PART 2

Individuals

“Let no citizen be treated as lesser, because of his confession”: Religious Tolerance and Civility in De Hooghe’s *Spiegel van Staat* (1706–7)

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Abstract

De Hooghe used the genre of chorography not only to praise the Dutch Republic but also to mirror it so it could be measured against his own ideals of a well-ordered polity. Reading the *Spiegel van Staat* [Mirror of the State] in conjunction with his other work, the earlier interpretations of De Hooghe as an adherent and popularizer of radical philosophical ideas must be rejected. Rather, De Hooghe was a faithful disciple of Hugo Grotius, who extolls unity as the foundation of good governance and the guarantor of liberty. Although religion should be free, the clergy should be firmly under the control of the secular government so as to prevent confessionally driven conflict and division within the body politic. De Hooghe makes innovations to Grotian notions, integrating them into a view on the crucial role of local custom, which has an almost sacred value. In turn, De Hooghe’s valuation of custom derives from the works of skeptical authors and satirists such as Barclay and Boccacini, and shows some affinity with the political theory of Spinoza, although it deviates from the latter’s work on certain essential points. The erudite artisan De Hooghe represents a new type of opinion leader emerging at the outset of the eighteenth century, one who, moreover, extolled a new concept of the fatherland.

1 Introduction

This article’s title is not derived from a scholarly work on the role of public religion. The quotation in it comes from the explanatory text accompanying an allegorical print depicting the excellence and splendor of the United Netherlands. Romeyn de Hooghe (1645–1706), who engraved the print and wrote the text, was not a professional philosopher or theologian but rather an educated artisan participating in public debate on religious and political affairs. The words themselves are spoken by ‘Lady Liberty’ (the character in the upper left corner of figure 6.1). Next to her stands an armed woman. According

FIGURE 6.1 The power of the State defending both Lady Liberty and True Religion, detail from the frontispiece for vol. 2, chapter 1, in: Romeyn de Hooghe, *Spiegel van Staat des Vereenigde Nederlands* 2 vols. (Amsterdam, 1706–1707). Leiden University Library, call nr. 1153 C 48

to De Hooghe, she symbolizes the government of the Netherlands. At her feet we see another woman, on her knees and removing a mask from her face. De Hooghe explains the scene as follows. “Kneeling before her, we see [the] true religion. She thanks the State for her protection and puts away the mask of hypocrisy”.¹ On her right we see a bishop walking out of the frame, taking the regalia of the Catholic church with him. In the same section of the text, the author argues that the presence of Lady Liberty is the most important reason for the well-being of the Dutch. Free from the shackles of ecclesiastical power, she joyfully declares that in the United Netherlands “Jews, Christians, Turks, Heathens, Catholics, Protestant, Lutherans and Anabaptists” can live together harmoniously. For as long as they obey the civil law, “no citizen should be treated as lesser, because of his confession”.² This praise of religious tolerance can be found in the first plate of the second volume of De Hooghe’s *Spiegel van Staat*, a comprehensive chorography of the United Netherlands, written in the vernacular and published in two volumes in 1706 and 1707.

The idea of religious tolerance was by then far from new or controversial.³ However, De Hooghe’s arguments in *Spiegel van Staat* are interesting because they are notably different from earlier reflections that had been developed in a more scholarly context. As such, the *Spiegel van Staat* provides a colorful view on the changing ‘culture of debate’ in the United Netherlands outside its universities. This is especially so because De Hooghe’s authorship is a prime example of the increasing importance of a new kind of author: neither theologian, minister, or philosopher, nor claiming to belong to the traditional ‘learned professions’. Seeing themselves first and foremost as proud citizens of the United Netherlands, these authors claimed an authoritative position as civil educators.⁴ Although their writings’ impact on the Dutch ‘culture of debate’

1 Romeyn de Hooghe, *Spiegel van Staat des Vereenigde Nederlands: Vervattende de macht der generaliteyt*, 2 vols., (Amsterdam, 1706–7), 2.1, p. 2 (hereafter cited as De Hooghe).

2 De Hooghe (see above, n. 1), 2.1, p. 5.

3 See, for example, the contribution of Henri Krop in this volume and his article “‘The General Freedom, Which All Men Enjoy’ in A Confessional State: The Paradoxical Language Of Politics In The Dutch Republic (1700–1750),” in: *Paradoxes of Religious Toleration in Early Modern Political Thought*, ed. John Christian Laursen and Maria José Villaverde (Lanham, Md., 2012), pp. 67–70. Also: R. Po-Chia Hsia and Henk van Nierop, eds., *Calvinism and Religious Toleration in the Dutch Golden Age* (Cambridge, 2004); Joris van Eijnatten, *Liberty and Concord in the United Provinces: Religious Toleration and the Public in the Eighteenth-Century Netherlands* (Leiden, 2003).

4 Inger Leemans and Gert-Jan Johannes, with the cooperation of Joost Kloek, *Worm en Donder, Geschiedenis van de Nederlandse literatuur 1700–1800: De Republiek* (Amsterdam, 2013), pp. 112–3, 182–90; Niek C. F. van Sas, *De Metamorfose van Nederland: Van oude orde naar moderniteit, 1750–1900* (Utrecht, 2004), pp. 52–5; Wijnand Mijnhardt and Joost Kloek, 1800:

has now been well researched, many questions remain about the intellectual fabric of these accomplished citizens who began to present themselves as civil educators in the eighteenth century.

De Hooghe's plea for religious tolerance in the *Spiegel van Staat* is illustrative of his civic ideal. By exploring the relation between this ideal and his criticism of ecclesiastical power, I want to shed new light on the intellectual roots of these eighteenth-century civil educators. De Hooghe's arguments may, at first glance, seem purely pragmatic. His pragmatism is, however, closely connected to a peculiar appropriation of much older ideas about the customs and habits of a nation. De Hooghe thus popularizes a civic norm substantiated by arguments that move beyond earlier established oppositions: reason versus faith, theology versus philosophy, or State versus Church.

In the first part of this chapter I will focus on the *Spiegel van Staat* itself and the ways the secondary literature treats De Hooghe's thought. In the second part I will elaborate on De Hooghe's views on religion. In the third part I will focus on his ideas about the importance of custom and on the authors who influenced his thought on these matters. I will conclude with some remarks on the significance of the *Spiegel van Staat* for our understanding of 1700 as a faultline in (Dutch) cultural and intellectual history.

2 The Spiegel van Staat: A Radical Chorography?

Until recently the *Spiegel van Staat* received little attention from intellectual historians. In his *Embarrassment of Riches* Simon Schama uses the two volumes to illustrate his reading of Dutch culture as essentially Calvinistic without providing the reader with a more in-depth analysis of its content.⁵ Jonathan Israel has given more attention to De Hooghe's political thought; based on some of the engraver's pamphlets and his *Spiegel van Staat* Israel includes De Hooghe in what he calls a Democratic-Spinozist or Modern tradition.⁶ The influence of radical authors like Hobbes and Spinoza on De Hooghe's thought has been

Blauwdrukken voor een samenleving (The Hague, 2001), p. 165; Joost Kloek, 'Burgerdeugd of burgermansdeugd? Het beeld van Jacob Cats als nationaal zedenmeester,' in: *De stijl van de burger: Over Nederlandse burgerlijke cultuur vanaf de middeleeuwen*, ed. Remieg Aerts and Henk te Velde (Kampen, 1998), pp. 100–22.

5 Simon Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches: An Interpretation of Dutch Culture in the Golden Age* (New York, 1997), pp. 51–3.

6 Jonathan I. Israel, *Monarchy, Orangism, and Republicanism in the Later Dutch Golden Age* [Second Golden Age Lecture] (Amsterdam, 2004); idem, 'The Intellectual Origins of Modern Democratic Republicanism (1660–1720),' in: *European Journal of Political Theory* 3 (2004), 7–36; idem, *Enlightenment Contested: Philosophy, Modernity, and the Emancipation of Man, 1670–1752* (Oxford, 2006), pp. 241–5, 249.

suggested by Joke Spaans as well.⁷ Henk van Nierop and Inger Leemans, however, have questioned this interpretation. Van Nierop deems that De Hooghe's vocabulary in the *Spiegel van Staat* is too slippery, too pragmatic, to allow one to make such a bold claim based on a few lines.⁸ Inger Leemans views it as a conventional work on politics for its time, leaning heavily to the side of the Staatsgezinden. Although I don't fully agree with Israel, De Hooghe's political thought indeed shares more than a little with Spinoza's. It differs, however, in one crucial aspect: De Hooghe has far less confidence in human rationality. For him, custom is king.

