essential reading for anyone interested in the history of sexuality and criminal justice in premodern Europe.

Tom Hamilton, Durham University

Marieke Smulders, *Voor het hogere bestemd. De vorming van een katholieke elite aan drie Nijmeegse jongensinternaten, 1920-1970* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2023). 376 pp. ISBN 9789048559077.

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This well-researched study of the establishment, development, and demise of three Dutch boarding schools and their seminaries – aimed at training future Jesuits, Dominicans, and Redemptorists – has relevancy beyond the local dimension of the city of Nijmegen. Apart from offering a detailed description of ecclesiastical training in this city in the years between 1920 and 1970, Marieke Smulders addresses how the organization of these schools interacted with national and international developments related to education. On a local level, the book elucidates the various differences between the missions and educational cultures of the three seminaries. Initially, only the Jesuit-led Canisius College offered seminary training for resident students as well as gymnasium education to external students, who added a worldly touch. Jesuit father N. Perquin maintained close ties with the Catholic University in Nijmegen, established in 1923. His books on educational reform were widely read among Dutch Roman Catholics in the 1950s. At the Canisius College, Perquin's ideas prompted much debate on, for instance, whether the personal development of the resident students would be boosted by allowing them more liberties. Initially, the educational regimes at the seminaries were quite strict, mirroring the hierarchical order and daily structure of monastic life. So-called prefects closely monitored student behavior, even by inspecting their incoming and outgoing letters. While some prefects became notorious for their sadistic conduct, others gained students' trust. At the end of the 1960s, these seminaries merged with nearby schools offering different levels of secondary education to boys and girls. By 1970, nearly all Dutch seminaries for training clergymen had become obsolete.

The merging of secondary schools into large-scale facilities followed from new Dutch legislation, in particular the so-called *Mammoetwet* (literally: Mammoth Act) on education enacted in 1968, which intended to facilitate the transition of pupils between different levels of secondary education. As the analysis by Smulders reveals, however, national legislation influenced the Dutch school system much earlier. Nationwide developments in general started impacting the seminaries right from their beginning. Seminaries combined two objectives: to train priests active in pastoral care – as a missionaries or teachers – and to foster religious character. For ecclesiastical careers, classical schooling, as offered by gymnasia, was considered most appropriate. In the outside world and at other schools, however, more practical and science-based educational objectives quickly gained importance. Increasingly, then, the national government started tinkering with the contents of the curricula at gymnasia, while also steadily tightening the formal requirements of teaching staff. More and more parents preferred to see licensed diplomas as a starting point for a professional career, in case their boys lost their calling or were dismissed from the seminary (which often happened without hardly any explanation). Smulders further argues that the ongoing functional differentiation encouraged a split between formal and informal education, whereas the seminaries had precisely started from the ideal of combining both. Before World War II, the teaching staff at seminaries considered themselves better equipped as educators compared to what the frequently busy parents could offer in a familial setting. As of the 1960s, however, co-education began to be considered more natural than educating boys and girls in separate facilities, and this view gradually influenced educational efforts and cultural events at the three seminaries and their gymnasia.

From an international perspective, World War II caused the most direct, disruptive, and enduring changes for the Nijmegen seminaries. Schools and monasteries were confiscated by the occupier. When students returned to the seminaries after the war, their leadership noticed that many of them disregarded the monastic value of obedience. This motivated the leadership to ignore particular educational innovations from the 1930s and to return to stricter regimes. Inspired by the example of British boarding schools involving the creation of joint responsibilities for "houses," the Canisius College introduced more group activities and shared responsibilities. If this British example originated in Protestant principles, as explained by Smulders, most Dutch boarding schools started from Roman Catholic principles and

prioritized students' personal qualities and virtues. As tomorrow's Catholic leaders, they were expected to embody traditional masculine values, such as being competitive and resilient, while hiding their emotions. Having tightened the reins right after WWII, in the 1950s the Nijmegen seminaries and their gymnasia introduced a more lenient code of conduct again, as proposed by "progressive" Dutch Roman Catholic pedagogues and psychologists like Perquin, P. Calon, and F. Buytendijk. Still, the administrations of the monastic orders in Rome were highly sceptical about these developments in the Netherlands. In the 1960s, at a time when popular culture (movies, music) gained prominence also at seminaries, the Second Vatican Council would shake up the Catholic world.

Given the detailed analysis of a variety of rich primary sources and the extensive references to secondary sources, the book's overall conclusion is perhaps somewhat meager. Smulders convincingly argues that the demise of the seminaries in the 1960s started decades earlier, as testified in internal debates about education. This historical claim is reflected in the book's two-part structure, as divided by the year 1950, when the Dominicus College and the Redemptorist Nebo in Nijmegen were formally acknowledged as gymnasia. Each part consists of three chapters, dedicated to the seminaries' educational organization, their teaching staff's views and actions, and their students' experiences, each chapter relying on different types of primary sources. Yet the crucial concept of a "Catholic elite," featured in the subtitle, remains rather underdeveloped. As a consequence, the author's interesting observations on this subject do not always result in a more sustained argument. A paper by Peter Nissen, to which Smulders refers several times, explains the unintended effect caused by seminary dropouts, who in fact contributed to maintaining particular Catholic networks. In a telling anecdote, Smulders refers to a Catholic manufacturer offering scholarships based on specific conditions, thus fostering the networked character of the Catholic elites. Finally, I would add that Pierre Bourdieu's analytical framework – based on distinguishing and connecting social, economic, cultural, and symbolic capital – will certainly help to further analyze and articulate the dynamics of ecclesiastical education in the period under study.

Joseph Wachelder, Maastricht University