelled home again.<sup>254</sup> Confirmations were sent to the charitable towns, when the money had arrived in the locality in need.<sup>255</sup> Some people tried to avoid the official procedure, as becomes clear from an example from Utrecht. Here it was announced in 1657 that the municipality would take action against collectors who 'take from here large sums of money, which is restrained from the deserving poor of this city', without having the permission to do so.<sup>256</sup> However, that only one mentioning of this illegal type of collecting could be found in the archives of the four sample towns, may indicate that this was not common practice and that overall, city governments were in control.

Municipalities also had a say in church collections; church boards were not entirely free to organize collections as they wished. For one-off collections within churches, permission of the town council was necessary. For example, in July 1713, a minister and elder of the Walloon church of Delft requested permission to organize a collection for co-religionists in Flanders.<sup>257</sup> Again in December 1728, representatives of the same church made an appearance before the city council to ask permission to collect in their church for the Waldenses.<sup>258</sup> Even regular church collections were not always fully considered internal affairs. In 's-Hertogenbosch, when deacons wished to put open plates on the tables during the Lord's Supper, it was the church board who allowed them to do so,<sup>259</sup> but especially in towns where funds were centralized, and deaconries were incorporated in charities under the control of municipalities, deacons and church officials had to comply with the policy of urban authorities. For example, when in February 1756, the Dutch Reformed deacons in Zwolle complained

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<sup>253</sup> *Advis van Gecommitteerde Raaden op het verzoek van die van Heukelom, tot het doen eener collecte voor de noodlydende door de brand aldaar op 17 augusty laatstleeden [...]. 7 november 1772 (1772); (RL, 401 E 1 1768-1773:55). Translation from: 'een kundig en vertrouwt Persoon'.*

<sup>254</sup> See e.g. AD, OA I, inv. no. 17.6, 25 September 1759 and inv. no. 17.7, 16 September 1766 and HUA, SA II, inv. no. 121, 29 September 1766.

<sup>255</sup> See e.g. HUA, SA II, inv. no. 121, 15 January 1781.

<sup>256</sup> Vande Water, *Groot placaatboek*, vol. 3, p. 577, 8 September 1657. Translation from: '[...] van hier brengende groote sommen gelds, 't welk d'oprechte deeser Stads armen alsulks ontogen wort'

<sup>257</sup> AD, OA I, inv. no. 17.5, 12 July 1713. The decision is unknown.

<sup>258</sup> AD, OA I, inv. no. 16.5, December 1728.

<sup>259</sup> Many examples of this can be found, see e.g.: SH, Kerkenraad, inv. no. 3, 10 April 1685, 17 July 1685 and 8 July 1692.

that their revenues were insufficient to take care of the indigent church members, it was the town council which granted them the second collection bag in the Sunday afternoon service in the main church, mentioned above.<sup>260</sup>

Requests for extra-ordinary collections were not always granted. The eighteenth century in particular provides many examples of requests that were declined. While in the seventeenth century city governments declined five per cent of the requests found in the sources, a century later more than one-fifth of the cases resulted in a negative decision, mainly for purposes on a national level (see Table 4.5). Although on the one hand this may be due to the fact that the material from this period has probably been better preserved and is better accessible, it on the other hand also seems to indicate that in this period of economic downturn, city governments became less willing to allow collectors from outside the city to go door-to-door. Namely, in making these decisions, municipalities followed a policy in which the main priority was raising enough money for the city poor. Collections for external causes were only allowed if no negative consequences for regular collections were expected.

Table 4.5 – Approved and declined requests of one-off collections

	<b>17<sup>th</sup> century</b>	<b>18<sup>th</sup> century</b>
Approved	50 (91 %)	78 (74 %)
Declined	3 (5 %)	23 (22 %)
Decision unknown	2 (4 %)	5 (5 %)
<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>106</b>

Sources: see Table 4.2.

The expectation that one-off collections would lead to lower revenues of regular collections, was the most expressed reason to decline requests. For example, when in September 1766 representatives of the fire-struck town of Hilversum travelled to several localities in the Dutch Republic to ask for financial assistance, the Delft municipality refused to let them go door-to-door, because they feared ‘that by giving permission for this collection, the yearly regular collection for the purpose of the poor of this city would surely suffer a disadvantage’.<sup>261</sup> The same reason was given to decline an appeal of the partially burnt down village of Giesendam in 1778.<sup>262</sup> In November 1800, the urban authorities of Delft determined that a collection for the

<sup>260</sup> HCO, SA, inv. no. 88, 5 February 1756.

<sup>261</sup> AD, OA I, inv. no. 17.7, 16 September 1766. Translation from: ‘dat door het accordeeren van diergelijke collectens, de jaarlijkse ordinaris collecten ten behoeven van de Armen deezer stad zeekerlijk nadeel zoude komen te lijden’. In Utrecht the collection was allowed and more than 3,600 guilders was collected: HUA, SA II, 121, 20 October 1766.

<sup>262</sup> AD, OA I, inv. no. 17.8, 29 January 1778. The request had been made on 15 December 1777, and it was the revenues of the annual December collection, organized on the 26<sup>th</sup> of that month, that the urban authorities worried about. They did donate 125 guilders.

village of Asperen, that had also been partly devastated by a fire, had to be postponed until after the Christmas collection for the Chamber of Charity.<sup>263</sup> Where requests were declined, representatives were not always sent away empty-handed; sometimes municipalities, church boards, synods, relief institutions or guilds made a small donation.<sup>264</sup>

In eighteenth-century Amsterdam, it was common to set maximums for one-off collections for other localities, which was another way to protect the interests of local charities. Burgomasters would then set the level of funding that could be raised for a specific cause, ranging from several hundreds to a few thousand guilders.<sup>265</sup> As these amounts were considerably lower than what was collected when, for instance on the occasion of a collection organized in the whole province or country, no limits were set regarding the revenues, it becomes clear that the maximums did not correspond with the ability of the city population to give, but were meant not to overburden the inhabitants with charitable appeals. The example of the more than 70,000 guilders raised in Amsterdam in 1699 for the Waldenses has already been given. As discussed above, the size and wealth of Amsterdam arguably led to a higher number of requests for financial assistance than in other Dutch localities, which made the town council cautious in letting collectors for these causes go door-to-door without restrictions. In the four towns studied in this thesis, only one example could be found where a maximum amount was established beforehand.<sup>266</sup>

Within towns collections were also subject to strict planning. In 1634, in the predominantly Catholic town of 's-Hertogenbosch, when the deacons wished to organize a public collection, the church board not only decided that it would be better if the collectors would restrict themselves to the houses of church members, because they worried about their safety, they also postponed the collection several weeks, so it would not interfere with collections for the Civic orphanage and for the Blocks.<sup>267</sup> In the same year, in Utrecht the St. Job's hospital was no longer allowed to go door-to-door twice a year, but instead the Chamber of Crafts was given permission

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<sup>263</sup> AD, OA II, inv. no. 1.8, 26 November 1800.

<sup>264</sup> See e.g. HUA, SA II, inv. no. 121, 29 September 1777: 6 ducats were given by the municipality to representatives of the German town Carlsruhe, who wished to collect money for the building of a Protestant Church and School. And see HUA, Kerkenraad, inv. no. 11, 24 June 1700: money was collected during a meeting of the Dutch Reformed Church Board for persecuted Protestants in France. Also see Ten Boom, 'Steun over de grens'.

<sup>265</sup> Van Leeuwen, 'Liefdadige giften in Amsterdam', pp. 434-439. Van Leeuwen assumes that the burgomasters set maximums which were realistic and were in line with the giving behaviour of the inhabitants of Amsterdam, but considering the other tactics described in this chapter, it is more likely that this too was a way to protect the income of local charities.

<sup>266</sup> HUA, SA II, inv. no. 121, 9 November 1778. No more than 6,000 guilders could be collected for the village of Kortenhoef that had suffered from a fire.

<sup>267</sup> SH, Kerkenraad, inv. no. 1, 20 December 1634. On this collection also see Vos, *Burgers, broeders en bazen*, p. 324.

to do so. Thus, rather than granting both institutions the income of two public collections a year, this privilege was given to only one.<sup>268</sup> It was not only the secular authorities who worried about the negative impact of frequent charitable appeals. In 1675, the Utrecht city council deliberated on introducing a collection for the *Stadskinderhuis* at the doors of Dutch Reformed Churches, against which the church board protested successfully, out of fear that it would negatively influence the collections for poor members of the congregation.<sup>269</sup>

Apparently, the authorities were well aware that the generosity of the donors was finite and tried to avoid town dwellers would feeling overloaded with charitable appeals that would result in them become less willing to give, a phenomenon which today we call 'giving fatigue'.<sup>270</sup> Municipalities had to find the right balance between, on the one hand, allowing institutions they attached great importance to, or which were unable to survive without the income from frequent public collections, to go door-to-door as often as necessary, without, on the other hand, ignoring the urban population's ability and willingness to donate. Accordingly, in the authorities' collection schedules, these considerations were taken into account. While allowing representatives of other Dutch towns and villages to weekly take up collections for their poor or for victims of disasters within their localities would probably have led to unsatisfying results, organizing charitable appeals this frequently for local charities was actually extremely profitable.

In this policy, the urban authorities clearly favoured public charities over other relief institutions. In the seventeenth century only secular poor relief administrators were granted the privilege to organize collections in the streets. When over the course of the eighteenth century authorities also increasingly allowed Dutch Reformed and Protestant charities to request alms door-to-door, they were often restricted to the homes of church members and other collectors were given priority. For example, in eighteenth-century Zwolle, both the City Poor Chamber and the Catholic Poor Chamber went door-to-door every four weeks, but the collections of the latter took place eight days after the ones of the urban institution.<sup>271</sup> Moreover, often only public charities were permitted to put alms boxes in public locations, and other institutions had to place them within their own buildings or in ministers' homes.<sup>272</sup>

Both in Delft and Utrecht, weekly collections were only granted to civic charities assisting the outdoor poor. In 's-Hertogenbosch, where no institution

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<sup>268</sup> HUA, SA II, inv. no. 121, 18 August 1634.

<sup>269</sup> Adriani, *Het Stads-Ambachtskinderhuis*, p. 137.

<sup>270</sup> See e.g. Van Leeuwen and Wiepking, 'National campaigns', p. 231.

<sup>271</sup> HCO, Rooms-katholieke armenkamer, inv. no. 6, 29 November 1739.

<sup>272</sup> See e.g. HUA, SA II, inv. no. 121, 3 December 1660.

comparable to the Delft Chamber of Charity or the Utrecht Almoners' Chamber existed, the Blocks were given the privilege to go door-to-door this frequently. Why in this town public collections took place for poor prisoners as often as twice a week, who could hardly be regarded as either outdoor or deserving poor, is unknown and rather surprising. The municipality, which over the course of the seventeenth century gained full control over this fund, probably lacked the financial means to assist the detainees without donations from the towns' population.<sup>273</sup> In Zwolle, the institution which was allowed to hold public collections most often was also not an outdoor one, but the *Holdehuis*, which the municipality apparently regarded to be in much need of donations.

In case of the fund for the poor detained in the gatehouse of 's-Hertogenbosch, the frequent collecting schedule did not result in the desired high revenues. On a monthly basis, on average a paltry 5 guilders were donated. The interim estate agent, who brought the issue to the attention of the municipality, complained that this 'insignificant sum' that the collector managed to raise was 'almost unworthy of repeatedly bothering the citizens for'.<sup>274</sup> That the servant who went door-to-door was moreover paid to do so, and received almost half of the yearly revenues of 60 to 70 guilders, made collecting this often even less effective.<sup>275</sup> It was not unusual for collectors to receive financial compensation. For example, the supervisors of the alms boxes located at the monumental graves of the former stadtholder William of Orange and of the maritime hero Michiel de Ruyter in the New Church of Delft, of which the income was meant for the Chamber of Charity, were paid for their services.<sup>276</sup> Moreover, the collector who weekly went door-to-door for this civic charity received three guilders a week and some peat for in the winter.<sup>277</sup> Apparently volunteers could not be found for collections taking place this frequently. Indeed, in Utrecht the civic charity clearly struggled to motivate the unpaid collectors to go door-to-door every week. Between 1629 and 1728 the city council announced at least seven times that those who failed to go round would be fined.<sup>278</sup>

However, in contrast to the isolated case of the prisoner's charity in 's-Hertogenbosch, for most institutions it was rewarding to organize public collections

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<sup>273</sup> More information on the fund of the poor prisoners can be found in the inventory of its archives: SH, Arme gevangenen.

<sup>274</sup> SH, OA, inv. no. 3110. Translations from: 'geringe somme' and 'bijna niet waerdich, omme de Borgeren daer over t'elkens soo lastigh te vallen'.

<sup>275</sup> SH, OA, inv. no. 3110. For the financial administration of the Fund of the Poor Prisoners: SH, Arme gevangenen, inv. nos. 30-59.

<sup>276</sup> AD, Kamer van Charitate, inv. no. 7, 5 January 1760.

<sup>277</sup> Based on data from 1728: AD, Kamer van Charitate, inv. no. 5, 16 October 1728.

<sup>278</sup> HUA, SA II, inv. no. 121. Resolutions by the city council can be found for 14 September 1629, 27 September 1630, 14 November 1631, 13 November 1654, 22 November 1669, 10 September 1683, and 1 March 1728.

this often, even if collectors had to be paid. As shall be discussed in chapter 6, although the vast majority of the urban population contributed to charitable collections, many people gave small coins, such as doits and stivers.<sup>279</sup> As a result, by going door-to-door frequently, the overall small coins added up to a substantial amount on a yearly basis. In fact, for charities that organized public collections weekly as well as a few times a year, the weekly charitable appeals were often most profitable. For example, although the Utrecht Almoners' Chamber only collected approximately one hundred guilders a week, while the collections organized four times a year gained more than seven times as much, on a yearly basis the weekly collections gained more than 1.5 times that of the seasonal collections.<sup>280</sup> Similarly, while the Blocks in 's-Hertogenbosch raised almost ten times as much around Christmas and Easter than during their weekly collections, in total the latter were three times more profitable.<sup>281</sup>

Conversely, however, the Delft Chamber of Charity collected the largest amount around Christmas. This yearly collection usually gained more than five to ten times as much as the weekly ones. Why then did they make the effort to go-door-to-door so frequently, instead of organizing a second collection around, for example, Easter? For the Blocks, which, as discussed in the previous chapter, possessed substantial funds, and only financed a small part of their activities from donations, it can also be questioned why they decided to send collectors door-to-door weekly from 1652 onwards. Apart from the fact that the frequent charitable appeals contributed to the charities' visibility within urban society, this policy also corresponded with the ideal of a charitably financed poor relief system, which apparently also motivated charities which could manage without this type of income to go door-to-door this often. Moreover, a practical reasons may have been that this collecting schedule ensured relief institutions of a relatively stable weekly income stream, which met their frequent need for cash for their charitable distributions.

The explanation for why most outdoor relief institutions, next to their weekly collections, chose to organize additional charitable appeals once, twice or four times a year, lies in the fact that these collections took place around religious holidays, when on a single day large amounts of money could be collected. That the Delft Chamber of Charity went door-to-door around Christmas and the Blocks around Christmas as well as Easter has already been mentioned. The collections organized every three months by the Utrecht Almoners' Chamber more or less corresponded with the Catholic tradition of Ember days, which were seasonal days of fasting and

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<sup>279</sup> For more information on the value of these coins, see chapter 6, Table 6.1.

<sup>280</sup> HUA, Aalmoezenierskamer, inv. no. 1827. Samples were taken from the years 1641-1650, 1671-1680, 1701-1710, 1731-1740, 1761-1770.

<sup>281</sup> SH, Negen Blokken, annual account books Blocks A to I (see Appendix A).

prayer, and were probably a heritage from before the Reformation.<sup>282</sup> As a result of the special character of these collections, and their extensive announcement beforehand, people proved to be willing to make larger donations than they normally did.<sup>283</sup>

Religious holidays as well as Sundays were an excellent opportunity to go door-to-door, as on these days, people were supposed to fulfil their religious duty towards the poor, even more so than usually.<sup>284</sup> Perhaps for this reason, the Delft municipality often scheduled extraordinary collections to take place on Sundays. Overall, however, door-to-door collections could literally take place on any day of the week. In eighteenth-century Zwolle, public appeals for external purposes usually took place on Tuesdays, while the collectors of the City Poor Chamber made their rounds through town every four weeks on Mondays. In Delft, the weekly collection for the Chamber of Charity even took place on different days in the different districts.<sup>285</sup> Thus, public authorities also seem not to have taken into account on which day of the week people were paid wages, so that cash would be available. Apparently, cash shortages were not one of their concerns.<sup>286</sup>

The authorities hoped to encourage the population to give generously, not only by means of strict planning, but also by supervising the process of raising money for charitable causes. They seem to have been well aware that the slightest rumour that donations were ill-spent could negatively impact the people's willingness to give. Still, occasionally these kinds of rumours surrounded charitable collections. For example, when in 1681, following a peace treaty, in the towns of the province of Holland money was raised to redeem the seamen held captive on the Barbary Coast, stories circulated that at the previous collection for the same purpose, which had taken place in 1663, a part of the donations had been withheld and had not benefitted those in need. Indeed, because it had proven to be impossible to free all the enslaved men, there had been a surplus, which including interest had increased to the substantial sum of some 80,000 guilders. As a result of the intrigue which surrounded

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<sup>282</sup> The Catholic charity in Rotterdam collected on Ember days, see Van Voorst van Beest, *De katholieke armenzorg*.

<sup>283</sup> For more information on factors which influenced the population's giving behaviour, see chapter 6.

<sup>284</sup> For more on this see chapter 5.

<sup>285</sup> AD, Kamer van Charitate, inv. no. 6, 7 November 1750.

<sup>286</sup> Weekly wages were often paid at the end of the week, however, a large part of middling groups and elites probably received an income from their own shops, trade activities, or businesses, while casual labourers on the bottom of society casual were paid for a day's work. On wage payments in the early modern period see Lucassen, 'Wage payments'. For an analysis on the availability of cash within early modern Dutch towns, based on data on coins donated to collections, see Teeuwen, 'A penny for the poor'.

this issue, revenues of the 1681 collection were disappointing, and could cover only a third of the necessary amount.<sup>287</sup>

As soon as rumours regarding the spending of collection revenues were heard, it was key that the authorities rushed to deny them and tried to convince the population that the full amount would be used for the assistance of the indigent. When in the 1660s it was questioned whether money raised for the Waldenses had been well-spent, a document was published in which not only an extensive report on their miserable situation was given, but in which the negative stories were also denied.<sup>288</sup> In Zwolle in 1691, stories regarding misuse of charity funds went as far as to accuse almoners and deacons of the civic charity of 'malversations and deceitfulness'.<sup>289</sup> The urban authorities feared that this issue would undermine the credibility of the public charity, which would negatively impact on the population's giving behaviour. After inquiry, they prohibited everyone to speak negatively about the members of the City Poor Chamber, and, moreover, promised a reward of one hundred guilders to the person who could reveal the source of the harmful rumours.<sup>290</sup>

However, it was even better if situations like these could be avoided. Municipalities pursued a policy which would minimize the possibilities for fraud and misuse to take place. Several ways in which they attempted to ensure a sound and efficient use of local charitable funds have already been discussed in this thesis. Firstly, as described in chapter 2, town councils often oversaw the nomination of almoners and deacons, and could prevent the appointment of undesirable candidates. Moreover, as discussed in chapter 3, municipalities monitored the financial policy of public relief institutions. Once or twice a year treasurers had to report on the charity's income and expenditure. These reports were also made available to the other members of the urban community, who could thus inform themselves as to the spending of their donations. Religious charities were accountable to church boards. By these means, consistent accounting was encouraged, while the risks of serious financial abuses were minimized.

Moreover, as described above, when charitable appeals were organized for external purposes, the authorities first gathered information about the seriousness of

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<sup>287</sup> Den Ridder, 'Gedenk de gevangenen', pp. 12-13.

<sup>288</sup> J. van Lodensteyn (ed.), *Ontfang-schrift van de leeraren, en afgesonden der Gemeeynten, in de Valleyen van Piemont, vergadert in Herfstmaand des voorleden Jaars 1665. in een Synode tot Pinache in de Valley van Perouse; nopende De Penningen henl. uyt de Provincie van Utrecht gedurende hunne laatste vervolginge in de jaren 1663. en 1664. tot nodig onderhoud toe-gesonden* (Utrecht, 1666): Knuttel, *Catalogus van de pamfletten-verzameling*, pamphlet no. 9236, [http://tempo.idcpublishers.info/content/coll\\_pamphlets.php](http://tempo.idcpublishers.info/content/coll_pamphlets.php), last viewed 22 May 2013.

<sup>289</sup> HCO, SA, inv. no. 805, 6 December 1691. Translation from: 'maliversatie en quade trouwe'.

<sup>290</sup> On this issue also see Van Wijngaarden, *Zorg voor de kost*, pp. 131-133.

the situation, and if a collection was granted, the procedure was supervised by the charitable town. In their announcements for one-off collections the authorities moreover often stressed that the revenues would not be spent on personnel, and that the whole collected amount would benefit the cause collected for.<sup>291</sup> Also, only representatives of charities, localities or religious groups with an undisputed reputation were allowed to take up collections. Usually requests from private persons to go door-to-door, for example after their house had been damaged in a fire, were declined. In Utrecht, the reason given for this policy was that these collections 'take place without any supervision of the sovereign himself, so rather give occasion for misuse and all kinds of deception'.<sup>292</sup> The fact that the reliability of these requests for assistance was not guaranteed by local authorities, made these cases more susceptible to fraud.

Regarding collections held for local causes, relief institutions drew up instructions for the collectors which were meant to ensure an orderly procedure. In Delft, collectors were told to address people kindly and thank both rich and poor cordially for their gifts. People were supposed to put the coins into the bags or baskets themselves, instead of giving them to the collectors, who otherwise risked a fine of 25 guilders. For accepting tips, for example around the holidays, collectors could, according to the stipulations, even be suspended from their duties.<sup>293</sup> The possibilities of misuse of collection money were reduced to a minimum by letting people go door-to-door in pairs or in even larger groups. Only paid collectors made the rounds by themselves. After a collection had taken place, the bags, boxes or plates had to be handed over to the treasurer at a fixed time, and the money had to be counted in the presence of almoners, deacons or the church board.<sup>294</sup> For example, in Utrecht, the boxes of the weekly collections that took place on Sunday mornings, had to be brought to the Civic Poor Chamber between 11 and 12 o'clock in the morning, where they were safely locked away, and opened on Monday by the treasurer.<sup>295</sup> After the money had been counted, worthless coins had to be registered separately and sold, a detailed administration of the revenues had to be made, and the total amount had to be deposited in a box that could be locked.<sup>296</sup> In churches, full

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<sup>291</sup> See e.g. AD, OA I, inv. no. 1.10, 8 July 1749.

<sup>292</sup> HUA, SA II, inv. no. 121, 1 December 1794. Translation from: 'zonder eenige toezicht vanwege den souverain zelve, geschiedende, zoo lichtelijk aan misbruiken en allerlei bedrog aanleiding geeft'.

<sup>293</sup> AD, Kamer van Charitate, inv. no. 6, 7 November 1750.

<sup>294</sup> See e.g. AD, Hervormde gemeente, inv. no. 1, 6 September 1574; HCO, SA, inv. no. 4375.

<sup>295</sup> HUA, SA II, inv. no. 121, 10 September 1683.

<sup>296</sup> HUA, SA II, inv. no. 121, 20 October 1766. Also see e.g. HCO, SA, inv. no. 4375.

collection bags had to be kept in sight of the deacons until the end of the service, so they could keep an eye on them.<sup>297</sup>

Because it was impossible to precisely predict how much money would be collected, it can be questioned whether the authorities could completely prevent that small sums of money occasionally disappeared into the pockets of collectors of poor relief administrators, or otherwise missed their purpose. Still, if municipalities and church boards fulfilled their supervisory role well, and collectors followed the instructions, the possibilities for fraud must have been limited. Thus, both by planning collections thoughtfully and taking action against fraud, the authorities tried to create favourable conditions for potential benefactors to donate, and they hoped that the town dwellers would be able as well as willing to make a financial contribution whenever money was raised for a charitable cause. The following section deals with several other tactics which were applied to encourage higher levels of generosity, namely advertising collections extensively, and increasing social pressure in giving.

#### 4.4 Between nudge and obligation

Public collections – or at least the more irregular ones – often received ample attention beforehand. Announcements were made from or near the town hall, usually a week, but sometimes only a day in advance, and printed publications were distributed throughout town. In 's-Hertogenbosch the town crier, who announced the collections taking place, walked across town joined by a trumpeter, while in Delft the announcements were accompanied by ringing bells of the tower of the town hall.<sup>298</sup> In Utrecht it was stated that the proclamations 'were duly published, printed and advertized', as a result of which no one could 'pretend to be ignorant' about the upcoming charitable appeal.<sup>299</sup> Over the course of the eighteenth century, it became more and more common to put advertisements in the local newspaper.<sup>300</sup>

Next to announcements made by the municipality, attention was often given to these collections during church services. Usually, urban authorities requested ministers to urge worshippers to give lavishly, but in Zwolle the announcements for

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<sup>297</sup> HUA, Diaconie, inv. no. 157.

<sup>298</sup> On Delft see e.g. AD, OA I, inv. no. 1.6, 21 March 1617 and AD, OA II, inv. no. 29, 13 November 1796; on 's-Hertogenbosch see e.g. SH, OA, inv. no. 467, 21 January 1716 and 8 December 1718.

<sup>299</sup> Translations from: 'gepubliceert, gedrukt en geafficeert worden na behoren' and 'eenige ignorantie te pretendeeren hebben': HUA, SA II, inv. 121, 5 January 1789.

<sup>300</sup> See e.g. *Utrechtsche Courant*, 26 January 1795, in which a collection was announced for the city poor of Utrecht because of the extremely cold winter. Also collection revenues were sometimes made public through newspapers, see e.g. *Utrechtsche Courant*, 23 April 1784, in which it was announced how much was raised in different localities during a Day of Prayer. These newspapers can be found online at [www.kb.nl](http://www.kb.nl).

the collections for the City Poor Chamber were made by almoners, who were warned that they would be fined if they failed to do so.<sup>301</sup> The urban authorities, who frequented these services, probably kept a close eye on whether the ministers or almoners tried hard enough to exhort the congregation to show their generosity towards the poor. Sometimes not only the Dutch Reformed Churches, but also of other denominations were expected to cooperate, as some collections were announced in Walloon, English Reformed, Remonstrant, and even in Lutheran and Mennonite churches as well.<sup>302</sup>

People were thus informed both in churches and in the streets when to expect an almoner, deacon or district warden on their doorstep, so they could have small change close at hand. Afterwards attention was also often given to the results of one-off collections. It was usually announced in churches how much had been collected, and lists stating the revenues were published. For example, when in September 1731 in Amsterdam money was raised for the Waldenses, the authorities made public how much had been collected in the different city districts, which elders and deacons had gone door-to-door, and which Bible passages had been discussed during the services on the previous day, which had also been dedicated to this collection. And, to add a competitive element to proceedings, an overview was given of the revenues in different localities.<sup>303</sup> On other occasions, it was announced how much had been raised during different services, overviews were given of the revenues of the same type of collection for the last few decades, or the lists were accompanied by poems praising charitable giving as a religious act.<sup>304</sup>

For collections taking place on a national level, engravings were sometimes made showing images of the whole procedure, such as of people suffering from a war or fire, representatives making an appearance in the city council asking for assistance, collectors going door-to-door, and a committee of urban authorities administering the revenues. These were accompanied by poems on charity, often

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<sup>301</sup> See e.g. HCO, SA, inv. no. 85, 15 November 1739.

<sup>302</sup> See e.g. HUA, SA II, inv. no. 121, 24 October 1687 and HCO, SA, inv. no. 807, 25 November 1777.

<sup>303</sup> See e.g. *Collecte voor de Piemontoisen, gedaan den 10. September 1731. door de onderstaande ouderlinge, en diaconen, binnen Amsterdam ...* (1731): Knuttel, *Catalogus van de pamfletten-verzameling*, pamphlet no. 16813, [http://tempo.idcpublishers.info/content/coll\\_pamphlets.php](http://tempo.idcpublishers.info/content/coll_pamphlets.php), last viewed 22 May 2013.

<sup>304</sup> See e.g. *Gecollecteert, by een extra-ordinaire ommegang van predikanten, ouderlingen en diaconen, welke hun was geaccordeert door borgemeesteren en raadt in Groningen, den 23 sept. 1757 ..* (1758): Knuttel, *Catalogus van de pamfletten-verzameling*, pamphlet no. 1209, [http://tempo.idcpublishers.info/content/coll\\_pamphlets.php](http://tempo.idcpublishers.info/content/coll_pamphlets.php), last viewed 22 May 2013; *Op de algemeene dank- vast- en bededag, op woensdag den 13 meert 1765. : Is in de Nederduitsche kerken binnen Groningen, gepredikt over onderstaande texten, en het volgende gecollecteert ..* (1765): Knuttel, *Catalogus van de pamfletten-verzameling*, pamphlet no. 1251, [http://tempo.idcpublishers.info/content/coll\\_pamphlets.php](http://tempo.idcpublishers.info/content/coll_pamphlets.php), last viewed 22 May 2013.

specifically related to the cause collected for.<sup>305</sup> Sometimes public or religious authorities instructed ministers to thank the church flock for their gifts.<sup>306</sup> Occasionally, localities or communities for which money had been raised, also expressed their gratitude. In 1644, after collections had been organized in many churches in the Dutch Republic for persecuted Protestants in Ireland, the Irish synod sent a letter to the churches where money had been raised, in which they expressed the sentiment that the Dutch '(although we were strange and unknown to them), have treated us as loving brothers, and they were very sensitive of our difficulties'.<sup>307</sup>

An elaborate discussion of both civic as well as religious exhortations to give to charitable causes can be found in the next chapter, where the arguments used by the authorities to admonish town dwellers to give lavishly are analysed. What is important to discuss here is that in the collection announcements it was made clear that not only the rich, but also the less well-off were expected to make charitable contributions. Only the really poor were excused. In case of public collections, the announcements usually stated that collectors would visit every single house. For example, in 1699 the town council of Zwolle notified the inhabitants that 'a general collection, which will be done with good and exact order from house to house without exception' would be held for persecuted co-religionists in France and the North of Italy.<sup>308</sup> And when money was collected for the Chamber of Charity in December of 1597, the municipality stressed that 'everyone [was] requested and admonished, to give liberally and gently to this cause'.<sup>309</sup> For Amsterdam we know that collectors even visited almshouses to ask for charitable distributions, as in the

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<sup>305</sup> See e.g. *Ter gedagtenisse van den liefdadige onderstand der Vereenigde Nederlandse Provincien : bestaande in een collecte voor de land en geloofsgenooten van Bergen op den Zoom, Sas van Gent, enz. tot herstelling van hunne schade in den oorlog geleeden, en herbouwing hunner kerken, gedaan op den 16 Juny des jaars 1749* (1749); (UUL, MAG: E qu 509d dl 7a). Also see Blauwendraat et al. (eds.), *De Grote Kerk*.

<sup>306</sup> See e.g. HUA, SA II, inv. no. 121, 4 November 1687 and SH, Diaconie, inv. no. 7, 23 January 1767.

<sup>307</sup> *Eenen sent-brief van de Nationale Synode van Schotlant, aen de Nederlantsche kercken, inhoudende een hertige dancksegginghe, van de liberale collecte aen die van Yerland* (Middelburg 1644): Knuttel, *Catalogus van de pamfletten-verzameling*, pamphlet no. 5062, [http://tempo.idcpublishers.info/content/coll\\_pamphlets.php](http://tempo.idcpublishers.info/content/coll_pamphlets.php), last viewed 22 May 2013.

Translation from: '(hoewel wy hun vreemt en onbekent waren) sich tegen ons gedragen hebben als lief-hebbende broeders, ende teer ghevoeligh van onse swaricheden'. This collection at least took place in the province of Utrecht, the collection took place in 1644: HUA, SA II, inv. no. 121, 17 and 23 May 1644. In 's-Hertogenbosch, it was discussed in December 1645 whether a collection for this purpose would be organized, of which the decision is unknown: SH, SA, inv. no. 278, 12 December 1645.

<sup>308</sup> HCO, SA, inv.no. 805, 6 February 1699. Translation from: 'een generale collecte, die gedaan zal worden met een goede en exacte ordre van his tot huis sonder exceptie'.

<sup>309</sup> AD, OA I, inv. no. 1.5, 23 November 1597. Translation from: 'eene yegelicken [wert] versocht ende vermaent, liberaelick ende mildelick daertoe te willen gheven'.

*Raepenhofje* the 'L', with which they could identify the houses of *lidmaten* (members) of the Dutch Reformed Church, can still be found on the stiles of the doors.<sup>310</sup>

In contrast, in some proclamations it was mentioned that only well-to-do citizens would be called upon to donate, but these cases were exceptional, and have only been found for the eighteenth century.<sup>311</sup> On the one hand, this could indicate that in the period of overall prosperity, almost everyone was expected to contribute, while in the period of economic downturn the authorities were lenient towards the less well-off and more demanding of the elites. This development would be in line with the 'elitization' of charitable giving which Elise van Nederveen Meerkerk observes for charitable bequests in the Dutch towns of Leiden, Utrecht and Zwolle within the early modern period. While in the seventeenth century those of the middling groups made up the majority of those to bequeath money to good causes, in 1800 the majority belonged to the elites.<sup>312</sup> It is, however, more likely that the increased emphasis on the role of the elites in the collection announcements was mainly, if not purely, rhetorical. There are, for example, no indications that in the eighteenth century a smaller share of the town population was requested to donate, that collectors visited a smaller number of houses, or that a smaller proportion of the inhabitants contributed to charitable collections than in the seventeenth century.

Although contributions to collections were in principle voluntary, and donations could not be enforced by law, never the less giving to collections had a semi-obligatory character.<sup>313</sup> Making a donation was regarded to be everyone's religious and civic duty. In February 1699, when in Zwolle a collection took place for persecuted co-religionists in other parts of Europe, the proclamation on the one hand stated that 'voluntary and liberal gifts' were requested, but on the other hand it urged all inhabitants to donate and announced that every single house would be visited.<sup>314</sup> The authorities in Delft even emphasized that if people were unable to be at home to donate when a collection took place, they should ask someone – a family member, for example – to give on their behalf.<sup>315</sup> On the occasion of a collection for Protestant Churches in Ireland, which was organized within the Dutch and English Reformed as well as the Walloon Churches of Utrecht in May 1644, members of those congregations unable to attend the services were urged to make a donation at the

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<sup>310</sup> Evenhuis, *Ook dat was Amsterdam IV*, p. 124.

<sup>311</sup> See e.g. HUA, SA II, inv. no. 121, 8 February 1740 and AD, OA I, inv. no. 17.6, 25 September 1759.

<sup>312</sup> Van Nederveen Meerkerk, 'The will to give', pp. 256-261.

<sup>313</sup> Sometimes misers were reprimanded in the streets, see Evenhuis, *Ook dat was Amsterdam IV*, p. 124.

<sup>314</sup> HCO, SA, inv. no. 805, 6 February 1699.

<sup>315</sup> See, for example, AD, OA I, inv. no. 1.6, 19 December 1621. Spaans notes that in Haarlem, if the collectors found no one at home, they tried again at a later time: Spaans, 'De gift aan de armen', p. 382.

houses of the captains of the civic militias or of the treasurer of the Dutch Reformed Diaconate within fourteen days.<sup>316</sup>

In some localities, the dividing line between voluntary and compulsory giving was clearly crossed. In the Frisian town of Sneek, when in 1775 the public poor relief institution struggled with a large deficit, a compulsory poor tax was introduced. Every household that could afford it had to donate at least a stiver weekly. Poorer families were allowed to give smaller amounts. If people failed to fulfil their duty, they could expect a bailiff on their doorstep. Other Frisian localities, such as Dokkum, Harlingen, Lemmer and Workum, followed the example of Sneek in the 1780s and 1790s.<sup>317</sup> Although, within the Dutch Republic, the phenomenon of the poor tax seems to have remained limited to the province of Frisia, in other parts of the country examples can be found of a significant role for coercion in charitable giving. When the Civic Orphanage in Zwolle experienced financial difficulties in 1587, the municipality decided that everyone who had a will made up, was obliged to make a contribution to this charitable institution of at least one gold guilder.<sup>318</sup> In early nineteenth-century Alkmaar, inhabitants had to sign a form with which they committed themselves to a specific weekly donation to the Dutch Reformed Diaconate.<sup>319</sup>

Still, usually contributions could not be collected through coercion, and authorities had to resort to other strategies in order to encourage the population to give lavishly. Often almoners, deacons or regents of relief institutions were assigned to go door-to-door, sometimes assisted by members of urban militias or district wardens. However, it was generally presumed that higher revenues could be gained if people of high status and a good reputation, such as members of the municipal administration or ministers, were sent door-to-door. In 1747, in 's-Hertogenbosch the Dutch Reformed deacons were disappointed that minister Noortberg, whom they asked to take up a collection in the streets, had informed them he was unable to do so, because they believed that letting a minister go door-to-door could lead 'to great advantage of the poor'.<sup>320</sup> They decided not to take no for an answer and ask him again.

Especially for one-off collections, letting urban or religious authorities go door-to-door was a frequently applied strategy to foster higher levels of generosity. In Delft in 1749, when money was raised for victims of the War of the Austrian Succession in Brabant and Flanders and for the rebuilding of churches in Bergen op

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<sup>316</sup> HUA, SA II, inv. no. 121, 23 May 1644.

<sup>317</sup> Spaans, *Armenzorg in Friesland*, pp. 288-292.