What's more, if De Hooghe could be pinpointed by the direct reception of the *Spiegel van Staat*, and we employ Israel's division of a radical, moderate, and counter-enlightenment, the work seems to belong to the moderate tradition. Even De Hooghe's contemporary critics saw it first and foremost as a work of geographical history and, like De Hooghe's contemporary admirers as well, made no mention of radicalism or Spinozism.⁹ According to the French chorographer François Michel Janiçon (1674–1730) the *Spiegel van Staat* was simply the most useful description of the Dutch Republic at that time.¹⁰ Such high praise was repeated, with some reservations, later in the eighteenth century by the father of Dutch history, Johan Wagenaar.¹¹ In the foreword to his *État présent des Provinces-Unies et des pays qui en dépendent* (1729), an international bestseller read throughout the eighteenth century, Janiçon admits that he had made good use of De Hooghe's two-volume works. One of Janiçon's readers was Montesquieu (1689–1755), who even cited the French chorographer's work in his own *De l'Esprit des Lois* (1748). In the chapter on the republican form of government, Montesquieu used Janiçon's description of the Dutch Republic as a loose confederation or 'a Republic of fifty republics'.¹²

7 Joke Spaans, 'Hiëroglfen, de verbeelding van de Godsdienst,' in: Romeyn de Hooghe, *De verbeelding van de late Gouden Eeuw*, ed. Henk van Nierop (Zwolle, 2008), pp. 48–57.

8 Henk van Nierop, 'Nieuwsprenten en de verbeelding van het nieuws,' in: Romeyn de Hooghe, ed. van Nierop (see above, n. 7), pp. 66–85; Inger Leemans, 'De vicerooy van de hel, radicaal libertinisme,' *ibid.*, pp. 32–48.

9 Roelof Roukema, *Romeyn de Hooghe's Spiegel der Vereenigde Nederlanden, Voor zo verre als die de Provincie van Friesland betreft. In een brief, aan een Heer van Staat, onderzocht en enigermate te regte geholpen* (Leeuwarden, 1707).

10 François Michel Janiçon, *De Republiek der Vereenigde Nederlanden*, 4 vols. (The Hague, 1731–2), 1: xxii; G. C. Gibbs, 'Some Intellectual and Political Influences of the Huguenot Emigrés in the United Provinces, c. 1680–1730,' in: *Bijdragen en Mededelingen betreffende de Geschiedenis der Nederlanden* 90 (1975), 255–87, there 282; William H. Riker, 'Dutch and American Federalism,' *Journal of the History of Ideas* 18 (1957), 495–521, there 521.

11 Jan Wagenaar, *Tegenwoordige Staat der Vereenigde Nederlanden: Eerste deel, vervattende eene algemeene beschrijving des lands*, 13 vols. (Amsterdam, 1739), 1: vii.

12 M. de Montesquieu, *Complete Works*, 4 vols. (London, 1777), 1: 165–8.

This interpretation of the Dutch Republic's constitutional form is also an apt description of the focus of the *Spiegel van Staat*. As stated above, it is a chorography, a historical-geographical work on the Dutch Republic. Unlike most chorographies produced in the Dutch Republic, the *Spiegel van Staat* concerns not a single city or province but encompasses the whole of the United Netherlands.¹³ In accordance with the genre's conventions De Hooghe describes and glorifies the Dutch Republic: its inhabitants, its history, its many provinces, cities, and colonies, its governmental structure, the composition and jurisdiction of its many councils, and certain specifically local laws, privileges, and voting procedures.

Because of the structure of the two volumes the *Spiegel van Staat* reads like an overview of fifty republics. The individual parts all center on a sovereign Province, each part having its own frontispiece, and most of the chapters take as their topic a 'sovereign' city (that is, one with voting rights in the States of its province). It must be noted, however, that the entire second volume is dedicated to the States-General and throughout both volumes De Hooghe stresses their importance. As we will see, the structure of the work and this centralizing undercurrent correspond with his political views. But before I elaborate on this, more attention should be given to the work itself.

Although the author was familiar with the scholarly world in Holland at that time, the two volumes are meant for a different, broader audience. Written in the vernacular, devoid of academic self-fashioning, De Hooghe's work was intended to educate his fellow citizens and to convey one message. In both scope and style, the *Spiegel van Staat* stays true to its goal of hammering home the message that the Dutch, after William III's death but still at war with France, should put aside their petty disagreements to stand united against its enemies behind the banner of the States-General, the only unifying political council of the Dutch Republic. It is therefore a work of politics in the proper sense of the word, not only because political culture is its prime subject but above all because De Hooghe repeatedly argues that the well-being of everything Dutch,

13 For more on chorography in the Dutch Republic, see: Sandra Langereis, *Geschiedenis als ambacht: Oudheidkunde in de Gouden Eeuw: Arnoldus Buchelius en Petrus Scriverius* (Hilversum, 2001); E. O. G. Haitsma Mulier, 'De eerste Hollandse stadsbeschrijvingen uit de zeventiende eeuw,' *De zeventiende eeuw* 9 (1993), 97–111; Henk van Nierop, 'How to Honour One's City: Samuel Ampzing's Vision of the History of Haarlem,' *Theoretische Geschiedenis* 20 (1993), 268–82; Marijke Meijer Drees, *Andere landen, andere mensen, de beeldvorming van Holland versus Spanje en Engeland omstreeks 1650* (The Hague, 1997); Eddy Verbaan, *De woonplaats van de faam: Grondslagen van de stadsbeschrijving in de zeventiende eeuwse Republiek* (Hilversum, 2011); Raingard Esser, *Politics of Memory: The Writing of Partition in the Seventeenth-Century Low Countries* (Leiden, 2012).

including religion, depends on unity and civic harmony among the citizens of all the provinces united in the Dutch confederation.

De Hooghe claims to have written the *Spiegel van Staat* to kindle his readers' love for the fatherland in their hearts and minds. He argues that the work is therefore more than just a handy manual for a beginning regent; all the inhabitants of the Dutch Republic should know its contents by heart. True to this ambition, De Hooghe provides practical information about political life, but he also points out which ethical norms should guide the actions of everyone involved, and explains why. Most of his criticism and praise comes down to the idea that any kind of behavior that strengthens the Dutch civil community should be praised and, conversely, any harmful behavior should be condemned.

This emphasis on civic life partly flows from the fact that the *Spiegel van Staat* is a chorography. Popularized in Renaissance Italy, this classical genre took Europe by storm and developed in the Netherlands from the sixteenth century onward as a communicative space wherein civic virtues were discussed and celebrated.¹⁴ Existing alongside the highly polemical world of pamphlets and tracts, the chorography in its structure and topicality seems to have provided a way to comment critically on current affairs without evoking too much outrage. Civic harmony, commerce, and religious moderation could be glorified without angering those who believed that civic life was less important than religious purity.

In a chorography the author first had to define the geographic outline of whatever city, province, or country he took as his subject. He would follow up by describing the first inhabitants, then provide a historical overview, and finally arrive at a description of the current situation. Greatest emphasis was placed on monumental buildings like churches and town halls. Although some authors merely described and glorified the province or city they lived in, most authors gave their accounts a more personal touch. Naturally, a chorography by someone from Amsterdam could differ more than a little from one written by someone from Gelderland, in the way that a legally trained author wrote in a different way than a minister or an engraver like De Hooghe. Authors showed their preferences by stressing the importance of various virtues of the first inhabitants of the area in question, spinning historical accounts in certain ways, or by making comparisons between the Dutch and other nations.

What makes De Hooghe's chorography interesting is that, apart from his focus on the entire United Netherlands, he also deviates from its conventional

14 Verbaan, *De woonplaats van de faam* (see above, n. 13), pp. 71, 122–4; Meijer Drees, *Andere landen, andere mensen*, (see above, n. 13); Esser, *Politics of Memory* (see above, n. 13), pp. 1–26.

structure in another significant way. Unlike what one would find in other chorographies, there is no chapter on the many religions in the United Netherlands and the organization of the public Church. This omission might be explained by De Hooghe's wishing to alienate as few people as possible: such an account would undermine his message of unity. But his writings on this matter in some of his other works, and some biting remarks in the *Spiegel van Staat* itself about the abuse of ecclesiastical power, give ample grounds for conjecture that there is more to this. Especially because, *pace* Van Nierop, his views on this matter were remarkably consistent throughout his life. Although they are not exactly radical, I agree with Israel and Spaans that De Hooghe's thought has more to offer than merely conventional topoi and commercial pragmatism.

