

**Zeitschrift:** Internationale kirchliche Zeitschrift : neue Folge der Revue internationale de théologie

**Band:** 99 (2009)

**Heft:** 3

**Artikel:** Jansenism across the border : the interaction in the 17th and 18th century between Catholic theologians in France and in the Dutch Republic

**Autor:** Berlis, Angela / Schoon, Dick

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-405055>

### **Nutzungsbedingungen**

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. [Siehe Rechtliche Hinweise.](#)

### **Conditions d'utilisation**

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. [Voir Informations légales.](#)

### **Terms of use**

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. [See Legal notice.](#)

**Download PDF:** 19.06.2025

**ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>**

---

## Jansenism Across the Border

### The interaction in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century between Catholic theologians in France and in the Dutch Republic\*

*Angela Berlis and Dick Schoon*

#### 1. Introduction

The interchange between France and the Dutch Republic in the early-modern period offers a good opportunity to supplement the results of existing research into Jansenism. Until now, scholars of theology and church history, when dealing with this area, have mainly concentrated on one specific ‘territory’, so that their studies provide information about Jansenism in a specific country such as France, the German states, Italy or the Dutch Republic.<sup>1</sup> This approach has produced much insight into Jansenism as a national movement of church reform, but tends to regard similar movements in other countries as derivative, without taking into account the international networks involved. When we talk about interchange, we seek to move beyond the view of a one-way traffic, and to deal with

---

\* This paper was originally presented to the conference “Religious interchange between France and the Dutch Republic in the early modern period”, University of Lyon, 28 September 2007. The proceedings of this conference will be published in French. Many thanks to Jaap Theunisz (Haarlem) for the translation and Dr Charlotte Methuen (Oxford) for her comments.

<sup>1</sup> For Jansenism in France, cf. JEAN CARREYRE, ‘Jansenisme’, in: *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique* 8/1, Paris 1924, cols. 318–529; CATHERINE MAIRE, *De la cause de Dieu à la cause de la Nation. Le jansénisme au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Paris: Gallimard, 1998; MONIQUE COTTRET, *Jansénismes et Lumières. Pour un autre XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Paris: Albin Michel, 1998. For Jansenism in the German states, Austria and Italy, cf. WILHELM DEINHARDT, *Der Jansenismus in deutschen Landen. Ein Beitrag zur Kirchengeschichte des 18. Jahrhunderts*, München: Kösel/Pustet, 1929 [reprint Hildesheim: Gerstenberg, 1976]; PETER HERSCHE, *Der Spätjansenismus in Österreich*, Wien: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1977; CHARLES A. BOLTON, *Church Reform in 18<sup>th</sup> Century Italy (The Synod of Pistoia, 1786)*, The Hague: Nijhoff, 1969. For Jansenism in the Republic of the United Netherlands, cf. MATTHIEU G. SPIERTZ, *Jansenisme in en rond de Nederlanden 1640–1690*, in: *Trajecta* 1 (1992), pp. 144–167; IDEM, *Anti-jansenisme en jansenisme in de Nederlanden in de achttiende en negentiende eeuw*, in: *Trajecta* 1 (1992), pp. 233–251.

changes in the mutual relationship between two parties caused by encounters in which ideas, knowledge or material goods are exchanged.<sup>2</sup>

In more recent historical research this approach is known as ‘histoire croisée’ or transfer history. It takes into account the interdependence or mutual connectedness of historical relations between countries,<sup>3</sup> beginning from the assumption that knowledge and ideas move across borders, and that it is possible to speak of mutual influences.<sup>4</sup> Focusing on the exchange between two countries or areas can produce new views and perspectives regarding the traffic of ideas in Europe.