<sup>318</sup> Van der Vlis and Rinsema, *Weeshuizen in Nederland*, pp. 22-23. A gold guilder had the value of three guilders.

<sup>319</sup> Baar and Noordegraaf, 'Werkschuwheid en misbruik', p. 105.

<sup>320</sup> SH, Diaconie, inv. no. 5, 8 November 1747. Translation from: 'tot meerder voordeel der arme'.

Zoom and Sas van Gent, it was members of the city council who went door-to-door.<sup>321</sup> Also, when the Zwolle population was requested to pledge a sum of money for the establishment of the *Holdehuis* in Zwolle, members of the municipality were asked to subscribe first in the registration books, in order to set an example for other benefactors.<sup>322</sup> In villages, the local sheriff fulfilled this role and sometimes took up collections in his region.

Not only were higher revenues expected if pressure from the authorities was involved, but also when the impoverished or needy themselves went door-to-door or accompanied the collectors, a practice which was in fact close to begging. In Utrecht, residents of the St. Job's hospital went door-to-door themselves twice a year to ask for charitable contributions for the institutions they lived in.<sup>323</sup> In Zwolle, members of the urban militias, who were responsible for the collections for the *Holdehuis*, asked whether they could be accompanied by orphans, because then 'more will be given'.<sup>324</sup> The request was declined, but the urban authorities did offer to assist the collectors on their rounds, if necessary.<sup>325</sup>

Another tactic sometimes used to maximize revenues was decreasing the level of anonymity in giving, either by registering donations in collection books or by collecting with open plates rather than with closed bags or boxes. By these means collectors could not only see if one gave, but also how much was donated, which, as we shall see in chapter 6, led to higher levels of generosity. Registration books, in which the name of the benefactor and the donated amount were noted down, were used both for church and public collections. As described above, at least at the end of the seventeenth century, the Lutheran Church in 's-Hertogenbosch administered donations of members of the congregation in contribution books. And when in the 1660s money was raised for the *Holdehuis* in Zwolle, donations were registered before they were collected, a method which was often also applied on the occasion of collections organized for people held captive abroad.

It was, however, more common for collections organized in churches as well as door-to-door to encourage people to give more generously by means of the use of collection plates. Both in Utrecht and 's-Hertogenbosch, the Dutch Reformed Church board put them on the table at every Lord's Supper ceremony.<sup>326</sup> Sometimes during services on Days of Prayer they were used as well. The Delft Chamber of Charity went door-to-door with open plates every year on the 26th of December, and for one-off

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<sup>321</sup> AD, OA I, inv. no. 1.10, 8 June 1749.

<sup>322</sup> HCO, SA, inv. no. 42, 24 June 1664.

<sup>323</sup> De Bruin, Heurneman and Van der Veeke, *Van aalmoes tot AOW*, p. 52; Faber and Rommes, 'Op weg naar stabiliteit', p. 276.

<sup>324</sup> HCO, SA, inv. no. 42, 25 June 1655. Translation from: 'meerder gegeven sal worden'.

<sup>325</sup> HCO, SA, in. no. 42, 1 October 1655.

<sup>326</sup> SH, Diaconie, inv. no. 454 and HUA, Diaconie, inv. no. 538.

collections this method was occasionally applied.<sup>327</sup> For the monthly collections of the Zwolle City Poor Chamber ‘*commetjes*’ (bowls) were used.<sup>328</sup> However, poor relief administrators seem to have been aware of the fact that this strategy to maximize collection revenues had to be used moderately.<sup>329</sup> For example, the nine Blocks in ‘s-Hertogenbosch collected twice a year with open plates, namely at Easter and Christmas, while using closed boxes for the weekly collections. The Delft public charity chose to go round with open plates only once a year.

In the second half of the eighteenth century, there seems to have been growing resistance towards the use of open plates for collecting money for the poor and needy. In Utrecht in 1776, when on the occasion of an extremely cold winter an extraordinary collection for both the Dutch Reformed Diaconate and the Almoners’ Chamber was announced, it was specifically stated that bags instead of open plates would be used, ‘in order to cover up everyone’s charitable gifts’.<sup>330</sup> In 1796, in Delft, people even expressed that they preferred to ‘secretly show their gentility towards the poor’, which was then respected by the authorities.<sup>331</sup> Still, even then the pressure on the population to give remained high, and the town inhabitants were no less than before expected to frequently contribute to charitable collections.

#### 4.5 Conclusion

In early modern Dutch towns, collections were organized on a frequent basis and for a variety of purposes. Next to charitable appeals within the different religious communities, in all towns studied in this thesis at least once a week a door-to-door collection for relief institutions, either aimed at assisting the indoor or outdoor poor, took place. Moreover, extraordinary collections were held for local institutions in financial difficulties, for Dutch localities in troubles after a fire or flood, and for the assistance of co-religionists in other parts of Europe. These collections were well-organized. Municipalities monitored the charitable appeals with great care, and applied a variety of organizational tactics to create favourable conditions for generous giving. Firstly, strict planning had to prevent the overburdening of the population with charitable appeals. In this policy, urban authorities clearly favoured

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<sup>327</sup> See e.g. AD, OA I, inv. no. 1.9, 14 April 1683.

<sup>328</sup> HCO, SA, inv. no. 85, 15 November 1739.

<sup>329</sup> For present-day research on the influence of collecting with open plates on giving behaviour: Soetevent, ‘Een duit in het mandje’; Soetevent, ‘Anonymity in giving’. Here it is stated that the effect peters out over time, which means that it can better be used occasionally than on a frequent basis.

<sup>330</sup> HUA, SA II, inv. no. 121, 22 January 1776. Translation from: ‘op dat een ieders, liefde gaven bedekt blijven’.

<sup>331</sup> AD, OA II, inv. no. 1.2, 29 December 1796. Translation from: ‘in het verborgen Mildadigheid jegens den Armen te betoonen’.

institutions within their own locality, and then especially civic and Dutch Reformed charities. Moreover, municipalities anticipated how frequency might influence the population's giving behaviour and tried to maximize the revenues of public institutions by allowing them to go door-to-door weekly as well as less frequently such as once or twice a year. Secondly, strict supervision of the collection process and combating fraud had to create trust that donations would be well-spent. Lastly, authorities made use of the special character of collections, in which contributions are personally solicited. They tried to increase social pressure in giving by letting people of high status go door-to-door and by using open plates instead of closed boxes or bags. The use of these different collection strategies helps to explain why many relief institutions in the Dutch Republic managed to collect large amounts year after year.



## Chapter 5

# The rhetoric of giving

### 5.1 Introduction

When charitable collections were organized, city governments, church boards and poor relief administrators wished to motivate the city-dwellers to give generously. In the previous chapter we have seen that a multitude of organizational tactics were deployed to maximize revenues, such as strict planning, reducing anonymity in giving and increasing social pressure. Furthermore it was shown that secular and religious authorities widely announced collections before they took place, and made appeals to the town population requesting charitable contributions. Churchgoers were admonished from the pulpit to generously remember the poor and door-to-door collections were publicly announced by municipalities. This chapter studies both the civic and religious exhortations to give in order to answer the following question: which rhetorical tactics did the secular and religious authorities apply to encourage the population to give generously?

It has been argued that studying these exhortations will not only reveal the argumentation used to influence the people's generosity, but will also bring us closer to understanding what motivated donors to make charitable contributions.<sup>332</sup> Giving to collections in the churches and in the streets was the most anonymous act of giving in the early modern period. Contrary to, for example, charitable bequests or the founding of almshouses, no documentation on the donor and his or her reasons for giving are available, and historians can only guess as to the motivation behind putting coins into collection bags and boxes. Although care must be taken in conflating the authorities' argumentation and the donors motivation, these writings surely had to echo the view of potential donors, for they would miss their target otherwise.

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<sup>332</sup> See e.g. Fairchild, *Poverty and charity in Aix-en-Provence*, p. 25.

For the Netherlands, an analysis of the rhetoric used in early modern civic and religious charitable appeals is not yet available. This chapter opens with a short introduction on the perceptions of poverty and charity, based on a review of the literature. Next, collection announcements made by town governments and civic poor relief institutions are analysed. The subsequent part deals with how ministers tried to urge their flock to donate lavishly: sermons are analysed in order to reveal the argumentation used. The conclusion draws a comparison between the secular and religious exhortations to give.

## 5.2 Perceptions of poverty and charity

In literature on views and images of the poor in medieval and early modern times, changes within this period in who were perceived to be poor, and who was considered to be worthy of receiving charity are often emphasized.<sup>333</sup> Usually, shifts in the perception of poverty and charity are observed in the sixteenth as well as in the eighteenth century. Arguably, rising poverty in these periods, as well as the Reformation, impacted on the perception of the indigent and on poor relief policy. However, it is important not to overstate these changes and not to overlook continuities in views on poverty and charity in the medieval and early modern period.<sup>334</sup> This section analyses both the discontinuities and the continuities.

Usually, when perceptions of the poor in the medieval and early modern period are treated as a dichotomy, with new ideas as well as new policies emerging in the sixteenth century, two major changes are distinguished. Firstly, as described in chapter 2, the Reformation brought with it a new religious doctrine on poverty and charity, the main component of which was that good works would not bring salvation. Secondly, as a result both of the Reformation and of increasing poverty, the poor were no longer assisted indiscriminately, but a distinction was made between deserving and undeserving poor. Undeniably, in the sixteenth century, the discourse on both why and to whom assistance should be offered changed. However, the dividing line between the pre- and post-Reformation era is less pronounced than often assumed.

There is no doubt that with the emergence of Protestantism, a new theological doctrine on poverty and charity arose. In Catholic thought almsgiving was essential for receiving salvation. From the twelfth century onwards, the idea that charity had a positive impact on the benefactor's position in the afterlife, had become more prominent. Only saints were believed to immediately go to heaven after their death,

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<sup>333</sup> For references see chapter 2, especially section 2.2.2.

<sup>334</sup> On this also see Boele, *Leden van één lichaam*, pp. 15-21; Tervoort, "To the honour of God".

while common people were first sent to purgatory. The time in this place of purification, where people were punished for their sins, could be shortened by doing good works, such as giving generously to the poor. It was not uncommon that penitents, especially those who were considered to be guilty of avarice, usury or theft, were punished with compulsory almsgiving.<sup>335</sup>

In contrast, in Protestant thought heaven could be reached only through faith, and people could not influence their position in the afterlife. Salvation for some and eternal damnation for others was considered to be part of God's plan. Reformers vigorously condemned the principle of *do ut des*, in which givers at least partly gave to benefit from their benevolence in the afterlife. The needs of the receiver, rather than the benefits of the benefactor, should be central in charitable giving. According to Luther and Calvin, good works had become degraded to an empty shell, in which only theoretical dogmas and ostentation mattered, and could no longer be described as pious practices of inner devotion. However, although in Protestant doctrine charity could not buy heaven, it was still considered to be an essential aspect of a Christian's life, and giving to the poor remained a Christian duty. Firstly, through good works, gratitude towards God could be expressed. Moreover, at least in Calvinist thought, a person's behaviour resembled one's inner state, and leading an immaculate life could prove one's election.<sup>336</sup>

At the same time, altering religious doctrines did not automatically lead to changes in popular thought or practices of almsgiving. For example, as Van Leeuwen has demonstrated for early modern Amsterdam, not only Catholic, but also charities of the public church, promised benefactors that generosity would be rewarded in the afterlife, even though this went against Protestant orthodoxy.<sup>337</sup> Likewise, in this chapter we shall see that giving in order to receive salvation, remained a central element in exhorting the population to donate to charity, and was frequently used in orders and decrees of municipalities. Furthermore, the analysis of sermons reveals that even Protestant ministers told their congregations how charitable behaviour, or the lack of it, could impact on one's position in the afterlife.

Regarding the second distinction made between the medieval and the early modern discourse on poverty: the categorization of the indigent in those who needed assistance without being responsible for their own situation, and lazy beggars and vagrants, was not new to the sixteenth century. As discussed in chapter 2, already in the fourteenth and fifteenth century, not all poor were considered to be equal, but a distinction was made between those who could and those who could not be held

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<sup>335</sup> Boele, *Leden van één lichaam*, pp. 50-53.

<sup>336</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 53-62, 102-109.

<sup>337</sup> Van Leeuwen, 'Giving in early modern history', pp. 326-329.

responsible for their situation. Mendicant friars, who chose to renounce private property as part of their religious way of living, clearly belonged to the first group, but were regarded as worthy of receiving alms. Sinners, vagrants, and people whose poverty was a consequence of living excessively, however, should not be assisted. The second group consisted of old and sick people, who lived impeccable lives.<sup>338</sup>

However, although already in late medieval writings this distinction between deserving and undeserving poor can be observed, it did become more pronounced in the sixteenth century. In *De subventionem pauperum* Luis Vives stated that on a Christian holiday, it is not possible to reach the church doors without first having to elbow through people with abscesses, ulcers, and other ugly deceases, which was a threat to public health. He argued that it was the duty of urban authorities to step up against beggars, and to coordinate all charitable activities.<sup>339</sup> As described in chapter 2, although the assistance of churches remained important, poor relief increasingly became the domain of urban governments in this period. It has been argued that this shift altered the discourse of poverty and charity, and led to more secularly motivated poor relief policies.<sup>340</sup> However, religious motivations remained central to the writings of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century municipalities. Civic authorities presented themselves as responsible for the wellbeing of urban society as a whole, which they saw as a Christian community. Early modern city dwellers were expected to live an active life in the service of the urban community.<sup>341</sup> As we shall see in this chapter, they did not only make use of secular but also of religious notions to motivate city-dwellers to donate to collections.

As discussed in chapter 2, at the end of the seventeenth century, when the economic tide changed, access to poor relief became more restricted. As a result of growing poverty, the criteria of who almoners and deacons should assist changed, and both migrants and religious dissenters were increasingly excluded from help from public charities. When the economic situation worsened over the course of the eighteenth century, this greatly affected the poor relief discourse. Especially after 1750 it was widely debated how the welfare system should be adapted to deal with the increasing pressure on relief institutions.<sup>342</sup> Authorities experimented with public

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<sup>338</sup> Boele, *Leden van één lichaam*, chapter 7.

<sup>339</sup> For a modern English translation of the work, which was originally published in Bruges in 1526, see Spicker (ed.), *The origins of modern welfare*. For a translation in medieval Dutch: Vives, *Secours van den Aermen*, <http://www.historyofsocialwork.org/PDFs/1533Vivessecoursvandenaermenvolledig%20OCR%20C.pdf>, last viewed 3 September 2013.

<sup>340</sup> See e.g. Jordan, *Philanthropy in England*, p. 15; Jütte, *Poverty and deviance in early modern Europe*, p. 108; Parker, *The Reformation of community*, pp. 15-17, 97.

<sup>341</sup> Boele, *Leden van één lichaam*, chapter 2; Also see Van der Heijden e.a. (eds.), *Serving the urban community*.

<sup>342</sup> Gijswijt-Hofstra, 'Dutch approaches', p. 261.

works programmes to create employment and with forced labour in workhouses, although usually without success.<sup>343</sup>

In this period, the idea gained ground that, in spite of the theoretical distinction between deserving and undeserving poor, assistance was in fact given indiscriminately, which had led to the emergence of a lazy underclass living on doles. For example, in his analysis of the 'moral condition' of the Dutch Republic, theologian and politician Ysbrand van Hamelsveld (1743-1812) points at the paradoxical situation of both unemployment and labour shortages that existed at the end of the eighteenth century, which thus proved the unwillingness of a part of the population to work, a view which was still popular among historians until the 1980s.<sup>344</sup> However, over the last few decades a multitude of studies on the distributions of poor relief institutions have demonstrated that the assistance was far from substantial. In fact, living on doles was impossible, and for the poor a combination of relief, income from labour and informal forms of assistance was necessary to make a living.<sup>345</sup>

### 5.3 Civic exhortations to give

As we have seen in chapter 4, door-to-door collections were often widely advertised. For the frequent door-to-door collections which occurred on a set day and time, announcements by urban and religious authorities were made as a matter of routine, but for collections organized less frequently, and particularly for extraordinary collections, no effort was spared in making people aware of the appeal taking place. City governments drew up decrees, stating the cause for which the appeal was generating funds, who the collectors would be and when people could expect them on their doorstep. These announcements were read out loud close to the city hall, and were distributed around town. Apart from informing people about the practicalities concerning collections, these announcements were meant to make people aware of the necessity of contributing generously. This section studies the arguments and methods used by municipal authorities to exhort people to give.

Municipal proclamations of collections can be found in the town councils' decree books in which their announcements were registered, and which have been preserved in all four towns studied here. Although indexes are not always available,

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<sup>343</sup> Prak, 'Armenzorg 1500-1800', pp. 81-86.

<sup>344</sup> Van Hamelsveld, *De zedelijke toestand der Nederlandsche Natie*, pp. 285, 307, and 361-363. Cited in: Van den Eerenbeemt, 'Armoede in de "gedrukte" optiek', pp. 469-470. For examples of twentieth-century historiography see e.g. Mokyr, 'Capital, labour', p. 291; Van den Eerenbeemt, *Armoede en arbeidsdwang*.

<sup>345</sup> See e.g. Van Baar and Noordegraaf, 'Werkschuwheid'; Van Leeuwen and Smits, 'Bedeling en arbeidsmarkt'. For more recent studies on the seventeenth century which also discuss the level of assistance and the different survival strategies of the poor see e.g. Van der Vlis, *Leven in armoede*; Van Wijngaarden, *Zorg voor de kost*.

still in total, more than 400 announcements of collections could be found. However, often identical texts were used for several years in a row, in which only the dates of announcement and collecting were changed. For example, underneath the proclamation of the Christmas collection for the Delft Chamber of Charity of 1655, it was stated that the same announcement had been made in the years 1720 to 1806.<sup>346</sup> In Utrecht, for collections for local institutions taking place regularly, often only abbreviated versions of the announcements can be found in the decree books, with a reference to an older decree. When excluding these double and incomplete proclamations, 66 collection announcements remain (see Table 5.1).

Table 5.1 – Public announcements of collections found in four municipal archives per period (1576-1800)

Town	Number of announcements			
	1576-1600	1601-1700	1701-1800	Total
Delft	4	16	6	26
Zwolle	0	3	13	16
Utrecht	2	14	4	20
's-Hertogenbosch	0	2	2	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>66</b>

*Sources:* In Delft decree books are available for the period c. 1500-1806: AD, OA I, inv. no. 1; in Zwolle for the period 1560-1817: HCO, SA, inv. nos. 803-809; in 's-Hertogenbosch for the period 1629-1792: SH, OA, inv. nos. 448-468; in Utrecht for the period 1580-1767: HUA, SA II, inv. no. 153.

NB: In 's-Hertogenbosch, only four proclamations could be found. There, perhaps a different series of decree books existed, containing announcements of collections, which has not been preserved.

No proclamations of collections taking place on a weekly or monthly basis have been found, which seems to indicate that in these situations people were expected to keep cash close at hand without the public authorities having to compel them to do so.<sup>347</sup> Therefore, the following analysis, with the exception of some proclamations for the Christmas collection for the Delft Chamber of Charity and several regular collections for Utrecht institutions, such as the Almoners' Chamber, the Civic orphanage and the Chamber of Craft (*Ambachtskamer*),<sup>348</sup> is mainly based on announcements of extraordinary collections, either for local institutions or for purposes in other parts of the Dutch Republic or Europe. The next section studies the argumentation given as to

<sup>346</sup> It was probably used in the period between 1655 and 1720 as well.

<sup>347</sup> However, at least for Zwolle it is known that the collections for the City Poor Chamber, which in the eighteenth century took place every four weeks, were announced in churches: HCO, SA, inv. no. 85, 5 November 1739 and HCO, SA, inv. no. 4379.

<sup>348</sup> The Utrecht Chamber of Craft was established in 1619, and had the task to arrange that children of poor families would be hired as apprentices and trained by artisans: HUA, SA II, inv. no. 121, 11 October 1619 and HUA, Ambachtskamer.

why people should donate. The chapter then proceeds to an analysis of the rhetorical method used to persuade people to give to charitable collections.

### 5.3.1 Charity as a civic and religious duty

In the early modern period, care for the poor and unfortunate was considered to be the shared responsibility of members of the urban community. Although in many localities, municipalities took the lead in organizing welfare, or at least closely monitored private and religious charities, every city-dweller who was able to do so, was expected to contribute, by donating to collections or acting as a poor relief administrator. Citizens and their civic community were considered to be closely connected through obligations and duties which would serve the common interest. When new *burgers* (citizens) applied for legal citizenship, they swore an oath in which they promised to be loyal to the city and to serve the urban community. However, in practice, civic duties such as paying taxes, offering assistance in case of fire, serving in civic militias, and contributing to urban welfare were not only considered to be obligations for citizens, but for all town inhabitants.<sup>349</sup>

As described in the previous chapter, in proclamations of collections everyone who could afford to do so was requested to donate, the rich as well as the less well-off. Occasionally, the bond between city-dwellers and destitute fellow-citizens was specifically emphasized. In Delft, it was sometimes stressed to the inhabitants that the collections were organized ‘for the comfort of their neighbour’.<sup>350</sup> When in 1722 a fire hit parts of Zwolle and a collection was organized to rebuild the damaged buildings, the urban authorities expressed that they had the utmost confidence ‘that as we have previously seen the charitableness of citizens and inhabitants in suchlike occasions concerning strangers, the same will be shown even more to people living amongst us and our fellow-citizens’.<sup>351</sup> However, in most proclamations no reference to solidarity within the urban community can be found. Still, by emphasizing that all houses would be visited and that, as described in chapter 4 for Delft, people had to ask someone to give on their behalf if they were unable to be home at the time of the

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<sup>349</sup> Van der Heijden, *Civic duty*, pp. 22-26, 135-140. Probably only between a quarter and half of the town inhabitants were in the possession of legal citizenship, which in the early modern period was exclusively an urban phenomenon, with the other groups in urban society being *ingezetenen* (inhabitants) and *vreemdelingen* (strangers): Prak, ‘Burghers into citizens’, p. 415; Kuijpers and Prak, ‘Burger, ingezetene, vreemdeling’.

<sup>350</sup> See e.g. AD, OA I, inv. no. 1.6, 19 December 1621 and AD, OA I, inv. no. 1.8, 19 December 1655. Translation from: ‘tot solaes van sijnen evenaesten’.

<sup>351</sup> HCO, SA, inv. no. 805, 14 February 1722. Translation from: ‘dat gelijk wij voormaals omtrent vreemden, [...] in dergelijke gelegenheid der burgeren en ingezetenen mildadigheid hebben gezien, dezelve te meer aan luiden onder ons zelf woonenden en als aan onze mede-burgers zal worden betoont’.

collection, the authorities made clear they regarded donating to collections as far from optional and non-committal, but as an obligation of all city-dwellers .

Rather than stressing the inhabitants' civic duty towards the poor, the collection announcements were more often drafted in a language of religious responsibility. Urban authorities regarded themselves as the leaders of a Christian community, formed by all town inhabitants, from rich to poor, and cutting across different religious denominations.<sup>352</sup> In the historiography on early modern poor relief in Western-Europe, it has often been stated that in the sixteenth century, medieval charity, based on religious notions of Christian duty and the seven works of mercy, was gradually transformed into the more rational, systematic, and secularly motivated poor relief, that was typical for the early modern period.<sup>353</sup> Others have in contrast argued that in fact many continuities can be observed, and that around 1600, the discourse on poor relief was still steeped in Christian notions, and charity still religiously inspired.<sup>354</sup> The importance of religion, for both civic and church charity, also becomes apparent from the proclamations of collections studied here. In these writings, Christian compassion was often mentioned as a reason to give, both to religious and secular causes.<sup>355</sup> When collections were organized for the assistance of persecuted Protestants, such as the Waldenses or Huguenots, solidarity with co-religionists was especially emphasized, stressing the need of these 'religiously related people from neighbouring empires and countries'.<sup>356</sup>

Next to giving out of Christian compassion, the self-interest that generosity would be rewarded in the afterlife, was considered to be a valid reason to give to charitable institutions. In Delft, in 1613, when the Dutch Reformed Diaconate was fully incorporated into the Chamber of Charity, and money was collected for the reorganized institution, the inhabitants were 'asked and admonished, for the advancement of a so Christian and Godly work, [...] to give liberally and mildly, trusting that God the Lord will reward it here and here afterwards'.<sup>357</sup> In Utrecht, proclamations of collections were often concluded with the conviction that 'opening

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<sup>352</sup> Boele, *Leden van één lichaam*, pp. 101-102.

<sup>353</sup> See e.g. Grell, 'The Protestant imperative'; Lis and Soly, *Poverty and capitalism*, chapter 3. For an historiographical overview see Safley, 'Introduction'; Parker, *The reformation of community*, chapter 1.

<sup>354</sup> See e.g. Boele, *Leven van één lichaam*, especially pp. 18-21; Van Leeuwen, 'Liefdadige giften in Amsterdam'.

<sup>355</sup> Especially in Zwolle the words 'christelijke mededogentheit' can often be found in the proclamations. See e.g. HCO, SA, inv. no. 806, 7 August 1736 and 26 May 1741.

<sup>356</sup> See e.g. AD, OA I, inv. no. 1231, 14 April 1683. Translation from: 'Religions verwanten uyt de nabuyrige Rijcken ende Landen'.

<sup>357</sup> AD, OA I, inv. no. 1.5, 5 May, 1613. Translation from: 'versocht ende vermaent tot vordering van een soo Christelicke ende Godtsaligen werck, [...] liberalick ende mildelick te willen geven, uit vast vertrouwen dat Godt den heeren tselve hyer ende hyer naemaels ryckelick sal recompenseren'.

hearts and hands with compassion towards the poor, [...] will be rewarded by the almighty God a thousand times'.<sup>358</sup> As we shall also see in the next section on charitable appeals made in churches, after the Reformation, generous givers were still promised heaven, while misers were said to go to hell after their death. Although the theological theory on the achievement of eternal salvation had changed, good works being rewarded in the afterlife was probably still in line with popular beliefs, and worthwhile mentioning in the charitable appeals.

Over the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth century no clear changes in the rhetoric used by urban authorities can be observed. Although purposes collected for became more secular and less internationally oriented, as was described in the previous chapter, proclamations from the last decades of the Dutch Republic were not much different from those around 1600. However, in the French period, the argumentation undoubtedly changed. Firstly, it is only after 1795 that the word 'duty' was used to describe the civic responsibility of city-dwellers towards the indigent. For example, in Delft in 1799, when a collection was organized for victims of a flood, the authorities stressed that those who were unable to be at home at the time of the collections, would have to make sure that another member of the household could 'fulfill the duty' on their behalf.<sup>359</sup> When money was raised for the widows and orphans of a sea battle, on the one hand making a donation was said to be 'voluntary', while at the same time the confidence was expressed that 'no one would refrain from his duty' to contribute.<sup>360</sup>

Secondly, in the French period, the religious aspect disappeared, and the character of collection announcements became fully secular. Christian compassion was no longer mentioned as a reason why people should liberally put coins into collection bags and boxes. Instead, urban authorities referred to the general interest and concern for the common good as motives behind charity, using terms such as *menslievendheid* (humanitarianism) and *vaderlandsliefde* (patriotism).<sup>361</sup> This shows that, not only did the purposes for which collections were organized (as seen in chapter 4) become more secular and nationally oriented, but that the rhetoric used by authorities in public announcements of these appeals followed a similar trend. This is hardly surprising, considering that in this period, firstly, as mentioned in the previous chapter, the attitude towards the church became more hostile, and

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<sup>358</sup> See e.g. HUA, SA II, inv. no. 153-3, 23-2-1607. Translation from: 'haer harten ende handen met medelyden jegens den voor armen willen openen, [...], t welck Godt almachtich duysentvout sal vergelden'.

<sup>359</sup> AD, OA II, inv. no. 29.3, 3 April 1799. Translation from: 'aan de Verplichting [...] te kunnen voldoen'.

<sup>360</sup> HCO, SA, inv. no. 808, 3 December 1797. Translation from: 'dat niemand van zijn pligt zig des wegens zal onttrekken'.

<sup>361</sup> See e.g. HCO, SA, inv. no. 808, 3 December 1797.

moreover, citizenship was transformed from an urban into a national phenomenon.<sup>362</sup> After 1795, the authorities no longer urged the people to fulfil their civic duty towards the poor, but emphasized that it was their obligation as inhabitants of the Batavian Republic to have compassion for indigent fellow-countrymen.

### 5.3.2 Methods of persuasion

In their charitable appeals to the towns' population, urban authorities used a variety of approaches to persuade city-dwellers to fulfil their civic and religious obligation towards the poor and destitute. In this section, four methods of persuasion are distinguished; (1) instigating a feeling of compassion with the needy collected for, (2) establishing that trust donations would be spent wisely, (3) emphasizing how not only the poor, but also benefactors would benefit, and (4) asking people to give according to wealth, to stress that also small gifts would be appreciated, and that everyone would pay their share.<sup>363</sup> As mentioned above, some announcements, especially for collections for local institutions that took place on a regular basis, could be quite short, and less effort was put into the exhortation of possible donors. However, for one-off collections, either for local, national or international purposes, often several or all of these methods were used in the same proclamation.

The announcements were clearly, therefore, meant to instigate a feeling of compassion with fellow city-dwellers, inhabitants of the Dutch Republic or co-religionists. To achieve this the situation of the poor or unfortunate was described. This could be either by elaborating on the hardship which the local poor suffered in times of dearth or extreme cold, the damage caused by wars, fires or floods, or the distressing situation in which Protestants in other parts of Europe had to live. For example, in the announcement of a collection in Delft in 1759 for the fire-stricken village of Strijen, it was stressed that the fire had 'ruined most of the inhabitants'.<sup>364</sup> Sometimes, urban authorities went into more detail, such as when in that same year money was raised in Zwolle for the town of Genemuiden, that had also suffered from a devastating fire. In the proclamation it was stressed that 'most inhabitant who's houses burnt down, have been able to save nothing or at least very little of their furniture, and have fallen into extreme misery and poverty' and are, 'without

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<sup>362</sup> On citizenship in the Netherlands in this era see: Prak, 'Burghers into citizens', especially pp. 411-415.

<sup>363</sup> For an analysis of charitable appeals from eighteenth-century Amsterdam, in which the first and third persuasive techniques were also found, see Van Leeuwen, 'Liefdadige giften in Amsterdam', pp. 426-434.

<sup>364</sup> AD, OA I, inv. nr. 17.6, 25 September 1759. Translation from: 'de meeste Ingezetenen zyn geruineert geworden'.

generous external assistance, themselves unable, to restore their houses and sheds again to some state of habitation', by which the Zwolle population was meant to be convinced of the need to contribute.<sup>365</sup>

Likewise, for collections for persecuted Protestants outside of the Dutch Republic, such as for the Waldenses in the North of Italy, often much effort was put into describing the miserable situation of these co-religionists. This was especially the case when these were held just after days of prayer, on which church services had been characterized by sympathizing with and praying for these fellow-Protestants. For example, when in 1699, the States-General issued a collection for religious refugees living in Switzerland, which was scheduled the day after a day of prayer, the proclamation was meant to make people aware of 'the high need of all who have largely been deprived of life necessities', by recounting that more than eight thousand Protestants had fled from France to the valley of Piedmont, that in the future even more people were expected to do so, and that their financial means were far from sufficient for the maintenance of churches and schools in these religious communities.<sup>366</sup> Clearly, these announcements were not only meant to inform people about a collection taking place, but also to persuade them to give, by arousing feelings of pity and sympathy.

A second method to exhort people to donate, was to establish trust that the city government was in full control and that donations would be spent wisely. In case of an extraordinary collection for a local institution, authorities often included references to this charity's financial situation in the proclamation. It was then often stated how collection revenues had decreased, and income had diminished, while at the same time, due to economic hardship or extreme cold, the number of poor and needy in the town had increased. Sometimes specific mention was made of the fact that the urban authorities had inspected the charity's account books. By these signalling mechanisms, donors could be sure that no evidence of fraudulent practices had been found, and that the regular income sources were truly insufficient for the care of the city poor. In 1736, when in Zwolle a collection took place for the City Poor Chamber as well as for the Dutch Reformed deaconry, it was stressed that the decision to organize a public collection, had been taken after extensive 'examination of the accounts of the mentioned poor chamber' and that it had been concluded that

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<sup>365</sup> HCO, SA, inv. no. 806, 23 May 1741. Translation from: 'de meeste Inwoonderen dier verbrande Huisen niets ofte immers seer weinig van hare meubeltjes hebben kunnen salveren, ende tot de uiterste Elende ende armoede zijn geraakt' and 'om sonder de mildadige adsistentie van buiten, als zijnde uit haar selfs daar toe niet in staat, hare verbrande Huisen en schuiren wederom in enige staat van bewoningte te kunnen herstellen'.

<sup>366</sup> SH, OA, inv. nr. 463, 14 February 1699. Translation from: 'den hoogen noot van alle dese die ten meer ten deele ontbloot syn van alles wat tot haer levens behoefte nodigh is'. Also see HCO, SA, inv. no. 805, 6 February 1699.

‘the alms, gifts and collections from the ordinary revenues and income of the chamber are by far not sufficient and enough’.<sup>367</sup>

At times, the urban authorities went into great detail, even giving insight into the charity’s financial management strategies. In November 1796, in the announcement of an extraordinary collection for the Delft Chamber of Charity, it was explained that this institution had had no choice but to borrow money at high interest, but that at the same time ‘the income of the chamber had diminished, the food products had become more expensive, and the number of poor had increased, as a result of which the regents are now unable to fulfil the negotiated capital to the money-lender in time’.<sup>368</sup> The municipality expressed the fear that this difficult financial situation would lead to the ‘total decay of this so useful institution’, after which ‘old people, fathers, mothers, children and infants would perish from destitution and poverty’.<sup>369</sup>

In the case of collections for external purposes, a strategy sometimes used to build public trust and confidence as to the reliability and trustworthiness of the cause collected for, was to publicise the fact that money had already been raised in other localities, either within or outside the Dutch Republic. The above-mentioned collection for the fire-struck village of Strijen in 1759 was organized ‘with the awareness and collusion’ of the municipality, ‘following the example of other towns in this province’ and after ‘favourable letters of recommendation’ from the urban authorities of Dordrecht, who monitored the collection and undertook the responsibility of ensuring the money got to those in need.<sup>370</sup> A collection for persecuted co-religionists that was held in Zwolle in 1655, was organized ‘after the good and laudable example of the Lord Protector of England, etc. and the Evangelical cantons of Switzerland and those of the Reformed religion in France’.<sup>371</sup> Moreover, for these collections taking place on a provincial or national level, it was often stressed that a committee would oversee the whole procedure, that the collected money had to be sent in time to those in charge, ‘without the least distraction’, and

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<sup>367</sup> HCO, SA, inv. no. 806, 7 August 1736. Translations from: ‘examinatie van de staat van gemelte armen-camer’ and ‘d’Aelmissen, Giften en Collecten gevoegd bij d’Ordrs Revenues en opkomsten van meergenoemde Kamer op Verre naa niet sufficient en toerekende sijn’.

<sup>368</sup> AD, OA II, inv. no. 29, 13 November 1796. Translation from: ‘de Inkomsten van het huis verminderd, de Levensmiddelen duurder, en de Armen meerder geworden zijn, zo dat Regenten zich thans buiten staat bevinden die genegotieerde Capitalen aan de Geldopschieters behoorlijk op zijn tijd te voldoen’.

<sup>369</sup> AD, OA II, inv. no. 29, 13 November 1796. Translations from: ‘totale ondergang van dit zoo nuttig Gestigt’ and ‘Grijzaarts, vaders, moeders, kinderen en zuigelingen van gebrek en armoede zouden moeten vergaan’.

<sup>370</sup> AD, OA I, inv. no. 17.6, 25 September 1759. Translations from: ‘met kennis en voorweten’, ‘in navolging van andere Steeden dezer Provintie’ and ‘favorabele brieven van voorschrijving’.

<sup>371</sup> HCO, SA, inv. no. 804, 19 August, 1655. Translation from: ‘op het goed ende loffelijck exempel van den Heer Protector van Engeland, etc. Ende de Evangelische Cantons van Swisertland ende die van de Gereformeerde religie in Vranckrijk’.

that collectors were not allowed to receive a salary.<sup>372</sup> Sometimes, references were made to previous collections that had been organized in the same way, thus proving that the authorities were capable of ensuring that money was raised in an orderly and righteous way.<sup>373</sup>

Another way of ensuring that donations arrived at their intended destination, was to stress that only the deserving poor would be eligible for assistance, and that beggars and vagrants would not benefit from charitable gifts. In early-seventeenth-century Utrecht, some people apparently had expressed the fear that ‘donated alms would be wrongly spent’, but the city government emphasized that ‘all idlers, vagrants and lazy beggars’ would be excluded from help.<sup>374</sup> Then, in 1628, in a proclamation for a collection for poor inhabitants of Utrecht, the urban authorities admitted that, although begging had been prohibited, some people still had abused the generosity of the towns’ inhabitants, by going door-to-door asking for alms, without having permission to do so. Furthermore, poor relief administrators had made the mistake of distributing ‘indiscriminately and without being aware whether alms were wisely spent, [...] even so that some beggars on top of the goods that had been given, have collected many breads, that it has been noticed that they have sold these as chicken and pig feed, and even worse, have thrown them away at the towns’ walls and elsewhere’, money and goods that could otherwise have been used for the ‘relief of many miserable and honest hearts’.<sup>375</sup> The municipality stressed that this was no longer the case, and that it took stringent action against begging. Moreover, the town inhabitants were urged to donate to the collection for the civic relief institution, because it ‘will more and more cause that these poor people will live out of beggary, quietly and respectably, and will raise their children in great discipline and skilled in craft work, and then the town will be freed of the frequent visiting of vagrants and beggars, and the good citizens and community will be exempted of this important issue’.<sup>376</sup> The argumentation of the Utrecht municipality was, therefore, that people should not only abstain from giving to private itinerants, but that they

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<sup>372</sup> See e.g. AD, OA I, inv. no. 1.10, 8 June 1749. Translation from: ‘sonder de minste detractie’.