Precisely because the *Spiegel van Staat* is a political work, De Hooghe's position, given the powerful doctrine of the two kingdoms of Christ, is fairly outspoken. Although the idea that Christ has two kingdoms, a civil and a religious one, is rooted in the orthodoxy of Roman Catholicism, it remained an influential doctrine within Protestantism as well.¹⁵ Especially members of the Voetian faction upheld it with all the rhetorical power they could muster and adopted it to Reformed doctrine. After all, Calvin more or less argued that every human being possessed two consciences, one Christian, one civil. As a consequence, the relation between citizenship and church membership, and the position of the clergy—the questions, that is, of which aspect of human behavior was governed by which conscience, and which kind of officeholder was responsible for which kind of education—remained important topics for debate throughout the seventeenth century.¹⁶ These debates transcended mere questions of ecclesiology. Because one's conscience was the ultimate judge of morality, questions of ethics, even mundane ones, could and did become debates on the existence of these two kingdoms or spheres, and the hierarchical relation between them. It is precisely De Hooghe's clear position on this matter that provides an entrance into his elusive writing.

15 David van Drunen, *Natural Law and the Two Kingdoms: A Study in the Development of Reformed Social Thought* (Cambridge, 2010), p. 207; Benjamin J. Kaplan, *Divided by Faith: Religious Conflict and the Practice of Toleration in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, 2007), p. 18; G. Groenhuis, *De Predikanten: De sociale positie van de gereformeerde predikant in de Republiek der Verenigde Nederlanden voor ± 1700* (Groningen, 1977), pp. 87–102.

16 H. A. Enno van Gelder, *Getemperde vrijheid. Een verhandeling over de verhouding van Kerk en Staat in de Republiek der Verenigde Nederlanden en de vrijheid van meningsuiting in zake godsdienst, drukpers en onderwijs, gedurende de 17e eeuw* (Groningen, 1972); Jonathan I. Israel, *The Dutch Republic: Its Rise, Greatness, and Fall 1477–1806* (Oxford, 1995), pp. 421–49; D. Nobbs, *Theocracy and Toleration: A Study of the Disputes in Dutch Calvinism from 1600 to 1650* (Cambridge, 1938); Matthew J. Tuininga, *Calvin's Political Theology and the Public Engagement of the Church: Christ's Two Kingdoms* (Cambridge, 2017), pp. 145–147.

3 Ecclesiastical Power Unmasked: De Hooghe's Ideas on Religion, Ecclesiastical Power, and the Well-Being of the Commonwealth

Because the *Spiegel van Staat* is mainly a work on politics, I will start with an outline of De Hooghe's political thought before moving on to discuss his view on ecclesiastical power. Since his views on religious matters can be derived only from several examples scattered over the two volumes, I will focus on a few illustrative passages and relate them to some of his other works. I will categorize the individual examples into two groups. De Hooghe views ecclesiastical power as, first, a threat to civic harmony and, second, a threat to the moral state of those inhabiting the Dutch civil sphere.

As stated above and as illustrated in the etching discussed at the beginning of this chapter, De Hooghe's main message concerns the importance of unity for the protection of liberty. Although these notions were far from original, ideas on the unity and liberty of all the various provinces and cities conflicted with the reality of the United Netherlands' highly fragmented political structure. De Hooghe, like most of his Dutch contemporaries, adopts the conventional idea that power ultimately should remain in the hands of the multitude—that is, the collective body of the citizens of the Low Countries.¹⁷ In effect this meant the urban regent elite, for they represented the sovereignty of the people.¹⁸ This creates a tension, since the interests and preferred policies of the many cities and provinces of the Dutch Republic could differ substantially—a fact acknowledged by De Hooghe. However, because he is committed to the traditional idea of popular sovereignty, he argues that unity should not be enforced by centralized power, for that would destroy what precisely the Dutch had to protect against the tyranny of the French: namely, their liberty. Unity should be the effect of a shared understanding of the common good.

Therefore, apart from a few pages dealing with different forms of government, De Hooghe is not interested in the formal structure of public authority. He is more concerned with the way that officeholders should behave and how their behavior should be evaluated by citizens not involved in ruling. De Hooghe is convinced that the actions of every human being, especially those with power, have personal glory as their aim. Because glory, or honor, is something that can be bestowed only by other members of their community, it is only logical that everyone, the ruling elite and the non-ruling citizens alike,

¹⁷ De Hooghe (see above, n. 1), 1.1, p. 62.

¹⁸ E. H. Kossmann, *Political Thought in the Dutch Republic: Three Studies* (Amsterdam, 2000); Graeme Callister, 'The City and the Revolutionary Dutch Nation, 1780–1800,' *Dutch Crossing* 36 (2012), 228–43.

ought to have a proper understanding of what is honorable and what is not. Because those in power will do everything they can to be praised by their fellow citizens, it is vitally important that all citizens possess a proper understanding of what is just and what is unjust.¹⁹

De Hooghe points out not only which moral standards should be used when matters of the commonwealth are discussed, but also which should be ignored. By making a well-informed understanding of the common good one of the necessities for good governance, the problem of the forces that corrupt such an understanding is automatically brought to the fore—a problem that De Hooghe himself discusses. Given the self-image of a nation cemented by anti-Catholic sentiment, it comes as no surprise that the abuse of power by ecclesiastical officeholders such as bishops, and of course the pope, figures prominently in these sections of the text. De Hooghe, like many of his contemporaries, participates wholeheartedly in fashionable Catholic-bashing, but he doesn't shy away from pointing out the troubling exercise of ecclesiastic power by others within the Dutch Republic. Although he argues that since the success of the Revolt the suppression by "Religious Judges" is "far away from here,"²⁰ all is not well, apparently. To understand his specific position within the Dutch 'culture of debating', these passages are the most revealing.

His first and main problem with religious bigotry is its disastrous effect on harmony and constancy within a given community. This can be illustrated by De Hooghe's historical account of the Revolt's aftermath. Although William of Orange tried to establish freedom of religion for everyone, even Roman Catholics, zealous believers interpreted his defense of tolerance as a weakness or a sign of impure faith. They cried out for the complete destruction of every hint of Catholicism. In doing so, De Hooghe argues, they threatened the newly formed state and hindered the defense of the fatherland.²¹ In his overview of the many cities of the Netherlands, De Hooghe time and again points out, and corroborates with historical examples, that members of the Anabaptist, Catholic, and Jewish communities all played a vital role in the protection of the individual cities and the larger commonwealth against the many foreign invaders the Dutch had to face.²²

Another example can be found in his historical overview of the conflict between the Arminians and the Gomarists during the Twelve Years' Truce. In

19 De Hooghe (see above, n. 1), 2.1, p. 37.

20 De Hooghe (see above, n. 1), 2.1, p. 5.

21 De Hooghe (see above, n. 1), 2.1, p. 130.

22 De Hooghe (see above, n. 1), 1.1, pp. 158, 178–9, 1.6, p. 7.

the 'official' chapter De Hooghe does not take a side.²³ However, in the second volume of the *Spiegel van Staat*, in the chapter on the Dutch colonies, he suddenly lashes out. First he describes the tension between Prince Maurits and Van Oldenbarnevelt and argues that a compromise had nearly been achieved: "until the clergy entered the game, they unleashed discord, brought fire into the hearts of excellent cities, people against people, governments, ministers, cities, streets, yes, even members of families were riled up against one another."²⁴ Although he does not ignore the political tension between the Stadholder and the Landsadvocaat at that time, he believes the ecclesiastics are most to blame.