In our contribution we focus on the interaction between Catholic clergy and theologians from France and the Dutch Republic in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, and particularly the question of what this interaction consisted of. We try to ascertain what influence French theologians actively exerted on like-minded people in the Dutch Republic and *vice versa*. Was this influence only with concerned theology in the narrow sense or did it also extend to the area of practical church life and spirituality? How were the people involved influenced by the contacts they established or which they maintained? How can we judge the importance of these mutual active and passive influences? The sources available to us give rise to two limitations. First, we will focus mainly on clergy and theologians, a certain kind of elite, which cannot be considered as cross-section of the whole Catholic Church. Secondly, and not as we first intended, the context of the Dutch Republic will be a larger part of the scope of this contribution than the

---

<sup>2</sup> Material goods might include books. Cf. e.g. JULIETTE GUILBAUD, *Le trafic de livres jansénistes entre la France et les Pays-Bas (fin XVII<sup>e</sup>-début XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècles)*, in: *L'Abbaye de Port-Royal des Champs. VIII<sup>e</sup> centenaire (Chroniques de Port-Royal 55)*, Paris 2005, pp. 277–289.

<sup>3</sup> DEBORAH COHEN/MAURA O'CONNOR, Introduction: Comparative history, Cross-national history, Transnational history – definitions, in: EAEDEM (eds), *Comparison and History. Europe in cross-national perspective*, New York NY: Routledge, 2004, pp. IX–XXIV, here XII–XIV.

<sup>4</sup> For transfer of prints and engravings see PHILIPPE KAENEL/ROLF REICHARDT (eds), *Interkulturelle Kommunikation in der europäischen Druckgraphik im 18. und 19. Jahrhundert – The European print and cultural transfer in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries – Gravure et communication interculturelle en Europe aux 18<sup>e</sup> et 19<sup>e</sup> siècles*, Hildesheim: Olms, 2007; esp. the introductory article by ROLF REICHARDT, *Interkulturelle Wechselbeziehungen der historischen Bildpublizistik als Forschungsaufgabe*, pp. 3–16, and CHRISTINE VOGEL, *Ort und Funktion der Bildpublizistik im plurimedialen Netz der Nachrichten- und Debattenkultur des 18. Jahrhunderts. Ein Beispiel*, pp. 357–374.

French context. This is partly due the fact that we are focusing on a specific group which was quite mobile; however, we also hope to say something about their influence on the French.

This article begins with a short comparative description of Jansenism in France and in the Dutch Republic. It then considers two periods in which French theologians came to the Dutch Republic, before turning briefly to the question of what the French and the Dutch had to offer one another and the form of their interactions. Finally, we offer our conclusions together with some thoughts for further study, including research on international networks.<sup>5</sup>

## 2. Jansenism in France and in the Dutch Republic

Despite – or perhaps also because of – the difficulty of defining it, Jansenism has sometimes been referred to as the central theme of French church history during the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Broadly speaking, it is possible to distinguish four aspects of Jansenism in France.<sup>6</sup>

First of all there is a dogmatic Jansenism, which revolves around the theological question of the exact relationship between the omnipotence of God's grace and human freedom when it comes to obtaining eternal salvation. Molinists, so called after the Jesuit Luis de Molina (1536–1600), who advocated a relatively optimistic view of human freedom, found themselves in opposition to stricter Augustinians. The latter were called 'Jansenists' by their opponents, as a reference to Cornelius Jansenius (1585–1638), bishop of Ypres. Jansenius' work *Augustinus*, which was published posthumously, sought to demonstrate that the Jesuits' doctrine of grace conflicted with that of Augustine. With their strong emphasis on the comprehensive effect of divine grace Jansenius and his followers seemed to allow little room for human freedom.

---

<sup>5</sup> We consider this article as a small contribution to network studies. An interesting approach to network studies is offered by MIRJAM DE BAAR, Internationale und interkonfessionelle Netzwerke. Zur frühen pietistischen Rezeption von Anna Maria van Schurman und Antoinette Bourignon, in: ULRIKE GLEIXNER/ERIKA HEBEISEN (eds), Gendering Tradition. Erinnerungskultur und Geschlecht im Pietismus (Perspektiven in der neueren und neuesten Geschichte 1), Korb: Didymus, 2007, pp. 85–105.

<sup>6</sup> DICK J. SCHOON, Van bisschoppelijke Cleresie tot Oud-Katholieke Kerk. Bijdrage tot de geschiedenis van het katholicisme in Nederland in de 19de eeuw, Nijmegen: Valkhof Pers, 2004, pp. 22–25, especially footnote 15 and the literature mentioned therein.