<sup>373</sup> See e.g. AD, OA I, inv. no. 1.10, 8 June 1749.

<sup>374</sup> HUA, SA II, inv. no. 153-3, 17 April 1606. Translation from: ‘gegeven aelmissen wel off qual. worden bestaet’ and ‘alle ledich gangers vagevonden, ende luye bedelaers’.

<sup>375</sup> HUA, SA II, inv. no. 153-5, 22 December 1628. Translations from: ‘sonder onderscheyt ende sonder kennisse te dragen off d’aelmoessen wel bestaet waren off niet, [...] oock soo dat sommige bedelaers boven ’t goet dat hun gegeven was noch soo veel broots vergadert hadden dat men bevonden heeft dat sy tselve tot mestinge van hoenderen ende verkens vercoft, jae, dat erger is, aen deser stadtswallen ende elders wechgeworpen hebben’ and ‘soulagement van meenighe bedroeffde eerlicke harten’.

<sup>376</sup> HUA, SA II, inv. no. 153-5, 22 December 1628. Translation from: ‘sall dan meer ende meer veroorsaecken dat d’selve Arme luyden buyten bedelarye hun sullen in alle stilheyt ende eerbaerheyt dragen, ende hare kinderen in behoerlicke tucht ende op een goet hantwerck op voeden ende sall alsulcx de stadt vande frequentatie der vagabonden ende bedelaers gesuyvert ende goede burgers ende Gemeente van der selver importanteyt ontslagen worden’.

could also better give to official collections of poor relief institutions, because by doing so they would contribute to combatting begging.

This brings us to the third method employed: emphasizing that not only the receiver of alms, but also benefactors themselves would profit from acts of generosity. In the abovementioned example, the argument was that donating to collections would advance order and stability in urban society, which would be in the interest of the whole town population. The same argument was used in the announcement for a collection for the Delft Chamber of Charity in 1598, which stated that the collection would lead ‘to noticeable relief not only of the poor people, but also of the citizens of this town’.<sup>377</sup> Other proclamations, instead of stressing the advantages for the community at large, emphasized how individual donors would gain from contributing to the collections. As described above, municipal authorities firstly did this by drawing attention to the rewards which would be awaiting for generous givers in the afterlife. In other cases ‘the feeling, that accompanies the immediate giving of help and assistance to the miserable and needy’, as a benefactor ‘comforts and consoles as much himself, as them whom he hurries to save’, was given as a legitimate reason to give. This is, for example, seen in an announcement of a collection for war victims, issued by the States-General in 1799.<sup>378</sup>

Fourthly, although it was sometimes stressed that ‘especially those who God almighty has richly provided with temporary goods and means’ were expected to contribute, as was mainly the case in Utrecht proclamations,<sup>379</sup> it was usually emphasized that everyone was expected to give to the best of his or her ability. In announcements issued in Delft, it was often stated that ‘everyone is earnestly requested to reach out his charitable hand and give according to his wealth and the goods that God almighty has granted him’, or words to that effect.<sup>380</sup> By choosing these words, the authorities, on the one hand, made clear to those who were unable to give large amounts, that also small gifts would be appreciated, and that people did

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<sup>377</sup> AD, OA I, inv. no. 1.5, 11 October 1598. Translation from: ‘tot merckelicke verlichtinghe niet alleenlicken vanden schamelen menschen, maer oock vande ghemeene burgherye deser Stadt’.

<sup>378</sup> ‘Publicatie van het Uitvoerend Bewind der Bataafsche Republiek. Bepalende het doen eener algemeene collecte door de geheele republiek, ten behoeve der door de jongste rampen des oorlogs nooddruftig gewordenen ingezetenen [...]. Gearresteerd den 4 december 1799’ (The Hague, 1799). This proclamation can be found online at: <http://www.earlydutchbooksonline.nl/nl/view/image/id/dpo:9920:mpeg21>, last viewed 16 June 2013. Translations from: ‘het gevoel, dat het dadelyk toebrenghen van hulp en onderstand aan ongelukkigen en noodlydenden verzelt’ and ‘even zoo wel zich zelve vertroost en opbeurt, als hun tot welker redding hy toesnelt’. Giving in order to receive a positive emotional feeling, is in sociological research called ‘warm glow-giving’: see e.g. Andreoni, ‘Giving with impure altruism’; Andreoni, ‘Impure altruism and donations to public goods’.

<sup>379</sup> See e.g. HUA, SA II, inv. no. 153-3, 17 April 1606.

<sup>380</sup> See e.g. AD, OA I, inv. no. 1.3, 25 November 1576. Translation from: ‘Versoucken daeromme ernstelick dat een ygelicken zyn milde handt wil uitreycken ende gheven nae syn vermogen ende goeden die hem Godt almachtich verleent heeft’.

not have to be embarrassed to only give a *doit*, the smallest coin available in the Dutch Republic. On the other hand, they stressed that everyone was expected to pay their share, which might persuade possible donors to give, trusting their neighbours and other town inhabitants would also contribute. Whether wealth indeed influenced charitable giving, will be analysed in the next chapter.

#### 5.4 Religious exhortations to give

Before money was collected during church service, ministers admonished their flock to give generously. It was their task to make people aware of the necessity of giving, and to convincingly argue that both recipient and donor would benefit from the charitable act.<sup>381</sup> Often, on the authority of the municipality, door-to-door collections were also announced in churches, usually during the Sunday service. Ministers were requested not only to read out the proclamation drawn up by the urban authorities to the churchgoers, but also to strongly admonish them to give liberally, and sometimes even to select a suitable passage from the Bible for the sermon.<sup>382</sup> In Delft it was common to announce public collections before the blessing at the end of the church service, but in 1779 the Delft city government asked the minister to announce the Christmas collection immediately after the sermon, as this might have more impact on the congregation.<sup>383</sup>

Unfortunately, no written records of these exhortations are available. Therefore which words and arguments were used is something that can only be guessed at. However, churchgoers were also made aware of their obligations towards the poor by means of church sermons. In some of the archives of the towns studied here, a small number of written sermons of the local clergy can be found. More importantly, a multitude of books containing collections of sermons are available for the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In this section, these sources are analysed in order to give insight into the ways congregations were summoned to give generously to the poor.

Poverty and charity were probably not the most common topics for ministers to confront their listeners with. Sermons on these issues are not easy to find. Still, a few times a year ministers preached about the unequal social order and instructed churchgoers when, how and why charitable donations should be given. Especially during Lent, charity was a central topic. Fasting, praying as well as almsgiving were

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<sup>381</sup> Andrew, 'On reading charity sermons', pp. 581-582.

<sup>382</sup> See e.g. HCO, SA, inv. no. 91, 29 September 1766; HUA, Kerkenraad, inv. no. 10, 31 October 1687.

<sup>383</sup> AD, OA I, inv. no. 17.9, 14-12-1779.

considered to be important in the preparation for Easter.<sup>384</sup> In total, out of more than 200 sermons which could be selected using different approaches, 92 proved to be applicable for this research (see Table 5.2 and Appendix D). Firstly, an inventory has been made of early modern sermons available in the archives of Delft, Zwolle, Utrecht and 's-Hertogenbosch. Only in Utrecht did this lead to relevant material. Additionally, sermons of the Dutch Reformed minister Joannes Vollenhove (1631-1708), who spent part of his life in Zwolle, have been studied. Several of these sermons, which have been preserved in the municipal archives of The Hague, deal with wealth and poverty.<sup>385</sup>

Table 5.2 – Overview of the used sermons and other religious writings

Type of religious writing	Number of writings	Different ministers
Sermons on the Heidelberg Catechism	66	30
Sermons on wealth, poverty and charity	26	15
- of which on the occasion of a collection	2	2
- of which hand written	4	2
Other religious writings	10	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>51</b>

Secondly, sermons were selected using the Short Title Catalogue of the Netherlands (STCN),<sup>386</sup> which is an online bibliography of books that were published in the Netherlands from 1540 to 1800. Three approaches were used. First of all, the database was searched for sermons using several keywords, e.g. 'poverty', 'charity', 'rich', 'poor', 'mercy' and 'stingy'.<sup>387</sup> Moreover, the names of the ministers working in the four towns in the early modern period, have been inserted.<sup>388</sup> Furthermore, the

<sup>384</sup> Boele, *Leden van één lichaam*, p. 49.

<sup>385</sup> Vollenhove began his career as minister in a village in the province of Drenthe in 1654, went to a Zwolle congregation in 1655, and worked as a minister in The Hague from 1665 until 1705. On his life and work see G.R.W. Dibbets, *Joannes Vollenhove (1631-1708), dominee-dichter. Een biografie* (Hilversum 2007). According to Dibbets, Vollenhove can be described as a moderate representative of the *Nadere Reformatie* ('Further Reformation'), a puritan movement within the Dutch Reformed Church, see p. 346.

<sup>386</sup> RL, Short Title Catalogue of the Netherlands: <http://www.kb.nl/expertise/voor-bibliotheken/short-title-catalogue-netherlands>, last viewed 21 February 2013.

<sup>387</sup> Dutch words that have been used to search the STCN were for example 'rijkdom' (wealth), 'armoede' (poverty), 'rijk' (rijk), 'arm' (poor), 'naasteliefde' (neighbourly love), 'barmhartigheid' (mercy), 'gierig' (stingy), all with the relevant variations in spelling.

<sup>388</sup> For Delft, a list of the Dutch Reformed ministers can be found on <https://www.wikidelft.nl>, last viewed 21 March 2013; of the Remonstrant ministers in the inventory of AD, Remonstrants-Gereformeerde gemeente; of the Walloon ministers in AD, Waalse kerk, inv. nos. 142-144; of the Lutheran ministers in AD, Evangelisch-Lutherse gemeente, inv. no. 1. For Utrecht, a list of the Dutch Reformed, English Reformed and Walloon ministers can be found in Kastelein, *Predikanten die kwamen en gingen*. For Zwolle, a list of the Dutch Reformed ministers can be found in the

database has been searched for sermons on biblical passages that relate to poverty and charity, such as on the poor widow who puts money in the collection box in church (Mark 12: 41-43), on the seven works of mercy (Luke 6: 20-38), and on the parable of the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16: 19-31). Although there could be large discrepancies between the words spoken in church and the text of a published sermon,<sup>389</sup> these sources still give a clear insight into the thought of ministers in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and their ideas on the unequal social order. Additionally, some other religious publications, mainly commentaries on Bible chapters, are included in the analysis. These sources are not strictly sermons, but they were written by ministers and have probably been used as sources of inspiration in the preparation of sermons.

The major body of the sources studied here consists of sermons on the Heidelberg Catechism, a confessional document on the Reformed Christian doctrine. The Catechism, which takes the form of 52 questions and answers, also called 'Sundays', was designed to be taught on a weekly basis, and supplied ministers with a prescribed topic for their sermons.<sup>390</sup> Some of these sermons, namely those on Sundays 38 and 42, and occasionally those on Sundays 40 and 50, at least partly focus on a Christian's duty towards the poor.<sup>391</sup> Secondary literature has been used to select the most often cited publications of Catechism sermons, which are believed to have been the most influential of these writings.<sup>392</sup>

The Dutch Republic was a country of many religions. In the Union of Utrecht of 1579, in which representatives of the rebellious provinces agreed to form a common army and jointly raise taxes to finance it, it was determined that every province was free to organize religion at its own discretion. In practice this meant that the Dutch Reformed Church became the privileged church, also called the 'public church', and that other religious groups were granted some form of religious freedom. Catholics, Jews, Lutherans, Mennonites and other religious dissenters were allowed, if privately and without public display, to organize their own gatherings. The Walloon and English Reformed were regarded as extensions of the public church and their members could practice their religion freely.<sup>393</sup> In the first decades after its

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inventory of HCO, Hervormde gemeente. For 's-Hertogenbosch, a list of the Dutch Reformed ministers can be found in the inventory of SH, Kerkenraad.

<sup>389</sup> Bosma, *Woorden van een gezond verstand*, p. 132.

<sup>390</sup> Edwards, 'Varieties of sermon', p. 21.

<sup>391</sup> Sunday 38 of the Heidelberg Catechism deals with the fourth Commandment 'Remember the Sabbath Day'; Sunday 40 with the sixth Commandment 'Thou shalt not kill'; Sunday 42 with the eighth Commandment 'Thou shalt not steal'; Sunday 50 with the fourth petition of the Lord's Prayer, which is 'Give us this day our daily bread'.

<sup>392</sup> Examples of research (partly) based on these sermons are: Van Eijnatten, *Liberty and concord*; Van Deursen, *Rust niet voordat gy ze van buiten kunt*.

<sup>393</sup> On Walloon churches see e.g. Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, pp. 627-630.

foundation, only a minority of the inhabitants of the Republic belonged to the Dutch Reformed Church. In the seventeenth century, a large part of the population remained loyal to the Catholic church and within Protestantism, Lutheran and Mennonite Churches attracted large followings. Moreover, many people were still in doubt, or went to church without committing themselves as a member, the so-called 'liefhebbers'. Only in the eighteenth century did Calvinism gain the upper hand, and did the public church also quantitatively become the dominant church.<sup>394</sup>

In this section, although some sermons of celebrants of dissident communities are discussed, the emphasis is on the Dutch Reformed Church. It is even more difficult to find sermons on poverty and charity from, for example, Lutheran and Mennonite ministers than from ministers of the public church. As a result, here a general analysis is made of the ways in which churchgoers were summoned to remember their less fortunate fellow believers or city-dwellers. Furthermore, no distinction is made between changes of views on charity and poverty over time. This may be regarded as a weakness of the analysis. However, research on, for example, early modern English and Flemish sermons on these topics has demonstrated that not much changed over time, nor that many differences between countries existed. In the Anglican Churches of England, the Catholic Churches of Flanders and the Dutch Reformed Churches of the Northern Netherlands, more or less the same argumentation was used to persuade churchgoers to give liberally to the poor.<sup>395</sup> Also in the sermons studied in this chapter, no clear differences could be found between ideas on poverty and charity between orthodox and more liberal Dutch Reformed ministers, and even between Catholic, Lutheran and Calvinist clergyman. Thus, even though the religious doctrine could differ widely, in practice much stayed the same.

#### 5.4.1 Preaching in the early modern period

In the Dutch Republic, literacy rates were higher than in most countries at the time,<sup>396</sup> which made pamphlets, containing for example letters, songs and poems, especially in times of political turmoil, a popular way of spreading the news and influencing public opinion.<sup>397</sup> Sermons could reach a large audience and have an impact on the listeners' views on religious and civic topics. Not only were sermons

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<sup>394</sup> Bergsma, 'Church, state and people'. According to Jelle Bosma, in the eighteenth century, some sixty per cent of the population belonged to the Dutch Reformed Church, although there were large regional variations: Bosma, *Woorden van een gezond verstand*, p. 85.

<sup>395</sup> On early modern English sermons on charity see: Andrew, 'On reading charity sermons'; on early modern Flemish sermons on poverty see Dewilde, "Die niet arbeyd, en zal niet winnen."; Hennion and Storme, 'Door het oog van de naald'.

<sup>396</sup> Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, p. 686; Spufford, 'Literacy, trade and religion'.

<sup>397</sup> On the use of pamphlets in public debates see e.g. Deen, Onnekink and Reinders (eds.), *Pamphlets and politics in the Dutch Republic*; Deen, *Moorddam*.

preached on a regular basis, they also reached the public that was not able to read. As a result, sermons have been characterized as one of the few mass mediums of the early modern period, and as an important educational and propaganda instrument.<sup>398</sup>

As discussed in chapter 4, the inhabitants of the four towns had the opportunity to attend Dutch Reformed services up to five or six times a week, and sermons were usually preached during all of these services. In the Sunday morning service, as well as on week days, ministers most often found their inspiration in passages from the Bible. At times, some chapters or a book of the Bible were dealt with systematically in a sequence of sermons.<sup>399</sup> Especially the four Gospels were popular preaching material.<sup>400</sup> On Sunday afternoon, however, sermons had to concern the Heidelberg Catechism. The Synod of Dort (1618-1619), a 'national' gathering of representatives of a variety of Calvinist churches, had determined that the whole Catechism should be covered every year.<sup>401</sup>

Sources on the perception of sermons are scarce. Obviously, some ministers and their sermons, were more popular than others. As discussed in chapters 4 and 6, this led to the practice of letting ministers who attracted the largest audience, preach during the main services, in order to increase the revenues from collections. Initially, exegesis had lain at the heart of Calvinist preaching. However, in the mid-eighteenth century, the endless clarification of biblical passages was perceived to be too boring and scholarly as well as unpractical and inefficient, and ministers put more emphasis on not only drawing moral applications, but also practical conclusions from the religious texts. Although many Reformed preachers opposed the renewals at first, from the 1770s onwards sermons became more communicative, easier to understand more tailored to churchgoers' wishes.<sup>402</sup> But even then, criticism could be heard: the theologian and politician Ysbrand van Hamelsveld depicts a bleak picture of the church folks' commitment to what was said and done during service. According to Van Hamelsveld, sermons were tedious and boring, which caused many churchgoers fall asleep. He describes that for this reason, for collections held during sermons, bags with a small bell were used, in order to wake the people from their nap.<sup>403</sup>

In the early modern period, no clear distinction could be made between urban and religious society. Internal church affairs were influenced not just by church

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<sup>398</sup> Bosma, *Woorden van een gezond verstand*, pp. 81-82, 126; Bosma, 'Preaching in the Low Countries', p. 338; Dewilde, "Die niet arbeyd, en zal niet winnen.", p. 4.

<sup>399</sup> Bosma, *Woorden van een gezond verstand*, p. 131.

<sup>400</sup> Van Deursen, *Bavianen en slijkgeuzen*, pp. 45-48.

<sup>401</sup> Edwards, 'Varieties of sermon', p. 21. Especially in the early seventeenth century, and then mainly in rural areas, the Synod's order was not always followed, as not in every locality two services were held on Sundays, see Op 't Hof, 'De Catechismus in de prediking', pp. 209-211.

<sup>402</sup> Bosma, *Woorden van een gezond verstand*, see e.g. pp. 265-284, 312-318; Ihalainen, 'The Enlightenment sermon'.

<sup>403</sup> Bosma, *Woorden van een gezond verstand*, pp. 127-130.

boards, but city authorities had a say as well. City governments, for example, determined how often per week services could be held in the public churches, and where and when the Lord's Supper could be organized. Sometimes sermons were even clearly aimed at spreading a political message. For example, after the appointment of new magistracies or important political events, such as the inauguration of a new stadtholder, Dutch Reformed ministers were supposed to customize their preaching to the occasion.<sup>404</sup> Civic authorities also gratefully made use of the ministers' influence on the churchgoers. In 1695, the in Middelburg officiating Dutch Reformed minister Bernardus Smytegelt (1665-1739) was requested to urge his listeners to pay a newly introduced and much despised tax. Church authorities condemning tax evasion was not uncommon in the early modern period.<sup>405</sup>

That religion and politics were closely interrelated was most obvious on days of prayer, a Dutch Protestant day of contemplation, announced by provincial or national authorities. On these days, gratitude to the Lord was expressed and prayers were said for victims of wars, famine and disasters. Initially, days of prayer were proclaimed on an important occasion that concerned the whole society, in order to ask for the Lord's compassion and blessing. During the seventeenth century these days were organized approximately twice a year. From 1713 onwards days of prayer became a regular annual event, no longer linked to special occasions. Proclamations were issued by the States-General, and sent to the Provincial States, who on their behalf passed them on to local authorities. Ministers were requested to base their preaching on the proclamation and select an accompanying passage from the Bible. When these days were devoted to the suffering of persecuted Protestants in other parts of Europe, ministers had the task to summon their flock to give liberally to the collections organized for this cause. For example, in August 1655, when on the occasion of a Day of Prayer money was collected for the Waldenses, the local authorities in the province of Utrecht were requested to instruct ministers that they should 'direct their sermons and prayers as such that the congregation will be earnestly instigated to a liberal gift'.<sup>406</sup> Contrary to what is often assumed, days of

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<sup>404</sup> Evenhuis, *Ook dat was Amsterdam* IV, p. 78; Bosma, *Woorden van een gezond verstand*, pp. 211-212.

<sup>405</sup> Groenhuis, *De predikanten*, p. 32; also see Van Deursen, *Bavianen en slijkgeuzen*, p. 32. On Smytegelt see e.g. S.D. Post, *Bernardus Smijtegelt, leven en werken* (Kampen 2006). Smytegelt was minister in Borssele in the period of 1689-1692, in Goes from 1692 until 1695 and in Middelburg in the period of 1695-1735. He was one of the representatives of the *Nadere Reformatie*, and belonged to the orthodox wing of the Dutch Reformed Church.

<sup>406</sup> Kist, *Neêrlands bededagen*, vol. 2, p. 203. Translation from: 'hare Predicatie en gebeden soodanich te willen dirigeren dat de gemeente serieusl. werde opgeweckt tot een liberale gifte'.

prayer were not solely a Calvinist event, but in the eighteenth century Mennonite, Lutheran and even Jewish religious communities participated.<sup>407</sup>

#### 5.4.2 Views on wealth and poverty

In the early modern period, the order of society was considered to be God-given. Social inequality was viewed to be inherent to earthly society, and everyone had to acquiesce in the function assigned to him or her by the Lord. Social barriers were to be respected, not to be broken. According to Herman Hillers (1653-1695), a Remonstrant minister who worked in Tiel and Hoorn, not respecting your position in society, was to be interpreted as rebellion against the divine order, with which 'you do not only show that you are not a Christian, who submits to the divine will, and especially the law of love and mercifulness; but you also demonstrate not to be human'.<sup>408</sup> In the theological discourse on social inequality, two groups are distinguished: the rich and poor. Both were regarded as part of the same body, united by Christ. If one member failed in his or her obligations, it would be a threat to the whole social order. In Catholic churches it had been common to preach on wealth and poverty, and the rights and responsibilities of each group in society, at the New Year and on St. Martin's Day.<sup>409</sup> Protestant services also explored issues of social inequality, for example when Sundays 38 or 42 of the Heidelberg Catechism were discussed, ministers shared their views on social inequality with their flock.

Hillers stated that poverty or wealth were no coincidence. Several of his sermons on the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, which can be found in the Gospel of Luke, have been published, which tells the story of a rich man, living in luxury, and a poor man who lays at his gate, full of sores, in vain begging to be fed with the crumbs from the rich man's table. When Lazarus dies on the rich man's doorstep, he is carried away by angels to Abraham's bosom, while when the rich man dies shortly after, he is sent to hell.<sup>410</sup> In one of these sermons, Hillers states that the Lord has created both rich and poor in order to encourage solidarity, 'because if the earthly goods had been divided equally, and one would not have more or less than the other, then one would not need the other, and would also not want to serve

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<sup>407</sup> According to Peter van Rooden this type of what he describes as *civil religion* contributed to the creation of a national political community: Van Rooden, 'Public orders into moral communities'; Van Rooden, 'Dissenters en bededagen'.

<sup>408</sup> Hillers, *De gelykenis van den ryke man*, p. 63. Hillers, who was also educated as a physician, worked as a minister in Tiel from 1682 until 1685, and from then on until his death in Hoorn. For information on his life see Van der Aa, *Biografisch woordenboek*, vol. 8:2, pp. 822-823, <http://www.historici.nl/retroboeken/vdaa/>, last viewed 29 August 2013.

<sup>409</sup> Holtz, 'On sermons and daily life', pp. 280-281.

<sup>410</sup> The parable can be found in Luke 16: 19-31.

him'.<sup>411</sup> According to Hillers, social inequality, therefore, contributed to cohesion within society. Calvinist minister Petrus Curtenius (1716-1789) agreed with this and moreover stated that inequality put people to the test: for the rich it was a practice in being prudent in their spending, and merciful and generous towards the indigent, and for the poor it was a practice in resignation and in acquiescing to their fate.<sup>412</sup> It is important to notice that these Protestant visions on social inequality demonstrate a high degree of overlap with Catholic thought on this matter.

However, even though both wealth and poverty were considered to be essential to the subsistence of earthly society, ministers sometimes struggled with their judgment of people who had amassed large fortunes. For the rich, many dangers were lurking. The Dutch Reformed minister Bernardus Smytegelt, who lived in Middelburg and whose sermons continue to reach an audience today, strongly agitated against people who cared too much about their wealth. Instead of being occupied with their earthly possessions, they should focus on being a good Christian and on their salvation. He warned that being rich would not buy heaven: 'Remember that all of the goods in the world are not able to content your soul or make you happy! Oh, it will not bring you heaven, nor salvation; Nebucadnesar and the rich man went to hell long ago!'<sup>413</sup>

Still, overall ministers did not condemn wealth as intrinsically bad, for it was part of Gods hierarchical order. Moreover, as the Remonstrant theologian Simon Episcopius (1583-1643) put it, some people, such as burgomasters, counts, dukes and kings, simply needed more money than the common man to maintain their position in society, which was something not to be condemned.<sup>414</sup> Still, as ministers emphasized in their preaching, for the rich there were many dangers to be avoided. According to the Calvinist minister Simon Jansz. Phyleus (?-1607) wealth was misused in three ways. Firstly, he points towards the illegal and harmful ways in

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<sup>411</sup> Hillers, *De gelykenis van den ryke man*, pp. 60-61.

<sup>412</sup> Curtenius, *Leerredenen over den Heidelbergschen Catechismus*, p. 65. Curtenius, who belonged to the Coccejan, relatively liberal wing of Calvinism, started as a minister in Durgerdam in 1739, moved to Deventer in 1741, to Gouda in 1746 and ended his career in Amsterdam from 1754 until his death in 1789. For information on his life see Van der Aa, *Biografisch woordenboek*, vol. 3, pp. 932-933, <http://www.historici.nl/retroboeken/vdaa/>, last viewed 29 August 2013.

<sup>413</sup> Smytegelt, *Keurstoffen*, p. 628. Translation from: 'Gedenkt toch, dat ál het goed van de wereld niet in staat is om uw ziel te vergenoegen of gelukkig te maken! O, het zal u in de hemel niet brengen, noch u zalig maken; Nebucadnezar en de rijke man zijn allang in de hel!'

<sup>414</sup> Episcopius, *Uytlegginge over het vijfde capittel*, p. 86. Episcopius was one of the leading figures in the Remonstrant movement and played a major role in the establishment of the Remonstrant Brotherhood. He worked as a minister in Bleiswijk from 1610 until 1612, and in Rotterdam and Amsterdam in the period from 1626 until 1633. He also worked as a professor in theology in Leiden and at the Remonstrant college in Amsterdam. He spent several years in exile in the Southern Netherlands and in France. For information on his life see Van der Aa, *Biografisch woordenboek*, vol. 5, pp. 176-182, <http://www.historici.nl/retroboeken/vdaa/>, last viewed 29 August 2013.

which riches are often gathered. Secondly, he argues that avarice makes people honour money instead of God. And lastly, he states that wealth can lead to many sins, such as drunkenness, conceitedness, fornication, and murder.<sup>415</sup>

Rich people, for whom it would be more difficult to go to heaven than for the poor, were often depicted as misers. In the eyes of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century preachers, having more money than one needed would seduce people away from God into the sinful hands of greed. An often cited biblical passage in this respect stems from the Gospel of Matthew, which states that it was not possible to serve both God and the Mammon, an idol who symbolized money and wealth.<sup>416</sup> Thus, it was not necessarily wealth that was reprehensible, but the misuse of one's possessions. For God, it did not matter how much money someone had, but how the money was spent. Ministers emphasized that people are no more than stewards of earthly possessions, lent to them by God. They must use their wealth to serve God. The best of way of doing so was by looking after the unfortunate in society.

#### 5.4.3 Charity as a Christian duty

In their preaching on charity, seventeenth and eighteenth-century ministers, gave a character description of the ideal Christian. Virtues a true Christian should dispose of were for example parsimony, frugality, austerity, and obviously generosity. Charity was presented as a Christian duty. According to minister Hillers, it was not possible to live a life that God would approve of without being generous towards the indigent: 'That it is our guilty duty, to assist the poor and miserable with wisdom and deeds, with the mouth and the truth; because we want to be good Christians, who follow God's orders willingly and accurately'.<sup>417</sup> Especially on Sundays it was important to remember the indigent. In sermons on Sunday 38 of the Heidelberg Catechism, which deals with the fourth Commandment of Sunday rest, ministers stipulate that on this day of the week, not only should people go to church, listen to the minister's preaching, receive the sacraments, and pray to God, but also put some money aside

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<sup>415</sup> Phyleus, *Een leerachtighe verclaringe*, p. 23. Phyleus worked as a minister in the period from 1581 until 1602 in Dirksland, Oudewater, Oostzaan, Wageningen, Hellum, Slochteren, Haren, Meppel and Genemuiden, see e.g. Van der Aa, *Biografisch woordenboek*, vol. 15, pp. 268-269, <http://www.historici.nl/retroboeken/vdaa/>, last viewed 29 August 2013.

<sup>416</sup> See e.g. several handwritten sermons from Joannes Vollenhove: HG, Kerkenraad, inv. no. 643, sermon no. 85 (12 June 1667); and inv. no. 647, sermon no. 200 (29 November 1671) and no. 201 (2 December 1671).

<sup>417</sup> Hillers, *De gelykenis van den ryke man*, p. 62. Translation from: 'Dat het onze schuldige plicht is, den armen en ellendigen met raad en daad, met den monde en de waarheyd by te staan; zo wy anders goede Christenen, die Gods beveelen op 't gewilligst en nauwkeurigst uytvoeren, willen wezen.'

for the poor.<sup>418</sup> The congregation was told that this was not an optional activity, but a real Godly command, and thus a religious obligation.

In their sermons on the Ten Commandments, some ministers even went as far as equating not giving to theft or murder. The Calvinist minister Daniel Reneman (1636-1716) considered stinginess to be a violation of the eighth commandment: 'Even so someone can also be said to take the life of one's fellow, not only by cutting his throat or cutting out his heart, but also by retaining from him the means, without which his life will be lost. On these grounds the Old father Augustinus said: *quem non pavisti, occidisti*, which means: whom you don't feed, you kill'.<sup>419</sup> On theft he continues: 'Because it is not your own money and good, nor food and drinks that you lock so abundantly in your cases and closets without using, but it is the bread of the hungry, and the garment of the naked, that you put away in your suitcase for the moths and worms [...]. A rich man, who does not share his surplus with the poor is more a thief than a poor man in extreme need who steals from a rich man.'<sup>420</sup>

Moreover, congregations were told that not only the poor, but also benefactors would profit from charitable deeds. In theory, only Catholic doctrine allowed for good works being rewarded in the afterlife. However, Protestant ministers also preached that generosity would be compensated for after death, while stinginess would be punished. For example, in sermons on the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, it was often stressed that the rich man deserved his place in hell for ignoring Lazarus' suffering and only thinking about his own needs. Generosity, on the other hand, would ease God's wrath and make Him favour the generous donor in his earthly as well as his heavenly life. Or as Phyleus, quoting from 2 Corinthians 9 verse 6, summarized: 'whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows

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<sup>418</sup> See e.g. Ridderus, *Sevenvoudige oeffeningen*, p. 335.

<sup>419</sup> Reneman, *Arme-voogd in tijdt van dierte*, pp. 100-101. Translation from: 'Alsoo kan oock ymandt geseyt worden sijn evennaasten het leeven te berooven, niet alleene wanneer hy hem de keel uyt-snijdt ofte 't herte afsteeckt, maar oock die hem onthoudt die middelen, sonder dewelke sijn leven verlooren moet gaen: op dese grondt seyde de Oudtvader Augustinus quem non pavisti, occidisti: dat is, dien ghy niet en voedet dien doodet ghy.' Reneman was simultaneously minister in the Frisian villages of Blije and Hegebeintum in the period of 1655-1659 before he became minister in Harlingen for a period of 57 years (1659-1716). For bibliographical information on Reneman see e.g. Nauta and others (eds.), *Biografisch lexicon voor de geschiedenis van het Nederlands protestantisme*, vol. 2, p. 372, [www.historici.nl/retroboeken/blnp](http://www.historici.nl/retroboeken/blnp), last viewed 29 August 2013. Reneman was a representative of the 'Further Reformation', see Op 't Hof, 'Nadere Reformatie in Friesland?', p. 60.

<sup>420</sup> Reneman, *Arme-voogd in tijdt van dierte*, pp. 100-101. Translation from: 'Want 't is niet u eygen geldt en goedt, noch spijs en drank dat ghy so overvloedigh in u kisten en kasten sonder gebrueck wegh sluit, maer 't is het broodt der Hongerigen, en het kleet des Naeckten, dat ghy voor motte en wormen in u koffers hebt wegh geleydt [...] een Rijcke, die sijn overschot niet mede deelt aen de Armen is groeter Dief, als een Arme, die in sijn uiterste noodt, den Rijcken jedts tot nooddruft berooft.'

bountifully will also reap bountifully'.<sup>421</sup> According to this Calvinist minister, the excruciating pains the rich man had to undergo in hell resulted directly from his miserly behaviour.<sup>422</sup> Nicolaas Lynckens (c. 1672-1720), who served as a minister in several congregations in Zeeland, made a comparable analysis and advised his adherents to '[d]istribute liberally [...] to the needy and miserable', because 'the Lord Jesus shall count it, as if it has been done to him'.<sup>423</sup> In contrast, people acting as stingy as the rich man would surely go to hell.<sup>424</sup>

In sermons on the Heidelberg Catechism as well, many ministers made the connection between people's generous behaviour and their position in the afterlife. Episcopius, for instance, stated that 'good deeds must not only be done for reasons of well-being, to show gratitude for what one owns, but because they are necessary for salvation, because without one will not gain salvation'.<sup>425</sup> According to the Calvinist minister Johannes Beeltsnyder (1603-?) on Judgement Day 'the alms and other works of love' will be used to test 'our faith or the sincerity of our faith'.<sup>426</sup> Likewise, when the Mennonite preacher Abraham Verduin (1668-1756) summed up the different reasons why people should give to the poor, in which he stressed that this was a duty and that it would bring people closer together, he emphasized: 'But above all think what a great, what a wonderful reward will await for this virtue in the future, on the judgement day, on which we will need God's mercy most.'<sup>427</sup> The Reformed minister Franciscus Ridderus (1620-1683) stressed that 'heavy penalties are threatening those being heartless to the poor', while generous givers would be rewarded with

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<sup>421</sup> Phyleus, *Een leerachtighe verclaringe*, pp. 53-54. Translation from: 'wie sparich saeyt, die sal ooc sparichlic oogste: ende wie mildelic saeyt, die sal ooc mildelic maeyen'.

<sup>422</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 56.

<sup>423</sup> Lynckens, *Eenige leer- en sinryke parabolen*, p. 202. Translations from: 'Deelt [...] mildelik mede aan den nooddruftigen en elendigen' and 'de Heere Jesus sal 't rekenen, als of 't hem gedaan was'. Lynckens served as a minister in St. Anna ter Muiden (1701-1703), Schoondijke (1703-1707) and Kleverskerke (1707-1720), see Van der Aa, *Biografisch woordenboek*, vol. 11, p. 794, <http://www.historici.nl/retroboeken/vdaa/>, last viewed 20 April 2014.

<sup>424</sup> Lynckens, *Eenige leer- en sinryke parabolen*, p. 203.

<sup>425</sup> Episcopius, *Uytlegginge over het vijfde capittel*, p. 91. Translation from: 'goede werken niet alleen moeten gedaen werden om het welstaens wille, om dankbaerheyt te betoonen van het gene dat men alreede heeft, maer datse noodigh zijn ter Zaligheyt, dat men sonder de selve tot de Zaligheyt niet komen en sal'.

<sup>426</sup> Beeltsnyder, *Anathomie, dat is: ontledinghe des christelijcken catechismi*, pp. 401-402.

Translations from: 'de aelmoessen ende andere wercken der liefde' and 'onse geloove ofte d'oprechtigheyt van onse geloove'. Beeltsnyder worked as a minister in Beilen from 1630 until 1678. When he died is not known, but it was at least after 1682, see P.C. Molhuysen and P.J. Blok (eds.), *Nieuw Nederlands biografisch woordenboek*, vol. 4, p. 97, <http://resources.huygens.knaw.nl/retroboeken/nnbw>, last viewed 20 April 2014.

<sup>427</sup> Verduin, *De pligt der barmhertigheid*, p. 19. Translation from: 'Maar boven al bedenkt, wat groote, wat heerlyke vergelding deeze deugd te wachten heeft in het toekomende, in dien algemeenen oordeel, waar in wy de Godlyke genade in Christus allermeest van nooden zullen hebben.' Verduin served as a minister at the Mennonite congregation in Koog-Zaandijk for almost sixty years, from 1698 until 1756, see Van der Aa, *Biografisch woordenboek*, vol. 19, pp. 140-141, <http://www.historici.nl/retroboeken/vdaa/>, last viewed 29 August 2013.

many benefits, such as ‘consolation and reinvigoration in times of disease and sickness’, ‘compensation of what one does to the poor’, ‘protection from neediness’, as well as ‘the heavenly gift of mercy’.<sup>428</sup> To give a final example, in his sermon on Sunday 42, Johan Carel Palier (1729-1781), who worked as a Dutch Reformed minister and professor in theology in 's-Hertogenbosch, specifically addressed the well-off and said to them: ‘double your alms, it will not diminish your goods, the Lord will bless you for it’.<sup>429</sup>

Thus, also after the Reformation the Catholic doctrine of earning salvation through good works remained an oft-used method for encouraging churchgoers to remember the poor. As the abovementioned examples demonstrate, in their sermons ministers from various Protestant denominations and from the seventeenth as well as the eighteenth centuries, explicitly linked the outcome of the Last Judgement to the extent to which one has been generous towards the poor. Although it can be questioned whether the sample of approximately 100 sermons used for this analysis can be considered to be representative for early modern preaching in general, the findings are in line with earlier studies on the poor relief discourse in the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Northern Netherlands.<sup>430</sup> Moreover, the above made analysis of public collection announcements also confirms the continuity between the medieval and early modern methods of encouraging generous giving.