Besides directly creating discord, the ecclesiastical abuse of power exerts a subtler but also more dangerous impact on the Dutch, according to De Hooghe. In a few lines, which could have been directly taken from the dictionary of Koerbagh, he writes that the secrets of the practitioners of religion, just like those of law and medicine, are created by their use of vocabularies that are foreign to most people.²⁵ Because even the most learned hardly know anything more than their colleagues, they invent words to keep up appearances. In doing so they corrupt knowledge and morality. In particular the 'middle kind of people', among whom De Hooghe also includes the nobility, are the real victims of this corruption of language and moral standards: those with power are safe; the common people have nothing to lose.²⁶

De Hooghe's critique of persons who base their moral standards not on the needs of the civil community but on the demands of their religion may be noted throughout the work. In his introduction he writes that one of his main reasons for writing the *Spiegel van Staat* was to inure his readers against the pretensions of those who "achieve a certain status, by invoking the Spirit; to conspire against the virtue and honesty of their fellow citizens, and the behavior of their lawful governments; to corrupt the common with novelties and hatred, only to hide their own deplorable character; if it was possible, they would bring everything down and confiscate that which belongs to frugal and

23 De Hooghe (see above, n. 1), 1.1, pp. 173, 340.

24 De Hooghe (see above, n. 1), 2.5, pp. 49–50.

25 Bart Leeuwenburgh, *Het noodlot van een ketter. Adriaan Koerbagh 1633–1669* (Nijmegen, 2013), pp. 123–33.

26 De Hooghe (see above, n. 1), 2.4, p. 260. This is another example of De Hooghe's broad conception of the civic community, as most of his contemporaries used phrasings like 'the middle sort' to describe citizens. See Wyger R. E. Velema, 'Beschaafde Republikeinen: Burgers in de achttiende eeuw,' in: *De stijl van de burger* (see above, n. 4), p. 81.

industrious pious men. To make sure that just citizens will not be tempted by this kind [of people], is the reason I wanted to print this [book].”²⁷

He underlines that people who act in ways that improve the strength of the Dutch in any form, whether through commercial, scholarly, or military activities, should be honored irrespective of their religion, instead of being condemned. Because the zealots’ ethical norms are based not on what is right for the commonwealth as a whole but on the spiritual kingdom, open to only a few, they threaten the character of the Dutch. In a similar fashion he writes about the Frisians and praises them for killing Saint Boniface—for the priests of the heathens were in many ways much better equipped to preserve the Frisians’ moral purity than these so-called Christian priests. The Frisians were therefore completely right to reject a religion that posed a threat to their heroic virtue.²⁸

Despite his blunt criticisms of certain members of the clergy, De Hooghe stays within the confines of what Joris van Eijnatten has called the Calvinist Erastian position. This is a position which, according to C. D. Gunnoe, is simply in line with the Grotian ideal—and hence is better called neither Calvinistic nor Erastian.²⁹ In the seventeenth century it found ardent defenders in authors like Lambertus van Velthuysen and Johan van Bleiswijk.³⁰ Indeed, a minister is entrusted with a holy office, but because of the epistemic uncertainty about their personal sacredness, these officeholders should not be accorded extraordinary rights.

De Hooghe expressed this view most vividly in his *Hieroglyphica*, an allegorical work on the history of religion published posthumously in 1735 but written in the same period as the *Spiegel van Staat*. It consists of allegorical

27 “Op de naam van Geest, ... by haar soort een naam [verkrijgen], om de deugd en eerlykheyd, van hare Medeborgers, en t’ gedrag van hare wettige Overheden verdagt te maken; nieuwigheyd en quaad stokende om onder een gemeen verderf, haare quade toestand best te dekken; of was ‘t mogelyk, alles in duygen te smyten, en te azen van de vlyt en zuynigheyd der vromen. Om dat de goede Borgers niet zouden van zulken soort verleyd werden, lust my dit de doen drukken.” De Hooghe (see above, n. 1), 1.1, p. v.

28 De Hooghe (see above, n. 1), 2.2, p. 75.

29 Van Eijnatten, *Liberty and Concord* (see above, n. 3), p. 110; C. D. Gunnoe Jr. ‘The Evolution of Erastianism: Hugo Grotius’s Engagement with Thomas Erastus,’ *Grotiana* 34 (2013), 41–61, there 48.

30 Johan Cornelisz. van Bleiswijk, *Mose als een God over Aäron; dat is, Schriftuurlyke wederlegginge van al het gene door D. Brakel tegen haar Ed. Gr. Mog. Resolutie in dato den 17en. September 1687 binnen de Stadt Rotterdam op den 25en July 1688 openbaarlijk is gepredikt, tot nadeel van’t H. Regt der Christelyke Overheyd. Welke Predikatie naderhand, nevens sekere Voor-en Na-reden, door den Druk nog meer gemeen gemaakt is* (Delft, 1689); Lambertus van Velthuysen, *Het Predick-Ampt en ‘t Recht der kercke, Bepaelt nae de Regelen van Godts Woordt, en de gronden van onse Reformatie. Tegen het gevoelen van eenige Gereformeerde Leeraers, die der selve macht verder uytbreyden als het behoort* (Amsterdam, 1660).

FIGURE 6.2 The States of Holland defending the Reformed Church by endorsing the Synod of Dordrecht, detail from plate 59, in: Romeyn de Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica* (Amsterdam, 1735). Private collection

prints complemented with lengthy explanatory texts. In the text explaining an allegorical representation of the Dutch Republic, De Hooghe comments on the doctrine of the two kingdoms, the worldly and the spiritual. He does not attack the doctrine or the idea itself, but puts forward the idea that the wisdom of the political authors of his time has shown that it is in everyone's interest to put sovereignty firmly in the hands of the secular government.³¹ Therefore the oversight of the synods by representatives of the magistrate, the *commissaris-sen politiek*, is completely justified. In the print (Fig. 6.2), we see the sword of the worldly government pointing firmly at the synods, purposefully raised as if to signify that the synods convene only with the consent of the State. This view was far from controversial—De Hooghe basically justifies the kind of political

31 Romeyn de Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica, ofte merkebeelden der oude volkeren* (Amsterdam, 1735), p. 438.

oversight that was common practice—but his argument supporting it is substantially new.³²

The idea that the well-being of the civil community does not depend on its members' religious purity or conformity to a specific confession can also be found in a pamphlet De Hooghe wrote in 1690. His arguments are again based on patriotism and experience. In a dialogue dealing with a conflict between Amsterdam and William III, one of the fictional characters claims that after the successful revolution of 1688 it is time to purge the Netherlands of Catholics as well. His opponent, evidently representing De Hooghe's opinion, rebukes him with the following words: "calm down, for many Catholics and members of other confessions are true patriots and upholders of true liberty."³³ Just as De Hooghe argues in the *Spiegel van Staat* that someone's confessional allegiance should not influence his or her legal status, the pamphlet makes it clear that people should be judged by the way they contribute to the fatherland, not by their faith.

We find an earlier defense of this view in one of his satirical prints published sometime around 1678, entitled *The Ecclesiastical Funeral Cortège of the pious minister Johannes van de Velde* (Fig. 6.3).³⁴ Although published anonymously, its style and choice of words leave no doubt that the author was Romeyn de Hooghe. In the print we see a mocking representation of the funeral cortège of one of the prominent members of the Voetian faction, the minister Van de Velde. The ministers and theologians making up the procession have donkey ears and on one of the tombstones in the graveyard around them we read: "Here lies the enemy of freedom." Joke Spaans, in her *Graphic Satire and Religious Change*, has provided an insightful analysis of the print's many allegations of hypocrisy, sedition, and pedantry on the part of the Voetians.³⁵ For now I want to focus on the figure on the left. Here we see a man standing with a field marshal's baton in his hand, a cloud of air leaving his mouth. He speaks the words, "Reyn af," complete destruction, a figure of speech also used in the *Spiegel van Staat*.³⁶ It was adopted by the zealots, mentioned above, who criticized the establishment of freedom of religion by William of Orange. The phrase can be found in Datheen's metrical rendering of Psalm 136,7—a Psalm

32 F. A. van Lieburg, *Profeten en hun Vaderland: De geografische herkomst van de gereformeerde predikanten in Nederland van 1572–1816* (Amsterdam, 1995), pp. 24–6.

33 Romeyn de Hooghe, *Postwagen-Praetjen tussen een Hgenaer [sic], Amsterdammer Beneficiant, Schipper en Frans Koopman* (s.l., 1690), p. 13.

34 Dutch title: *De kerckelijcke lijck-statue van den seer devoten domine Johannes van de Velde*; see Joke Spaans, *Graphic Satire and Religious Change: The Dutch Republic 1676–1707* (Leiden, 2011), p. 58.