The different positions that were occupied in the conflict over the doctrine of grace had consequences for the practice of the Catholic religion as both parties advocated it. This constitutes the second aspect of Jansenism, that of Jansenist spirituality and piety. Jansenists made high demands on all believers. They were expected to read the Bible, regard themselves as active participants in the liturgy, and handle the sacraments with care.<sup>7</sup>

The third aspect of Jansenism has to do with canon law. Owing to the important successes of the Jesuits in Rome in their fight against the Jansenists, the central Church authority itself was challenged. Jansenists, who gained support because of the French Church's simultaneous struggle for their Gallican rights, applied themselves to the defence of the rights and customs of their local church and their bishops.

When the French royalty sided with Rome and the Molinists, the parliaments protested, and the fourth aspect appeared, that of parliamentary Jansenism. This was a contributory factor in the French Revolution of 1789.

In the Dutch Republic we find a similar Jansenism, albeit with different accents and in a very different context. In spite of the strong position of the *stadtholder* of the House of Orange and the States of Holland, which was mainly based on its economic success, the Dutch Republic had neither an absolute kingship nor a centrally governed state. The seven provinces were comparatively autonomous. Social and religious life was dominated by Calvinism, which limited those of a different persuasion – which meant a large section of the population – in the practice of their religious convictions.<sup>8</sup> As in France, Catholics in the Dutch Republic were looking for a new position in relation to the changing social and religious circumstances. In real terms, this meant that the leaders of the Church, the apostolic vicar and his fellow governing board members, found themselves in a difficult position. On the one hand they were seeking to restore and expand the infrastructure of a Church that had lost all its material possessions, but on the other hand, if they succeeded in this respect, they had to take into account possible repressive measures by the government and by Calvinist preachers.

---

<sup>7</sup> One example concerns the involvement of lay members at the liturgy, cf. ELLEN WEAVER, *Scripture and Liturgy for the Laity. The Jansenist case for Translation*, in: *Worship* 59 (1985), pp. 510–521.

<sup>8</sup> For the religious situation in the Dutch Republic see WILLEM FRIJHOFF, *Kalvinistische Kultur, Staat und Konfessionen in den Vereinten Provinzen der Niederlande*, in: PETER CLAUS HARTMANN with ANNETTE REESE (ed), *Religion und Kultur im Europa des 17. und 18. Jahrhunderts* (Mainzer Studien zur Neueren Geschichte 12), Frankfurt a. M.: Lang, 2006, pp. 109–142.

This precarious situation does much to explain the conflict between the secular clergy and members of the orders, especially Jesuits, in the Dutch Republic. While the Jesuits were very successful in their work, the secular clergy opted for a more careful strategy. In an attempt to beat the heretics with their own weapons, the secular clergy emphasized a serious, almost intellectual variety of Catholicism which could easily be regarded as elitist or as moving towards Protestantism.<sup>9</sup> The faithful were admonished to take a disciplined approach to their individual religious lives, to read the Bible and to study the writings of the Church Fathers, to respect the sacraments and receive them with care. These attitudes were completely in accordance with the first two aspects of Jansenism.

The struggle between the Jesuits and the secular clergy resulted in the suspension of the apostolic vicar Petrus Codde in 1702 and his deposition in 1704 by Rome. The conflict was not solved. Finally, in 1723/1724, an archbishop of Utrecht was elected and consecrated for the non-Molinist – and thus Jansenist – Church of Utrecht, and the authorities turned a blind eye.

### 3. The Dutch Catholic Church and Church leaders in France

The glorious days of the French Church led by Pierre de Bérulle (1575–1629), the founder of the Oratory, and Jacques-Bénigne Bossuet (1627–1704), bishop of Meaux, coincided with an escalation of the conflict between the secular clergy in the Dutch Republic and members of a regular order. John of Neercassel (1626–1686), apostolic vicar from 1663, knew the French Church from his time as a student.<sup>10</sup> Like many Dutchmen he undertook a *peregrinatio academica* to France. In 1645, after his