#### 5.4.4 Guidelines for giving

In early modern sermons on poverty and charity, many conditions for giving to the poor can be found. First of all, ministers often made clear that one was not supposed to give indiscriminately to the poor, but always needed to be aware of to whom the money or goods were given. An important distinction was made between the deserving and the undeserving poor. Some people fell into poverty as a result of their own actions, such as being lazy or greedy, while others were born poor or with physical defects, lost many family members, or were unfortunate in business. Petrus van der Hagen (1641-1671), who worked as a Calvinist minister in Leiden and Amsterdam, condemned lazy beggars for stealing from the honest poor. ‘Those taking from the deaconry, who if they would work diligently, would be able to support

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<sup>428</sup> Ridderus, *Sevenvoudige oeffeningen*, pp. 683-684. Translations from: ‘troost en verquickinge in sieckte en krankheydt’, ‘vergeldinghe van 't gene men aen den armen doet’, ‘veyligheydt teghen gebreck’, and ‘de genade-loon des hemels’.

<sup>429</sup> Palier, *Leerredenen over den Heidelbergschen Katechismus*, p. 354. Translation from: ‘verdubbelt uwe aalmoessen, uw goed zal er niet door verminderen, God zal er u voor zegenen.’ Palier was born in 's-Hertogenbosch, started working as a minister in Well and Ammerzoden in 1755, and moved back to 's-Hertogenbosch in 1769, see Van der Aa, *Biografisch woordenboek*, vol. 15, pp. 38-39, <http://www.historici.nl/retroboeken/vdaa/>, last viewed 20 April 2014.

<sup>430</sup> Boele, *Leden van één lichaam*; Van Leeuwen, ‘Giving in early modern history’, pp. 326-329.

themselves, are godless thieves', he states in his sermon on Sunday 42 of the Heidelberg Catechism.<sup>431</sup> However, sick, old and other unfortunate people, had nothing to be ashamed of when accepting relief from charitable institutions.<sup>432</sup>

Benefactors also needed to be aware of whether a recipient of alms belonged to the true faith, or was from outside the religious community. On the one hand, assistance needed to be given to all (deserving) poor, irrespective of their beliefs. For example, Ridderus claimed that people needed to be generous not only towards poor fellow members, but even towards strangers and enemies.<sup>433</sup> However, at the same time, following Galatians 6 verse 10, ministers emphasized that in giving alms, people should favour the members of the 'household of faith'. Henricus Groenewegen (ca. 1640-1692) stressed that even though the parable of the Good Samaritan teaches us that adherents of other religions also deserve our compassion, enough means should be saved to help fellow believers. Giving to the indigent from outside the religious community must never disadvantage poor fellow believers.<sup>434</sup>

In these sermons, distinctions were made not only between whom should and should not be recipients of the people's generosity, but guidelines were also given on how alms should be donated. First of all, it was stressed that, although giving to the poor was a Christian duty, it should not emanate from a feeling of obligation, but from true love and compassion. Ministers stressed that alms should be donated diligently, generously, compassionately, perseveringly, and above all cheerfully.<sup>435</sup> In this they referred to 2 Corinthians 9 verse 7: 'Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.' Moreover, charity should not be practiced to impress others and earn prestige. Several ministers emphasized that giving should be done secretly, and people should not let their left hand know what their right hand is doing, as preached in Matthew 6

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<sup>431</sup> Van der Hagen, *De Heydelbergsche catechismus*, p. 464. Translation from: 'Die van de Diaconye iets nemen, daer zy neerstig werkende, haer zelve zouden kunnen bedrypen, zijn godloose Dieven'. Van der Hagen, after having worked as a minister for several years in England and France, became minister in Leidschendam in 1663, in Leiden in 1664 and in Amsterdam in 1670, see Van der Aa, *Biografisch woordenboek*, vol. 8:1, pp. 81-82, <http://www.historici.nl/retroboeken/vdaa/>, last viewed 29 August 2013. Van der Hagen was a Coccejan minister, although his sermons and writings could appeal to the more orthodox public as well, see Op 't Hof, 'De Catechismus in de prediking', p. 224.

<sup>432</sup> Beukelman, *De leer der waarheid*, p. 656.

<sup>433</sup> Ridderus, *Sevenvoudige oeffeningen*, p. 460.

<sup>434</sup> Groenewegen, *Oefeningen over den Heydelbergschen catechismus*, p. 771. The parable of the Good Samaritan can be found in Luke 10:25-37. Groenewegen became minister in De Lier in 1667, in Delfshaven in 1671, in Enkhuizen in 1679, where he died in 1692, see Van der Aa, *Biografisch woordenboek*, vol. 7, pp. 424-425, <http://www.historici.nl/retroboeken/vdaa/>, last viewed 29 August 2013. He was an adherent of the relatively liberal theologian Johannes Coccejus (1603-1669), who repeatedly clashed with the more orthodox theologian Gijsbert Voetius (1589-1676).

<sup>435</sup> See e.g. Beukelman, *De leer der waarheid*, p. 368; d'Outrein, *Het gouden kleinoot*, pp. 676-677.

verse 3.<sup>436</sup> Alms given in order to gain personal prestige, would not be rewarded in the afterlife.

Lastly, not everyone was expected to donate equally. People were asked to give according to their wealth. Ministers often referred to the lesson in Mark 12 of a poor widow who donated only two small coins, but according to Jesus had given more than the rich men before her. Verduin formulated these ideas very clearly and addressed different groups in society on their duty towards the poor. To the rich he said:

No one is allowed to extract oneself from this duty of love; it concerns all of us, rich, middle class and of modest standing, although those who have been blessed by God above others, also have more obligations in practicing generosity than others. This lesson especially concerns the rich, by whom is meant those who possess more earthly possession than they need to maintain themselves and their household members in a honest and civil way. Particularly they need to open their generous hand to help Jesus in the person of a fellow Christian. What is more reasonable, what is more equitable, what is more necessary than to relinquish all these goods, with which God has trusted you as a loan, again to His complacency?<sup>437</sup>

He emphasized that the rich may complain about times of dearth and slackness of trade, but that this should not be used as an excuse to evade one's obligations towards the poor. As he continued: "Those of middling groups, and who can maintain themselves, whether through business, or craft, or any other means of existence, in an honest and civil way, are not allowed to abstract themselves in any way possible, but are also obligated to open their generous hands. If they are not able to give as much as those of higher standing, they should behave according to their own standing and wealth."<sup>438</sup> He further stresses that people of modest standing should

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<sup>436</sup> See e.g. Vermeer, *De leere der waarheid*, p. 1011.

<sup>437</sup> Verduin, *De pligt der barmhertigheid*, p. 20. Translation from: 'Niemand vermag zich deezē liefden pligt te onttrekken; hy gaat ons allen aan, ryken, middelbaaren, en van geringer staat; hoewel die geenen, welke boven anderen van God zyn gezegend, ook tot het oefenen der barmhertigheid boven anderen verplicht zyn. Inzonderheid gaat deezē les den Ryken aan; verstaat zulken, die meer aardse goederen bezitten, als ze van nooden hebben, om zich zelve en hunne Huisgenooten in eenen eerlyken en burgerlyken staat te onderhouden. Deezē moeten hier voornaamelyk hunne milde hand opendoen, om Jezus in de persoon van hunne Mede-Christenen te helpen. Wat is er redelyker, wat is er billyker, wat is er noodzaakelyker, als die goederen, welke u te leen van God aanbetrowd zyn, Hem naar zyn welbehaagen weder op te offeren?'

<sup>438</sup> Verduin, *De pligt der barmhertigheid*, p. 21. Translation from: 'Die van middelbaaren staaten zyn, en zich zelve, 't zy door hunne neering, of handwerk, of eenige andere middelen van bestaan, op eene eerlyke en burgerlyke wyze kunnen helpen, mogen zich hier ook geensins onttrekken, maar

also take up their responsibility towards those at the bottom of society, but do not need to worry that they are expected to donate on equal footing with the rich: 'That poor widow, who only threw two small [coins] into the treasury, pleased the Lord more and earned more praise than the rich who gave a lot, because she had given from her deficiency everything she owned, and the rich from their abundance'. According to Verduin, those actually living in poverty were excused from donating, as they were the object of the compassion he was preaching about.<sup>439</sup>

## 5.5 Conclusion

Both civic and religious authorities used predominantly religious argumentation to persuade the population to donate generously. Only in the French Period did the rhetoric used by municipalities become fully secular. Both ministers and town governments presented charity as a religious duty Christians had towards the poor and needy. Contrary to theological doctrine, Protestant authorities moreover promised generosity would be rewarded in the afterlife, while stinginess would be punished. Dutch Reformed ministers furthermore preached that the poor fulfilled a task in society, and that social inequality encouraged solidarity between different social groups. Not only were many similarities found between the Catholic and Protestant poor relief discourse, but also in the ways ministers of different Protestant denominations, or of opposing tendencies within the Dutch Reformed Church preached about poverty and charity and in the ways they tried to make churchgoers aware of the necessity to give liberally.

In their announcements of public collections, urban authorities used a variety of persuasive techniques to encourage the population to give. For example, by extensively describing the situation of the poor and unfortunate collected for, they attempted to instigate a feeling of compassion among potential donors. Moreover, they tried to establish trust that donations would be spent wisely, by, for instance, emphasizing that the charities' accounts had been checked, that no beggars or other poor undeserving of receiving alms would profit, and, in the case of one-off collections, that all collectors were volunteers and that revenues would not be used for salary payments. Furthermore, civic exhortations often accentuated how donors would also benefit from acts of generosity, for example by increased order and stability in society, but mainly from rewards in the afterlife.

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zyn mede verschuldigd hunne milde hand te openen: kunnen ze zo veel niet toebrengen, als die van hooger rang zyn, zy hebben zich echter te gedraagen naar hunnen staat en vermogen'.

<sup>439</sup> Verduin, *De pligt der barmhertigheid*, p. 21. Translation from: 'Die arme Weduw, welke maar twee kleine [penningen] in de offerkist had geworpen, was den Heere aangenaamer, en verdiende grooter lof, als de ryken, die veele gaaven toegebracht hadden, om dat zy van haar gebrek allen den leeftoch dien zy had, maar de ryken van hunnen overvloed hadden gegeven'.

Both civic and religious authorities addressed large parts of the population in their appeals, and stressed that the rich as well as the less well-off were expected to contribute to the financing of poor relief provisions. The abovementioned quotes from a sermon by Verduin nicely illustrates how all layers of society were urged to give to charitable causes, and how only the poor themselves were excused from this obligation. Both ministers and urban authorities stressed that people could contribute according to wealth, and that small donations would be most welcome. Apparently, they not only wished to collect large sums of money, but also attached great importance to the fact that the financing of poor relief had a broad basis in society, and that everyone who could afford to do so would pay his or her share. To what extent the population complied with these wishes, shall be discussed in the next chapter.

## *Chapter 6*

# Donating to collections

### 6.1 Introduction

As seen in the previous chapters, as well as charitable appeals organized in churches, inhabitants of early modern Dutch towns could expect collectors on their doorstep as frequently as once a week, urging them to donate. Furthermore, municipalities and church boards tried to encourage the population to give generously and to maximize revenues by means of organizational and rhetorical tactics. What is still unclear, however, is which parts of the population contributed to the collections, and which factors influenced the town-dwellers' giving behaviour. This chapter studies the effectiveness of the authorities' policies in generating high levels of generosity, and addresses the following question: how did the population respond to the applied collection strategies through donations?

The sources used for the analysis of the giving behaviour of the early modern Dutch are diverse. Firstly, account books and collection registers are studied, which indicate how much was given to different purposes, and under which circumstances. Secondly, in both Delft and Zwolle, account books of poor relief institutions have been preserved in which collection yields are specified per type of coin. These registers not only reveal whether many small or large coins were put into collection bags and boxes, but also give insights into the stability of collection gifts, and can even be used to estimate the share of the population that contributed. For Delft it is moreover possible to examine the influence of wealth on charitable giving by linking collection registers where a breakdown of revenues per town district is given to tax records. All these sources combined enable an analysis of giving to collections in early modern Dutch towns in churches as well as door-to-door. This chapter is divided into two: the first part deals with the donors to collections, while the second examines their donations.

## 6.2 The donors

In historical sources, donors to charitable collections often remain invisible. Other than in the case of larger-sized gifts such as charitable bequests or the founding of almshouses, when the benefactors' names, and sometimes even age, family situation and profession are known, donations to collections are usually lumped together without distinguishing between different types of givers or donors on an individual level. In most cases only the almoners, deacons and other collectors who requested charitable contributions in the churches and on the streets knew who contributed and who did not and sometimes even how much was given. This makes it more difficult to get a clear picture of the donors to charitable collections; whether it was a small minority or perhaps a substantial part of the urban population that gave, and which groups in society were more likely to contribute.

However in Zwolle, two exceptional sources are available that give an impression of the part of the population that followed the authorities' appeal to contribute to charitable collections. Firstly, registers from a collection for the building of a new orphanage for which money was raised in the 1660s have been preserved in which donated amounts per household head were noted down. Secondly, for a period of more than 50 years, account books of the City Poor Chamber are available, in which a breakdown is given of the types of coins that were collected. Every time the almoners went door to door, which was 12 or 13 times a year, the treasurers noted down how many doits, stivers, guilders and other coins they found in the collection boxes. In this section, both sources are used to make an analysis of the donors of collections in the Dutch Republic.

Not all town inhabitants were expected to respond to the charitable appeals made by religious and urban authorities and to contribute to collections: some were simply too poor to do so. Those who received assistance from poor relief institutions were excused from giving, but also perhaps a group just above that who struggled daily to make ends meet, and were considered to have a valid reason not to give. Others donated on some occasions while letting the collectors pass by without putting money into the bags or boxes at other times. Those in charge of the weekly collections for the Delft City Poor Chamber were told to visit every single house, 'with the exception of those who are common to give to the poor box on self-selected times, whether every fortnight, every month, every two or three months, or one, two, three or four times a year'.<sup>440</sup> Of these families, which possibly included not only less well-

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<sup>440</sup> AD, Kamer van Charitate, inv. no. 6, 7 November 1750. Translation from: 'uytgesondert aan zodanige, die gewoon zijn, op zekere van haar daar toe gezette tijden, het zij om de veerthien dagen, alle maanden, alle twee of drie maanden, ofte eens, twee, drie of viermaalen des jaars, in den armbusch te geeven'.

off households, but also wealthier families who preferred to donate larger amounts less frequently, the collectors had to make a strict administration, which they had to present to the poor relief administrators once a year. Perhaps the authorities not only wished to examine whether collectors followed the prescribed procedure, but was this also a way to verify whether those registered as unable to contribute to every collection were indeed rightfully excused from this duty.

Although some families were occasionally excused from giving, there are strong indications that a large part of the urban population regularly donated to charitable collections. The first source that gives this impression are account books of a collection held in Zwolle for the building of a new orphanage, the *Holdehuis*, in the 1660s. Orphans of 'strange vagabonds' and other people from outside the urban community had previously been taken care of by the City Poor Chamber, but the establishment of this new institution was meant to reduce the pressure on the city almoners, who continuously struggled to balance income and expenditure.<sup>441</sup> Unlike the usual procedure when collecting for poor relief institutions, collectors did not immediately go door-to-door with collection boxes, but first, probably in 1664 and early 1665, asked the city-dwellers how much they were willing to contribute. These amounts were listed per household in four registers.<sup>442</sup> In the following years, they again made their rounds through town to collect the money. This mainly happened in the course of 1665 and 1666; the last payment was made in 1671. No explanation is given as to why this method was applied, but it was probably expected to gain higher revenues when people had to promise a collector how much they would donate, who then wrote this down in a register below the intended donations of other families living in the same street or town district. Moreover, members of the municipality were requested to subscribe first, which should have set a good example for other town-dwellers.<sup>443</sup>

In total, 2,055 heads of households are listed in the account books, of which 1,903 were present at the time the enquiries were made. In some cases it was written down that people had recently died as a reason for not being home when their houses were visited. For almost one hundred families the explanation given was that they had left town, which must be seen in the political context of the period. The year 1665, when the second of the Anglo-Dutch Wars took off, was a turbulent year for Zwolle. The bishop of Münster, Bernhard von Galen, subsidized by the English, unexpectedly invaded the east of the country and threatened to attack Zwolle as well,

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<sup>441</sup> HCO, SA, inv. no. 733. Translation from: 'vreemde vagabonden'.

<sup>442</sup> HCO, SA, inv. nos. 11276-11279.

<sup>443</sup> HCO, SA, inv. no. 42, 24 June 1664.

which led families to flee to safer areas.<sup>444</sup> When excluding the people who were absent or dead and only counting the families that were in town when the enquiries were made and the collecting took place, 82 per cent of the households made a contribution. Some paid less than they had previously promised, while occasionally a bit more was given, which led to a total of just under 9,000 guilders instead of the 10,000 guilders previously announced.<sup>445</sup> Sometimes a reason was given as to why people refused to make a donation such as that people claimed that they had never promised to give. For 6.7 per cent of the households, it was stated that these families did not have the means to contribute, in which case the descriptions 'poor', 'no possessions', 'says he cannot give', or 'nothing to gain' were given.<sup>446</sup> This was close to the six per cent of the urban population that was at the time assisted by the City Poor Chamber.<sup>447</sup> The remaining 11 per cent of the population probably included more poor people as well as misers.

It cannot be established with full certainty that all households were included in the registers. It is possible that the poorest were not asked to contribute because the authorities knew that their effort would be in vain. However, the number of families in the collection registers does correspond well with information found in tax registers from Zwolle. Tax records reveal that in the year 1665 1,558 houses were occupied, while in 1670 when the threat of war had been averted, the number had increased to 2,733.<sup>448</sup> Almost 2,000 families mentioned in the collection registers as living in Zwolle were then probably not far off from the total urban population in that town in the second half of the 1660s. Consequently, it can be concluded that the vast majority of the inhabitants of Zwolle, and probably almost all inhabitants that were not themselves assisted by urban welfare, contributed to the financing of the *Holdehuis*. That not only the rich but also the less well-off made a donation, also becomes clear from the large variety in the amounts donated. The smallest contribution was three stivers, which was still substantially more than the smallest donations made to regular public collections as we shall see later in this chapter.<sup>449</sup>

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<sup>444</sup> Van Wijngaarden, *Zorg voor de kost*, p. 38.

<sup>445</sup> According to the account books of the *Holdehuis* some 11,000 guilders were collected, see HCO, SA, inv. no. 11280. However, the donations in the registers add up to 8,904 guilders. Perhaps the city government or the City Poor Chamber made an extra donation, but no proof of this has been found in the financial administration. It is also possible that some donations were made later and were not registered in the four collection registers.

<sup>446</sup> HCO, SA, inv. nos. 11276-11279. Translations from: 'arm', 'heeft niet', 'seg't niet te kunnen geven' and 'niet te halen'.

<sup>447</sup> Van Wijngaarden, *Zorg voor de kost*, p. 86.

<sup>448</sup> Van Wijngaarden, *Zorg voor de kost*, pp. 38-41.

<sup>449</sup> To give an idea about the real value of these coins: the daily wage of an unskilled labourer in the Eastern part of the Netherlands, where Zwolle was located, in the period around 1735 was approximately 12 stivers, a master's wage was about 20 stivers: De Vries and Van der Woude, *The first modern economy*, pp. 612-613.

More than sixty per cent of the households donated less than two guilders. The largest donation was made by the bailiff of Salland, the region in which Zwolle is located, who gave 250 guilders.<sup>450</sup>

Also other archival sources for this town, namely registers of collections held every four weeks for the City Poor Chamber, hint that a large part of the inhabitants responded to the authorities' appeals by making a charitable donation.<sup>451</sup> For every collection, it was written down how many doits, stivers, guilders and other coins had been donated. These registers are available for the period 1689 to 1747, in which at first twelve times a year, and from 1691 onwards every four weeks, money was collected at the houses of the town inhabitants.<sup>452</sup> To fully comprehend the data taken from this financial administration, and how these registers can be used for an analysis of donors to collections, a brief introduction on the early modern Dutch monetary system is firstly required. Only by giving some insight into coin production and circulation in the Dutch Republic, it becomes possible to make sense out of the different types of coins found in the account books.

The monetary system in the Dutch Republic was far from straightforward, and has been described as a 'coin chaos'.<sup>453</sup> Coins were produced in six different provincial minting houses, namely in the provinces of Holland, Zeeland, Utrecht, Gelderland, Overijssel and Friesland, and several cities and regions minted their own coinage. Moreover, a multitude of foreign coins could be found in the Northern Netherlands. The States-General tried to create order through this chaos by supervising coin production, regulating the circulation of foreign coins, and issuing coin books and ordinances which gave insight into the value of the different coins, their appearance and origin.<sup>454</sup> In the major part of the Dutch Republic, the guilder, divided into 20 stivers, while a stiver equalled 16 pennies, formed the basis of the monetary system. However, when interpreting account books, it is important to bear in mind the difference between the money of account and real coins. In the Republic, no real guilders were produced until the 1680s and the penny was an administrative coin during the whole period studied here.<sup>455</sup> The unit of account system was aimed at standardising the large number of coins in circulation and linking them to a central

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<sup>450</sup> The donation of the bailiff of Salland can be found in: HCO, SA, inv. no. 11277.

<sup>451</sup> The archival material discussed here has also been used for an article on the level of monetization of early modern Dutch towns, in which it is argued that the Dutch Republic was a highly monetized society, and that cash was widely available: Teeuwen, 'A penny for the poor'.

<sup>452</sup> HCO, Stadsarmenkamer, inv. nos. 238-240.

<sup>453</sup> See e.g. Polak, *Historiografie en economie van de 'muntchaos'*.

<sup>454</sup> On the monetary system in the Dutch Republic see for example: Gelder, *De Nederlandse munten*; Polak, *Historiografie en economie van de 'muntchaos'*; Lucassen, 'Wage payments'; Wolters, 'Heavy and light money'.

<sup>455</sup> Wolters, 'Heavy and light money', pp 38-40; For information on the history of coinage in the Dutch Republic, see: Van Gelder, *De Nederlandse munten*.

coin. During the seventeenth century, mainly smaller coins such as double stivers and shillings were produced. In the eighteenth century, the guilder became to be the most minted silver coin.<sup>456</sup> In Table 6.1 an overview can be found of the main coins that circulated in the Dutch Republic and that appear in the sources studied here. Next to the value in stivers, names are given in Dutch with translations in English.

Table 6.1 – Coins in the Dutch Republic

	<b>Dutch name</b>	<b>English name</b>	<b>Value in stivers</b>
Gold coin	Gouden dukaat	Gold ducat	100/105*
Large silver coins	Zilveren rijder	Silver rider	63
	Driegulden	Three guilder	60
	Zilveren dukaat	Silver ducat	50
	Halve zilveren rijder	Half silver rider	31.5
	Daalder	Thaler	30
	Florijn	Florin	28
	Halve zilveren dukaat	Half silver ducat	25
	Gulden	Guilder	20
Small silver coins	Dertiendehalf	Thirteen-a-half	12.5
	Schelling	Shilling	6
	Zesdehalf	Six-a-half	5.5
	Vijf groot	Five groot	2.5
	Dubbele stuiver	Double stiver	2
	Stuiver	Stiver	1
Copper coins	Oord	Liard	1/4
	Duit	Doit	1/8

\* The value of coins could differ over time: in Delft in 1687 ducats were mentioned with a value of 100 stivers, in 1749 ducats with a value of 105 stivers were registered.

Sources: for the value of the coins as well as the period they were minted see: Van Gelder, *De Nederlandse munten* and Van Beek (ed.), *Encyclopedie van munten en bankbiljetten*. The English terms are based on international literature on the early modern Dutch monetary system, see e.g. Wolters, 'Heavy and light money'.

What kind of information did the Zwolle poor relief administrators register? In the account books, sometimes next to the number of collected coins of one type, the name was noted down, but more often the value of this coin was given. Bigger coins, of which smaller amounts were donated, were registered individually. Smaller coins were often counted as *worp*, which was a unit of account of five (in the case of shillings, double stivers and stivers) or four coins (in the case of six-a-halves). For example, when it was recorded that 50 *worpen* of stivers had been donated, this meant a total of 250 of these coins. For the smallest coin, the doit, this method was not used in the account books, but only the total sum was noted down.<sup>457</sup> In total, an

<sup>456</sup> Lucassen, 'Wage payments', p. 253. The data only concern the production of silver coins.

<sup>457</sup> For all years studied here, for two reasons more explanation is needed on the registration of the doit, which was less precise than for the other coins found on the collection lists. Firstly, in contrast to the larger currencies, for the doit it is not always possible to establish exactly how

analysis can be made of the coins donated to the town's indigent for more than 750 collections. Below an analysis is offered for the revenues of all collections for the Zwolle City Poor Chamber in the years 1695, 1705, 1715, 1725 and 1735 (see Appendix E for an overview of the collected coins in these sample years). The first and last years of these account books could not be included in the sample due to a lack of detailed information, since no clear distinction was made between several smaller types of coins.

In the period studied here, every four weeks the almoners of the Zwolle City Poor Chamber collected approximately 250 guilders, with some outliers down to about 200 and up to some 350 guilders. Adding up the revenues from all door-to-door collections organized for this civic relief institution in a year, the income from these charitable appeals amounted to some 3,000 to 4,000 guilders in total. These sums were not only donated by the rich upper class of Zwolle, but presumably by a large number of families. In the year 1695, in total almost 70,000 coins were collected, with an average of over 5,000 coins per door-to-door collection. In 1705, 1725 and 1735, the number of donated coins per collections was a bit under 4,000, and in 1715 the town population on average donated 2,962 coins every four weeks. The number of households in Zwolle in the early eighteenth century has been estimated at about 2,400,<sup>458</sup> which means that on average a household donated at least about 1.5 coins every time the almoners went door to door. Including inferior currency, this figure must have been even higher.

In four of the sample years, the majority of the collected coins were copper coins, namely doits (see Figure 6.1 and Appendix E). Often also a substantial number of stivers were donated. In 1735, for example, 61 per cent of donated coins consisted of doits and 22 per cent of stivers (see Table E.5 in Appendix E). The collection proceeds in other sample years show a similar picture, with the exception of the year 1715 when both doits and stivers constituted nearly 40 per cent of the total of donated coins. Other coins that were frequently put into the collection boxes of the

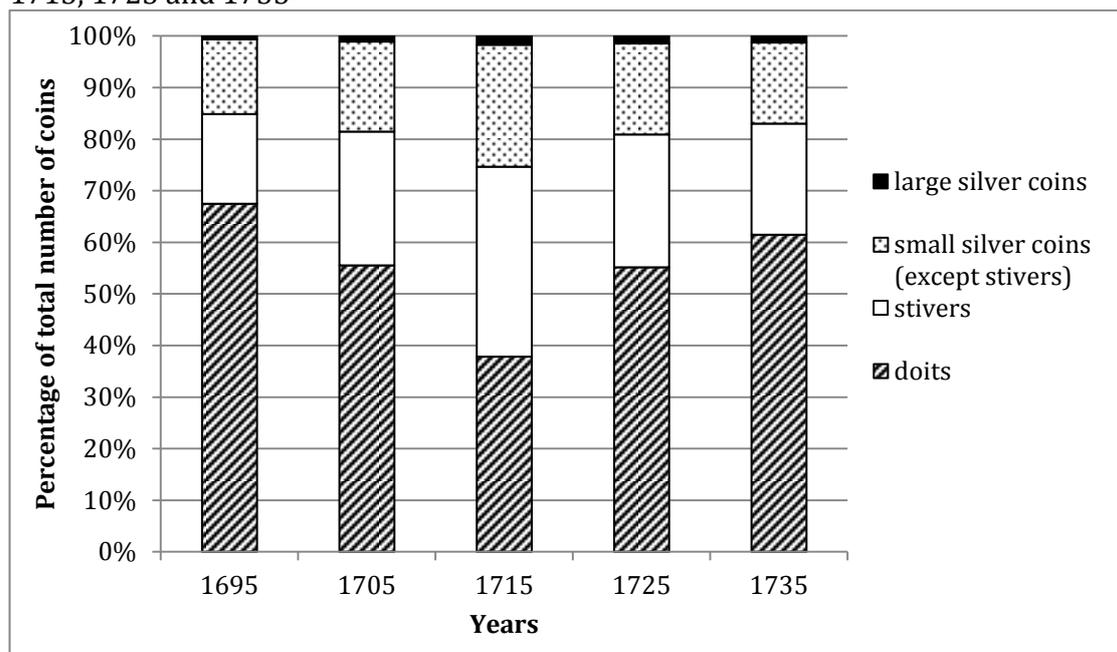
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many were given, as sometimes the revenues of this coin were probably rounded off to full amounts. Secondly, as discussed in more detail below, often many coins of inferior quality, such as doits which had been taken out of circulation, were donated to collections, of which on these collection lists, however, no mentioning can be found. Unfortunately, for neither of the sample years the yearly accounts of Zwolle's civic institution, in which usually the income from the sale of, or expenditure on inferior currency was registered, are available, as a result of which it is impossible to identify how large the amounts precisely were. However, as it is, judging from the charity's financial administration from other years, unlikely that no bad coins were donated to the monthly collections of the City Poor Chamber in the sample years, this means that they were either included in the total revenues, or separated from the other donations, and sold afterwards. In the first case, this would mean that the category of the doit also includes currency of a lower value, as a result of which more coins were put into the collection boxes than can be detected, but this was also the case if the bad coins were kept outside of this registration. Thus, regarding the doits only minimum figures can be given.

<sup>458</sup> Habermehl, 'De bevolkingontwikkeling in Zwolle', p. 73.

Zwolle almoners were double stivers and six-a-halves, which were devaluated shillings with a value of 5.5 stivers. A small number of households donated larger coins such as guilders, florins and three guilder pieces. The largest coin donated in the five years examined here were silver riders, which had a value of 63 stivers. In the survey years, no gold coins were donated to the City Poor Chamber.<sup>459</sup>

Figure 6.1 – Types of coins collected for the Zwolle City Poor Chamber in 1695, 1705, 1715, 1725 and 1735



Sources: HCO, SA, inv. nos. 238-240.

NB: For the division between different types of coins see Table 6.1.

On the one hand, the large number of doits that were given can be explained from the large difference in value with the next coin in line, the stiver, as a result of which people perhaps preferred to give a several doits instead of a stiver. Still, both the large amounts of coins donated as well as the high number of small coins seem to indicate that a large number of households contributed to the collections for the Zwolle civic charity. It is unlikely that a small wealthy minority of the urban population used a large number of small coins to make a donation. For example, if a rich merchant wanted to donate a guilder, he would rather give a guilder piece than use 160 doits or 20 stivers to do so. Considering that guilders were the most minted

<sup>459</sup> Also no liards could be found on the collection lists, as these were only minted until 1669, see Van Gelder, *De Nederlandse munten*, p. 245. Regarding the gold coins: in contrast to these collection gifts, especially in the seventeenth century, gold coins were frequently donated to the Zwolle City Poor Chamber by means of testamentary bequests. In about a third of one hundred wills that have been studied for the year 1600, charitable bequests with gold coins were mentioned: HCO, SA, inv. no. 2118 (with thanks to Elise van Nederveen Meerkerk for providing me with these data).

silver coins in the eighteenth century, they were probably widely available, which made it unnecessary to put a handful of small coins in the collections boxes.<sup>460</sup>

The stability of the number of coins that were collected every four weeks confirms this assumption. For example in 1735, one silver rider, three to six silver ducats, about 23 guilders, some 800 stivers and between 2,200 and 2,500 doits were donated every four weeks (see Table E.5 in Appendix E). Since the almoners went door to door every four weeks, people knew when they would appear on their doorstep and presumably kept some coins at hand. If the coins administered in the account books were only donated by higher middling groups and elites, who all put a large number of coins into the collection boxes, this would have increased the variety of collected coins. Then at one time perhaps about 500 stivers would have been donated, while at other moments more than a thousand.

As a result, these Zwolle account books and registers of the collections for the *Holdehuis* lead us to the conclusion that large parts of urban society contributed to charitable collections and thus to the financing of poor relief. Since no source material with the same level of detail has been preserved for the other towns studied here, no comparable analysis can be made for Delft, Utrecht or 's-Hertogenbosch. Still, as we have seen in the previous chapters, also in these localities the collectors went door-to-door, visiting the homes of the rich as well as of the less well-off, using comparable tactics to increase revenues, and admonishing the whole of the urban community to give. Therefore, there are no reasons to suspect this very widespread character of donating to collections, where not only the elites but also people from middling and lower groups in society fulfilled their duty towards the poor, to have not been typical for Delft.

Unfortunately, an analysis of benefactors is only possible for door-to-door collections. In the four towns studied here, no financial administration of church collections has been preserved that gives an impression on the number of donors. Also we are not informed on the number of churchgoers to different types of services nor on their social background. As in churches social pressure must have been as high as in the case of door-to-door collections, and privacy arguably even lower, also here many people must have contributed. Moreover, as those who went to church on a regular basis were not only frequently asked to give to charity in their homes, but also during each service they attended, they must have donated more often than those who were not frequent churchgoers.<sup>461</sup>

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<sup>460</sup> On the production of different types of silver coins, see Lucassen, 'Wage payments', p. 253.

<sup>461</sup> Present-day sociological research has found positive relationships between church membership, the frequency of church attendance and giving: Bekkers and Wiepking, 'Who gives?' (part one), pp. 337-365. Also, for example, higher educated people and elderly are often found to

## 6.3 Collection gifts

Having studied the sections of society that donated to charitable collections, the remaining questions are: how much did people actually give, which factors influenced their giving behaviour, and how effective were the methods applied by the authorities in trying to maximize revenues? This section, which consists of three parts, examines the donations made to collections. Firstly, the positive impact of organizational tactics on the population's giving behaviour is analysed. The second part, however, demonstrates that the pressure exerted by the authorities also had its limits. Finally, we are able to see which parts of urban society contributed most to the collections, and thus to the financing of poor relief. Next to the above described sources for Zwolle, both registers from a variety of church offertories and door-to-door collections and the institutions' yearly accounts are used from all four towns under scrutiny, as well as minutes and resolutions from charities and municipalities.

### 6.3.1 Effective policies

As discussed in chapters 4 and 5, municipalities, church boards and poor relief administrators tried to encourage town-dwellers to donate to the charitable appeals they organized by means of a variety of organizational and rhetorical tactics, as well as to convince them to be liberal in their contributions. The previous analysis of the donors indicates that the authorities were successful in mobilising large parts of urban society to contribute to the financing of charitable provisions. The effectiveness of some of the applied collection strategies can also be demonstrated. For instance, as explained in chapter 4, town councils were well aware as to how the scheduling of collections influenced the town-dwellers' willingness to contribute. Overall, the more frequently collections took place, the smaller the sums people donated. Yet taken on an annual level, the weekly appeals were most profitable. The Delft Chamber of Charity, the Utrecht Almoners' Chamber and the Blocks in 's-Hertogenbosch all circulated collectors regularly to maximize revenues. By additionally going door-to-door once or twice a year in one single day, usually around Christian holidays, several thousands of guilders could be collected as additional funding with limited effort. During its yearly Christmas collection, the Delft Chamber of Charity on average collected some 5,000 guilders in the seventeenth century and close to 10,000 guilders in the eighteenth century. In a population of about 14,000 around the year 1750, this means that on average every inhabitant donated almost

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be more likely to give to charitable causes. Also see: Wiepking and Bekkers, 'Who gives?' (part two).

three-quarters of a guilder or 2.5 guilders per household.<sup>462</sup> Considering that an unskilled labourer in the Western part of the Netherlands in this period earned less than a guilder per day, these were large amounts.<sup>463</sup>

In the case of extraordinary collections the trend was even more pronounced: either for local institutions in financial need, for neighbouring localities after a disaster, or for persecuted co-religionists abroad, the inhabitants of Dutch towns proved willing to contribute liberally. To give another example from Delft, in February 1699 more than 7,600 guilders were donated for the Waldenses, while this charitable appeal also yielded over 5,100 guilders in the villages just outside of Delft.<sup>464</sup> In Utrecht, for instance, a door-to-door collection for Hilversum in 1766 which had suffered from a fire, yielded over 3,600 guilders. Also in other localities collectors made their rounds for this cause, which resulted in a total revenue of 108,695 guilders, of which around half was donated by inhabitants of Amsterdam.<sup>465</sup> And during the cold winter of January 1776, more than 7,100 guilders were collected in Utrecht as additional funding for the Almoners' Chamber and the Dutch Reformed charity combined.<sup>466</sup> The revenues from charitable appeals on Days of Prayer were often impressive as well. In eighteenth-century Utrecht, amounts collected in the Dutch Reformed Churches ranged from 1,000 to over 6,000 guilders on these occasions, and in Amsterdam in a period of 70 years from 1724 up to 1794 more than a million guilders were donated.<sup>467</sup>

Probably not only the irregular character of these charitable appeals, but also the extensive advertisement by secular and religious authorities beforehand, as described in chapters 4 and 5, contributed to the high revenues. Municipalities and church boards did not spare any efforts in trying to convince the town-dwellers of the need to donate generously. For these one-off collections, moreover, occasionally people of high status such as burgomasters, members of the town council, or ministers were sent door-to-door, and open plates were used to collect the charitable donations. For these one-off collections it is impossible to establish precisely the impact of the different organizational tactics on the population's giving behaviour, but the high revenues do demonstrate the effectiveness of the authorities' policies in encouraging generous giving. In Delft in April 1683, members of the municipality who went around with open plates were able to raise more than 4,400 guilders for

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<sup>462</sup> On population figures for early modern Delft see Wijsenbeek-Olthuis, *Achter de gevels van Delft*, pp. 20-28.