35 Spaans, *Graphic Satire and Religious Change* (see above, n. 34), pp. 58–68.

36 De Hooghe (see above, n. 1), 2.4, p. 130.

FIGURE 6.3 'De kerckelijcke lijck-statie van den seer devoten domine Johannes van de Velde [The Ecclesiastical Funeral Cortege of the very pious minister Johannes van de Velde].' Satirical print on the political and ecclesiastical pretensions of the Voetian faction in the Reformed Church. Designer, engraver and publisher not indicated, probably by De Hooghe. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, cat. nr. RP-P-1944-3050

of David, for Jeremiah—and in Moerentorff's sixteenth-century version of the Bible from 1599.³⁷

The connection with Jeremiah is probably more than a coincidence: the jeremiad was a popular form of preaching among the members of the Voetian faction. Every time the Dutch were confronted with misfortunes like war, a natural disaster, or famine, ministers argued in this sort of sermon that it was chiefly the sins of the people that had brought about these divine punishments, and

37 Jan Moerentorff, *Biblia sacra, dat is de geheele heylige schriftuer bedeyld in het oude en nieuwe testament ... gedrukt te Antwerpen by Jan Moerentorff 1599* (Brussels, 1838), Psalms 86,7 on p. 672.

therefore the only remedy was public and communal repentance.³⁸ In other words, in the jeremiads we find, in its most enunciated form, the idea that the well-being of the Dutch depended on the spiritual purity of the country's inhabitants. An idea that De Hooghe criticized throughout his life.

De Hooghe's aversion to Voetian ideas is accompanied by a preference for moderation and civility. This does not make his work secular. Throughout the *Spiegel van Staat* he makes it very clear that the Reformed religion is the true religion; unwelcome elements are almost always labeled as Catholic, and there are limits to his religious tolerance as well. Although he declares that no citizen should be discriminated against because of his confessional adherence, he registers no objection to the position that those holding a political office should be members of the public Church. He defends state control over the (religious) education of children and even claims that, in principle, the right to allow one's own children to be educated by Jesuit teachings or other forms of Roman Catholic superstition should be denied.³⁹ To understand his criticism of certain ecclesiastical officeholders, the limits to his tolerance, and his civic morality, it is important to grasp that De Hooghe's civic ideal is first and foremost a Dutch ideal. Although there are elements of secularization in his work, at the same time he sacralizes the Dutch civic sphere to an unprecedented extent. In other words, he attacks the idea that the conception of a spiritual kingdom provides a legitimate foundation for granting extraordinary rights for the clergy, but does not leave those who seek divine guidance (in these matters) empty-handed.

4 The Power of Custom

De Hooghe's ideas about the importance of custom, like his critique of ecclesiastical power, is grounded in his political thought. As stated above, only a few pages of the *Spiegel van Staat* are dedicated to the various forms of government.⁴⁰ Although De Hooghe favors popular sovereignty, he points out that many different variations of the three Aristotelian forms—monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy—existed throughout Europe and that in many cases this is for the best.⁴¹ Even more importantly, most of them hold sway

38 Groenhuis, *De Predikanten* (see above, n. 15), pp. 81–6; N. C. Kist, *Nêerland's bededagen en biddagsbrieven*, 2 vols. (Leiden, 1848).

39 De Hooghe (see above, n. 1), 2.1, pp. 265–7, 2.2, p. 251.

40 De Hooghe (see above, n. 1), 2.1, pp. 41–9.

41 De Hooghe (see above, n. 1), 2.1, p. 15.

only for a limited period, since politics by its very nature is unstable. He concludes this analysis on a more positive note: despite the ever-changing nature of human societies, there is one force that reliably provides some stability. He writes: "there is nothing stronger to keep a region than custom—we with a free government, and likewise Asia with a rule by one; but just like buildings, ways of clothing, trinkets and virtues are fads ... the same goes with forms of government."⁴²

In line with the rest of his work, De Hooghe argues that institutional safeguards are powerful instruments to keep a form of government from changing into its corrupted counterpart. But these don't suffice completely, and ultimately the customs of a nation represent the most constant foundation to build upon. Thus for De Hooghe the importance of these customs being preserved affects not only his ideal of a public Church that caters to the needs of the civil society, but also public education in general. Both these elements hinge on the way he sacralizes the customs of the Dutch.

In the chapter directly following his discussion of the various forms of government, De Hooghe sets out to explain why the United Netherlands has the best of all forms of government. Anyone looking for intricate theoretical or legal arguments here will be disappointed. The whole section is exclusively devoted to a historical account of the Dutch from the beginning of time onward. However, in relation to his ideas about the power of the customs and habits of a nation, it becomes clear that his idea of the Dutch as the oldest nation is the argument itself. This is not a version of the Machiavellian idea that its age means that its government is strongest, but rather the idea that the morals of the Dutch are the best. Tracing back the origins of the Dutch to the beginning of time, albeit in an idealized, fictional genealogy, enables De Hooghe to argue, more or less, that the customs and habits of the Dutch are unique in not having been corrupted by despotism or Church rule, give or take a few others like some tribes in the New World and Africa.⁴³

De Hooghe traces Dutch history much further back than Grotius had. The engraver presents the Dutch nation as the oldest people in the world.⁴⁴ This idea goes back to the theory of Marcus Zuerius van Boxhorn about the Scythian origins of the Dutch and the Germans.⁴⁵ De Hooghe's version of Dutch origins

42 De Hooghe (see above, n. 1), 2.1, p. 54.

43 De Hooghe (see above, n. 1), 2.1, p. 14.

44 De Hooghe (see above, n. 1), 2.1, p. 57.

45 D. Droixhe, 'Boxhorn, Marcus Zuerius (1602/12–1653),' in: *Elsevier's Encyclopedia of Language & Linguistics*, 2nd ed. (online resource, 2006), p. 103. This idea can also be found in: Simon van Leeuwen, *Batavia Illustrata, ofte verhandelinge van den oorspronk, voortgang etc. van de Bataven*, 2 vols (The Hague, 1685). 1, pp. 2, 14–5. See also the contribution

reads like an ongoing warning about the dangers of tyranny from the time of the biblical Flood onward. After the Deluge, new despots tried to rule all of humanity. Often in cahoots with ecclesiastical leaders, they posed as gods to coerce people into obedience. Some people, because of their love for liberty, could not accept the legitimacy of these claims and traveled north to Europe, taking with them fully intact their natural love for liberty and their knowledge of the guiding light of nature and of God.⁴⁶ Despite the rise of tyrants in Europe, this love of liberty is still the defining character of the Dutch, according to De Hooghe.⁴⁷

Every time the oppression of the worldly and ecclesiastical powers in concert became too harsh, the Dutch rose up to defend their liberty. This cyclical chain of events was finally broken with the complete restoration during the Revolt against Spain. The success of the Revolt was, according to De Hooghe, partly the result of the invention of the printing press.⁴⁸ The reading of the writings of the Chambers of Rhetoric made the people rediscover their inborn nature and the natural origins of their liberty, both worldly and spiritual.⁴⁹ The message seems to be that the customs and habits of the Dutch are sacred in and of themselves, because they are in part untouched by the corrupting forces of Church and statecraft. His attention to the role of the Chambers of Rhetoric is typical for De Hooghe and illustrates his awareness of the power of print for the populace at large. Before I elaborate on this, I will discuss the influence of satirical authors like John Barclay and Trajano Boccalini on his ideas about custom. Their attention to education in relation to the customs of a nation is especially illustrative for De Hooghe's rationality. After I have discussed their ideas, I will consider the ambiguous relation between Spinoza's thought and that of De Hooghe. In my view this relation is not only telling for the possible influence of Spinoza on De Hooghe, but gives us some insight into the way public debate in the Dutch Republic had shifted away from the polemical writings of the radicals of the seventeenth century. De Hooghe's ideas, after all, were received as rather conventional.

of Jaap van Nieuwstraten in this volume and his dissertation, 'Historical and Political Thought in the Seventeenth-Century Dutch Republic: The Case of Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn (1612–1653)' (Haarlem, 2012), pp. 170–8.

