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The Development of the Army Chaplaincy in Early Eighteenth-Century Prussia[1]

My dissertation is a cultural history of the military chaplaincy in Prussia during the first half of the eighteenth century. Two significant developments occurred during this period: the institutionalization of the chaplaincy, and the domination of the chaplaincy by Pietists. Central to these developments was the reign of King Friedrich Wilhelm I, who took a personal interest in the chaplaincy and looked very favorably upon Halle Pietism. Under the Soldier King the chaplaincy was transformed from a disorganized, unofficial apparatus to a highly bureaucratized, systematic, and hierarchical state organ. At the same time, Friedrich Wilhelm granted the Pietists control of the new military church. Francke's allies used this power base and the access to the King that it afforded them to check their various opponents, to further expand their own influence in Prussia, and even to sabotage Friedrich Wilhelm's own religious policies.

The archival sources surrounding the chaplaincy are quite rich and they have enabled me to gain a comprehensive understanding of the chaplaincy. Most of my research has been in epistolary sources. This includes both the correspondence of the Pietist inner circle as regards the chaplaincy and the hundreds of letters from scores of individual chaplains at the Archiv der Franckeschen Stiftungen in Halle and in the Francke Nachlass at the Staatsbibliothek in Berlin. Additionally, some of the official files regarding the military church have survived and are at the Geheimes Staatsarchiv in Berlin. At libraries throughout Germany I have located many published sources relevant to the Prussian chaplaincy: soldiers' Bibles; obituaries and eulogies for chaplains and former chaplains; and even published sermons and manuscripts by chaplains. Finally, I have created a prosopographic database of the chaplaincy for use as an organizational tool to keep records of the hundreds of chaplains in order, as a research tool to help in tracking down sources, and as a means of generating statistics regarding the chaplaincy.

It is my hope that my dissertation will contribute to a number of early modern historiographical discussions. My dissertation is divided into four main sections. An introductory section encompasses overviews of the history and historiography of the chaplaincy, a description of the mechanics of the chaplaincy, and an *Alltagsgeschichte* of chaplains in the Prussian army. The second section concerns state building. Here I consider the chaplaincy as an instance of early modern disciplining by examining the discourse regarding disciplining among those managing the chaplaincy and the role that chaplains played as disciplinarians. I also investigate early modern state building by contrasting how the newly-institutionalized bureaucracy was supposed to function against how it really did work. I probe the vague relationship between Pietism and the Prussian state by portraying how they cooperated in establishing, staffing, and administering the military church. The third section involves patronage, factionalism, and the court society in Prussia. I describe Pietism as a early modern patron-broker-client network and as a court faction by showing how Pietists filled lucrative posts in the chaplaincy and how they maneuvered to affect Prussian religious policies regarding the military church. I analyze the relationships of chaplains with their aristocratic and Pietist patrons, as well as the influence and extent of royal patronage in the chaplaincy. I also explore how the Prussian "court society" functioned in the absence of a royal court under Friedrich Wilhelm. A final section is a social history of the chaplaincy. I answer questions about how kinship networks functioned in eighteenth-century Germany by looking at the marriages and hereditary posts that bound chaplains to each other. Finally, I

evaluate levels of social mobility and exclusion during this period by tracing chaplains' backgrounds, careers, and subsequent promotions.

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