<sup>463</sup> On the wages of both unskilled and skilled labourers in the Western part of the Netherlands in the early modern period, see De Vries and Van der Woude, *The first modern economy*, pp. 610-611.

<sup>464</sup> AD, OA I, inv. no. 1229.

<sup>465</sup> HUA, SA II, inv. no. 121, 20 October 1766 and Blauwendraat, *De Grote Kerk*, p. 10

<sup>466</sup> HUA, SA II, inv. no. 121, 22 January 1776.

<sup>467</sup> Kist, *Neêrlands bededagen*, vol. 1, pp. 340-342.

Protestant refugees who had fled to the Dutch Republic. This was over 25 per cent of the total revenues of collections in the two Reformed churches over the entire year.<sup>468</sup>

In case of church collections, using registers of proceeds listing the type of service as well as the name of the officiating minister, it can be established far more precisely which factors influenced giving behaviour. As explained in chapter 4, open plates were used especially during the Lord's Supper ceremonies to collect donations for the church's or town's poor. The accounts of the Reformed Church of 's-Hertogenbosch reveal that in the period 1747 to 1750 revenues on these occasions increased almost 12-fold compared with those received via regular services (see Table 6.2). In objection it could be argued that the higher proceeds resulted from the special character of these services, which perhaps led to a higher number of churchgoers, and which also made people more willing to give. However, when comparing the revenues from the open plates at the Lord's Supper with those from the regular appeals during the same service, it becomes clear that far higher amounts were given when open plates were used. In Utrecht in the period from July 1727 to July 1728, for instance, the open plates on the table of the Lord's Supper ceremony, in which only members of a congregation could participate, yielded about four and a half times as much as the collection bags passed around during church shortly before or afterwards.<sup>469</sup> As in the early modern period not all visitors of Dutch Reformed services chose to make a public profession of faith and officially join a congregation, the number of people donating to the collection bags must have been higher than of those attending to the table of the Lord's Supper.<sup>470</sup>

Table 6.2 – Average revenues in guilders of collections in the Reformed Churches of 's-Hertogenbosch by type of service (for the period mid-September 1747 to mid-September 1750)

Type of service	Collected sum
Regular service	8.49
Christian holiday	13.08
Days of Prayer	40.16
Lord's Supper	100.23

Source: SH, Diaconie, inv. no. 454.

The collection registers from the Reformed congregation in 's-Hertogenbosch also reveal how the popularity of the officiating minister could affect the sums raised during service. Abdias Velingius (1721-1803), who was appointed as a minister in

<sup>468</sup> AD, OA I, inv. no. 1231; AD, Kamer van Charitate, inv. no. 288.

<sup>469</sup> HUA, Diaconie, inv. no. 538.

<sup>470</sup> Van Deursen, *Bavianen en Slijkgeuzen*, pp. 128-135.

this town from 1747 to 1750, proved to be well-loved, as during the services he performed deacons managed to collect far higher amounts than during the services of his colleagues. As demonstrated in Table 6.3, which covers most of the period in which Velingius performed services in 's-Hertogenbosch, during his services in the period from September 1747 to September 1749 on average more than 17 guilders were collected, in contrast to often no more than 10 guilders during other services. The revenues during the services of ministers Johannes van Alphen (1716-1762) and Herman Gideon Clemens (1701-1772), which were on average some 10 to almost 13 guilders, came closest, while when Joachim Mobach (1699-1790) officiated the lowest amounts, on average slightly over three guilders, were raised. These differences could have been both caused by variations in the number of churchgoers that a minister attracted, as well as in the amounts per person put into the collection bags. Thus, during the services of Velingius, who in his sermons tried to reach a large audience, the *Grote Kerk* and the *Kruiskerk* may have been fuller than when other ministers officiated, he may have been more effective in encouraging the congregation to donate, or both.<sup>471</sup>

Table 6.3 – Average revenues in guilders of collections held in the Reformed Churches of 's-Hertogenbosch by officiating minister (1747-1750)

<b>Last name of minister</b>	<b>Sept. 1747- Sept. 1748</b>	<b>Sept. 1748- Sept. 1749</b>	<b>Sept. 1749- Sept. 1750</b>
Van Alphen	–	12.67	10.64
Clemens	9.97	9.88	10.89
Mobach	8.13	9.49	6.31
Noordberg	3.44	3.20	3.23
Velingius	17.71	17.05	12.51
De Witt	8.74	7.64	–
Guest ministers	9.16	5.89	7.56

Source: SH, Diaconie, inv. no. 454.

NB: The years run from mid-September to mid-September. The first sample year starts on 12 September 1747, during the week Abdias Velingius held his first service in 's-Hertogenbosch (on 17 September 1747). Velingius held his farewell sermon on 18 October 1750 and on that date the collection raised more than 84 guilders.

That Velingius was a popular minister was not only demonstrated by the proceeds from collections. In November 1747 in the German Lordship of Hörstgen, he clandestinely married a girl from Rotterdam without consent from her parents or registration with Dutch authorities, which when it became public, caused turmoil

<sup>471</sup> A remark on Velingius' well-structured and lively written sermons can be found in: Vroon, *Biografisch lexicon VI* (2006), pp. 322-323, [http://www.inghist.nl/retroboeken/blnp/#source=6&page=323&accessor=accessor\\_index&view=imagePane](http://www.inghist.nl/retroboeken/blnp/#source=6&page=323&accessor=accessor_index&view=imagePane), last viewed 29 November 2013.

within his congregation. In January 1748, more than one hundred church members signed a letter in which they requested the church board to allow Velingius to keep his position as minister in 's-Hertogenbosch.<sup>472</sup> In 1750, when the matter was still unresolved, Velingius accepted an appointment as minister in the German town of Cleves, after which a number of his adherents again showed their discontent. In a collection bag, a doit was found wrapped in a piece of paper, on which it was stated that if the minister would leave, the members of the congregation would in the future no longer give more than a doit to the church collections. The deacons, who proved to have been well aware of the high revenues during Velingius' services, reported the church board on 'the pre-eminently large collections which were raised' when he officiated, which appeared from their accounts, and expressed their worry that the whole matter would cause 'irreversible damage' and the 'total ruining' of the congregation's poor.<sup>473</sup> After October 1750, when Velingius was still discharged from his duties and left to Cleves, the total yearly collection revenues, which had in the period 1747-1750 been about 5,000 guilders, again dropped to their regular level of slightly under 4,000 guilders.<sup>474</sup>

If one minister had such a large influence on the amounts raised through collections, it would not be surprising if the church boards made use of this advantage and scheduled him to perform the main services in order to increase the charity's income. In Delft in 1590, the municipality came up with this idea, and responded to a subsidiary request of the Dutch Reformed deacons that more money could be raised if the two most eloquent ministers performed the two main services in the morning. However, the consistory objected that this would create inequality between the ministers and that the positive effect would be limited because the two other services would probably attract a smaller crowd.<sup>475</sup> Also in 's-Hertogenbosch, where the different services were equally divided between the different ministers, and Velingius' schedule was comparable to those of the others, the Dutch Reformed church board preferred not to take this measure.

In contrast to all these factors that influenced the population's giving behaviour such as the frequency of collecting, the use of open plates, and the officiating minister, the force of habit seemed to have played a major role when making donations to regular door-to-door collections. As mentioned above, for

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<sup>472</sup> SH, Kerkenraad, inv. no. 6, 15 January 1748.

<sup>473</sup> SH, Diaconie, inv. no. 5, 17 September 1750. Translations from: 'onherstelbaare schade' and 'totale ruïne'.

<sup>474</sup> For an extensive description of Velingius' life see: Sassen, 'Levensberichten van de hoogleraren'.

<sup>475</sup> Wouters, *Nieuw en ongezien*, vol. 1, p. 119; Abels, *Nieuw en ongezien*, vol. 2, pp. 222-223. Also see AD, Hervormde gemeente, inv. no. 291. The outcome of the dispute between town council and church board is unclear.

Zwolle's civic outdoor relief institution in the early eighteenth century every four weeks some 250 guilders were collected. In the 1720s, for instance, the average collected amount was 251 guilders, with 228 guilders being the lowest and 276 guilders the highest amount, and in which 76 per cent lay between 240 and 260 guilders.<sup>476</sup> Also in other localities this same stability in contributions can be found. For example, in Utrecht from March 1750 until February 1751, every week some 75 guilders were raised for the Almoners' Chamber.<sup>477</sup> The revenues of the weekly collections for the Blocks in 's-Hertogenbosch as well showed little fluctuation. For collection organized this frequently and on a fixed day and time, families perhaps kept a few coins close at hand, which becomes even more visible when studying the currencies that were donated. As already stressed above, every four weeks more or less the same amount of stivers, double stivers, guilders, florins and other coins were donated to the collections for the Zwolle City Poor Chamber. Most variety can of course be found in the number of donated doits, for these were most frequently given, but also of these themselves the variation was limited, and every time the collectors went round in 1735 between 2,200 and 2,500 were collected (see Table E.5 in Appendix E).

As demonstrated in chapter 3, the total revenues from the different types of collections that charities received over the course of a year were also often quite stable. For the Delft Chamber of Charity this was about 22,500 guilders each year, and for the civic institution in Zwolle the total revenues from church offertories, door-to-door collections and alms boxes were approximately 8,500 guilders. Treasurers must have been able to quite precisely estimate how much would be collected in a year, which helped them to balance income and expenditure. Although over the course of the early modern period the share of collection revenues of the total income of poor relief institutions declined notably in most towns, still the same amounts were collected more or less in absolute terms, and only in war periods did the revenues deviate remarkably.

Moreover, as also explained in chapter 3, when the revenues from one type of collections such as church offertories diminished, the proceeds from another type often increased as a result of which not much changed in the total income from these charitable appeals. This stability on a macro level is remarkable. That people by habit apparently donated more or less the same amounts, and often even the same coins, to regular public collections in a certain year or period did not necessarily result in stable levels of revenues over the course of two centuries, where the number of town inhabitants fluctuated and economic circumstances changed. Arguably, the applied

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<sup>476</sup> HCO, Stadsarmenkamer, inv. no. 239.

<sup>477</sup> HUA, Aalmoezenierskamer, inv. no. 1827-41.

collection strategies helped charitable institutions to achieve this stability. When money fell short, relief administrators could organize extraordinary charitable appeals, or send burgomasters with open plates door-to-door, or otherwise increase pressure on the population to give more generously. As a result of the authorities' policies, collection revenues formed a reliable source of income.

### 6.3.2 The boundaries of voluntarism

The pressure that municipalities and church boards exerted also clearly still had its limits, nonetheless. Firstly, as demonstrated in chapter 3, when poverty rose in the eighteenth century, collection revenues did not grow along with the increased demand on charitable institutions. Apparently in this time of economic stagnation, Dutch generosity had reached its boundaries and could not be stretched more. Secondly, as some organizational tactics had to be employed with moderation, it was not possible to maximize pressure on the population to give generously for every charitable appeal organized. Burgomasters only went door-to-door to request alms on special occasions, and open plates were never used for the weekly collections but only for those held less frequently. In the case of collecting with closed bags and boxes, an easy way out was giving the smallest coin possible, a poor quality coin taken out of circulation, a foreign currency, or a piece of metal. Indeed, the financial administration of the civic charity in Zwolle reveals that almost every year worthless or poor-quality coins were collected. For the 89 annual accounts from the City Poor Chamber studied from the period 1656-1800, in 83 years *biljoen* (billion), *kwaad geld* (bad money) or *kwade duiten* (bad doits) are mentioned.<sup>478</sup> This indicates that donating these types of coins was common practice amongst the town population.

Using inferior currency for distributions to the poor, to buy goods, or to pay for services was strictly forbidden. For example, the States of Holland issued a decree in 1707 stating that poor relief institutions risked a fine of 24 guilders for every single bad coin brought back into circulation.<sup>479</sup> Still, as these coins could be sold, they were far from worthless for charities and did contribute to their income. The accounts of Zwolle's civic charity mention coins being sold to the Master of the Mint as well as to Jewish merchants.<sup>480</sup> In most years bad coins were only mentioned on the income side. When counting the revenues from church and door-to-door collections, they were separated from the other coins and thereafter sold. In some

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<sup>478</sup> Data were used on the years 1656-1683, 1692-1694, 1723, 1743-1793 and 1795-1800, see: HCO, Stadsarmenkamer, inv. no. 91 and 97 and HCO, SA, inv. nos. 10105-10111 and 10124-10125.

<sup>479</sup> Scheffers, *Om de kwaliteit van het geld*, vol. 1, p. 216.

<sup>480</sup> See e.g. HCO, Stadsarmenkamer, inv. no. 91, the account of the year 1660 and HCO, SA, inv. no. 10107, the accounts of the years 1678-1680.

eighteenth-century accounts both on the income and on the expenditure side bad coins can be found. Probably for some types of collections they were put aside before being counted, while in other cases they were first counted as revenues then sold, after which the loss was registered as expenditure.<sup>481</sup> When adding up the amounts mentioned on both the income and expenditure side, these coins amounted to a yearly average of 104 guilders in the second half of the seventeenth century and to some 42 guilders in the eighteenth century.

In the financial administration of the Delft Chamber of Charity the income from or expenditure on bad coinage could be found less frequently. Here for the years 1641 to 1800, only 47 accounts mention billon or bad doits, which is less than 30 per cent of the studied years.<sup>482</sup> Especially in the eighteenth century, when the accounts often keep silent about inferior currency, they were probably not always registered separately, and they must have been lumped together with other income or expenditure items.<sup>483</sup> However, the amounts mentioned in Delft were far higher than in Zwolle, namely on average 479 guilders a year in the seventeenth century and 323 guilders in the eighteenth century. Differences in population size, which were largest in the seventeenth century, can at least partly explain this gap: while Zwolle had a population of some 8-9,000 inhabitants around 1680, the town-dwellers of Delft amounted to some 24,000 inhabitants in this period.<sup>484</sup> It may also have been that more foreign coins found their way to Delft than to Zwolle, which as a Holland town was located in the commercial heart of the Dutch Republic.<sup>485</sup>

It is difficult to establish which percentage of the donated coins were of inferior quality. In Zwolle in 1660, out of approximately 130 guilders found in poor boxes, a total sum of about 10 guilders in coins were qualified as bad currency.<sup>486</sup> No other examples have been found where the share of inferior coinage as part of the total collection revenues were made this specific. However, the relief administrators did sometimes next to the total amounts note down the weight of the coins sold from

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<sup>481</sup> In the years 1765 to 1773 the last expenditure item mentioned is 'miscalculations and bad money', as a result of which the precise expenditure on billon and bad doits could not be established. For these years the expenditure side has as a result not been included in the calculations, but as the mentioned amounts were low, and range from 0.75 to 25.35 guilders, this hardly influences the calculations.

<sup>482</sup> For the financial administration from the years 1641-1800 see: AD, Kamer van Charitate, inv. nos. 287-290.

<sup>483</sup> Research on more detailed sources than the charity's yearly accounts could reveal whether bad coins were indeed also collected in years for which no references have been found.

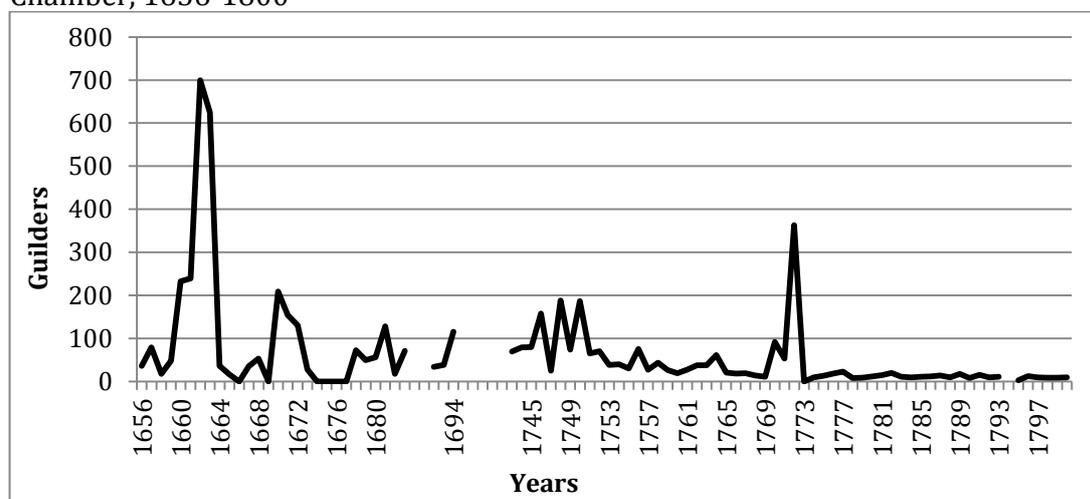
<sup>484</sup> Lourens and Lucassen, *Inwoneraantallen van Nederlandse steden*, pp. 84 and 103.

<sup>485</sup> In the Delft accounts sometimes foreign currencies are mentioned, such as Spanish pistols, see AD, Kamer van Charitate, inv. no. 1727. Also currencies from other provinces can be found in these sources, such as Brabant stivers and Frisian liards, see e.g. AD, Kamer van Charitate, inv. no. 304, 23 February and 8 June 1641. The accounts from Zwolle mention doits from Holland, Frisia and the neighbouring town of Kampen, see HCO, Stadsarmenkamer, inv. no. 91.

<sup>486</sup> HCO, Stadsarmenkamer, inv. no. 91, 9 May 1660.

which, if not already specified, the exchange rate can be calculated and also an estimation of the number of coins can be made. For example, on 28 February 1643 the administrator of the Delft civic charity received 128 guilders for doits with a total mass of 160 pounds, meaning that 0.8 guilders were paid for a pound of doits.<sup>487</sup> Considering that a doit had a mass of about 2 grams and a pound equalled roughly 470 grams, it can be calculated that the enormous amount of about 37,600 doits were exchanged on this date and that the price paid for a single doit was a bit over half of its usual value.<sup>488</sup>

Figure 6.2 – Inferior currency mentioned in the accounts of the Zwolle City Poor Chamber, 1656-1800



Sources: HCO, Stadsarmenkamer, inv. nos. 91 and 97 and HCO, SA, inv. nos. 10105-10111 and 10124-10125. Data were used on the years 1656-1683, 1692-1694, 1723, 1743-1793 and 1795-1800.

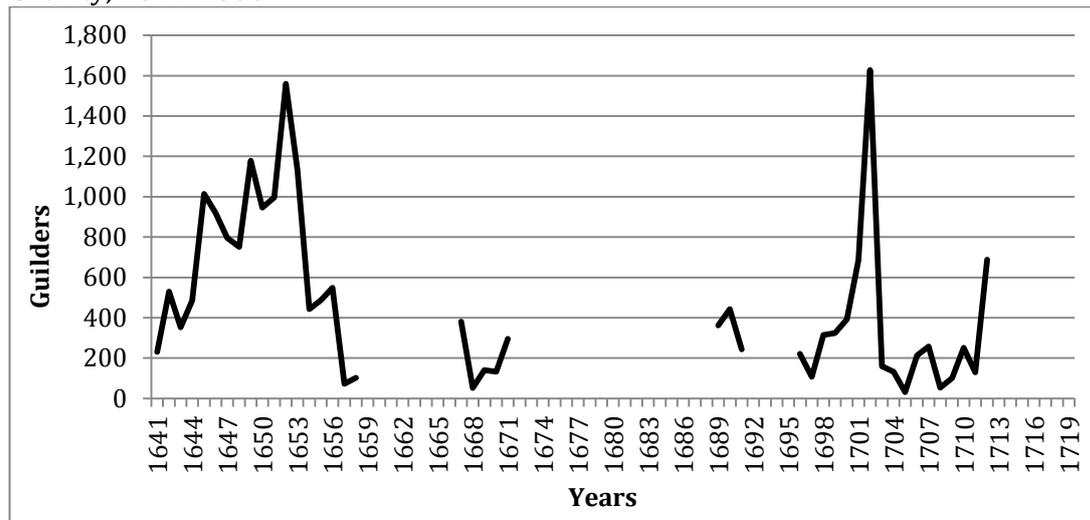
In some years remarkably more amounts of bad currency were donated to charitable institutions than in other years. As can be seen in Figures 6.2 and 6.3, providing an overview of the bad coins mentioned in the accounts of the civic charities in Zwolle and Delft, there were several clear outliers. For Zwolle these were the period 1660-1663 and the year 1772, for Delft the late 1640s and early 1650s and 1702. For some of these years an easy explanation can be given as to why so much inferior currency was collected. In 1702, for example, the States of Holland prohibited all doits from outside of this province, decreased the value of the Holland doit and introduced a

<sup>487</sup> AD, Kamer van Charitate, inv. no. 304, 28 February 1643. In Delft a pound was 468 grams, see Verhoeff, *De oude Nederlandse maten en gewichten*, p. 17. For both seventeenth century Zwolle and eighteenth century Delft, exchange rates have been found of 0.6 guilders per pound of doits, see e.g. HCO, Stadsarmenkamer, inv. no. 91, 18 December 1660 and 24 January 1661; and AD, Kamer van Charitate, inv. no. 5, 4 July 1702 and 1 August 1702.

<sup>488</sup> This calculation only holds when indeed only doits were exchanged and no other heavier coins. On the weight of a doit see Van Gelder, *Nederlandse munten*, pp. 245-250.

new heavier one.<sup>489</sup> In this year, the account of the Chamber of Charity mentioned over 600 guilders on bad coins on the income side and more than 1,000 guilders as expenditure. Apparently, many inhabitants of Delft got rid of the now worthless coins by putting them into collection bags and boxes. Also the high amounts of inferior coins in the 1660s can be explained from changes in currency policies, as new coins were introduced in 1659.<sup>490</sup>

Figure 6.3 – Inferior currency mentioned in the accounts of the Delft Chamber of Charity, 1641-1800



Sources: AD, Kamer van Charitate, inv. nos. 287-290.

Still, it is too simplistic to merely equate donating bad coins to miserly giving behaviour. For people unknowingly receiving foreign or inferior currency in retail or other transactions these coins had little value, and by putting them in collection bags and boxes they could be sold and used for the benefit of the city poor. It is moreover possible that some of these coins were given by travellers from other parts of the Dutch Republic or from outside of the country wishing to make a charitable donation, and were put into the alms boxes located in the inns in which they were staying. Furthermore, what becomes clear from comparing the collection proceeds of different charitable causes is that if public support was absent, collectors could go around on a frequent basis and authorities could employ all the strategies they wished, but it would be with little success.

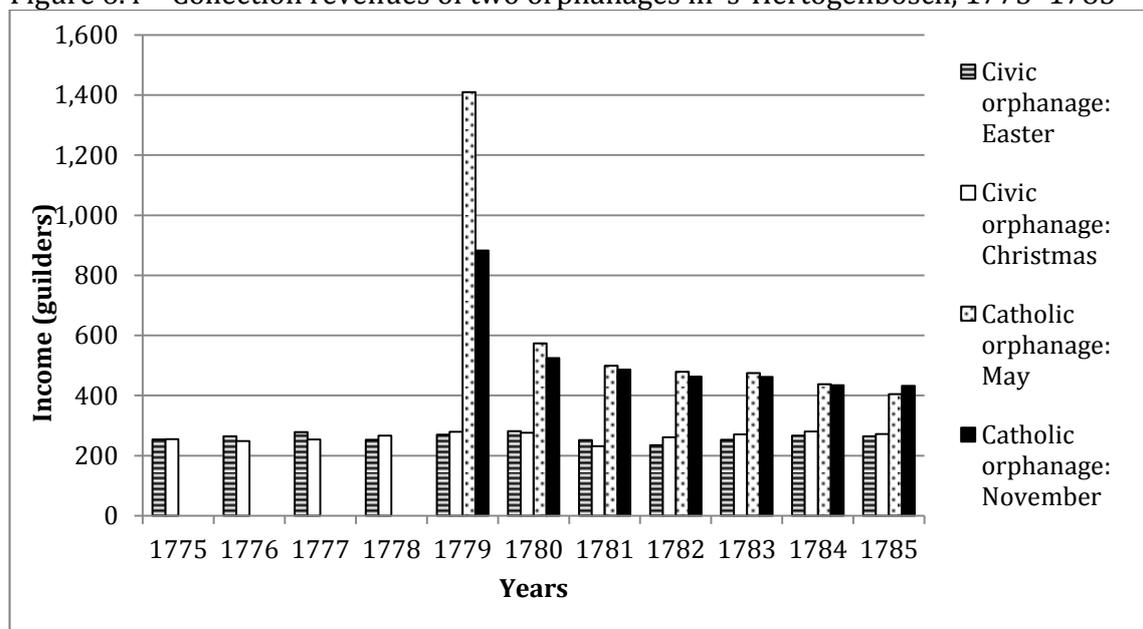
This can best be illustrated by two examples from 's-Hertogenbosch. As already mentioned in chapter 4, in this town the collector for the poor detained in the

<sup>489</sup> Van Gelder, *De Nederlandse munten*, p. 152; Scheffers, *Om de kwaliteit van het geld*, vol. 1, pp. 179-214.

<sup>490</sup> See e.g. Van Beek (ed.), *Encyclopedie van munten en bankbiljetten*, pp. 55-56 and Van Gelder, *De Nederlandse munten*, pp. 131-135. NB: For the period around 1650 and 1772 no explanations could be found for the large amounts of inferior coins donated to the collections.

town's gatehouse, who went door-to-door twice a week, encountered an almost complete unwillingness of the population to donate. On a yearly basis often no more than 60 or 70 guilders were given, of which almost half went to the collector's salary. According to the organization's interim estate agent, the collector had to visit 40 or 50 houses in vain before something was given.<sup>491</sup> This was probably not far off from the truth. If every time a collection was held, only some 60 cents were given, and all donors gave a *doit*, only a maximum of some 100 households could have contributed. In the eighteenth century, 's-Hertogenbosch had a population of approximately 13,000, probably living in some 3,500-4,000 households, which means that indeed only every 35 to 40 households donated.<sup>492</sup> Apparently the majority of the town-dwellers declined to give. It is not difficult to imagine that they considered poor prisoners to be responsible for their own misfortune, and thus undeserving of receiving alms.

Figure 6.4 – Collection revenues of two orphanages in 's-Hertogenbosch, 1775–1785



Sources: SH, OA, inv. nos. 8380-8390; SH, Rooms-katholiek weeshuis, inv. nos. 187-190.

The giving behaviour of the inhabitants of this Brabant town moreover demonstrates a clear religious preference. The civic orphanage held public collections twice a year around Easter and Christmas, and from 1779 onwards its newly established Catholic counterpart did the same in May and November. Although collectors for the Catholic orphanage were only allowed to visit the homes of families of their own religious

<sup>491</sup> SH, Arme gevangenen, inv. no. 59; SH, OA, inv. no. 3110.

<sup>492</sup> For population figures see Lourens and Lucassen, *Inwoneraantallen*, p. 46. The assumption that households in the eighteenth century composed of approximately 3.5 inhabitants is based on data from Delft, see Wijsenbeek-Olthuis, *Achter de gevels van Delft*, pp. 26-27.

denomination, while the civic orphanage could collect door-to-door, in the early 1780s the collections for the Catholic orphans brought in nearly twice as much as those for the civic institution (see Figure 6.4). This can be explained by the fact that after 's-Hertogenbosch had joined the Revolt in 1629, the majority of the population stayed loyal to the Catholic Church. In fact, 78 per cent of the population in 1799 was registered as Catholics.<sup>493</sup> Apparently the Catholics were far more generous towards the needy of their own religious affiliation. Conversely, the Protestant inhabitants proved to be unwilling to contribute to a poor relief institution to which they felt no connection. When in 1794, collectors for the Catholic orphanage were allowed to increase their rounds and visit all households throughout town capable of contributing, the revenues did not substantially increase.<sup>494</sup>

In line with this idea that people are more willing to donate if they feel connected to the cause collected for, it has been argued that centralized institutions experienced more troubles raising money for the poor than charities in localities where no reorganization had taken place.<sup>495</sup> The larger the organization and the broader the group that could appeal for its assistance, the less people regarded it to be their responsibility to contribute to its financing. The major financial troubles experienced by the Utrecht Almoners' Chamber, as described in chapter 3, which had to compete with an independent Dutch Reformed Diaconate for donations, may be used as evidence for this statement. Although a comparison between the money raised during church services for the religious charity and of the revenues of door-to-door collections organized by the civic institution can give a distorted view of the population's giving behaviour, more than seven times as much money in the eighteenth century was raised by the deacons as by the almoners.<sup>496</sup>

Moreover, examples from several localities can be found of poor relief administrators complaining that the Catholics in their town were reluctant to donate to civic institutions. In 1680, some prominent Catholic families were requested to make their appearance in the Zwolle town council, to be informed about the complaints that the Catholic share of the town population hardly contributed to collections for the City Poor Chamber. The magistrates' message was that the Catholics 'in the future had to be more generous', for the almoners from then on would otherwise be unable 'to give something to the subsistence of their poor'.<sup>497</sup> As described in chapter 2, between 1683 and 1710 and then again from 1736 onwards,

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<sup>493</sup> Vos, *Burgers, broeders en bazen*, pp. 268-269.

<sup>494</sup> SH, Rooms-katholiek weeshuis, inv. nos. 197-200.

<sup>495</sup> Van Nederveen Meerkerk and Vermeesch, 'Reforming outdoor relief', pp. 148-152.

<sup>496</sup> HUA, Aalmoezenierskamer, inv. no. 1827 and HUA, Diaconie, inv. nos. 538-551. A comparison could be made for the years 1727-1730, 1776-1789, 1792-1794 and 1799.

<sup>497</sup> HCO, SA, inv. no. 70, 27 September 1680. Translation from: 'hunne Armen iets tot subsistentie geven'.

the Catholics were indeed excluded from assistance and were forced to care for their own poor. In Utrecht, one of the reasons given for the establishment of the Almoners' Chamber, next to the major financial troubles experienced by the Dutch Reformed charity, was the complaints expressed by several wealthy Catholics that the deacons favoured their own poor, and that they therefore 'at the time of collections gave very little in the plates'.<sup>498</sup> Whether Catholics were indeed less willing to contribute to collections for civic purposes can unfortunately not be determined, for no data are available on what was given to these collections by different religious groups.

However, as was already demonstrated in chapter 3, no connection between the degree of centralization and the financial performance of the institutions in this sample can be detected. In fact, the Delft Chamber of Charity, which from the early seventeenth century onwards took care of all needy town inhabitants irrespective of their religious affiliation, seems to have been the institution that had to cope with the least financial troubles of all charities studied here. Moreover, organizational changes had no clear impact on the giving behaviour of the town inhabitants. Until 1614, the revenues of the collections in the two Dutch Reformed Churches of Delft had been used for the assistance of poor church members, while with the full incorporation of the religious charity in the Chamber of Charity, the money raised during services had to be handed over to the civic institution. However, in the following years in the two churches combined, still a bit over 800 guilders per month was collected.<sup>499</sup> The Dutch Reformed congregation in Delft apparently was either unaware or indifferent to the fact that the donations would no longer only benefit fellow church members but also the poor of other religious affiliations.<sup>500</sup> Also in in Zwolle, where during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries on average more than 70 per cent of the collection revenues of the City Poor Chamber came from donations made during church service, no signs could be detected of the churchgoers unwillingness to contribute to the civic institution's budget.<sup>501</sup>

### 6.3.3 Paying for poor relief

Although large parts of urban society contributed to the charitable collections, not everyone donated equally. As we have seen in chapters 4 and 5, every inhabitant was urged to contribute, but both secular and religious authorities emphasized that the

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<sup>498</sup> HUA, SA II, inv. no. 121, 6 August 1627. Translation from: 'ten tijde van collected seer weynich in de schale geven'.

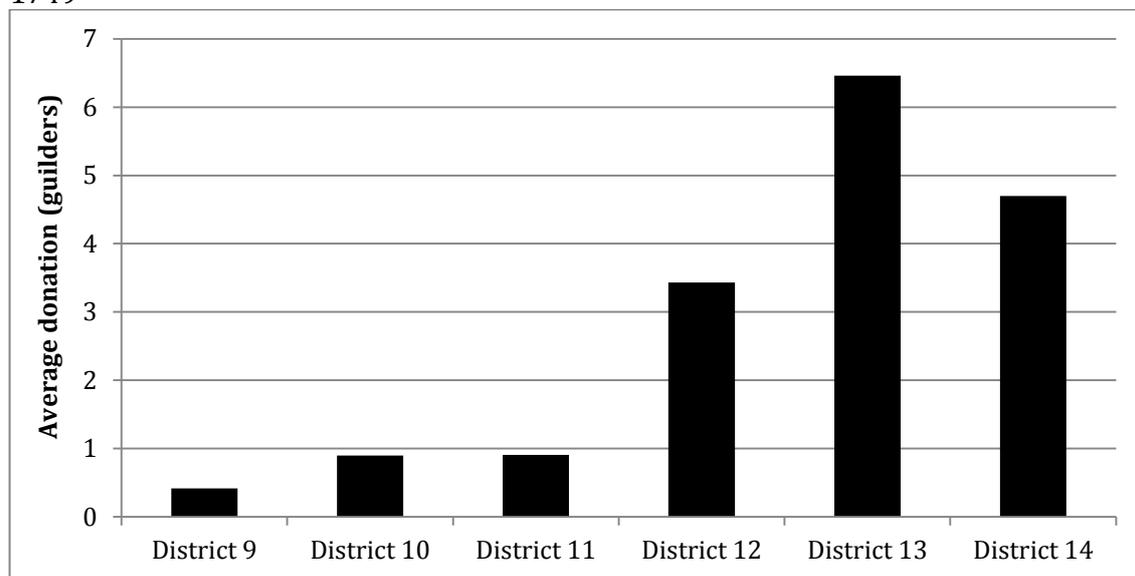
<sup>499</sup> AD, Hervormde gemeente, inv. nos. 2356-2357 and AD, Kamer van Charitate, inv. nos. 293-295.

<sup>500</sup> In the early seventeenth century, Delft had an estimated Catholic population of about 1,000 out of a total population of some 20,000, which increased over the course of the seventeenth century to about one-fifth of the town inhabitants, see Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, p. 380.

<sup>501</sup> Based on samples from the years 1661-1670, 1751-1760, 1771-1780 and 1791-1800.

well-to-do were expected to give more than their poorer fellow town-dwellers. People were asked to donate according to what they could afford. This means that for an unskilled labourer a doit or stiver would have been sufficient, while a rich merchant or high political official was expected to give a larger amount. When money was collected using closed boxes or bags, collectors had little insight in what was given. However, in case of collections taking place with open plates, pressure could be exerted to encourage people to donate more generously and to contribute according to their wealth.<sup>502</sup>

Figure 6.5 – Average donation per household to a collection in six districts of Delft, 1749



Source: AD, OA I, inv. no. 1727.

NB: The district numbers are given in both the collection register and the tax registers. The number of households per town district is based on AD, OA I, inv. no. 602.

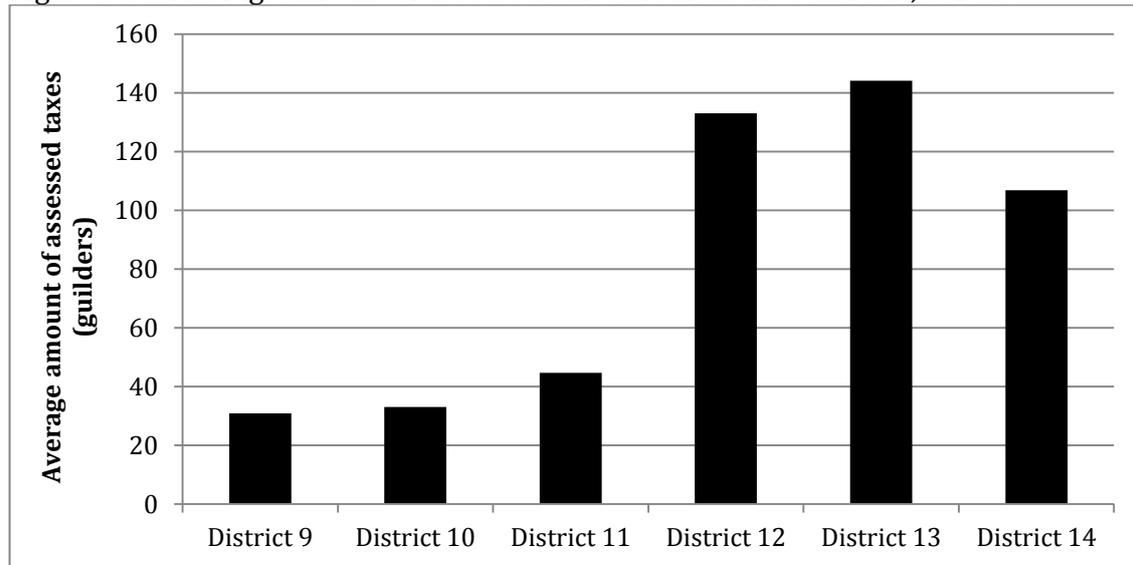
For Delft the sources allow an analysis of the influence of wealth on charitable giving. For the year 1749, collection lists of a one-off collection for the war-affected areas of Brabant and Flanders for which open plates were used, give a breakdown per town district, and the same goes for available tax registers too. Although no distinctly wealthy and poor neighbourhoods existed in early modern Delft, where the poor lived in the immediate vicinity of the rich, the inhabitants of some parts of town still were on average more affluent than the households living in other town districts.<sup>503</sup> A comparison of the two sources demonstrates that there was indeed a relation between wealth and charitable contributions per household. Notably more money

<sup>502</sup> In his book on the history of the Dutch Reformed Church in seventeenth-century Amsterdam, Evenhuis tells the story of rich man who only donated a double stiver and was reprimanded by a deacon for his stinginess: Evenhuis, *Ook dat was Amsterdam*, vol 4, p. 124.