46 De Hooghe (see above, n. 1), 2.1, p. 13.

47 De Hooghe (see above, n. 1), 1.1, p. 4.

48 De Hooghe (see above, n. 1), 1.1, p. 60.

49 De Hooghe (see above, n. 1), 2.1, p. 57.

5 Practical Custom versus Philosophical Reason: Barclay, Boccalini, and Spinoza

In the decades before De Hooghe's *Spiegel van Staat* was published, the Dutch Republic saw an increase in popularity of skeptical authors. In the last quarter of the seventeenth century, the *Essays* of Michel de Montaigne (1533–92), the complete writings of the Scottish satirist John Barclay (1582–1621), and the political fables of Trajano Boccalini (1556–1613) were all published in Dutch translation.⁵⁰ Very different works, of course, but apart from their political skepticism they also share a remarkable interest in education and the power of custom on a political community.⁵¹

John Barclay, a Scottish nobleman and ambassador for James I in France famed for his criticism of Puritans and Jesuits, wrote the satirical novel *Argenis* and a more serious work on the different nations of Europe entitled *Icon Animorum* [Mirror of Minds]. Written in Latin, this latter work was soon translated into English, French, and Italian. In 1683 Nicolaas Jacherides Wieringa included a Dutch translation in *Satyrikon of Heekel-schrift*, his Dutch edition of Barclay's complete writings.

Barclay's idea that every nation has a specific character leans heavily on Montaigne's essay on custom.⁵² Barclay explains the influence of custom in his introduction: "The making or marring of mankind, as of other creatures, is, especially in their first age ... The seeds ... and fundamentall parts of virtue,

50 On the translator of Barclay and Boccalini, Nicolaas Jarichides Wieringa, see: Caroline Louise Thijssen-Schoute, *Nicolaas Jarichides Wieringa: Een zeventiende-eeuws vertaler van Boccalini, Rabelais, Barclay, Leti e.a.* (Assen, 1939); Michel de Montaigne, *Alle de werken*, trans. J. H. Glazemaker (Amsterdam, 1674); J. Barklai, *Satyrikon of Heekel-schrift, waar in, onder de naam, gevallen, en d'afbeelding der gemoederen van den Schotzen Euphormio, de stand, handel en wandel, inborst, zeden en staatsbeleid van verscheide Volkeren of Landsaard... ten toon werden gestelt, en onbeschroomdelyk in alle hare gebreeken, op een geestige, scherpe en heylzame wijze, doorgestreeken*, trans. N. I. W. (= Wieringa) (Amsterdam, 1683). In this volume (as Part 2, Book 1, pp. 431–648): *Afbeelding der Gemoederen, of de Gaaven, aart, eygenschappen, geneigheden, gewoonten, &c. van verscheiden Rijkken, Landschappen, en Volkeren; Trajano Boccalini, Politieke toet-steen*, trans. Lambert van den Bosch (Harlingen, 1669); idem, *Kundschappen van Parnas, Waar in door Apollo, en ziine Geletterden, allerleiye geheime en heilzame Heerschregels voor Koninkriken, Vorstendommen, en Vrijestaten; Pligten voor Amptenaars; en Zedelessen voor Onderzaten, nevens aanwizing van veler gevaarlike feilen, zeer aardiglijk verhandelt en voorgeschreven*, trans. N. I. W. (= Wieringa) (Harlingen, 1670).

51 On the role of custom in the writings of Montaigne, see: John Christian Laursen, *The Politics of Skepticism in the Ancients: Montaigne, Hume, and Kant* (Leiden, 1992), pp. 118–9.

52 William M. Hamlin, *Montaigne's English Journey: Reading the Essays in Shakespeare's Day* (Oxford, 2013), p. 270.

they are by an early and stronger persuasion, to be so integrated into them, that they need not know, whether nature or precept were the teachers of them.”⁵³ Barclay stresses the importance of a proper moral upbringing because the early years define what a person will perceive to be naturally right or wrong. In the second chapter, based on these ideas about education, he conceptualizes the character of a nation: “Namely, that spirit which being appropriate to every region, is infuseth into men, as soon as they are borne, the habit, and affection of their owne country.”⁵⁴ Just as an individual will be guided throughout his life by the teachings received in early life, so the morality of a nation is defined by a national spirit of shared customs. Thus a nation is not the slave of the shifting opinions of a certain era; ultimately it is guided by a stronger force, the power of its reigning character or custom. Therefore, to protect unity and constancy this national spirit should be nurtured and cared for. This line of thinking is very similar to De Hooghe’s in his chapter on the various forms of government, especially the idea that a nation’s character can withstand the influence of changing fashions.⁵⁵

To infer Barclay’s influence is not farfetched. De Hooghe was well versed in the various satirical traditions and their authors, and in the Dutch Republic Barclay’s work was published more than sixteen times. De Hooghe’s signature appears on the frontispiece of Barclay’s political novel, the *Argenis*, and Jan ten Hoorn, the *Spiegel van Staat*’s publisher, brought out the Dutch translation of Barclay’s *Icon Animorum* in 1683. Barclay’s influence on De Hooghe’s indeed seems very likely.⁵⁶

Even more important was the Italian satirist Boccalini, mentioned in *Spiegel van Staat* and figuring prominently in De Hooghe’s pamphlets. De Hooghe even made the illustrations for the Dutch translation by Wieringa (who also translated Barclay) of Boccalini’s *Ragguagli di Parnaso*, published in 1670. The influence of the Italian satirist on Dutch political thought is hard to underestimate. As Arthur Weststeijn writes in his work on the political thought of the brothers De la Court, *Commercial Republicanism*: “Boccalini was the author of two works that would become the seventeenth-century *locus classicus* of

53 Dutch translation: “De voornaamste toezicht op ’t menschelijk geslagt, gelijk op alle andere schepsels, geschied in haar wieg of eerste beginzel.... Voor al dienen de zaaden, en (als) grondleggingen der deugden, voor een ouden en zeer diepen genegentheid haar ingeboezemt te worden; zoo datse daar na niet en weten, ofse uyt de Natuur, of door leerlingen en beveelen ontfangen hebben,” Barklai, *Satyrikon of Heekel-schrift* (see above, n. 50), p. 435.

54 Dutch translation: “te weten, dien geest, die yder Landschap in’t byzondere eygen sijnde, den menschen, zoo haast die geboren worden, haares Vaderlands aart en neygingen terstond inplant,” Barklai, *Satyrikon of Heekel-schrift* (see above, n. 50), p. 456.

55 De Hooghe (see above, n. 1), 2.1, p. 39.

56 Barklai, *Satyrikon of Heekel-schrift* (see above, n. 50), p. 431.

Tacitean, republican satire of princely and clerical hypocrisy: the *Ragguagli di Parnaso* and the *Pietra del paragone politico* (1612–14).” Although this influence has now been amply researched, little attention has been given to the way that the Italian satirist utilized the notion of custom as an elementary force and gave it a specifically political twist.⁵⁷ Throughout his writings Boccalini defended the liberty of the Italian city-states but also argued that its form or governmental structure was incredibly hard to import or implement. The reason for this difficulty is custom. The customs and habits of a people, he writes, are ultimately even more important than its laws.⁵⁸

According to Boccalini, this is because a free government lacks the disciplinary power of other forms of government, for example a monarchy. This means that other governments can force their subjects to behave in the interest of the common good. In a free government its citizens must behave this way of their own free will. Thus everyone must be able to judge impartially, to use their wealth virtuously, to accept the authority of an equal, and even to inhibit the exercise of individual skills when to do so would benefit the common good. Boccalini argues that an individual cannot learn this attitude of moderation and care for the common good from books or from education alone; it must be “taken in from birth” and nourished throughout life’s stages.⁵⁹ He continues his argument by emphasizing that this duty to conduct civic education should not be given to a community’s most learned men—its scholars, philosophers, and theologians—because they almost always have disdain for local customs.⁶⁰

In one of his Parnassian fables he tells the story of a group of writers who had apparently burned down all the houses of the reformers. Brought before Apollo, they defended themselves thus: “These reformers hide under the cloak of improvement, but they don’t teach us anything. They just keep changing the rules. Instead of improving us, they only point out our vices to elevate themselves above us. They don’t properly explain why they are vices but just criticize

57 On the influence of Boccalini on political thought in the Dutch Republic, see: E. O. G. Haitsma-Mulier, *Constitutioneel Republikanisme en de mythe van Venetië in het zeventiende-eeuwse Nederland* (Amsterdam, 1978), pp. 42–4, 176; Arthur Weststeijn, *Commercial Republicanism in the Dutch Golden Age: The Political Thought of Johan & Pieter de la Court* (Leiden, 2012), p. 130; Simon Groenveld, ‘Pieter Corneliszoon Hooft en de geschiedenis van zijn eigen tijd,’ in: Simon Groenveld, *Hooft als historieschrijver: twee studies* (Weesp, 1981), p. 45.