<sup>9</sup> Frijhoff speaks of the Calvinistic culture in the Dutch Republic as a ‘cultural code’ and understands it as a “Anpassung ursprünglich kalvinistischer Wertvorstellungen, Normen, Metaphern und Verhaltensregeln an die Realität des öffentlichen Lebens in der Republik der Niederlande”. Those characteristics were mirrored in other religious communities, such as the Mennonites, Lutherans and even Catholics, “bei denen der Jansenismus als katholische Alternative zum pietistischen Puritanismus der damaligen Zeit zu betrachten ist”; *ibid.*, p. 114. About the intersection of Calvinism and Catholicism in the Dutch Republic during the 17<sup>th</sup> century see now CHARLES H. PARKER, *Faith on the Margins. Catholics and Catholicism in the Dutch Golden Age*, Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2008, esp. pp. 237–242.

<sup>10</sup> For Dutch students in France cf. WILLEM FRIJHOFF, *Etudiants hollandais dans les collèges français. XVII<sup>e</sup> – XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècles*, in: *Lias* 3 (2/1976), pp. 301–312, which considers among other institutions, the College of the Oratory in Juilly.

study of the *humaniora*, he had joined the Oratory in Paris.<sup>11</sup> There and in the house of the Oratory in Saumur he (as was usual in those times) continued his studies whilst lecturing philosophy in the Arts Faculty. In Paris, in 1650, he was ordained a deacon and in 1652 he became a lecturer in the Oratory of Malines. Later Oratorians compared the formative years of Van Neercassel in the Oratory to the youth of Samuel in the Old Testament, who prepared himself for a future task under the guidance of Eli the priest (cf. 1 Samuel 2–3). To Van Neercassel this meant the restoration of the Catholic Church in the Dutch Republic.<sup>12</sup> In this respect the friendship he made in Paris with his teacher Jean Morin (1591–1659) would prove to be very useful. Morin came from a Huguenot family; he was well informed about the religious controversies between the various Calvinist movements in the Dutch Republic and published works of Catholic apologetics.<sup>13</sup> Van Neercassel's experiences at the Oratory were so positive that he seems to have intended to establish a similar house in the Dutch Republic.<sup>14</sup>

Van Neercassel's successor as apostolic vicar, Petrus Codde (1648–1710), also received at least part of his training in the Oratory. From about 1667 he stayed in its house at Louvain. After his ordination as a priest in 1672, he stayed a few years in its houses in Paris, Orléans and

---

<sup>11</sup> MATTHIEU G. SPIERTZ, *Jeugd- en vormingsjaren van Johannes van Neercassel, apostolisch vicaris (1663–1686)*, in: *Archief voor de geschiedenis van de katholieke kerk in Nederland* 17 (1976), pp. 169–197. The connection between the Oratory and Jansenism has become an important interpretative theme; however, Frijhoff points out that this identification is mainly caused by “Neercassel's militant involvement with Jansenism”. In 1710 only four out of the 15 Oratorians in the “Missio Hollandica” (Holland Mission)/Church of Utrecht province were Jansenists. The large majority belonged to the party of Rome. Cf. WILLEM FRIJHOFF, *De Noordnederlandse Oratorianen en de katholieke identiteit: rond een stelling*, in: MARIT MONTEIRO/GERARD ROOIJAKKERS/JOOST ROSENDAAL (eds), *De dynamiek van religie en cultuur. Geschiedenis van het Nederlands Katholicisme*, Kampen: Kok, 1993, pp. 210–217, here 216.

<sup>12</sup> SPIERTZ, *Jeugd- en vormingsjaren* (as in footnote 11), pp. 185–186.

<sup>13</sup> About Jean Morin: *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique* 10/2, Paris 1929, cols. 2486–2489. For Morin's influence on Van Neercassel see SPIERTZ, *Jeugd- en vormingsjaren* (as in footnote 11), pp. 187–190; GIAN ACKERMANS, *Herders en huurlingen. Bisschoppen en priesters in de Republiek (1663–1705)*, Amsterdam: Prometheus/Bakker, 2003, pp. 107 and 132.

<sup>14</sup> For Van Neercassel see JEAN LESAULNIER/ANTONY MCKENNA (eds), *Dictionnaire de Port-Royal [= DPR]*, Paris: Champion, 2004, pp. 752–754. In 1663, Van Neercassel became apostolic vicar with the title “bishop of Castorie”.