<sup>503</sup> On residential segregation within early modern Delft, see Lesger and Van Leeuwen, 'Residential segregation', pp. 350-355.

per household was donated in districts 12, 13 and 14 than in other parts of town. Comparing the three districts with high collection revenues with three districts with much lower revenues reveals that in the parts of town where less taxable wealth was found, lower donations to the public collection were made (compare Figures 6.5 and 6.6). Hence, as a group, the rich donated – at least in absolute terms – more than the poor.<sup>504</sup>

Figure 6.6 – Average amount of assessed taxes in six districts in Delft, c. 1749



Source: AD, OA I, inv. no. 602.

NB: In 1748 and 1749 the *gemene middelen* ('common means'), largely consisting of excises, were not collected and were temporarily replaced by the *provisioneel middel*. The level of this provisional tax was based on an estimation of family consumption, linked to the economic position of the households; see Diederiks, 'Inleiding', p. 11; Tjalsma, 'Een karakterisering van Leiden in 1749', p. 38; Wagenaar, "*Dat de regeringe niet en bestaet by het corpus van de magistraet van Den Hage alleen*", p. 105. For the assessment, a distinction was made between taxation at the national and at the town level; the amounts per household have been summed here. The assessed taxation on commercial activities, as well as whether the assessed amounts were really paid, has not been taken into account.

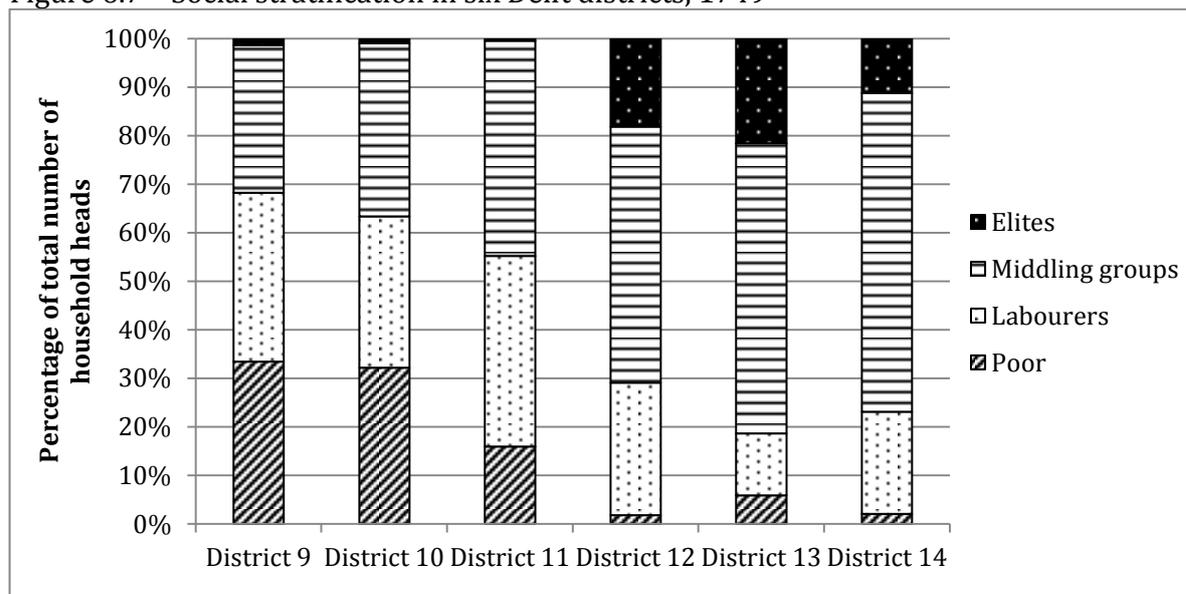
The tax registers not only report the amount of taxes people had to pay, but also their occupation and whether they depended on poor relief. Using literature on social stratification within early modern Dutch towns, a categorization is made of the households living in districts 9 to 14, distinguishing between the elites, middling groups, labourers, and the poor. The elites are usually described as the upper layer constituting less than 10 per cent of the population and earning a yearly income of more than 1,000 guilders. They included, for example, regents, patricians, high political officials, wealthy merchants and some rentiers. The next category, the middling groups, made up almost half of the urban population and consisted of

<sup>504</sup> For the collection registers, see: AD, OA I, inv. no. 1727; for the tax registers, see: AD, OA I, inv. no. 602.

shopkeepers, craftsmen, small to middling traders and lower officials, among others. Their annual income could vary from about 350 guilders to almost 1,000 guilders. The labourers, estimated at about a third of the town inhabitants, included unskilled labourers, servants and soldiers, who had to get by on some 300 guilders a year. Below them were the really poor such as day labourers, pedlars, and families living on assistance, earning only around 250 guilders a year.<sup>505</sup>

A closer look at the social and occupational composition within the different parts of Delft reveals that in the more generous districts, the elites and middling groups were overrepresented. These districts all included a part of the *Oude Delft*, an area where high-ranking persons lived such as burgomasters. In the districts where much less was collected, the lower social strata were highly represented (see Figure 6.7). Households in district 12 on average donated much less than one might expect based on the level of taxable wealth in this part of town, for which no explanation has been found.

Figure 6.7 – Social stratification in six Delft districts, 1749



Source: AD, OA I, inv. no. 602.

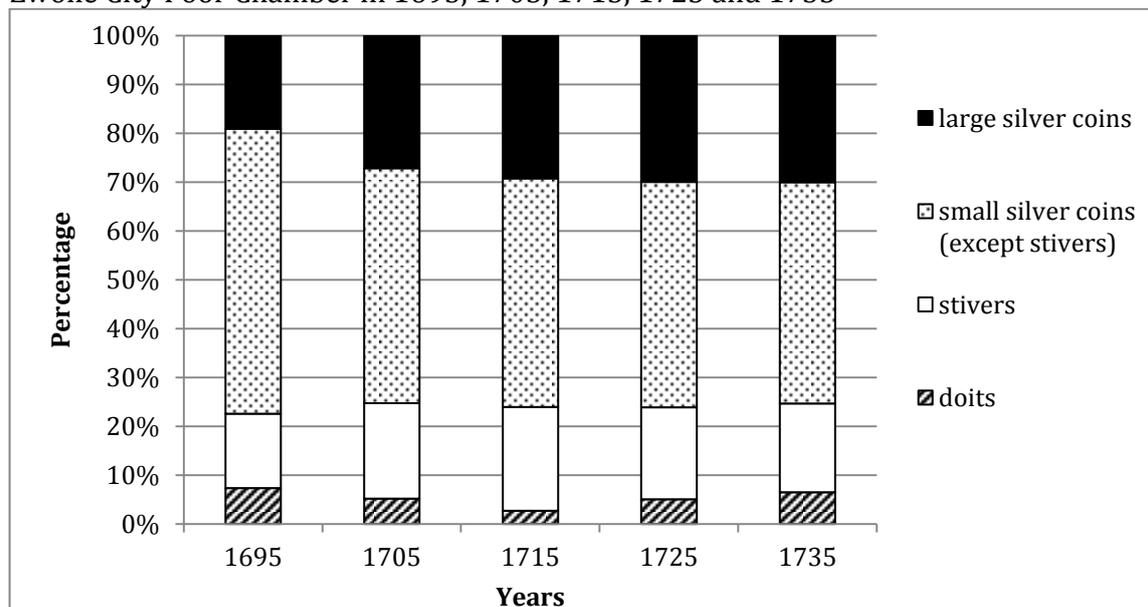
NB: The stratification used is based on the assessed amount of taxes, occupation, the presence of domestic servants in the household and whether people depended on poor relief. All households receiving assistance were classified as poor. In most cases, they were not assessed for tax by the town, although every household had to pay at least a small sum for national taxation.

Assuming that not only in the case of this one-off collection, but people in general donated according to wealth, the information on the collected coins for the Zwolle

<sup>505</sup> This classification derives from De Vries and Van der Woude, *The first modern economy*, pp. 561-564; Van Leeuwen, *De rijke Republiek*, pp. 40-43; Van Nederveen Meerkerk, 'Geven na de dood', pp. 138-140.

City Poor Chamber can be used to analyse which social groups contributed most to these charitable appeals. The large silver coins, which had a minimum value of one guilder and which in the years 1695, 1705, 1715, 1725 and 1735 made up only one per cent of the collected coins, on average represented 27 per cent of the proceeds (compare Figures 6.1 and 6.8). Arguably, only the elites were wealthy enough to donate these coins. The smaller silver coins, ranging from double stivers to thirteen-a-halves, accounted for almost half of the revenues, and could have been given both by the elites and higher middling groups. Stivers, which represented some 20 per cent of the total collected amounts, were arguably donated by people from the lower middling groups upwards. Lastly, arguably all layers of urban society, with the exception of the really poor, donated doits, which although making up 55 per cent of the collected coins, only constituted some 5 per cent of the total proceeds within the studied years.<sup>506</sup> In the five sample years, excluding some minor variations, the percentages of the collected amounts per types of coins were quite stable (see Figure 6.8).

Figure 6.8 – Percentage of revenues from different types of coins collected for the Zwolle City Poor Chamber in 1695, 1705, 1715, 1725 and 1735



Sources: HCO, Stadsarmenkamer, inv. nos. 238-240.

NB: For the division between different types of coins see Table 6.1.

As the small coins donated by the lower strata of society only made up a few per cent of the collection revenues, it can thus be concluded that the elites and middling

<sup>506</sup> In case coins of inferior quality were included in the collection registers, the percentage of income from doits was slightly lower, as the value of the bad coins was lower than a doit, which were then sold with a loss; in case they were not included, the percentage was a bit higher, as there was also some income from the sale of the coins. However, both scenarios would lead to minor changes.

groups contributed most to the proceeds of the charitable appeals. Arguably, also when in times of crisis additional funding was needed especially the donations from the higher social groups could make a difference. Fluctuations in the number of doits or stivers that were given hardly impacted on the total amount collected. By increasing their contributions to collections, especially the well-off in urban society could offer financial support when relief institutions experienced budgetary difficulties. Moreover, due to the control exercised by municipalities over the financial administrations of public charities, as well as familial linkages between members of town councils and church boards, the elites were most likely to have been aware of such problems. Apart from increasing their contributions to collections, another option was buying bonds to release the charities' financial difficulties. In Utrecht in April 1797, the Dutch Reformed Diaconate not only organized an extraordinary collection, but also requested the member of the congregation to issue a loan to the charity with a minimum amount of 50 guilders and preferably free from interest.<sup>507</sup> Only the wealthier members of this church had the financial means to do so.

However, the contribution of the lower social groups should by no means be interpreted as minimal. To begin with, as in the case of the Zwolle City Poor Chamber, the doits and stivers represented some 20 per cent of the total collected amounts, and the revenues of these coins formed an indispensable part of the institution's budget. Moreover, as people gave according to wealth, everyone paid his or her share. A doit donated by a household with a yearly income of 250 or 300 guilders, for which every penny counted, was still a substantial donation, especially considering the large frequency with which collections took place. Furthermore, as most civic as well as Dutch Reformed charities received a share of the town's excise income, labourers, like all inhabitants, not only contributed to the financing of poor relief by means of collections, but also through taxation on consumption.<sup>508</sup> Thus, not only in the case of relief institutions highly dependent on charitable donations, but also for charities receiving a large share of their income through subsidies such as the Utrecht Almoners' Chamber in the eighteenth century, almost all parts of society contributed to the financing of their activities.

Above all, the fact that the authorities still made the effort to collect all those doits despite the low revenues from small coins, is an indication of the great importance they attached to a broad financial basis of poor relief in society. In fact, it could even be argued that the donations made by lower social groups were essential

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<sup>507</sup> HUA, Diaconie, inv. no. 23, 6 April 1797. On the elites in the Holland town of Leiden buying bonds from charitable institutions see Prak, *Gezeten burgers*, p. 57.

<sup>508</sup> Van Leeuwen, *Bijstand in Amsterdam*, pp. 157-161.

to the success of the financial arrangements behind the early modern Dutch welfare system. The different layers of urban society contributed to the collections expecting the social groups below them to do the same. If lower classes would refrain from giving, middling groups might become less willing to donate as well, leaving the financial burden of poor relief to the elites. Dutch relief provisions were built upon a financial system in which every penny counted and where it was essential that everyone who could afford to do so contributed.

#### 6.4 Conclusion

Not only the rich but also the less well-off contributed to charitable collections organized in early modern Dutch towns. Both the collection register for the orphanage in Zwolle, where contributions were listed per household, and the large number of small coins given to the civic charity in this town indicate that a majority of the population gave. Thus, authorities proved to be successful in mobilising large parts of society to finance charitable provisions. Also different collection strategies such as strict planning, increasing social pressure, and limiting anonymity in giving, yielded positive results. Large amounts were especially given to one-off collections or charitable appeals taking place only once or twice a year. These collections were usually widely advertised and pressure in giving was high. By means of strict planning, moreover, authorities maximized revenues for regular collections for local charities. However, the pressure authorities could exert also had its limits. The low revenues of collections for unpopular charitable causes underlines that members of the municipalities, church boards and relief institutions, could employ all kinds of tactics in order to influence giving behaviour, but still depended on the population's willingness to give.

As people seem to have given according to their wealth, the donations from the elites and middling groups especially contributed to the charities' income. Thus, not only the collection gifts from a rich upper class, but from a much larger part of urban society proved to have been essential to the maintenance of charitable provisions in Dutch towns. That the authorities, moreover, also encouraged lower social groups to fulfil their duty towards the poor is an indication of the great importance they attached to a broad financial basis of welfare provisions in society. The financing of the early modern Dutch poor relief system was the shared responsibility of the entire urban community, in which all social layers paid their share and by these means motivated other groups to do the same.

## *Chapter 7*

### Conclusion

The early modern Dutch welfare system has often been described as relatively generous and efficient. Not only foreigners visiting the Dutch Republic, but also present-day historians have asserted that the Dutch, together with their English neighbours, stood out in early modern Europe in terms of solidarity with the poor and needy in society. Different from the English case, in the Northern Netherlands an extensive national legal and regulatory framework on social care was absent, as were obligatory poor rates for the financing of charitable activities. In Dutch towns social care was organized at a local level and largely financed from donations made to collections in the churches and in the streets. As contributions to these charitable appeals were in principle voluntary and not enforced by law, the question arises how the early modern Dutch managed to finance a substantial part of their welfare system through charitable collections.

To understand how charitable donations could form the financial backbone of sustainable and relatively generous relief provisions, both the policies of town councils and church boards in organizing collections as well as the population's giving behaviour were studied. Based on archival research in the towns of Delft, Utrecht, Zwolle and 's-Hertogenbosch, this thesis argues that despite the absence of a legal and compulsory framework for giving, secular and religious authorities still had effective means at their disposal to persuade and exhort the population to donate. This concluding chapter firstly analyses the financing of poor relief in Dutch towns, as well as the institutions' financial management strategies. The next part deals with the organizational and rhetorical tactics applied by the authorities to encourage generous giving. The subsequent part examines the population's giving behaviour, and thus the effectiveness of the applied collection strategies. Next, similarities and differences in the financing of relief, in the organization of charitable appeals and in the population's giving behaviour between the different localities are analysed as

well as developments over time. Lastly, this conclusion addresses the central question by explaining the success of charitable collections in early modern Dutch towns.

### 7.1 Financing poor relief in the Dutch Republic

Charitable donations were of major importance for the financing of outdoor relief provisions. In the seventeenth century, in three out of the four towns studied in this thesis, namely Delft, Zwolle and Utrecht, collection revenues formed the single largest source of income for civic institutions. Both the Delft Chamber of Charity and the Utrecht Almoners' Chamber funded more than 40 per cent of poor relief from donations made in the churches and in the streets; for the Zwolle City Poor Chamber this was almost 70 per cent. Dutch Reformed charities as well as deacons from tolerated churches also usually financed the lion's share of their activities from charitable gifts collected during services. As established by a literature study on financial arrangements in other Dutch localities, 's-Hertogenbosch was an exceptional case. For the charities in this town donations were only a supplementary source of income to the large funds that they had built up in the medieval period. For the Blocks approximately 20 per cent of their budgets came from small-scale gifts, while the House of Giving did not organize any collections at all.

When after the Golden Age the income from charitable gifts did not keep pace with rising expenditures, charities increasingly came to depend on the income from capital and real estate, as well as on municipal subsidies. For the Utrecht Almoners' Chamber, this development was most striking. In the 'disaster year' 1672, as a result of the war, collection revenues collapsed to about 50 per cent of their usual level, from which this institution never recovered, in contrast to the other charities studied here. Over the course of the eighteenth century, the Utrecht civic charity came to depend, almost fully, on governmental subsidies, funding over 80 per cent of poor relief. For the Zwolle City Poor Chamber municipal grants also increased in importance, constituting almost 40 per cent of the institutions' income stream towards the end of the eighteenth century. In contrast, the Delft Chamber of Charity as well as the Dutch Reformed Diaconates in both Utrecht and 's-Hertogenbosch increasingly funded their activities from property income, which mainly consisted of financial assets. In both Delft and Zwolle, in the eighteenth century charitable donations continued to be an indispensable source of income, still funding some 40 per cent of the civic institutions' activities; for the Reformed Diaconate in Utrecht this was even 60 per cent.

The revenues from church and door-to-door collections not only formed an important, but also a stable source of income for poor relief administrators. Despite economic volatility and demographic developments, fluctuations in the total annual amounts charities managed to collect were usually small. Only during war time, more precisely in 1672 and in the French period from 1795 onwards, were the charities' collection revenues often significantly disturbed. The overall stability is even more remarkable considering that in some towns the income from one type of collection, for example from church offertories, decreased over the course of the early modern period, and was then compensated by higher revenues from door-to-door collections to achieve a comparable total level. As a result of this stability, collections revenues formed a reliable source of income for charities, and helped them to balance their accounts.

Overall, relief institutions were financially well-maintained. Even in times of crisis, treasurers often succeeded in keeping the budgets afloat. Urban as well as religious authorities monitored income and expenditure of relief institutions carefully, in order to avoid mismanagement and to make sure that institutions would remain financially sustainable. Still, some charities experienced major financial difficulties. In this regard the Utrecht Almoners' Chamber in the seventeenth century is striking, as it suffered from deficits in more than 50 per cent of the years for which data were available. Other charities also regularly struggled to keep their budgets afloat, but by borrowing money, postponing payments, asking for assistance from the municipality, and organizing lotteries, financial shortages could be avoided most years. Extraordinary collections were an especially popular method to solve acute budgetary shortages. This tactic was often used during winter time when demands on charities were high. As a result, the income from charitable donations helped charities to cover their costs during most years, and contributed to the maintenance of these institutions in the long run.

## 7.2 Encouraging charitable giving

Collections were organized on a frequent basis and for a variety of purposes. First of all, collection bags were passed around in churches during service, which could be held up to six times a week. The proceeds of these charitable appeals either benefited poor church members or were handed over to civic institutions to be distributed among the urban poor. Moreover, in all four towns studied in this thesis, door-to-door collections requesting donations to charitable causes, sometimes for orphanages, but mainly for institutions assisting the outdoor poor, occurred with a frequency of at least once a week. Furthermore, extraordinary collections were

organized for local charities in financial difficulties, for Dutch towns or villages affected by fire or flood, and for the assistance of co-religionists in other parts of Europe. For people wishing to make a donation more spontaneously, poor boxes were located in a variety of public places, such as in inns, the town hall, and inside the buildings of charitable institutions.

In the organization of all these charitable appeals, urban and religious authorities acted as supervisor and regulator. No public collection could take place without municipal consent, and church boards decided upon charitable appeals held during service, although usually town councils also had a say in the organization of church collections. Strict monitoring of the collecting procedure had to prevent misuse, and to establish public trust that donations would indeed reach those in need. Collectors had to follow strict regulations when requesting alms in the churches or at the people's homes. In their policies, the authorities tried to create the right circumstances for generous giving and to channel the donations in the direction of charitable causes they attached great importance to, or which they regarded to be in the greatest need of funding.

To achieve this, they made use of a variety of organizational tactics. One of these was extensively advertising collections before they took place. Usually, public charitable appeals – or at least the more irregular ones – received ample attention beforehand. Proclamations were made near the town hall, and printed publications were distributed through town. Moreover, ministers announced these collections during service. The proclamations stated precisely for which purpose money would be raised, who would go around through town, and when people could expect these collectors on their doorstep. Afterwards attention was often given to one-off collections as well, announcing the revenues, sometimes specified per town district, church service or collector. For collections taking place on a national level, these proclamations were occasionally accompanied by poems praising the charitable act and engravings depicting the indigent as well as the collecting procedure.

Moreover, by means of strict planning authorities attempted to schedule collections in such a way that the most favourable outcome could be expected. For example, in Delft, Utrecht as well as 's-Hertogenbosch, public institutions went door-to-door weekly as well as once, twice or four times a year. On an annual basis, weekly collections proved to be most profitable, while during the charitable appeals organized less frequently, often on the occasion of a Christian holiday, with minimal effort large amounts could be raised. In their policies, municipalities clearly privileged institutions within their own locality, and then especially public charities. Collections for external causes were only granted if no negative consequences for local institutions were expected, and within towns often only public charities were

allowed to go door-to-door. When, over the course of the eighteenth century, religious dissident communities were increasingly allowed to request alms at peoples' houses, they were often restricted to the homes of church members and other collectors were given priority.

Another organizational tactic to generate higher levels of generosity was carefully selecting collectors, and occasionally sending people of high status and good reputation door-to-door. It was generally presumed that if, for example, burgomasters, members of the town council or ministers requested a charitable donation, this would increase revenues. Especially for one-off collections, this was a commonly applied strategy. The use of open plates instead of closed boxes or bags, which decreased the level of anonymity in giving, was another method by which authorities tried to influence giving behaviour. In churches open plates were only used on the occasions of the Lord's Supper and Days of Prayer. In the streets this tactic was never used for the weekly collections, but only for those organized once or twice a year, or once a month at most, which demonstrates that charities made sure to apply this method in moderation. In some cases, registration books, in which the name of the benefactor and the donated amount were noted down, were used, both for church and public collections, which made it even more visible if and if so, how generously, a person had contributed.

Thus, by supervising the collection process, by strictly scheduling charitable appeals, by extensively advertising collections beforehand, and by fine tuning the pressure on the population to give, municipalities and church boards attempted to fill the collection bags, boxes and plates again and again. Apart from these collection strategies, secular and religious authorities also applied rhetorical tactics to encourage the town population to give generously. In their sermons, ministers presented charity as a Christian's religious duty, and made clear that no one was allowed to shrink from the obligations of social solidarity. Some ministers even interpreted refraining from giving as a violation of the Ten Commandments and equated not giving to theft or murder. Interestingly, although the Catholic and Protestant theological doctrines on poverty and charity differed widely, in practice the Reformation did not bring about fundamental changes in this respect. Protestants were still promised a reward for charitable behaviour in the afterlife, while misers would be punished. Similar to Catholic thought, Dutch Reformed ministers furthermore preached that the poor fulfilled a task in society, and that social inequality encouraged solidarity between different social groups.

In their public proclamations of collections taking place, urban authorities also emphasized that not only the rich, but also the less well-off were expected to contribute. Municipalities often announced that collectors would visit every single

house, without exception. Probably only the really poor were excused. The town council in Delft even urged people who were unable to be at home when a collection took place, to ask someone – a family member, for example – to give on their behalf. Urban authorities, moreover, used a variety of persuasive techniques to generate generosity. First of all, they attempted to instigate a feeling of compassion with the needy for whom the collection was held, by extensively describing the situation of the poor or unfortunate collected for. Secondly, they tried to establish trust that donations would be spent wisely, by suggesting that the town government was in full control, and that money would reach those in need. Thirdly, they emphasized that not only the poor, but also benefactors would benefit, especially through rewards in the afterlife. Fourthly, they often urged people to give according to wealth, to make clear that even small gifts would be appreciated, and that everyone was expected to pay their share. Thus, by a combination of organizational and rhetorical tactics, secular and religious authorities attempted to promote generous giving, and to encourage large parts of society to contribute to collections, and as a result to the financing of poor relief, successfully, as will be demonstrated below.

### 7.3 Donating to collections

There are distinct patterns in the population's responses to the collection strategies applied by the authorities. In early modern Dutch towns, large parts of urban society seem to have contributed to charitable collections, and thus to the financing of poor relief. Not only the elites, but also the middling sorts and probably even lower social groups paid their share. For example, when in the 1660s in Zwolle a collection was organized for the construction of a new orphanage, the registers in which contributions were listed, demonstrate that more than 80 per cent of the households made a donation. Many households refraining from giving, were too poor to do so. The account books of Zwolle's civic institution, which give a breakdown per collected type of coin, also indicate that a vast majority of the population gave. Not only did collectors receive a large numbers of coins on a frequent basis, but they also obtained many small coins, especially doits and stivers.

Thus, with their fundraising efforts authorities managed to mobilize large parts of the population. Although many small and even low-quality coins were put into collection bags and boxes, in annual terms relief institutions collected vast amounts, often funding a substantial part of their activities. The collection strategies described above yielded positive results overall. As already explained, the frequency of collecting influenced the population's giving behaviour. The more often a charitable appeal took place, the lower the amounts donated. Still, from an annual

perspective going door-to-door as regularly as once a week maximized the charities' revenues. To give an example, while the Blocks in 's-Hertogenbosch raised almost ten times as much around Christmas and Easter than during their weekly collections, in total the latter were three times more profitable. Large amounts, often several thousands of guilders, were given to one-off collections or charitable appeals taking place only once or twice a year. These collections were usually widely advertised and pressure to give was high on these occasions, thanks to the use of open plates or the selection of collectors of high status. For church collections it can be demonstrated that the lowering of anonymity in giving clearly made people more generous towards the poor. For instance, when open plates were used during Lord's Supper ceremonies in the Reformed Church of 's-Hertogenbosch halfway through the eighteenth century, 12 times as much money was collected as during collections with closed bags during regular services.

Still, for some charitable causes collectors proved to be unable to raise high amounts, which indicates that the authorities' policies also clearly had their limits. In 's-Hertogenbosch, where a large part of the population remained loyal to the old church, twice a year collections were organized for a Catholic as well as for a civic orphanage, but the latter experienced far more difficulty in filling the collection boxes. Occasionally authorities even came up against an almost total unwillingness among the population to contribute. For instance, for an organization assisting poor prisoners in this same Brabant town, for which collectors went door-to-door twice a week, hardly any money could be raised. Apparently, in these cases authorities could employ all the strategies they wished, but without public support, and a population convinced of the legitimacy of the charitable appeals, their efforts would be in vain. Also the fact that in the eighteenth century collection income did not grow to the same extent as the increased demand for assistance, demonstrates the boundaries of voluntary giving. Authorities always depended on both the willingness and the ability of the population to contribute, and could only encourage but never force people to give.

It can be concluded that the authorities' policies of strict planning, extensive advertisement and increasing social pressure were a necessary condition for high collection revenues, but by no means sufficient to generate generosity. Although the overall low yields of alms boxes demonstrate the large role of personal solicitation in raising funds for charitable causes, and undoubtedly revenues could be further increased when collectors of high status went door-to-door, when anonymity in giving was lowered, and when charitable appeals were carefully scheduled, the applied collection strategies did not automatically result in high yields. Collection bags and boxes could only be filled when the population felt connected to the cause

collected for, and trusted that their donations would be well-spent. Arguably, as the Blocks and the Reformed Diaconate in 's-Hertogenbosch managed to collect considerable amounts year after year, although they had substantial other sources of income, the extent to which charities depended on charitable donations for the financing of their activities was of far less influence on the population's willingness to give.

Although large parts of urban society contributed to the collections, not all social strata donated equally. A comparison of registers listing the proceeds of an extraordinary collection organized in Delft in 1749 with tax records, both giving a division per town district, demonstrates that the highest amounts were collected in parts of town where the highest taxes were paid. Conversely, the inhabitants of districts with the lowest taxable wealth per household on average donated much smaller amounts. As a result of this giving according to wealth, the donations from the middling groups and elites contributed most to the charities' income. In Zwolle in the early eighteenth century, silver coins with a minimum value of a double stiver represented only some 20 per cent of the collected coins, but made up approximately 70 per cent of the total revenues. These larger coins, which are most likely to have been donated by the middling sorts and wealthier parts of urban society, thus made up most of the revenues. In contrast, smaller coins, and then especially doits represented a far smaller percentage of the civic charity's income.

The fact that the authorities, in spite of the low revenues from small currency, still made the effort to go door-to-door when requesting alms and also urged the lower social groups to pay their share, is an indication of the great importance they attached to a broad financial basis of poor relief in society. Arguably, the donations made by lower social groups were even essential to the success of the financial arrangements underpinning the early modern Dutch welfare system. The financing of poor relief was the shared responsibility of the whole urban community, and the different layers of urban society contributed to the collections expecting other social groups to do the same. As a result of the high social pressure exerted on the population to give, people could trust most other town inhabitants would make a charitable contribution as well. The fragmented character of poor relief provisions in the generally small Dutch towns, in which the donations people made to regular collections benefited their poor fellow town-dwellers, who were often also members of their own religious community, or inhabitants of the district they lived in, arguably increased the willingness among the population to donate.

#### 7.4 Differences between localities and developments over time

In this thesis, the main differences between Delft, Utrecht, Zwolle and 's-Hertogenbosch, besides differences in poor relief arrangements, were found in the income structures of charitable institutions. Overall, research on these four towns confirms what was already known for Groningen, Amsterdam, Sneek and several other early modern Dutch localities, namely that collections formed the financial backbone of welfare provisions in this period. However, as stated above, in two towns studied here the situation deviated from this general picture. Firstly, in 's-Hertogenbosch the major part of poor relief was financed from interest on capital and real estate, which seems to have been an exceptional case within the Dutch Republic. Here, charities founded in the Middle Ages continued their activities after the Reformation, and no new public outdoor relief institutions were established around 1600. As a result of this continuity in welfare arrangements it was financially possible to build on the medieval heritage, which consisted of large property income. In contrast, in the other three towns newly founded civic and Dutch Reformed charities had to start almost from scratch and needed several decades or more to be able to build up substantial funds.

Secondly, although in seventeenth-century Utrecht both the Dutch Reformed Diaconate as well as the Almoners' Chamber were highly dependent on income from charitable gifts, in the eighteenth century the civic relief institution funded over 80 per cent of its activities from governmental subsidies. This situation was partly a result of policy choices regarding the exclusion of the Catholic minority from assistance. Moreover, due to the independent position of Utrecht's Dutch Reformed charity, the Almoners' Chamber only profited from door-to-door collections, while the revenues from church offertories were used for the assistance of poor church members. Furthermore, as a consequence of the civic charity's financial troubles, it proved to be unable to substantially invest in real estate as well as financial assets and to build up large funds, which then only aggravated its budgetary difficulties. Arguably, the continuous struggle to balance the accounts and the institution's fragile financial situation led then to a downward spiral in which the population became increasingly less willing to donate.

In 's-Hertogenbosch, the deviation in the charities' income structures led to the exceptional situation that the major outdoor relief institution, the House of Giving, did not take up collections at all. Due to its substantial income from interest on property, the relief administrators of this charity could spare themselves the effort of having to request alms door-to-door. However, in spite of the differences within the four localities in the financing of welfare provisions and in the importance of charitable gifts as a source of income, collections were organized in similar ways. Not

only did public charitable appeals take place with a comparable frequency, they were moreover held for similar purposes, and the organizational and rhetorical tactics applied by the authorities to influence giving behaviour also bore a striking resemblance to one another. The findings regarding the policies of municipalities, church boards and relief institutions in organizing charitable appeals are moreover in line with earlier findings for Amsterdam as well as other localities in the Dutch Republic. This indicates that the analysis made in this thesis not only holds for Delft, Utrecht, Zwolle and 's-Hertogenbosch, and emphasizes that there were similarities in the ways local authorities in different parts of the country organized collections for the poor.

As described above, striking developments occurred in the financing of welfare provisions within the early modern period. Over the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, charitable collections made up a dwindling part of the charities' budgets, while property income for some institutions and subsidies for others grew in importance. This development must be viewed in the light of the stagnating Dutch economy from the late seventeenth century onwards, as a result of which pressure on relief institutions increased while the population became decreasingly able to contribute. Another development that can at least partly be explained by the country's economic situation, is the fact that over the course of the early modern period the character of one-off collections for non-urban purposes became more nationally and more secularly orientated. While in the seventeenth century many extraordinary charitable appeals were organized for persecuted co-religionists abroad, in the eighteenth century the majority of the one-off collections which did not profit local institutions, were held for Dutch localities in need after a disaster. Arguably, the growing poverty after the Golden Age made the authorities focus more on those in need within their own country. Another important explanation lies in the fact that the last great expulsion of Protestants took place in the early 1730s.

In the French Period this development became more distinct, as for the period 1795-1800 no mention of collections held for either international or religious purposes could be found in the archives of the four towns studied here. The rhetoric used by urban authorities also fundamentally changed after 1795. The religious aspect, which had been dominant in proclamations of collections in the period of the Dutch Republic, disappeared, and the character of municipal decrees instead became fully secular. Town councils no longer mentioned Christian compassion as a reason why people should liberally put coins into collection bags and boxes, but instead referred to the general interest and concern for the common good as motives for charity. Firstly, these changes in the purposes collected for as well as in the rhetoric

used by the authorities in exhorting the population to donate generously can be explained by a more hostile attitude towards the Churches in this revolutionary era. Moreover, from 1795 onwards citizenship was transformed from an urban into a national phenomenon. Consequently, donating to charitable collections was no longer regarded as people's religious or civic duty, but instead as their national obligation.

### 7.5 Explaining the success of charitable collections in the Dutch Republic

Having confirmed that indeed in many localities the lion share of poor relief was financed from charitable collections, the last question which needs to be answered is: how did the early modern Dutch manage to finance a substantial part of social care from voluntary donations made in the churches and in the streets? It can be concluded that creating awareness, establishing trust and exerting pressure were the key components of the fundraising campaigns of secular and religious authorities in the Dutch Republic. Within early modern towns, collections were almost impossible to avoid, as were the announcements of the charitable appeals. By supervising the charities' finances as well as the collecting process, the authorities moreover wished to create public trust in how donations were spent. That relief institutions were overall financially well-maintained, must have had a positive impact on their reputation as well as on the population's willingness to give. The exerted pressure furthermore ensured people that their neighbours and other fellow town-dwellers would most probably also pay their share.

Thus, town councils and church boards applied both positive and negative incentives to generate generosity, which in general proved to be successful. Not only did they attempt to create the right circumstances in which town inhabitants would be willing to liberally donate to the poor collected for, they moreover made sure that few would dare to refrain from giving. However, despite their great importance in influencing giving behaviour, the authorities' collection strategies are by no means an all-encompassing explanation for the overall willingness of the Dutch population to donate to charitable causes. Firstly, it could be argued that the relatively well-functioning welfare system as a whole, which not only consisted of the outdoor relief institutions on which this thesis focuses, but also of a large number of, for example, orphanages, hospitals, old people's homes, and almshouses, encouraged the inhabitants of early modern towns to contribute to the financing of a part of these relief provisions. Secondly, as argued above, the fragmented character of the social care arrangements, in which relief was not only organized at a local level, but in which many charities operated within the various religious communities or within town districts, arguably also helps to clarify the high collection revenues. Thirdly,

likewise the relative prosperity and the presence of large middling groups within cities and towns must be taken into account when explaining the flourishing of early modern Dutch welfare.

It could be argued that the Dutch financial arrangements were more fragile than a tax system. Firstly, as contributions to collections could not be enforced by law, relief institutions always depended on the population's willingness to give. Secondly, a system based on voluntarism was assumingly more vulnerable to crisis. However, also in the case of taxation authorities depended on the population's willingness as well as ability to contribute. In order to prevent tax evasion as well as revolts, public support was essential, and the tax burden moreover had to be fairly distributed across society. As demonstrated in this thesis, the applied collection strategies helped Dutch relief institutions to collect relatively high and stable amounts, seemingly to a large extent unaffected by economic and demographic circumstances. In some localities, in spite of growing poverty and a decreasing number of inhabitants from the late seventeenth century onwards, comparable sums were still collected over the course of almost two centuries. This indicates that the authorities' fundraising strategies motivated the population to give according to an accepted need for funding. Furthermore, due to the system of mixed financial arrangements, other sources of income were available as well, and relief institutions never fully depended on the income from charitable gifts. Not only did many charities profit from investment income, but moreover, if necessary, municipalities could step in and intervene.

Thus, the combination of effective fundraising methods, good financial management, and local governments feeling responsible for well-organized relief provisions within their communities, formed the financial basis of the relatively generous early modern Dutch welfare system. Although no direct parallels can be drawn between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and present-day society, it can at least be concluded from this thesis that the role of civil society in providing social care can be large, but that to facilitate this an institutional framework encouraging community activism is of vital importance. On the one hand it was demonstrated that in the Dutch Republic religious communities and neighbourhood associations were actively involved in organizing poor relief, and in some towns provided assistance to large parts of the population. Social care was, moreover, for a substantial part financed from donations raised from the vast majority of urban society. However, on the other hand it was shown that in this mixed economy of welfare, public authorities adopted a supervisory and regulatory role, enabling relief institutions to collect large sums of money. This demonstrates that even when the

government is not a direct provider or funder of care, it still has an important task in ensuring that the least privileged members of society are provided for.