58 Boccalini, *Kundschappen van Parnas* (see above, n. 50), p. 199.

59 Boccalini, *Kundschappen van Parnas* (see above, n. 50), p. 201.

60 Boccalini, *Kundschappen van Parnas* (see above, n. 50), p. 224. This advice goes back to the famous saying of another author De Hooghe knew by heart, Rabelais: “The greatest clerks are not the wisest of men.” For more on De Hooghe’s familiarity with Rabelais, see Meredith Hale, ‘Romeyn de Hooghe and the Birth of Political Satire’ (diss., Columbia University, New York, 2006).

what we are accustomed to doing.”⁶¹ Apollo understands their complaints and admonishes the reformers to change their tune.

Boccalini's regard for the power of custom and his somewhat suspicious view of philosophical rationalism helps us understand the substantial difference between De Hooghe and Spinoza without ignoring their striking similarities. De Hooghe's attention to local custom and his distrust of ecclesiastical power in relation to public opinion make it very likely that he was familiar with Spinoza's writings. The abuse of power by ecclesiastics, the importance of free speech, and the nurturing of the right customs play an especially important role in Spinoza's *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus* and his unfinished *Tractatus Politicus*. Peace or unity, Spinoza writes in the *Tractatus Politicus*, is not the absence of war but the unity of spirits or *animorum unio*.⁶² Laws and other measures should therefore always be implemented with the customs of the nation in mind.⁶³ This is necessary because most people are guided not by reason but by their affects.⁶⁴ In his famous description of the Hebrew Republic, Spinoza argues that because the spirit of their laws and of their religion overlap completely, religious piety and love for the fatherland direct the people to the same goal.⁶⁵ Together with their excellent political constitution and a shared hatred of the political communities around them, this love for the fatherland became second nature to them.⁶⁶ When he writes on the dangers of corruption in an aristocracy in the *Tractatus Politicus*, he links such corruption to the influence of foreign habits—French fashion in clothing, for example, or in the case of the Hebrew republic, alien religions.

De Hooghe does not, however, share Spinoza's complete lack of confidence in the ministers of the public Church at that time. Whereas Spinoza argues that a different 'National civil religion', overseen by a secular power, should replace the existing public Church, in none of De Hooghe's works do we find an attack on the existing public Church or the existence of the spiritual kingdom itself. Moreover, De Hooghe glorifies the character of the Dutch and their love for liberty to such an extent that the customs and habits based on this love make the Dutch nation a sacred sphere unto itself. This is an idea that Spinoza

61 Boccalini, *Politieke toet-steen* (see above, n. 50), pp. 49–60.

62 A. C. M. Roothaan, *Vroomheid, vrede en vrijheid: Een interpretatie van Spinoza's Tractatus* (Assen, 1996), p. 14. Baruch de Spinoza, *Staatkundige verhandeling*, trans. Karel D'huyvetters, 2nd ed. (Amsterdam, 2015), 3.7, p. 71, 6.4, p. 103.

63 Spinoza, *Staatkundige verhandeling* (see above, n. 62), 7.30, p. 163 and 10.7, p. 253.

64 Baruch de Spinoza, *Theologisch-Politiek Traktaat*, trans. F. Akkerman (Haren, 1997), 17.4, p. 369.

65 See, for an in-depth analysis, Wiep van Bunge, *Spinoza, Past and Present: Essays on Spinoza, Spinozism, and Spinoza Scholarship* (Leiden, 2012), pp. 91–96.

66 Spinoza, *Theologisch-Politiek Traktaat* (see above, n. 64), 17.24, p. 387.

explicitly dismisses: a nation's character is not something natural or divine but rather is purely artificial, because nature only produces individuals. A nation is therefore not guided by some innate genius or character but is the result of an interplay among language, laws, and customs.⁶⁷ In the *Tractatus Politicus* Spinoza makes it quite clear that although customs are something a wise politician has to deal with, custom itself is ultimately the sole product of the laws and the political structure of a given nation, not some intrinsic quality of that nation.⁶⁸ In his *Tractatus Politicus* we therefore find all kinds of advice, based on rational arguments or historical examples, on how certain laws and institutions influence the morality of rulers and subjects. Most of this advice, with its clear warnings and far-reaching proposals, reads as if it were addressed to the political institutions of the Dutch Republic.

Although it is clear that De Hooghe was not only familiar with Spinoza's political writings but often applied the same logic as the philosopher, I am reluctant to call him an outright Spinozist. Besides the reasons given above, the heart of the matter is that many of Spinoza's warnings were part of the established political vocabulary of the Dutch Republic. Spinoza's comments on the importance of custom in particular were actually quite conventional.⁶⁹ What's more, none of the advice regarding the organization of the army or the distribution of wealth in the *Tractatus Politicus* was echoed in the *Spiegel van Staat*. De Hooghe never follows the philosopher to his ultimate conclusions, simply because he doesn't have to. Every time De Hooghe's glorification of the Republic's political organization conflicts with his more cynical analyses of politics in general, he reassures his readers that the Dutch are superior by presenting the United Netherlands as an exception because of the superb moral character of its inhabitants. Despite De Hooghe's biting Tacitean or even Machiavellian remarks, it is this sacralization that enabled him to turn his *Spiegel van Staat* into a Ciceronean mirror of duties that Spinoza so forcefully tried to leave behind.

67 Spinoza, *Theologisch-Politiek Traktaat* (see above, n. 64), 17.26, p. 390.

68 Spinoza, *Staatkundige verhandeling* (see above, n. 62), 1.39, p. 39, 5.3, p. 95.

69 See also Niccolò Macchiavelli, *Discorsi: Gedachten over staat en politiek*, trans. Paul Heck (Amsterdam, 2007), pp. 143–4; Boccacini, *Kundschappen van Parnas* (see above, n. 50), p. 198; Michel de Montaigne, *De essays*, vertaald en toegelicht door Hans van Pinxteren met een nawoord van Afshin Ellian, trans. Hans van Pinxteren, 6th ed. (Amsterdam, 2012), 1.23, p. 149; Spinoza, *Theologisch-Politiek Traktaat* (see above, n. 64), 18.4, pp. 404–5; Lieuwe van Aitzema, *Historie of verhael van saken van staet en oorlogh in ende ontrent de Vereenigde Nederlanden, beginnende met 't uitgaen van den Trevis ende eyndigende 1669*, 14 vols. (The Hague, 1662), 7, p. 203; Pieter de Huybert, *Lauwer-krans ofte Apologie voor de stadhouderlijke en oude Hollandse regeringe* (Middelburg, 1672), p. 10; Pieter Valckenier, *'t Verwerd Europa* (Amsterdam, 1688), p. 1.

6 To Conclude: Faultline 1700?

De Hooghe's emphasis on the importance of custom and habits fits into a larger shift that took place sometime around 1700. Most notably this shift derived from the growing importance of a new voice within Dutch debating culture. Talented artists, craftsmen, and poets, despite their low rank, began voicing opinions on matters that had once been the exclusive territory of philosophers, theologians, and other learned men. Although many of the radicals of the seventeenth century had also worked and lived outside the world of academia, they clearly saw themselves in their writings as akin to academic scholars, in both rank and authority. Their emphasis on reason and the many ways they attacked and even tried to transform the public Church made them part of a debate which had originated in the clash between philosophy and theology at Dutch universities around 1650.⁷⁰ There are compelling reasons to put De Hooghe, with his *Spiegel van Staat*, into a different category, not that of a professional philosopher writing for the likeminded few but of a civil educator of the public at large.

In his description of the Batavian forefathers of the Dutch, De Hooghe mentions that they had three kinds of priests, none of which had any actual influence in their political assemblies. Those of the first kind were responsible for religion, the second kind concerned themselves with natural and supernatural wisdom, and those of the third kind were historians and poets who celebrated their pious and heroic deeds. With statues, songs, and national days of celebration, the forefathers of the Dutch honored their heroes in order to teach their male youth the same kind of manly courage. By boosting the importance of the preservation of the Dutch national character, he downplays the importance of ministers, theologians, and philosophers, and positions himself as a respectable and authoritative voice.⁷¹ He writes as someone who took Boccalini's advice on civic education to heart.