Lyon.<sup>15</sup> Whilst he was rector at the monastery of Huissen, at the instigation of the then apostolic vicar, Codde translated Bossuet's *Exposition* into Dutch.<sup>16</sup> To judge from the steady succession of reprints, this translation had a wide circulation among Dutch speakers.<sup>17</sup> Both Van Neercassel and Codde were in close contact with theologians in Louvain who defended the Augustinian school against the increasing influence of the Jesuits. They both corresponded with the leaders of the resistance. Together with their French counterparts they proposed a positive theology with an emphasis on going back to the sources and on historical research. They were advocates of a pastoral attitude in clergy, who, as 'good shepherds', were to cultivate an independent faith in the individual believer, which would protect them against Protestant criticism and the errors of fellow believers. Van Neercassel and Codde made a virtue of necessity and resisted a triumphalist Catholicism and new types of devotion designed to attract the masses. It must also be noted that the Church leaders in the Dutch Republic could not do without aid from abroad. For them, Catholicism without Rome was unthinkable, not least because, for lack of an internal episcopacy, it was necessary to look abroad for every new apostolic vicar or bishop.

The question whether the Dutch Catholics in turn provided France with something from the Dutch Republic, can, with some caution, be answered

<sup>15</sup> A biographical portrait of Codde is offered by A.H.M. VAN SCHAIK, 'Salva conscientia'. De Nederlandse aartsbisschop Petrus Codde en het Formulier van Alexander VII (1688–1710), in: *Archief voor de geschiedenis van de Katholieke Kerk in Nederland* 20 (1978), pp. 198–272.

<sup>16</sup> *Uytlegging der Katholyke Leeringe, Raekende de hedendaegsche Geloofsverschillen. Door den Doorluchtigsten Heer Jacques Benigne Bossuet, Bisschop van Condom, en Onderwijzer van den Dauphyn. Vertaeld door P.C. Pr., Antwerpen: Widow J. van Metelen; 1678.* This is a translation of: *Exposition de la doctrine de l'église catholique sur les matières de controverse*. Cf. J.A.G. TANS, *Bossuet en Hollande*, Paris: Nizet/Maastricht: van Aelst [1944], pp. 56–58, 104, 120, 173–177. Other editions are: Utrecht <sup>2</sup>1681 (mentioned by ACKERMANS, *Herders en huurlingen* [as in footnote 13], p. 339); Antwerpen: Joannes Stichter, <sup>7</sup>1699 (library of Dick Schoon).

<sup>17</sup> TANS, *Bossuet* (as in footnote 16) points to 18<sup>th</sup> century reprints of Codde's translation in 1724, 1741 and 1772. In 1772 and later, new translations appeared. There were thus at least ten editions, including the 17<sup>th</sup> century reprints mentioned in footnote 16. See FRIJHOFF, *De Noordnederlandse Oratorianen* (as in footnote 11), p. 213. There seems to be little foundation for VAN SCHAIK's suggestion that the translation was probably read 'on a modest scale'; cf. VAN SCHAIK, 'Salva conscientia' (as in footnote 15), p. 216.

affirmatively. As a minority under a protestant government, the Catholics in the Dutch Republic found themselves in a unique situation in the Western Catholic Church. Their position could be compared to that of the Early Church, when Christianity could not count on the support of the government and manifested itself primarily as a local Church around the bishop. Because of this situation, they could relate to movements of reform within the French Church.

#### 4. French Catholic clergy in the Dutch Republic

Several years ago, Michael Maurer noted the lack of a confessional history of travel.<sup>18</sup> In its broadest sense, travel – whether the journey was undertaken by choice (for example, in order to study at a particular university), or as an exile, or a refugee, or an emigrant – does not simply entail a change of scene or territory, but can often imply reorientation.<sup>19</sup> In the so-called ‘confessional age’, a change of place often had religious reasons. During the Enlightenment confessional components were often also important. Travel accounts witness to resistance against those of other confessions and to the strengthening of the traveller’s own identity through encounters with those who held similar beliefs. Maurer notes that Protestant theologians and clergy often travelled to the Netherlands or to England.<sup>20</sup> Maurer’s comment is made from the perspective of the religious majority; it will here be complemented by examining the experiences of the Catholic minority in the Netherlands, which also attracted visitors from abroad.