## Summary in Dutch

De Republiek der Zeven Verenigde Nederlanden (1588-1795) stond bekend om haar goed functionerende armenzorginstellingen. Niet alleen schreven buitenlandse reizigers die de vroegmoderne Noordelijke Nederlanden bezochten vaak vol bewondering over de vele voorzieningen die bestonden, ook hedendaags economisch-historisch onderzoek wijst uit dat dit land, waarschijnlijk samen met Engeland, binnen Europa uitblonk in de omvang van de institutionele zorg voor armen, ouderen, wezen en andere behoeftigen. Ondanks het ongeveer vergelijkbaar hoge niveau van armenzorgvoorzieningen in Engeland en de Republiek, bestonden er echter grote verschillen in de wijze waarop sociale zorg in deze landen georganiseerd was en gefinancierd werd. In Engeland zorgden de *Poor Laws* van 1598 en 1601 voor een nationaal wetgevend kader dat onder andere bepaalde dat iedere parochie een armenbelasting moest heffen. Alhoewel in het begin van de zeventiende eeuw ook andere bronnen van inkomsten, zoals giften en rente over bezittingen, van belang bleven, groeide de armenbelasting uiteindelijk uit tot de voornaamste inkomstenbron en tot de financiële ruggengraat van het Engelse armenzorgstelsel.

In de Republiek, daarentegen, bestond nauwelijks nationale wetgeving op het gebied van sociale zorg, net zo min overigens als in veel andere delen van Europa. Armenzorg was lokaal georganiseerd en de rol van kerkelijke en seculiere autoriteiten kon per stad en dorp erg verschillen. Ook werd er – op enkele kleinschalige uitzonderingen in de late achttiende eeuw na – geen armenbelasting geheven. Liefdadige instellingen, en dan in het bijzonder die organisaties die hulp boden aan de zogenaamde ‘huiszittende armen’ – behoeftigen die zelfstandig woonden en dus niet in bijvoorbeeld een hofje of gasthuis, en die de meerderheid van de ondersteunde armen vormden – waren financieel vaak in belangrijke mate afhankelijk van giften. Vooral donaties aan kerk- en huis-aan-huiscollectes waren onmisbaar voor de financiering van de uitdelingen van voornamelijk geld en brood die deze armenfondsen vaak op wekelijkse basis organiseerden.

Omdat bijdragen aan liefdadige inzamelingen in principe vrijwillig waren en, in tegenstelling tot bij de Engelse wijze van financieren, niet bij wet konden worden afgedwongen, ontstaat de vraag hoe armenzorginstellingen keer op keer de collectezakken en -bussen wisten te vullen. Ofwel: hoe slaagden de autoriteiten in de Republiek erin om een groot deel van de zorg voor de armen en behoeftigen te financieren uit collectegiften? Om inzicht te krijgen in het succes van de liefdadige inzamelingen wordt zowel het beleid van stadsbesturen en kerkenraden die verantwoordelijk waren voor de organisatie van collectes als het geefgedrag van de bevolking bestudeerd. Enerzijds richt het onderzoek zich dus op de vraag hoe collectes georganiseerd werden en op welke wijze de autoriteiten probeerden om de inwoners van vroegmoderne steden aan te sporen om bij te dragen; anderzijds wordt geanalyseerd wie er gaven en hoeveel gegeven werd aan verschillende doelen.

Dit proefschrift richt zich op stedelijke armenzorg, niet alleen vanwege de grote hoeveelheid literatuur die hierover al voorhanden is, maar ook omdat archiefmateriaal over collectes buiten stedelijke gebieden over het algemeen schaars is. Om het onderzoek verder af te bakenen is er gekozen voor vier *case studies*, namelijk Delft, Utrecht, Zwolle en 's-Hertogenbosch. Dat armenzorg in de Republiek een lokale aangelegenheid was, wordt mooi geïllustreerd door de verschillende manieren waarop armenzorg in deze steden georganiseerd was. Hoewel in de loop van de late middeleeuwen en voornamelijk in de zestiende eeuw de rol van stedelijke overheden in de organisatie van armenzorg groeide en er in veel plaatsen pogingen ondernomen werden om de aangeboden zorg onder toezicht van stadsbesturen te centraliseren, waren de lokale verschillen op dit gebied groot. In Delft en Zwolle werd eind zestiende eeuw een stedelijke armenzorginstelling in het leven geroepen (de Delftse Kamer van Charitate en de Zwolse Stadsarmenkamer) en raakte de gereformeerde diaconie, die de andere belangrijke hulpverstrekker was, kort daarop haar zelfstandige positie kwijt. Ook in Utrecht namen de stedelijke autoriteiten het initiatief tot het oprichten van een armenzorginstelling, de Aalmoezenierskamer geheten, maar deze bood in principe alleen zorg aan niet-gereformeerde armen en van een volledige centralisatie was in deze stad dan ook geen sprake. Nog minder was dit het geval in 's-Hertogenbosch, waar in de middeleeuwen opgerichte instellingen, namelijk de Tafel van de Heilige Geest (in de volksmond 'het Geefhuis' geheten) en de wijkorganisaties de Negen Blokken, ook na de Reformatie het grootste deel van de zorg op zich namen, hierin bijgestaan door diverse protestantse diaconieën.

Collectegiften vormden voor deze instellingen, vooral in de zeventiende eeuw, vaak de belangrijkste bron van inkomsten. Om een aantal voorbeelden te noemen, de Delftse Kamer van Charitate en de Utrechtse Aalmoezenierskamer financierden in

deze periode ruim 40 procent van de zorg die zij aanboden uit giften die in de kerken en huis-aan-huis ingezameld werden; voor de Zwolse Stadsarmenkamer was dit zelfs bijna 70 procent. Ook de diaconieën van zowel de gereformeerde kerk als van andere religieuze denominaties konden vaak het grootste deel van hun uitdelingen aan minderbedeelden betalen uit ingezamelde giften. In de achttiende eeuw, toen de Gouden Eeuw ten einde was gekomen en toen door de toenemende armoede de vraag naar zorg steeg, werden instellingen in steeds hogere mate afhankelijk van de rente over hun kapitaal en onroerend goed of van subsidies vanuit het stadsbestuur. Toch bleven ook in deze periode collectegiften van groot belang. Zo vormden zij circa 40 procent van de inkomsten van de stedelijke instellingen in Delft en Zwolle, en voor de Utrechtse gereformeerde diaconie was dit zelfs zo'n 60 procent. Bevestigd door literatuuronderzoek kan gesteld worden dat 's-Hertogenbosch wat betreft de financiering van sociale zorg een uitzondering lijkt te zijn geweest binnen de Republiek. De armenzorginstellingen in deze stad konden het grootste deel van hun zorg betalen uit rente over hun bezit dat zij voor een groot deel al hadden opgebouwd in de middeleeuwen. Collectegiften vormden gemiddeld slechts zo'n 20 procent van het budget van de Blokken; het Geefhuis hield zelfs helemaal geen collectes.

Inkomsten uit collectes waren niet alleen een belangrijke, maar het algemeen ook een stabiele bron van inkomsten. Ondanks conjuncturele schommelingen en demografische ontwikkelingen waren fluctuaties in de totaalbedragen die instellingen op jaarbasis wisten op te halen over het algemeen klein. Alleen tijdens oorlogsperiodes, en dan vooral in het rampjaar 1672 en in de Franse tijd vanaf 1795, hadden aalmoezeniers en diakenen grote moeite om de collectezakken en -bussen gevuld te krijgen. Wat deze stabiliteit nog opmerkelijker maakt is dat in sommige steden verschuivingen optraden in het belang van verschillende types collectes. Waar bij sommige instellingen bijvoorbeeld eerst kerkelijke inzamelingen het grootste deel van de collecteopbrengsten vormden, kwam aan het eind van de onderzochte periode juist het gewicht te liggen op de inkomsten van huis-aan-huiscollectes. Naast een betrouwbare inkomstenbron, vormden collectes ook een vangnet om acute financiële problemen, die bijvoorbeeld ontstonden door een extreem koude winter waarin armen extra hulp nodig hadden, het hoofd te bieden. Het organiseren van extraordinaire inzamelingen was een veelgebruikte methode om tekorten weg te werken.

Collectes vonden in vroegmoderne steden regelmatig plaats en waren moeilijk te ontwijken. Ten eerste werd er geld ingezameld tijdens kerkdiensten, die soms wel zes keer per week gehouden werden. Ten tweede werd er in alle vier de steden minstens één keer per week huis-aan-huis (of aan de huizen van de leden van één

specifiek kerkgenootschap) gecollecteerd. Naast organisaties die uitdelingen verzorgden aan huiszittende armen, hielden ook veel weeshuizen publieke collectes. Daarnaast werden er incidenteel extraordinaire inzamelingen gehouden voor plaatselijke instellingen in financiële problemen, voor nabijgelegen steden of dorpen waar een ramp, zoals een brand of watersnood, had plaatsgevonden, of voor vervolgd geloofsgenoten elders in Europa. Ten derde waren er op diverse locaties in de stad, zoals in het stadhuis en in herbergen, armenbussen te vinden voor mensen die een spontane schenking wilden doen. Op al deze inzamelingen werd toezicht gehouden door de stedelijke en religieuze autoriteiten. Om een publieke collecte te organiseren was toestemming nodig vanuit het stadhuis; kerkenraden (en soms ook stadsbesturen) hadden zeggenschap over inzamelingen tijdens diensten. Stedelijke autoriteiten hielden bovendien toezicht op de financiën van armenzorginstellingen, zagen erop toe dat collectes volgens de regels plaatsvonden, en bestreden fraude, wat het vertrouwen onder de bevolking dat donaties goed besteed zouden worden moest vergroten.

Stadsbesturen en kerkenraden probeerden in hun collectebeleid de juiste omstandigheden voor vrijgevigheid te creëren. Ze maakten gebruik van zowel organisatorische als retorische strategieën om de bevolking aan te sporen om bij te dragen. Zo werden collectes, en dan vooral de inzamelingen die slechts enkele keren per jaar plaatsvonden, uitgebreid aangekondigd. Kerkgangers werden door dominees en kerkenraadsleden onderwezen over de christelijke plicht om aan de armen te geven; en aanplakbiljetten die verspreid werden door de stad alsmede de rondgaande stadsomroeper maakten ook de overige stedelingen bewust van een aanstaande liefdadige inzameling. De autoriteiten probeerden de collectes bovendien zodanig in te plannen dat de hoogst mogelijke opbrengst verwacht kon worden voor doelen waar zij veel waarde aan hechtten. Inzamelingen voor externe doelen werden bijvoorbeeld alleen toegestaan als verwacht werd dat deze de vrijgevigheid aan de collectes voor lokale instellingen niet negatief zouden beïnvloeden, en stedelijke organisaties kregen voorrang boven religieuze. Ook lijken autoriteiten zich ervan bewust te zijn geweest dat de frequentie van collecteren invloed had op wat mensen gaven. In Delft, Utrecht en 's-Hertogenbosch mochten de publieke instellingen zowel wekelijks als eens of enkele keren per jaar langs de deuren gaan, wat een gunstige combinatie bleek te zijn. De wekelijkse inzamelingen brachten op jaarbasis het meeste op, maar door ook rond te gaan tijdens Christelijke feestdagen konden op één dag (en dus met minimale inspanning) hoge bedragen worden opgehaald. Soms werd de druk op de bevolking opgevoerd door predikanten, burgemeesters of schouten langs de deuren te laten gaan om giften in te zamelen. Niet zelden gebeurde dit met

open schalen, zodat niet alleen gezien kon worden of iemand gaf, maar ook hoeveel gegeven werd.

Niet alleen door het inzetten van organisatorische collectestrategieën, maar ook op retorische wijze probeerden de autoriteiten de bevolking aan te moedigen om bij te dragen. In hun preken benadrukten dominees dat liefdadigheid een christenplicht was en dat niemand zich aan de noodzaak om de naasten bij te staan mocht onttrekken. Sommige predikanten beweerden zelfs dat gierigaards de Tien Geboden overtraden en dat niet-geven gelijk stond aan diefstal en moord. Een interessante bevinding is dat protestanten nog steeds beloofd werd dat liefdadigheid in het hiernamaals beloond zou worden, alhoewel dit duidelijk inging tegen de theologische doctrine die stelde dat zaligheid alleen door het geloof en niet door goede werken verworven kon worden. Ook stadsbesturen maakten in hun publieke aankondiging van collectes duidelijk dat niet alleen de rijken, maar iedereen die een paar muntjes kon missen, geacht werd bij te dragen. Vaak kondigden ze aan dat collectanten, zonder uitzondering alle huizen zouden langsgaan. Inwoners van Delft die niet thuis konden zijn tijdens een collecte werd zelfs aangeraden om een familielid of een andere huisgenoot te vragen om namens hen te geven. Stedelijke autoriteiten benadrukten evenals predikanten dat geven een christenplicht was die beloond zou worden in het hiernamaals. Zij maakten daarnaast gebruik van een aantal overtuigingsmethoden om vrijgevigheid op te wekken. Zo probeerden zij door de ellendige situatie van de armen uitvoerig te bespreken, een gevoel van medelijden op te wekken. Daarnaast wilden ze door hun toezichthoudende rol te benadrukken de bevolking het vertrouwen geven dat donaties goed besteed zouden worden. Een andere methode hield in dat ze erop wezen dat niet alleen de armen, maar ook de rijken zelf zouden profiteren van de giften, voornamelijk door de beloning die hen wachtte in het hiernamaals. Als laatste benadrukten stadsbesturen dat mensen geacht werden om naar vermogen te geven en maakten zij duidelijk dat ook kleine giften welkom waren en dat iedereen geacht werd zijn deel te betalen.

Over het algemeen kan gesteld worden dat het beleid van de autoriteiten succesvol was. Niet alleen werden er op jaarlijkse basis hoge bedragen opgehaald, bovendien droegen niet alleen de rijken, maar bijna alle lagen van de stedelijke samenleving bij aan de collectes. Om een voorbeeld te geven, toen in Zwolle in de jaren 1660 een inzameling werd georganiseerd om geld op te halen voor de bouw van een nieuw weeshuis, gaf zo'n 80 procent van de bevolking, zo blijkt uit de collecteboeken waarin de bijdragen werden opgetekend. Ook het feit dat instellingen op frequente basis een groot aantal munten en bovendien veel kleine munten wisten op te halen, toont aan dat giften niet alleen afkomstig waren van een rijke elite, maar van een veel grotere groep weldoeners. De bovengenoemde collectestrategieën

brachten bovendien het gewenste resultaat: door ophanden zijnde inzamelingen uitgebreid aan te kondigen, door ze strategisch in te plannen, door de sociale druk te verhogen en door anonimiteit in het geven te verlagen, kon het geefgedrag van de bevolking worden beïnvloed. Dit blijkt onder andere uit het feit dat mensen vele male vrijgeviger waren als er met open schalen in plaats van met gesloten collectebussen werd gecollecteerd. Vooral voor eenmalige collectes, of voor inzamelingen die slechts enkele keren per jaar plaatsvonden, konden op deze wijze hoge bedragen worden opgehaald, oplopend tot vele duizenden guldens per collecte per stad.

Toch bleken niet alle instellingen in staat om de collectebussen gevuld te krijgen, wat aangeeft dat het beleid van de autoriteiten ook zijn grenzen had. In 's-Hertogenbosch, waar een groot deel van de bevolking trouw bleef aan de rooms-katholieke kerk, werd twee keer per jaar een collecte georganiseerd voor zowel een katholiek als voor een burgerweeshuis, waarbij de laatste veel meer moeite ondervond om geld in te zamelen dan de eerste. In diezelfde stad bleek het voor een armenfonds dat behoeftige gevangenen ondersteunde, een groep die niet bepaald tot de categorie van 'eerlijke armen' werd gerekend, zelfs bijna geheel onmogelijk om de bevolking aan te sporen tot vrijgevigheid. Uit deze voorbeelden blijkt dat zonder maatschappelijk draagvlak en een bevolking die overtuigd was van de legitimiteit van de liefdadige oproepen, de pogingen van de autoriteiten om geld in te zamelen weinig resultaat opleverden. Ook het feit dat in de achttiende eeuw de inkomsten uit collectes niet meestegen met de toenemende vraag naar zorg, toont de grenzen van het vrijwillig geven aan. De autoriteiten konden mensen aansporen, maar nooit dwingen om bij te dragen.

Hoewel grote delen van de samenleving gaven, droeg niet iedereen in gelijke mate bij. Uit een vergelijking tussen collectelijsten van een eenmalige inzameling in Delft in 1749 met belastingregisters, die beide een indeling per stadsdistrict geven, blijkt dat in de delen van de stad waar de hoogste donaties werden opgehaald, de bevolking ook het hoogst aangeslagen werd voor belasting. Uit dit geven naar vermogen kan geconcludeerd worden dat vooral de elite en de middengroepen een substantiële bijdrage aan de collectes en dus aan de financiering van vroegmoderne armenzorg leverden. De grote hoeveelheden kleine muntstukken, en dan vooral de duiten, die waarschijnlijk in ieder geval deels door de lagere sociale groepen werden gegeven, vormden slechts een klein deel van de opbrengsten. Dat de autoriteiten desondanks moeite deden om met grote regelmaat huis-aan-huis geld op te halen en al die kleine muntjes in te zamelen, toont aan dat er grote waarde werd gehecht aan een brede financiële basis in de samenleving. De financiering van sociale zorg werd gezien als de gedeelde verantwoordelijkheid van de gehele stedelijke samenleving, en

de verschillende sociale lagen droegen bij met het idee dat andere groepen dat ook zouden doen.

Al met al kan worden geconcludeerd dat stedelijke en religieuze autoriteiten, ondanks de afwezigheid van een wettelijk en verplicht kader omtrent het geven, over effectieve methoden beschikten om de bevolking over te halen om financieel bij te dragen. Het creëren van bewustzijn, het opwekken van vertrouwen en het uitoefenen van druk vormden de drie kernelementen van het vroegmoderne collectebeleid. Nog minder dan collectes, waren de aankondigingen van liefdadige inzamelingen moeilijk te vermijden. Door toezicht te houden op zowel de financiële situatie van de instellingen als op het collecteproces, probeerden de autoriteiten bovendien vertrouwen te creëren dat donaties goed besteed zouden worden. Dat armenzorginstellingen over het algemeen goed financieel beheerd werden, zal positief hebben bijgedragen aan hun reputatie en ook aan de bereidheid van de bevolking om te doneren. De sociale druk moest daarnaast mensen ervan verzekeren dat hun burens en andere stadsgenoten ook hun deel zouden betalen.

Stadsbesturen en kerkenraden maakten dus gebruik van zowel positieve als negatieve prikkels om vrijgevigheid op te wekken. Niet alleen probeerden ze de juiste omstandigheden te creëren waarin de stedelingen bereid waren om ruimhartig te geven aan de armen voor wie gecollecteerd werd, ze wilden bovendien bewerkstelligen dat maar weinigen durfden te weigeren om te geven. De collectestrategieën moeten echter geenszins gezien worden als een alomvattende verklaring voor de over het algemeen grote bereidheid onder de bevolking om aan collectes te geven. Ook het feit dat armenzorg in de Republiek relatief goed georganiseerd was, alsmede de zichtbaarheid van de vele armenzorginstellingen in de samenleving, zullen mensen hebben gemotiveerd om bij te dragen aan de financiering van een deel van die voorzieningen. Bovendien kan worden gesteld dat het gefragmenteerde karakter van de sociale zorg, waarbij veel liefdadige instellingen niet alleen opereerden op lokaal niveau, maar daarbinnen zorg verleenden aan religieuze gemeenschappen of aan de inwoners van een bepaalde wijk, ook deze bereidheid tot geven in de hand gewerkt zal hebben. Daarnaast is de relatieve welvaart van de Republiek en de aanwezigheid van een grote middengroepen in de steden van groot belang bij het verklaren van het niveau van de vroegmoderne Nederlandse armenzorg.

Het zou gesteld kunnen worden dat de regelingen die in de Republiek bestonden om sociale zorg te financieren kwetsbaarder waren dan een belastingsysteem. Niet alleen omdat de liefdadige instellingen altijd afhankelijk waren van de bereidheid van de bevolking om te geven, maar ook omdat een systeem gebaseerd op vrijwilligheid wellicht gevoeliger was voor crises. Echter, ook bij

belastingheffing waren autoriteiten afhankelijk van de mogelijkheid en bereidheid van mensen om bij te dragen. Om zowel belastingontwijking als -oproeren te voorkomen, was maatschappelijk draagvlak van groot belang en moest de belastingdruk eerlijk over de samenleving worden verdeeld. Bovendien blijkt uit dit proefschrift dat de gebruikte collectestrategieën de Nederlandse armenzorginstellingen hielpen om over het algemeen relatief hoge en stabiele bedragen op te halen, die zo lijkt het nauwelijks door economische en demografische omstandigheden werden beïnvloed. In sommige steden werden ondanks afnemende bevolkingsaantallen vanaf de late zeventiende eeuw, toch over een periode van bijna twee eeuwen op jaarlijkse basis vergelijkbare bedragen opgehaald. Bovendien waren instellingen nooit puur en alleen afhankelijk van giften, en waren er ook andere inkomstenbronnen aanwezig om eventuele tegenvallende collecteopbrengsten op te vangen, wat het stelsel nog verder verstevigde.

## *Appendix A*

### Financial administration of poor relief institutions

#### Delft

##### *Chamber of Charity*

Data have been used for the years 1624-1628 and 1641-1800, see: AD, Kamer van Charitate, inv. nos. 1, 208 and 287-290. Samples have been taken from the accounts of the charity's estate agent to calculate the division between income from capital and real estate possessions on the one hand and from subsidies on the other hand for the period before 1716. The accounts from the following years have been used: 1628, 1641, 1642, 1643, 1644, 1645, 1650, 1655, 1660, 1665, 1670, 1675, 1680, 1685, 1690, 1695, 1700, 1705, 1710 and 1715, see: AD, Kamer van Charitate, inv. nos. 210, 212-221, 224, 226 and 235.

##### *Remonstrant Church*

Samples have been taken for the years 1705, 1734-1735 (the account covers two years) and 1765, see: AD, Remonstrants-Gereformeerde gemeente, inv. nos. 115 and 116. There are no separate account books available of the church's charitable activities. The financial administration from the seventeenth century has due to its incoherent character not been used.

##### *Lutheran Diaconate*

Samples have been taken for the years 1770, 1775, 1780, 1785, 1790, 1795 and 1800, see: AD, Evangelisch-Lutherse gemeente, inv. no. 537. These accounts only include the financial administration of the congregation's deacons.

##### *Walloon Diaconate*

Samples have been taken for the years 1650, 1700, 1750 and 1800, see: AD, Waalse kerk, inv. nos. 844, 849, 851 and 852. These accounts only include the financial administration of the congregation's deacons.

## Zwolle

### *City Poor Chamber*

Data have been used for the years 1656-1683, 1692-1694, 1723, 1743-1793 and 1795-1800, see: HCO, Stadsarmenkamer, inv. no. 91 and 97 and HCO, SA, inv. nos. 10105-10111 and 10124-10125. NB: These data have partly been collected by Elise van Nederveen Meerkerk.

### *Dutch Reformed Poor Chamber*

Samples have been taken for the years 1770, 1780, 1790 and 1800, see: HCO, Hervormde Gemeente, inv. no. 323.

### *Mennonite Church*

Samples have been taken for the years 1700, 1710, 1720, 1730, 1740, 1750, 1760 and 1770, see: HCO, Doopsgezinde gemeente, inv. no. 155. There are no separate account books available of the church's charitable activities. The financial administration from the late seventeenth century has due to its incoherent character not been used. The accounts from the last decades of the eighteenth century, which can be found in inv. no. 156, could not be included because the collection revenues are often mentioned jointly with other income items.

### *Catholic Poor Chamber*

Samples have been taken for the years 1765, 1775, 1785, 1795 and 1805, see: HCO, Rooms-katholieke armenkamer, inv. no. 43.

## Utrecht

### *Almoners' Chamber*

Data have been used for the years 1630-1637 and 1639-1794, see: HUA, Aalmoezenierskamer, inv. no. 1827. NB: These data have partly been collected by Elise van Nederveen Meerkerk.

### *Reformed Diaconate*

Data have been used for the years 1727-1731, 1776-1790 and 1792-1800 (the accounts run from July until July; the accounts on July 1790-July 1792 could due to incompleteness not be included), see: HUA, Diaconie, inv. nos. 538-551. NB: These data have partly been collected by Elise van Nederveen Meerkerk.

### *Mennonite Diaconate*

Samples have been taken for the years 1730, 1740, 1750, 1760, 1770 and 1780, see: HUA, Doopsgezinde gemeente, inv. no. 316. These accounts only include the financial administration of the congregation's poor relief administrator.

### *English Church*

Samples have been taken for the years 1760, 1770, 1780 and 1790, see: HUA, Engelse kerk, inv. no. 849. There are no separate account books available of the church's charitable activities.

### *Remonstrant Church*

Samples have been taken for the years 1660, 1670 and 1690, see: HUA, Remonstrantse gemeente, inv. nos. 461-462. There are no separate account books available of the church's charitable activities.

### *Walloon Diaconate*

Samples have been taken for the years 1760 and 1790, see: HUA, Waalse gemeente, inv. nos. 229 and 232. These accounts only include the financial administration of the congregation's deacons.

## 's-Hertogenbosch

### *House of Giving*

Several studies mention that the House of Giving did not organize collections, see e.g. De Kruif, 'De prijs van de armenzorg' and Kappelhof, 'Het Bossche Geefhuis'. De Kruif also gives an overview of the income and expenditure of this charitable institution in the second half of the eighteenth century. Moreover, account books from the years 1650, 1700 and 1750 have been checked, in which indeed no income from collections can be found. For the financial administration of the House of Giving, see: SH, Geefhuis, inv. nos. 405a-607.

### *Blocks*

For the Blocks, because providing an overview of the complete income structures of these nine charities for a period of two centuries would be too labour-intensive, only data has been gathered on collection gifts as a share of the total income. The percentages given in Table 3.1 are estimates based on samples taken every ten years from the Blocks' financial administration (see below). For some years no account books have been preserved and, if possible, years have been substituted by other years for which data were available. The Blocks received a small part of their income in rye, which has not been converted to guilders. However, the percentages of the second half of the eighteenth century do not differ significantly from the data that De Kruif has gathered for that period, see de Kruif, 'De prijs van de armenzorg'.

For the *Blok van de Markt en Tolbrug* samples have been taken for the years 1600-1601, 1609-1610, 1619-1620, 1629-1630, 1639-1640, 1649-1650, 1669-1670, 1689-1690, 1699-1700, 1709-1710, 1719-1720, 1729-1730, 1739-1740, 1749-1750, 1759-1760, 1769-1770, 1779-1780, 1789-1790 and 1799-1800 (the account from the year 1600-1601 runs from July until July, the one from the year 1629-1630 runs from November until November, all other accounts run from October until October), see: SH, Blok A, inv. nos. 5-15.

For the *Blok van de Orthenstraat en het Orteneinde* samples have been taken for the years 1759-1760, 1769-1770, 1779-1780, 1789-1790 and 1799-1800 (the account from the year 1759-1760 runs from October until October, all other accounts run from December until December), see: SH, Blok B, inv. nos. 27-29.

For the *Blok van de Hinthamerstraat* samples have been taken for the years 1600-1601, 1610-1611, 1620-1621, 1630-1631, 1640-1641, 1650-1651, 1660-1661, 1670-1671, 1680-1681, 1690-1691, 1700-1701, 1710-1711, 1720-1721, 1730-1731, 1740-

1741, 1750-1751, 1760-1761, 1770-1771, 1780-1781, 1790-1791 and 1800-1801 (all accounts run from January until January), see: SH, Blok C, inv. nos. 37-42, 44-48 and 50-55.

For the *Blok van het Hinthamereinde* samples have been taken for the years 1599-1600, 1609-1610, 1619-1620, 1629-1630, 1639-1640, 1649-1650, 1668-1669, 1680-1681, 1689-1690, 1700, 1710, 1720, 1730, 1740, 1750, 1760, 1770, 1790 and 1800 (the accounts up to and including the year 1690 run from December until December; from 1700 onwards they run from January until January), see: SH, Blok D, inv. nos. 69, 71-75 and 77-84.

For the *Blok van de Kerk- en Verwerstraat* samples have been taken for the years 1737-1738, 1782-1783, 1789-1790 and 1801-1802 (all accounts run from December until December), see: SH, Blok E, inv. nos. 108C, 109, 111.

For the *Blok van de Weversplaats* samples have been taken for the years 1660-1661, 1669-1670, 1679-1680, 1689-1690, 1699-1700, 1709-1710, 1719-1720, 1729-1730, 1739-1740, 1749-1750, 1759-1760, 1769-1770, 1779-1780, 1789-1790 and 1799-1800 (all accounts run from December until December), see: SH, Blok F, inv. nos. 120-126.

For the *Blok van de Vismarkt* samples have been taken for the years 1620-1621, 1643-1644, 1651-1652, 1660-1661, 1670-1671, 1681-1682, 1690-1691, 1700-1701, 1710-1711, 1720-1721, 1730-1731, 1740-1741, 1750-1751, 1760-1761, 1770-1771, 1780-1781, 1790-1791 and 1800-1801 (the accounts up to and including the year 1691 run from February until February, from 1700 onwards they run from January until January), see: SH, Blok G, inv. nos. 136-146.

For the *Blok van de Vughterstraat* samples have been taken for the years 1609-1610, 1619-1620, 1639-1640, 1649-1650, 1659-1660, 1689-1690, 1699-1700, 1709-1710, 1719-1720, 1732-1733, 1739-1740, 1749-1750, 1759-1760, 1769-1770, 1779-1780, 1789-1790 and 1799-1800 (the accounts from the years 1639-1640, 1649-1650 and 1659-1660 run from November until October, the one from 1769-1770 runs from September until September, all other accounts run from October until October), see: SH, Blok H, inv. nos. 159-169.

For the *Blok van de Vughterdijk* samples have been taken for the years 1619-1620, 1629-1630, 1639-1640, 1649-1650, 1679-1680, 1689-1690, 1699-1700, 1709-1710, 1719-1720, 1729-1730, 1739-1740, 1749-1750, 1759-1760, 1769-1770, 1779-1780, 1789-1790 and 1799-1800 (all accounts run from December until December), see: SH, Blok I, inv. nos. 183-192, 193C and 194A.

#### *Reformed Diaconate*

Data have been used for the years 1735-1764 and 1766-1800, see: SH, Diaconie, inv. nos. 257-294.

#### *Lutheran Church*

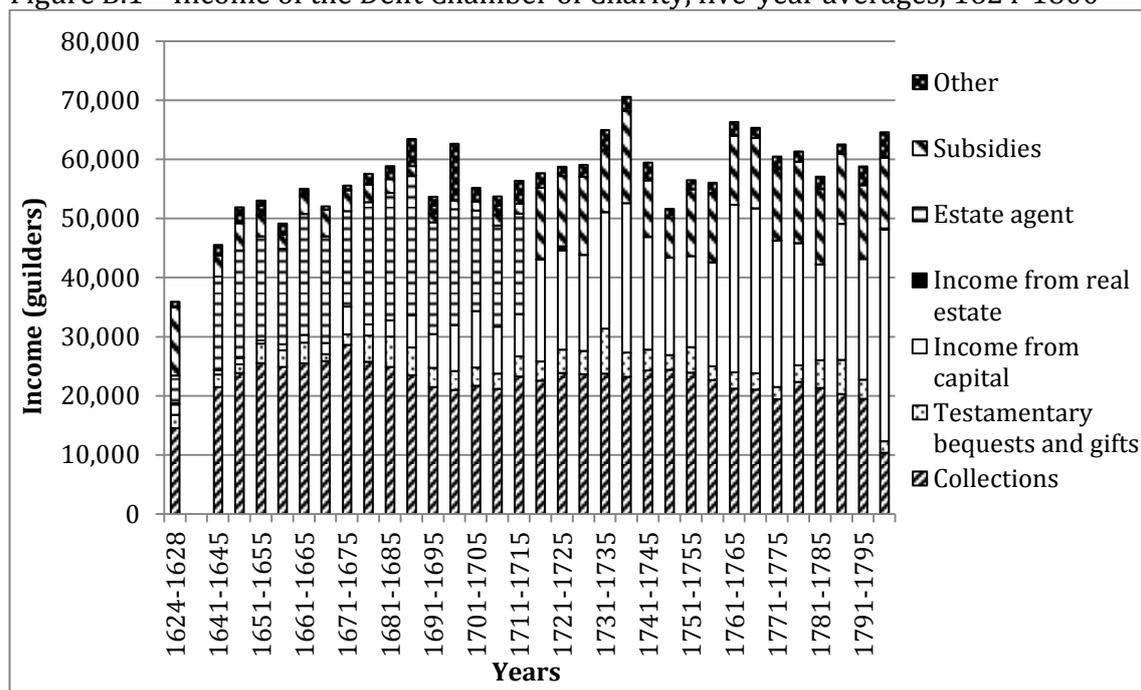
Samples have been taken for the years 1760, 1770, 1780, 1790 and 1800, see: SH, Evangelisch-Lutherse kerk, inv. nos. 34-36. There are no separate account books available of the church's charitable activities.

## Appendix B

### Income of poor relief institutions

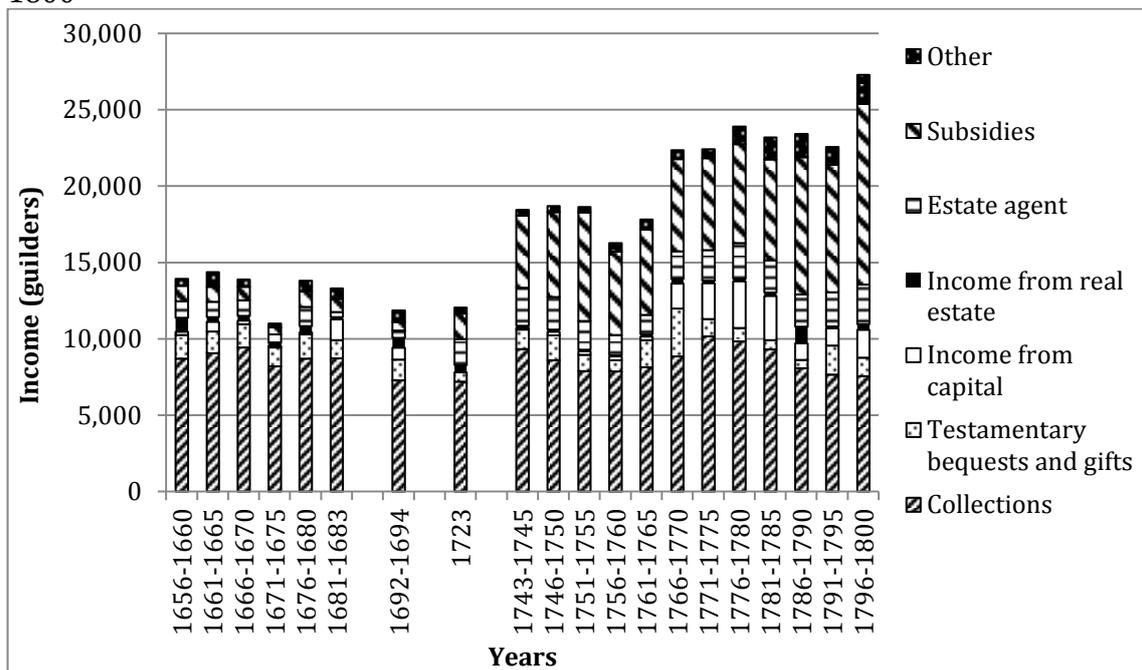
NB: For Figures in which the data have been corrected for inflation, see Appendix C. For sources see Appendix A. Surpluses of the previous year have not been included in the Figures.

Figure B.1 – Income of the Delft Chamber of Charity, five-year averages, 1624-1800



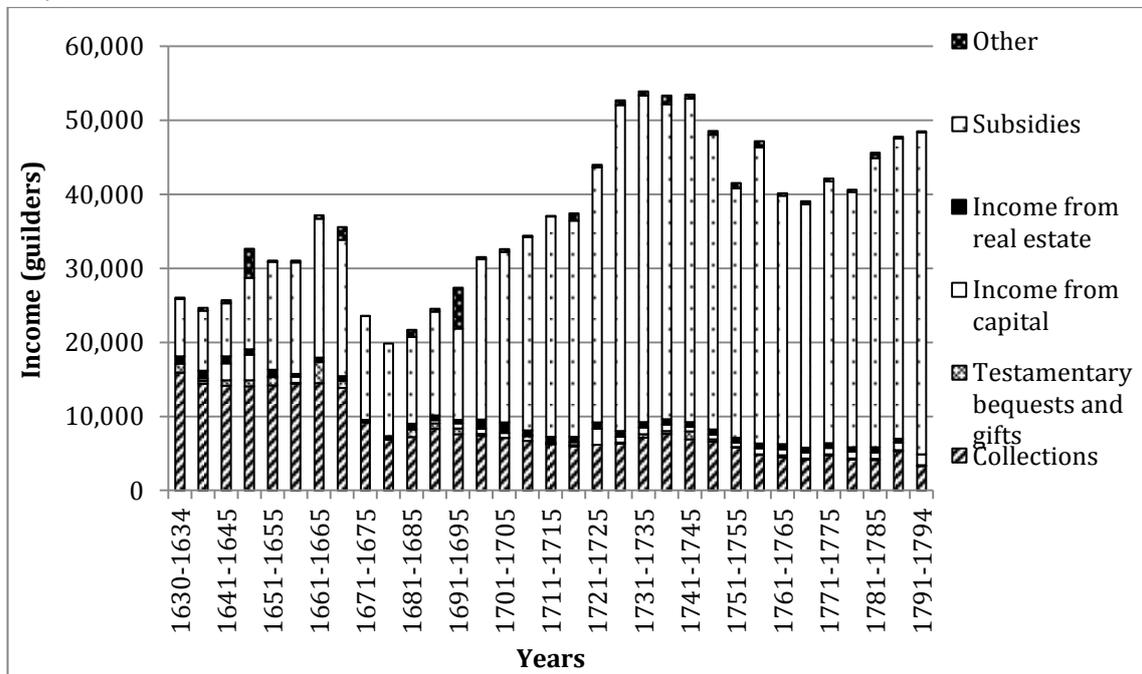
NB: For the explanation of the category of 'estate agent' see chapter 3.