De Hooghe's goal is therefore not to transform the public Church or the religious regime in any way, but to defend the fatherland by preserving the Dutch virtues of its citizens. Likewise, all who practice Dutch virtue in their behavior should be regarded as equals by their fellow citizens. This focus on a shared morality is visible throughout the eighteenth century. A telling fact

70 See the chapter on philosophy by Wiep van Bunge in: Marijke Spies and Willen Frijhoff, *1650: Bevochten Eendracht* (The Hague, 1999), pp. 281–314; Wiep van Bunge, *From Stevin to Spinoza: An Essay on Philosophy in the Seventeenth-Century Dutch Republic* (Leiden, 2001), pp. 34–93; Rienk Vermeij, *The Calvinist Copernicans: The Reception of the New Astronomy in the Dutch Republic, 1575–1750* (Amsterdam, 2002).

71 De Hooghe (see above, n. 1), 2.1, p. 71.

is the immense popularity in the Dutch Republic of John Locke's writings on education,⁷² *The Spectator* of Addison (1672–1719) and Steele (1672–1729), and the writings of Justus van Effen (1684–1735), along with those of Christian Wolff (1679–1754) and Montesquieu.⁷³ All these writers accepted the position of the public Church and made custom and care for the fatherland central to their work.

With the emphasis on moral education, the eighteenth century's literary landscape, when compared to the preceding century, became far less polemical. It has been characterized as polite, moralizing, even provincial.⁷⁴ One of the consequences of this shift is that the radical authors of the seventeenth century, like the brothers De la Court, Spinoza, and Ericus Walten, were mostly ignored as if they had never existed.⁷⁵ This makes it hard to reconnect eighteenth-century authors with seventeenth-century thought. Why did the attention shift from debating political constitutions to discussing the inculcation of virtues? Why did a new civic ideal become so popular?

In my view, an answer can be found in the way De Hooghe uses custom as a means to sacralize the civil culture of the Dutch. Because it conspicuously lacks a chapter on religion, the *Spiegel van Staat* reads almost like the orthodoxy of a civil religion. Not a Machiavellian orthodoxy that should replace the official

72 On the skeptical influence on Locke's ideas on education, see: John Locke, *Some Thoughts Concerning Education (Including the Conduct of Understanding)*, ed. John William Adamson (Mineola, 2007), preface, pp. 1–20. On the popularity of Locke's educational ideas, see: Willeke Los, *Opvoeding tot mens en burger: Pedagogiek als cultuurkritiek in Nederland in de 18e eeuw* (Hilversum, 2005).

73 P. J. Buijnsters, *Justus van Effen (1648–1735): Leven en werk* (Houten, 1992), pp. 258–9. On the elusive relation between the English spectatorial writings of Addison and Steele and the satirical and spectatorial writings by the Dutch in the first half of the eighteenth century, see: A. J. Hanou, 'Dutch periodicals from 1696 to 1721: In Imitation of the English?' *Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century* 199 (1981), 187–204; Elly Groenenboom-Draai, *De Rotterdamse woelreus: de Rotterdamsche Hermes (1720–21) Jacob Campo Weyerman: Cultuurhistorische verkenningen in een achttiende eeuwse periodiek* (Amsterdam, 1994). On the popularity of Wolff and Montesquieu, see: Kloek and Mijnhardt, *1800: Blauwdrukken voor een samenleving* (see above, n. 4), pp. 155–6.

74 Van Eijnatten, *Liberty and Concord* (see above, n. 3), p. 11; Kloek and Mijnhardt, *1800: Blauwdrukken voor een samenleving*, (see above, n. 4), p. 148; Van Sas, *Metamorfose van Nederland* (see above, n. 4), pp. 54, 101; Wyger R. E. Velema, 'Ancient and Modern Virtue Compared: De Beaufort and Van Effen on Republican Citizenship,' *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 30 (1997), pp. 437–43.

75 Wijnand Mijnhardt, 'The Construction of Silence,' in: *The Early Enlightenment in the Dutch Republic 1650–1750*, ed. Wiep van Bunge (Cambridge, 2003), p. 235; H. W. Blom, *Morality and Causality in Politics: The Rise of Naturalism in Dutch Seventeenth-Century Political Thought* (Ridderkerk, 1995); p. 241; Velema, 'Ancient and Modern Virtue Compared' (see above, n. 74).

tenets of the public Church, but one wherein the teachings of the public Church are embedded within the civic culture at large—legitimizing its place, but emphasizing its civil duty above all. This represents an intellectual shift that is in agreement with the analysis of Peter van Rooden, who in *Religieuze regimes* has convincingly shown that in the seventeenth century the Dutch perceived the worldly and ecclesiastical spheres to be distinct from or even opposed to each other.⁷⁶ Even more importantly, the people's moral education was seen as a duty of the ecclesiastical sphere. In the eighteenth century, however, both spheres were understood to be equally important for the moral upbringing of the Dutch.

According to Van Rooden, this change resulted from a conceptual shift beginning in the first decade of the eighteenth century, so that around 1750 both spheres had come to be seen as equally important pillars of a new moral sphere, that of the fatherland.⁷⁷ Van Rooden argues that out of the many debates on the hierarchical order of the different moral spheres there emerged a new moral understanding of the fatherland. And because the fatherland, as a new moral sphere, transcended confessional allegiances and political ideologies, the friction between them dissolved within it. As a consequence, debating their importance no longer evoked the same passion as it had a century earlier. Although his thesis is largely accepted, one question remains, raised as a result of research conducted by Donald Haks and Ingmar Vroomen, who show that fatherland rhetoric is not a typical eighteenth-century phenomenon.⁷⁸ Throughout the seventeenth century this idea of the fatherland as an independent sphere had already become widespread. We may ask whether this idea simply became more popular after 1700—or did the idea itself change? Willem Frijhoff argued in 1992 that in the eighteenth century the humanistic image of the self, fabricated from classical topoi, was slowly replaced by more holistic ideas about the character of the nation. As a result the Dutch Republic, despite its fragmented political structure, could be envisioned as a cultural nation.⁷⁹ The *Spiegel van Staat* provides us some insights into the social and intellectual

76 Peter van Rooden, *Religieuze regimes: Over godsdienst en maatschappij in Nederland, 1570–1990* (Amsterdam, 1996).

77 Van Rooden, *Religieuze regimes* (see above, n. 76), p. 87; idem, 'Vroomheid, macht en verlichting,' *Documentatieblad werkgroep Achttiende eeuw* 32 (2000), 57–75.

78 Donald Haks, *Vaderland en Vrede 1672–1713: Publiciteit over de Nederlandse Republiek in oorlog* (Hilversum, 2013), pp. 286–97; Ingmar Vroomen, 'Taal van de Republiek: Het gebruik van vaderlandretoriek in Nederlandse pamfletten, 1618–1672,' unpublished PhD thesis (Rotterdam, 2012), pp. 259–63.

79 Willem Frijhoff, 'Het zelfbeeld van de Nederlander in de achttiende eeuw: Een inleiding,' *Documentatieblad werkgroep Achttiende eeuw* 24 (1992), 5–28.

dynamic of this transition and reveals the ways it signified both a continuation of, and a shift away from, the tumultuous seventeenth century.

In summary, by using the ever-popular language of fatherland and patria and connecting them to inherently skeptical ideas about custom as the prime force of human behavior, De Hooghe could claim that the Dutch had the best customs in the world and that their preservation should therefore be everyone's concern. His criticism of the conduct of ecclesiastical leaders and religious bigotry is based on the way these phenomena disturb the civil order by creating discord and by corrupting morality. Because Dutch morality itself carries with it a trace of the divine origins of humankind, this itself makes them ungodly. According to the same logic, he declares that it is unjust to condemn citizens who contribute to the well-being of the Dutch because of their dissenting faiths. With this rhetorical move De Hooghe can stress the importance of his own work, legitimize his position as a civil educator, and propagate a civic morality without entangling himself in the many snares of the debates between philosophers and theologians. This does not mean that he is a moderate in the sense of oscillating between an orthodox Reformed and a radical position. Rather, he has applied a new rationality.