---

<sup>18</sup> See MICHAEL MAURER, *Konfessionsgeschichte des Reisens – ein Desiderat*, in: IDEM (ed), *Neue Impulse der Reiseforschung*, Berlin: Akademie, 1999, pp. 351–354.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 352.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p. 353. See e.g. the diary of the Swiss traveller H. Annoni in: JOHANNES BURKHARDT/HILDEGARD GANTNER-SCHLEE/MICHAEL KNIERIM (eds), *Dem rechten Glauben auf der Spur. Eine Bildungsreise durch das Elsass, die Niederlande, Böhmen und Deutschland. Das Reisetagebuch des Hieronymus Annoni von 1736*, Zürich: TVZ, 2006. There were also students from Protestant countries to Italy, which following Matthias Asche had to do with “der anhaltenden, überkonfessionell wirksamen Antike-Rezeption und Italien-Begeisterung”; cf. MATTHIAS ASCHE, *Peregrinatio academica in Europa im Konfessionellen Zeitalter. Bestandsaufnahme eines unübersichtlichen Forschungsfeldes und Versuch einer Interpretation unter migrationsgeschichtlichen Aspekten*, in: *Jahrbuch für Europäische Geschichte* 6 (2005), pp. 3–33, here 18. Asche’s overall conclusion is: “As a result of the Confessionalization of the European universities, however, the migration system became segmented and fragmented”; *ibid.*, p. 33.



#### 4.1 Travellers

How did French Catholics view the Church in the Dutch Republic? The accounts of the French who visited the Dutch Republic has been explored in some detail.<sup>21</sup> Typically, the Republic was experienced as:

A completely flat country, out of which church and bell towers arise; a land intersected by canals, which enclose it in an almost geometrical structure. It is filled with well looked after gardens and meadows with abundant cattle. This is what the landscape looks like, the landscape of the province of Holland that dominates the whole.<sup>22</sup>

Many travellers remarked on the omnipresence of water in the Republic. Several travellers noticed that the Dutch did not drink all that water, but served beer from the early morning to evening and drank undiluted wine.

Two travel accounts are of particular interest, because their authors, as Jansenists, were directly involved with the theological controversy of their days. Charles Le Maistre (d. 1688), theologian of the *Collège de Navarre*

---

<sup>21</sup> We have the seventeenth-century travel accounts of Claude Joly, Canon of Notre-Dame, who in 1646 travelled to the Peace Conference in Münster along with the Duke and the Duchess De Longueville, and of the physician Charles Patin, who travelled mainly out of curiosity. Their reports are mentioned in: CHARLES FIERVILLE (ed), *Voyage anonyme et inédit d'un janséniste en Hollande et Flandre en 1681. Étude historique d'après un manuscrit de la bibliothèque du Havre*, Paris: Champion, 1889, pp. 8–10. For Joly's account see also DICK BERENTS, *Kerken en karossen. Fransen in Utrecht 800–1900. Uitgave ter gelegenheid van het 100-jarig bestaan van de Alliance Française Utrecht*, Utrecht: Spectrum, 1994, pp. 29–34. For eighteenth-century accounts see MADELEINE VAN STRIEN-CHARDONNEAU, *Le Voyage de Hollande: récits de voyageurs français dans les Provinces-Unies, 1748–1795*, Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 1994. For journeys by people from the Northern Netherlands to France, see WILLEM FRIJHOFF, *Les voyageurs Néerlandais en France du XVII<sup>e</sup> au début du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle*, in: IDEM/OLAV MOORMAN VAN KAPPEN (eds), *Les Pays-Bas et la France des guerres de religion à la création de la République Batave. Exposés faits au colloque historique, organisé à l'occasion de la commémoration de quatre siècles de relations diplomatiques franco-néerlandaises à La Haye les 17 et 18 novembre 1988*, Nijmegen: Gerard Noordt Instituut, 1993, pp. 87–104.