Figure B.2 – Income of the City Poor Chamber in Zwolle, five-year averages, 1656-1800



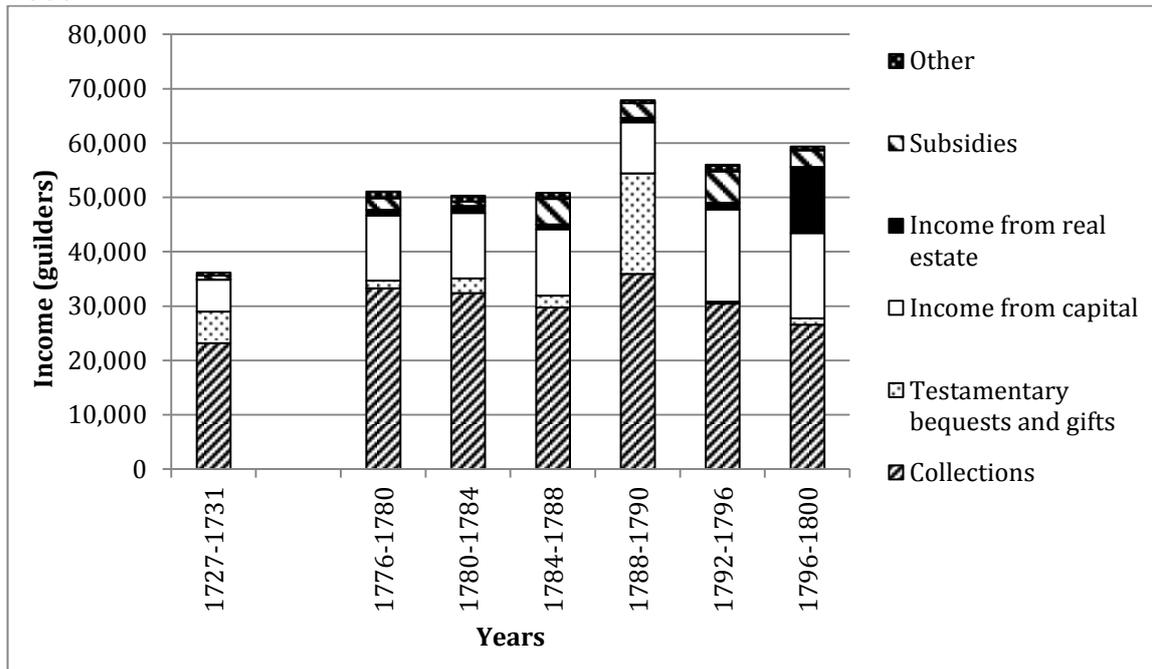
NB: For the explanation of the category of 'estate agent' see chapter 3. Three-year averages for 1681-1683, 1692-1694 and 1743-1745. One-year average for 1723. No data for 1794.

Figure B.3 – Income of the Almoners' Chamber in Utrecht, five-year averages, 1630-1794



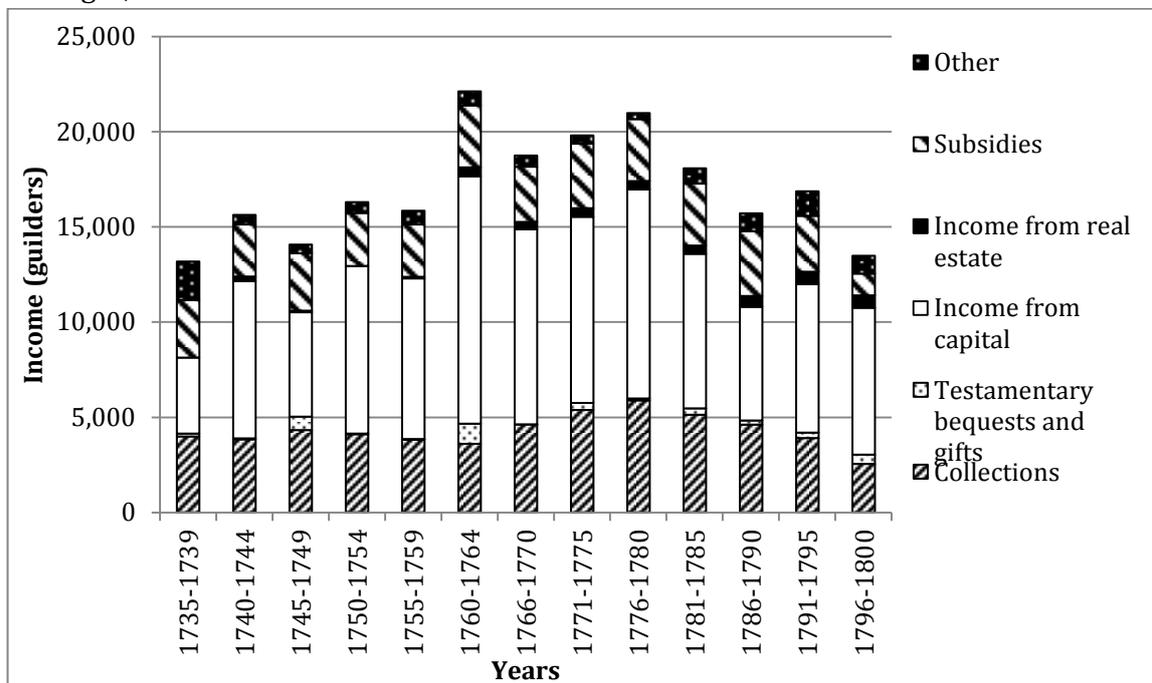
NB: Four-year average for 1791-1794.

Figure B.4 – Income of the Reformed Diaconate in Utrecht, four-year averages, 1727-1800



NB: The years run from July until July. Two-year average for 1788-1790.

Figure B.5 – Income of the Reformed Diaconate in 's-Hertogenbosch, five-year averages, 1735-1800



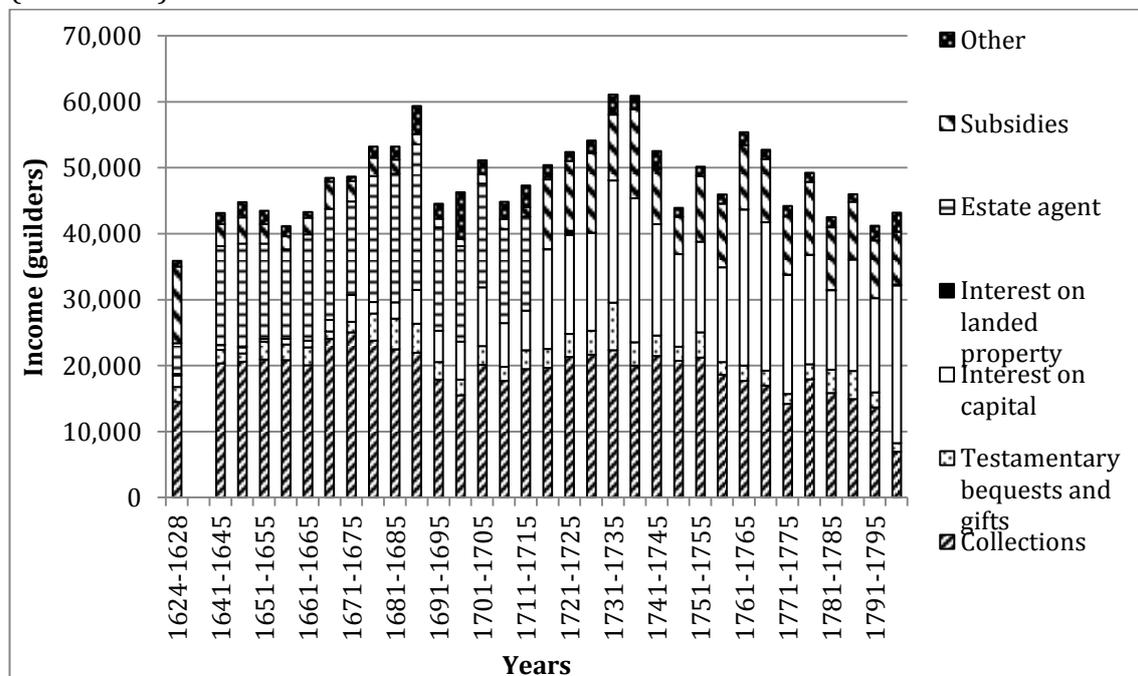


## Appendix C

### Income of poor relief institutions corrected for inflation

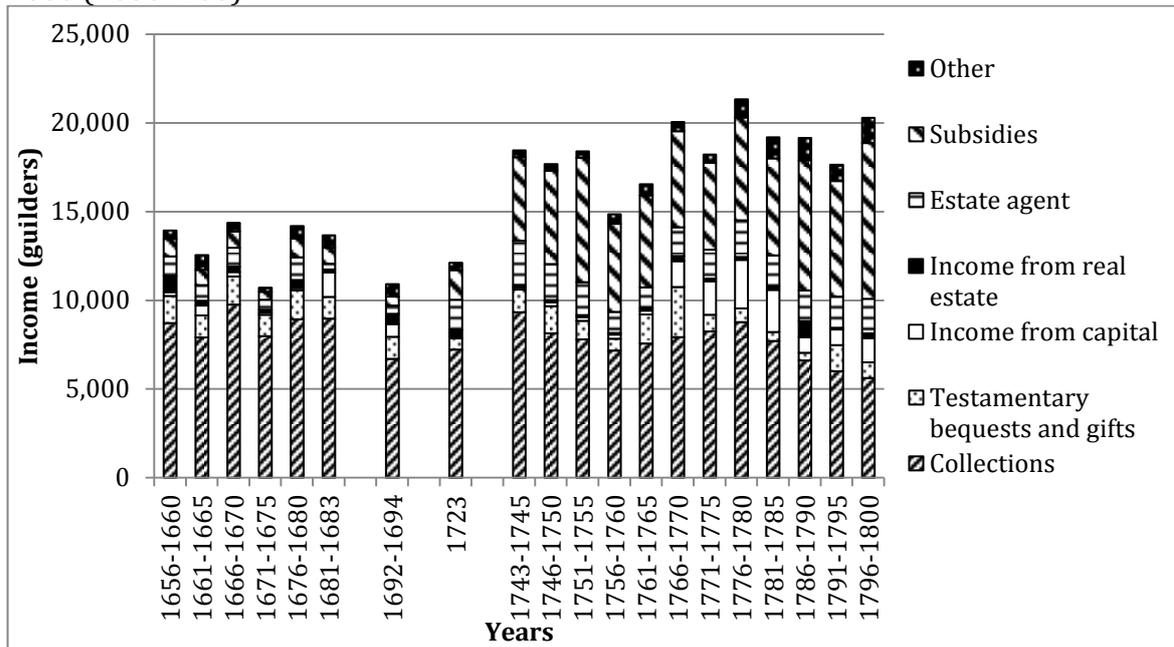
NB: The inflation correction is based on the consumer price index for the early modern period for the western part of the Netherlands as calculated by Jan Luiten van Zanden; see <http://www.iisg.nl/hpw/brenv.php> (last viewed 18 October 2013). For Figures in which the data have not been corrected for inflation, see Appendix B. For sources see Appendix A. Surpluses of the previous year have not been included in the Figures.

Figure C.1 – Income of the Delft Chamber of Charity, five-year averages, 1624-1800 (1624=100)



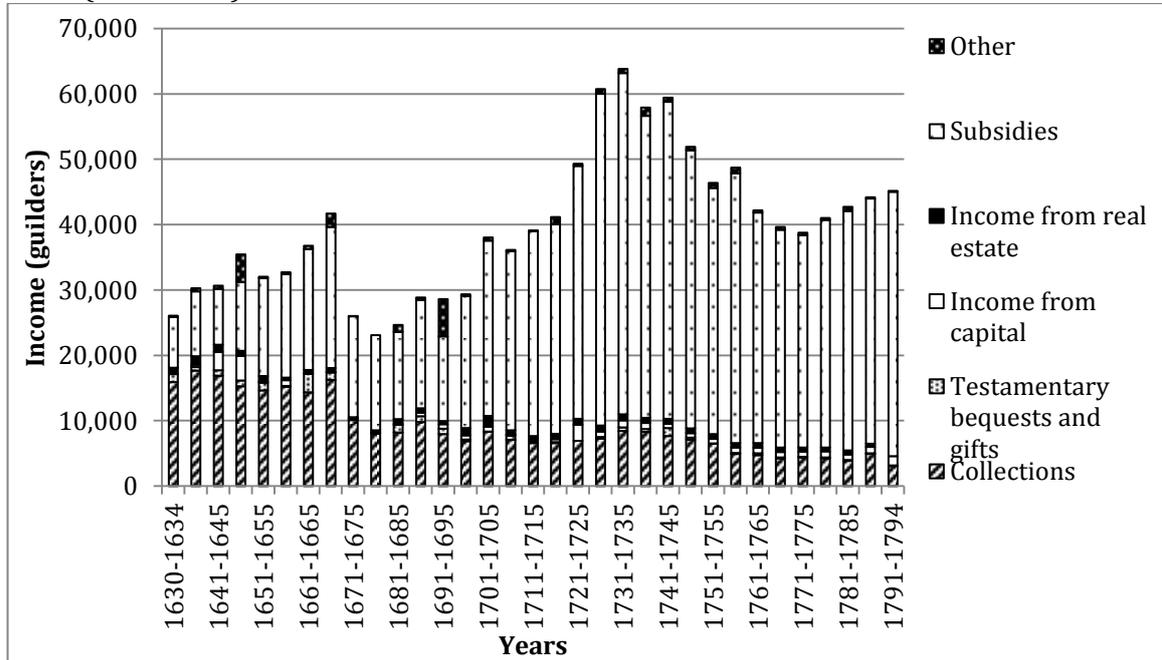
NB: For the explanation of the category of 'estate agent' see chapter 3.

Figure C.2 – Income of the City Poor Chamber in Zwolle, five-year averages, 1656-1800 (1656=100)



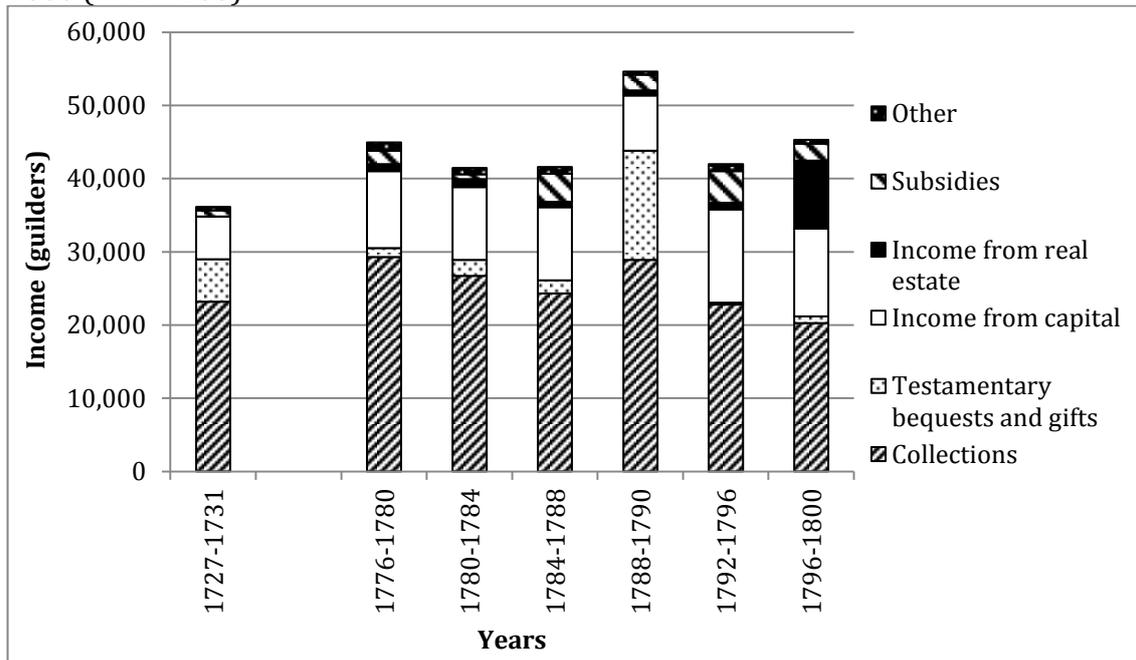
NB: For the explanation of the category of 'estate agent' see chapter 3. Three-year averages for 1681-1683, 1692-1694 and 1743-1745. One-year average for 1723. No data for 1794.

Figure C.3 – Income of the Almoners' Chamber in Utrecht, five-year averages, 1630-1794 (1630=100)



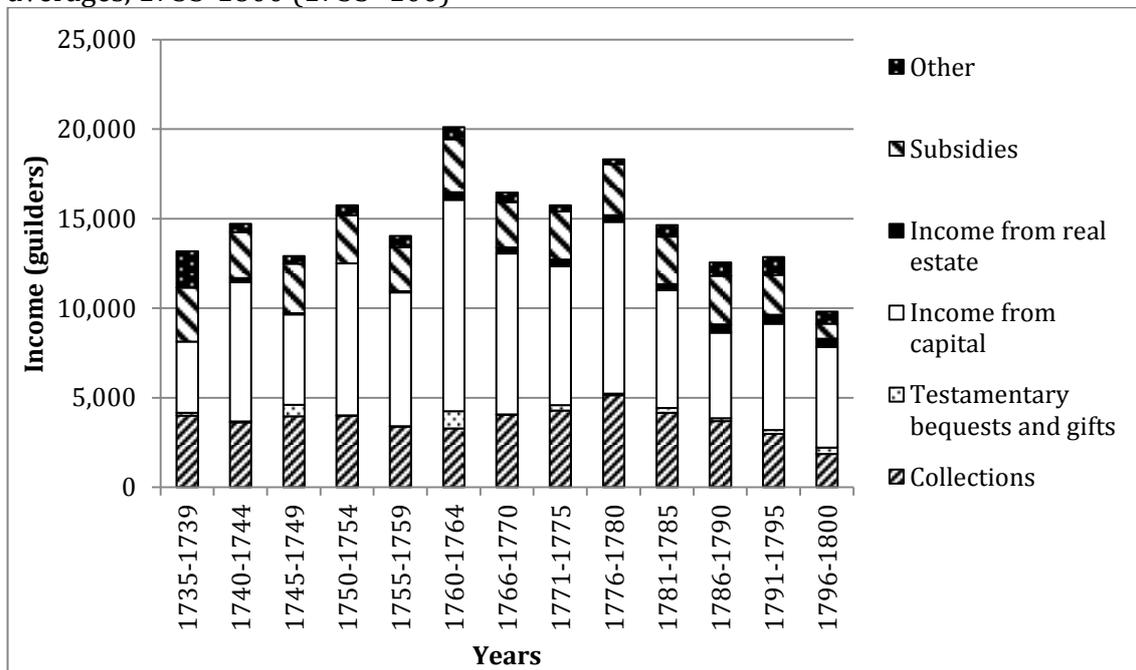
NB: No data for 1638; four-year average for 1791-1794.

Figure C.4 – Income of the Reformed Diaconate in Utrecht, four-year averages, 1727-1800 (1727=100)



NB: The years run from July until July. Two-year average for 1788-1790.

Figure C.5 – Income of the Reformed Diaconate in 's-Hertogenbosch, five-year averages, 1735-1800 (1735=100)





## Appendix D

### Sermons and religious writings

#### Sermons on the Heidelberg Catechism

- Beeltsnyder, J., *Anathomie, dat is: ontledinghe des christelijcken catechismi* (Amsterdam, 1651).
- Beukelman, J., *De leer der waarheid tot godzaligheid of volledige verklaring van de Heidelbergse catechismus* (Kampen, 2008; first edition 1774).
- Bossche, P. vanden, *Den catholycken pedagoge oft christelycken onderwyser inden catechismus* (Antwerpen, 1685).
- Bouma, G. de, *De vermeerderde christelycke catechismus der Nederlandsche gereformeerde kercken* (Amsterdam, 1681; first edition 1656).
- Bouma, G. de, *Christelicke Catechismus der Nederlandtsche Gereformeerde Kercken* (Dordrecht, 1642).
- Coccejus, J., *De Heydelbergse catechismus der christelijker religie* (Amsterdam, 1679; first edition 1671).
- Curtenius, P., *Leerredenen over den Heidelbergschen Catechismus*, 4 vols. (Leiden, 1790-2).
- Gargon, M., *De eenige troost, of Heidelbergsche Katechismus, geopend en betoond* (Leiden, 1710).
- Gentman, C., *Uitbreidinge over de catechismus, in vragen en antwoorden* (Utrecht, 1692).
- Groenewegen, H., *Oefeningen over den Heidelbergschen catechismus* (Leiden, 1706; first edition 1679).
- Groot, J. de, *Tien predikation over de tien geboden. XXXIII predikation* (Amsterdam, 1754).
- Hagen, P. van der, *De Heydelbergsche catechismus, verklaert in twee-en-vyftigh predikation* (Amsterdam, 1736; first edition 1676).
- Kemp, J. van der, *De christen geheel en al het eigendom van Christus in leven en sterven* (Ermelo, 2009; first edition 1717).
- Knibbe, D., *De leere der Gereformeerde Kerk volgens de order van de Heydelbergse Katechismus* (Leiden, 1696; first edition 1689).
- Martinus, J., *Grottere catechisatie over den catechismus der waren Christelijcken Religie* (Leeuwarden, 1686; first edition 1665).
- Molenaar, S., *Bybel-merch, ofte Kort begrip der ware godsgeleerdheid*, 2 vols (Amsterdam, 1766; first edition 1723).
- Outrein, J. d', *Het gouden kleinoot van de leere der waarheid die naar de godsaligheid is* (Amsterdam, 1738; first edition 1719).

- Palier, J.C., *Leerredenen over den Heidelbergschen Catechismus* ('s-Hertogenbosch, 1792).
- Reiners, H., *Gods onfeilbare waarheden voorgesteld in eene verklaringe over den Heidelbergschen catechismus* (Hoorn, 1760).
- Ridderus, F., *Sevenvoudige oeffeningen over de catechismus*, 2 vols. (Rotterdam, 1671).
- Sibersma, H., *Fontein des heils, aangewesen in den Heidelbergsen Catechismus* (Amsterdam, 1696).
- Smytegelt, B., *Des Christens eenige troost in leven en sterven of verklaring van de Heidelbergse Catechismus in 52 predikaties* (Houten, 1986; first edition 1742).
- Teellinck, M., *Grondighe verklaringhe, over de Thien Geboden* (Middelburgh, 1639).
- Til, S. van, *Kerk-redeningen over den Heidelbergschen catechismus* (Utrecht, 1725).
- Tuinman, C., *De toevlucht en sterkte van het ware christendom in leven en sterven* (Amsterdam, 1739).
- Udemans, G.C., *Practycke, dat is, Werckelijcke oeffeninge van de christelijke hoofddeughden, geloove, hope ende liefde* (Dordrecht, 1658; first edition 1612).
- Ursinus, Z., *Schat-boek der verklaringen over den Nederlandsche catechismus*, 2 vols. (Dordrecht, 1978; first edition 1617).
- Vermeer, J., *De leere der waarheid die na de Godzaligheid is, voorgesteld, bevestigd en toegepast in LXXXV. oeffeningen over den Heidelbergschen Catechismus*, 2 vols. (Ermelo, 2006; first edition 1749-50).
- Voetius, G., *Catechisatie over den Catechismus der Remonstranten* (Utrecht, 1641).
- Voetius, G., *Voetius' catechisatie over den Heidelbergse Catechismus. Naar Poudroyen's editie van 1662 op nieuw uitgegeven, bij ons publiek ingeleid en met enkele aantekeningen voorzien* (Rotterdam, 1891).
- Vollenhoven, C. van, *De zuiver en beproefde waarheden, begrepen in den Heidelbergse Catechismus* (Amsterdam, 1756).
- Witte, P. de, *Catechisatie over den Heidelbergschen Catechismus der Gereformeerde Christelicke Religie* (Hoorn, 1652).

### Regular sermons

- Borstius, J., *Vyftien predicatien over verscheide texten van de Heylige Schrifture, behelsende de voornaamste pligten van een christelijk leven* (Amsterdam, 1696).
- Claude, J., *Recueil de sermons sur divers textes de l'Ecriture sainte* (Genève, 1693).
- Delo, Ch., *Sermon [...] composé a l'occasion d'une collecte [...] en faveur des eglises vaudoises du Piemont* (Amsterdam, 1765).
- Episcopius, S., *Uytlegginge over het vijfde capittel des H. euangelisten Mattheus, vervatet in XXXIV. Predicatie* (Rotterdam, 1657).
- Gentman Leidekker, K., *Het laatste huis verheerlykt boven het eerste huis, voorgesteld in eene kerkreeden, uit Haggai II: 10. Gedaan ter plechtige inwijnging van de groote kerke te Bergen op ten Zoom* (Bergen op Zoom, 1752).
- Hillers, H., *De gelykenis van den ryke man en Lazarus* (Amsterdam, 1698).
- Nahuys, G.J., *Leerredenen over Zacharia V: 5-11. en Jesaias LVIII: 5-12. ter voorbereiding van eenen dank-, vast- en bededag* (Amsterdam, 1786).
- Phyleus, S.J., *Een leerachtighe verclarige der historie ofte parabel vanden rijcke man ende den armen bedelaer Lazaro* (Leiden, 1600; first edition 1588).
- Pontanus, I., *Eenige predikatien, of bedenkingen, over de gelykeniszen van den verloren zoon: en den rykeman en Lazarus* (Rotterdam, 1721).
- Reneman, D., *Arme-voogd in tijdt van dierte, ofte Stichtelijcke bedenkingen over de woorden Pauli, Rom.XII. vers 13* (Harlingen, 1663).

- Smytegelt, B., *Keurstoffen, of verzameling van vyftig uitmuntende predicatien* (Houten, 1914; first edition 1765).
- Teellinck, W., *Liefden-dwanck, ofte De vriendelijcke cracht der liefde Christi [...]. Voorghesteld in een predicatie, over de woorden Pauli, 2 Cor. 5. vers 14* (Middelburg, 1620).
- Verduin, A., *De pligt der barmhertigheid, uit Koloss. III. 12* (Haarlem, 1733).

### Handwritten sermons

- One sermon by W.J. Calkoen on Proverbs 19 verse 17: UA, Family Archives Van Beeck Calkoen, inv. no. 35, March 1784.
- One sermon by J. Vollenhove on Luke 12 verse 19 and two on Luke 16: Municipal Archives The Hague, Consistory Dutch Reformed Church, inv. no. 643, sermon no. 85 (12 June 1667); and inv. no. 647, sermon no. 200 (29 November 1671) and no. 201 (2 December 1671).

### Other religious writings

- Clemens, H.G., *Ontleedende verklaring van het euangelie na de beschryving van Lukas* (Leiden, 1749).
- Coets, J.W., *De welgelukzaligheyt van die geene, die zig verstandelyk gedragen tegen eenen elendigen. Of Schriftmatige verklaringe over psalm XLI* (Gorinchem, 1756).
- Episcopius, S., *Verklaaring van het V, VI en VII kapittel van den H. Mattheus* (Leiden, 1720).
- Hartman, N., *De ongeveinsde christen, in zyn geloof en wandel, beknoptelyk afgeschest* (Zwolle, 1736; first editin 1728).
- Lodensteyn, J. van, *Kort verhaal der elendens van de gemeynte in de valleyen van Piemont* (Utrecht, 1768).
- Lynckens, N., *Eenige leer- en sinryke parabolen, uit de euangelisten Mattheus en Lucas* (Utrecht, 1712).
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## Appendix E

### Coins collected for the Zwolle City Poor Chamber, 1695-1735

Table E.1 – Number of different types of coins collected during 13 door-to-door collections for the City Poor Chamber in Zwolle in 1695

Type of coin	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	Total	% of total coins	% of total value
Silver rider	2	2	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	17	0.02	1.35
Three guilder	1	2	3	2	2	1	2	0	3	4	2	3	3	28	0.04	2.11
Silver ducat	3	2	1	1	1	1	0	2	1	1	1	1	0	15	0.02	0.94
Thaler	3	7	10	7	8	3	5	10	5	3	9	7	6	83	0.12	3.13
Florin	21	18	27	21	25	24	20	20	26	20	26	24	25	297	0.43	10.46
Half silver ducat	0	0	0	0	1	2	1	1	1	2	1	0	3	12	0.02	0.00
Guilder	4	2	3	2	2	2	5	2	2	3	2	2	1	32	0.05	0.80
Thirteen-a-half	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0.00	0.02
Shilling	65	59	47	55	70	74	50	49	66	52	49	40	59	735	1.05	5.55
Six-a-half	560	522	532	509	429	506	516	524	523	526	502	528	528	6,705	9.61	46.37
Double stiver	157	180	179	192	203	210	249	232	220	168	210	230	200	2,630	3.77	6.61
Stiver	1,000	998	955	941	935	920	834	884	925	954	915	855	1020	12,136	17.40	15.26
Doit	3,360	3,656	3,664	3,776	3,360	3,432	3,776	3,200	3,744	3,904	3,664	3,680	3,840	47,056	67.47	7.40
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,176</b>	<b>5,448</b>	<b>5,422</b>	<b>5,508</b>	<b>5,038</b>	<b>5,176</b>	<b>5,459</b>	<b>4,925</b>	<b>5,518</b>	<b>5,638</b>	<b>5,382</b>	<b>5,371</b>	<b>5,686</b>	<b>6,9747</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Source: HCO, Stadsarmenkamer, inv. no. 238.

Table E.2 – Number of different types of coins collected during 13 door-to-door collections for the City Poor Chamber in Zwolle in 1705

Type of coin	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	Total	% of total coins	% of total value
Silver rider	1.5	3	3	2	2	4.5	2	1	2.5	2	1	2	0	26.5	0.06	2.63
Three guilder	6	6.5	3	3	6	4.5	1	1	5.5	3	3	5.5	4	52	0.11	4.92
Silver ducat	3.5	3	4	2	4	0	2	1	2	3	4	3	6	37.5	0.08	2.96
Thaler	0	0	0	5	0	0	1	9	0	1	0	0	0	16	0.03	0.76
Florin	26	23	24	22	22	20	30	20	22	17	26	25	21	298	0.62	13.16
Devaluated forin (26 st.)	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0.01	0.12
Guilder	4	5	4	9	8	4	5	4	6	10	7	8	8	82	0.17	2.59
Thirteen-a-half	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0.00	0.02
Six-a-half	340	316	312	328	304	288	300	323	306	280	262	298	302	3,959	8.30	34.34
Double stiver	395	305	360	320	305	335	325	300	345	335	365	330	340	4,360	9.14	13.75
Stiver	940	950	980	915	965	935	1,000	950	825	970	970	1,050	925	12,375	25.94	19.52
Doit	1,920	2,080	2,016	1,920	2,048	1,920	2,040	2,000	2,240	2,040	2,080	2,120	2,080	26,504	55.55	5.23
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,636</b>	<b>3,691.5</b>	<b>3,706</b>	<b>3,527</b>	<b>3,664</b>	<b>3,513</b>	<b>3,706</b>	<b>3,609</b>	<b>3,754</b>	<b>3,661</b>	<b>3,718</b>	<b>3,841.5</b>	<b>3,687</b>	<b>47,714</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Source: HCO, Stadsarmenkamer, inv. no. 238.

NB: In the administration of this year, silver riders and half silver riders were lumped together, as well as three guilder pieces with coins of half that value, and silver ducats with half silver ducats.

Table E.3 – Number of different types of coins collected during 12 door-to-door collections for the City Poor Chamber in Zwolle in 1715

Type of coin	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total	% of total coins	% of total value
Silver rider	1	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	2	17	0.05	1.74
Three guilder	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	4	4	0	4	35	0.10	3.42
Silver ducat	5	3.25	2	2	2	3	3	2	3.75	3.25	3	2	34.25	0.10	2.79
Thaler	2	0	2	5	3	2	3	4	2	6	0	2	31	0.09	1.51
Florin	27	26	26	22	25	24	24	22	21	19	20	35	291	0.82	13.26
Half silver ducat	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2.5	0	0	0	5	0	0.00	0.00
Guilder	12	14	13	30	18	13	18	14	12	19	14	15	192	0.54	6.25
Thirteen-a-half	0	0	4	6	6	1	0	0	0	0	5	5	27	0.08	0.55
Six-a-half	284	306	288	288	288	308	240	278	274	218	288	300	3,360	9.45	30.08
Double stiver	515	510	430	355	380	370	395	390	350	505	400	420	5,020	14.12	16.34
Stiver	1,155	1100	1,030	1,085	1,060	1,105	1,040	1,165	1,065	1,100	1,070	1,120	13,095	36.83	21.32
Doit	1,120	1120	960	960	1,120	1,120	1,120	1,120	1,280	1,280	960	1,280	13,440	37.81	2.73
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,124</b>	<b>3,085.25</b>	<b>2,760</b>	<b>2,757</b>	<b>2,906</b>	<b>2,950</b>	<b>2,846</b>	<b>3,001.5</b>	<b>3,012.75</b>	<b>3,155.25</b>	<b>2,763</b>	<b>3,190</b>	<b>35,550.75</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Source: HCO, Stadsarmenkamer, inv. no. 239.

NB: In the administration of this year, silver ducats were sometimes lumped together with coins of half and a quarter of the same value.

Table E.4 – Number of different types of coins collected during 13 door-to-door collections for the City Poor Chamber in Zwolle in 1725

Type of coin	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	Total	% of total coins	% of total value
Silver rider	1	1	1	1	1	0	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	14	0.03	1.35
Three guilder	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	2	4	3	2	3	37	0.08	3.39
Silver ducat	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	3	2	3	3	3	2	31	0.06	2.36
Thaler	2	3	5	6	4	3	0	3	2	4	3	4	5	44	0.09	2.01
Florin	19	22	18	15	16	16	18	13	14	15	15	22	17	220	0.45	9.40
Half silver ducat	1	2	4	2	4	2	0	1	5	0	1	3	0	0	0.00	0.00
Guilder	22	22	27	31	29	28	30	24	25	22	30	28	35	353	0.73	10.77
Thirteen-a-half	9	2	4	1	5	4	4	3	1	3	8	0	5	49	0.10	0.93
Six-a-half	300	290	292	301	289	255	302	270	272	288	260	290	283	3,692	7.62	30.98
Double stiver	376	380	346	345	347	393	345	415	382	359	385	387	356	4,816	9.94	14.69
Stiver	990	980	950	975	963	930	943	935	1,000	1,005	905	945	950	12,471	25.73	19.02
Doit	1,920	1,760	1,600	1,920	2,080	1,920	2,080	2,240	2,240	2,240	2,240	2,240	2,240	26,720	55.12	5.10
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,645</b>	<b>3,468</b>	<b>3,252</b>	<b>3,602</b>	<b>3,742</b>	<b>3,556</b>	<b>3,729</b>	<b>3,911</b>	<b>3,946</b>	<b>3,944</b>	<b>3,854</b>	<b>3,925</b>	<b>3,898</b>	<b>48,472</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Source: HCO, Stadsarmenkamer, inv. no. 239.

Table E.5 – Number of different types of coins collected during 13 door-to-door collections for the City Poor Chamber in Zwolle in 1735

Type of coin	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	Total	% of total coins	% of total value
Silver rider	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	13	0.03	1.39
Three guilder	2	2	3	2	2	2	1	1	1	2	1	2	1	22	0.04	2.24
Silver ducat	6	4	4	4	4	3	6	4	3	4	4	4	5	55	0.11	4.67
Half silver rider	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.00	0.05
Thaler	3	1	5	2	1	2	2	2	3	2	3	3	2	31	0.06	1.58
Florin	17	18	11	13	14	13	13	14	11	14	14	15	19	186	0.37	8.84
Half silver ducat	2	1	1	3	2	2	1	3	3	0	1	3	3	25	0.05	1.06
Guilder	26	23	23	23	21	24	25	20	23	21	24	21	26	300	0.60	10.18
Thirteen-a-half	1	4	4	3	6	5	2	3	1	2	5	3	1	40	0.08	0.85
Six-a-half	226	236	235	242	234	257	249	213	216	240	208	220	263	3,039	6.11	28.36
Double stiver	400	430	405	375	368	370	330	350	327	320	400	325	355	4,755	9.56	16.14
Stiver	790	820	845	810	765	770	897	880	830	820	815	855	805	10,702	21.51	18.16
Doit	2,496	2,288	2,384	2,240	2,288	2,384	2,432	2,496	2,288	2,256	2,352	2,352	2,320	30,576	61.47	6.49
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,970</b>	<b>3,828</b>	<b>3,921</b>	<b>3,718</b>	<b>3,707</b>	<b>3,833</b>	<b>3,959</b>	<b>3,987</b>	<b>3,707</b>	<b>3,682</b>	<b>3,828</b>	<b>3,804</b>	<b>3,801</b>	<b>49,745</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Source: HCO, Stadsarmenkamer, inv. no. 240.



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Blok E – Blok van de Kerk- en Verwerstraat  
Blok F – Blok van de Weversplaats  
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