<sup>22</sup> “Un pays uniformément plat, d'où émergent tours et clochers, un pays sillonné de canaux, qui l'enserrent dans une structure quasi géométrique et où abondent jardins soignés et prairies couvertes de bestiaux: voilà le paysage, celui de la province de Hollande, qui domine l'ensemble.” VAN STRIEN-CHARDONNEAU, *Voyage* (as in footnote 21), p. 336.

in Paris, wrote about his journey to the Netherlands in 1681.<sup>23</sup> During this period the persecution of Jansenists in France had increased after the relatively quiet period during the Peace of the Church (1669–1679). Le Maître belonged to the circle of Port-Royal and in 1656 he had defended Antoine Arnauld. When he narrowly escaped imprisonment in 1681, he decided to leave the country for a while. On 18 May he left Paris, whither he would return five months later. His travels led him via Brussels and Antwerp to Rotterdam, Delft, The Hague, Amsterdam, Leiden and Utrecht.<sup>24</sup> He recorded whatever he thought remarkable about the landscape or the cities.<sup>25</sup> His account shows his special interest in fortifications – the war was not long over – but his remarks about church buildings and works of arts are very general. When he saw the statue of Erasmus – as all visitors to Rotterdam did – he was annoyed by the rubbish around its base. In Delft, as later in Brussels and Gent, he was impressed by the Beguinage with its pious virgins. His account does not mention whether he also stayed at the Beguinage in Delft, where at that time Antoine Arnauld would also have been staying.<sup>26</sup> Le Maître did not consider Amsterdam particularly attractive: he liked the canals with their many bridges and trees, but the water stank and the other streets were narrow. He only visited Utrecht briefly, where he saw the former cathedral church which had been struck by lightning in 1674, only a few years before, and the nave of which had collapsed.

Le Maître's description of the Beguinage in Delft shows his amazement about the ecclesiastical situation in the Dutch Republic:

---

<sup>23</sup> The manuscript of the travel account, which is held in the Bibliothèque Municipale of Le Havre (ms 385, A 69), was published as: GILBERT VAN DE LOUW (ed), *Relation de mon voyage de Flandre, de Hollande et de Zélande, fait en mil six cent quatre vint et un* (Annales littéraires et l'Université de Besançon), Paris: Belles Lettres, 1978. As mentioned in footnote 21, excerpts from this travel account were already published in 1889 by CHARLES FIERVILLE under the title *Voyage anonyme*. About Charles Le Maître see DPR (as in footnote 14), pp. 634–635.

<sup>24</sup> This route was the most usual one for travellers entering the Dutch Republic from Antwerp; cf. VAN STRIEN-CHARDONNEAU, *Voyage* (as in footnote 21), pp. 26–27.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. FIERVILLE (ed), *Voyage* (as in footnote 21), pp. 20–23.

<sup>26</sup> For Arnauld's stay in Delft see ÉMILE JACQUES, *Les années d'exil d'Antoine Arnauld (1679–1694)*, Louvain: Publications Universitaires de Louvain, 1976, pp. 229–294.



Although the city of Delft, like the other cities in Holland, is heretical, there is nevertheless a Beguinage with Catholic virgins. They form a kind of small convent in which they are gathered in considerable numbers, completely in public for the heretical citizens, who let them live there without much interference. They [sc. the virgins] even have a dedicated chapel at their Beguinage, in which the Catholics gather without any fuss to hear mass on Sundays and feasts.<sup>27</sup>

Although his impression of Amsterdam was not very favourable, he did have a meeting there with the apostolic vicar Van Neercassel. Their first appointment had to be postponed, as the apostolic vicar gave priority to apparently more urgent matters.

Via one of his friends who had last seen him in the morning, he let me know that it would be more convenient if the meeting was transferred to another day. We would then have more freedom to discuss matters than at the earlier appointment. For he was to have a consultation with some clergymen, who were in this country being just as unreasonably suspected of the so-called Jansenism, against which the prelate, like so many in France, had to defend himself. I emphasize this here to indicate how far this persecution reaches, which is imposed with the greatest violence on all those who in the whole world are least suspect of the completely imaginary heresy of Jansenism.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>27</sup> “Quoy que la ville de Delphe soit heretique aussi bien que les autres de Hollande, elle ne laisse pourtant pas d’avoir un Beguinage de filles catholiques, qui est comme une espèce de petit cloistre ou elles sont ramassées en assez grand nombre, au vu et au seu des bourgeois heretiques qui les laissent vivre là en assez grand repos; elles ont mesme une chappelle particulière dans leur béguinage, dans laquelle les catholiques s’assemblent sans bruit, pour y entendre la messe les Dimanches et festes.” VAN DE LOUW (ed), *Relation* (as in footnote 23), p. 280. In reality, the Beguines to whom Le Maistre referred were ‘kloppen’, women who, like Beguines, lived in a form of religious community but did not take life vows (see also the description by Sartre, footnote 35). For the parish of the Beguinage in Delft, since 1687 under Joan Christiaan van Erckel, Monteiro records 54 ‘kloppen’ amongst 500 communicants for the year 1692; cf. MARIT MONTEIRO, *Geestelijke maagden. Leven tussen klooster en wereld in Noord-Nederland gedurende de zeventiende eeuw*, Hilversum: Verloren, 1996, p. 352; see also JAN Y.H.A. JACOBS, *Joan Christiaan van Erckel (1654–1734). Pleitbezorger voor een locale kerk*, Amsterdam: APA/Holland Universiteitspers, 1981, p. 58. On Van Erckel see also DPR (as in footnote 14), p. 989.

<sup>28</sup> “Il me fit connoitre par un de mes amis que le vit le matin, qu’il seroit bien aise que cette partie se remist a un autre jour auquel nous aurions plus de liberté de nous entretenir, qu’en celuy qu’il m’avoit donné d’abord, dans lequel il seroit engagé avec certains Ecclesiastiques qui étoient en ce pais là aussi peu raisonnables sur les soupçons du prétendu Jansénisme, dont il faut que ce grand Prélat se défendre, que le sont tant

When some time later the two men had their meeting, their discussion lasted for about two hours.

I had the privilege to have a conversation with him in the presence of one of his clergy who is closely cooperating with him and of two of my friends who had accompanied me on my way to him. Our conversation lasted about two hours, after which I said farewell and retired.<sup>29</sup>

Unfortunately Le Maistre gives no further information about the content of the conversation, but according to Charles Fierville its subject was the same as that of his conversation with Jansenists in Gent a few days later. There Le Maistre had been invited by his host to drink to the health of pope Innocent XI (1611–1689, pope from 1676), who shortly before had condemned 65 anti-Jansenist theses.<sup>30</sup> The lack of this kind of substantive information about Le Maistre's conversations during his travels fits in with the reserve that characterizes the whole account when it comes to sensitive issues. This raises the question of the intended audience of his account. His impressions of the curiosities do not rise above the level of a general travel guide; as a diary it lacks proper dates; and as an account of meetings with persons involved in ecclesiastical controversies, it lacks essential

---

d'autres en France: ce que je suis bien aise de marquer ici, pour faire connoître l'étendue de la persécution que l'on fait partout avec la dernière violence à ceux qui sont le moins du monde soupçonnés de l'hérésie purement imaginaire de Jansénisme." VAN DE LOUW (ed), *Relation* (as in footnote 23), p. 295.

<sup>29</sup> "J'eus l'honneur d'estre en conversation avec luy, en la compagnie d'un des ses Ecclesiastiques qui est attaché a sa personne et de deux de mes amis qui m'auroient conduit chez luy: nostre conversation dura bien environ deux heures, apres quoy je pris congé de luy et me retiré." *Ibid.*, p. 295.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. FIERVILLE (ed), *Voyage* (as in footnote 21), p. 32; VAN DE LOUW (ed), *Relation* (as in footnote 23), p. 324. This condemnation was the result of months of campaigning in Rome by Jansenist theologians from Louvain. Cf. LUCIEN CEYSSENS, *De Leuvense deputatie te Rome (1677–1679)*, in: *Historisch Tijdschrift* 19 (1940), pp. 252–312; 20 (1941), pp. 99–136. Fierville identifies Le Maistre's host in Gent as Jean François (Jan Frans) della Faille, baron of Nevele, who is mentioned on p. 228 of the manuscript. He lived in Gent at the Court of Fiennes and was favourably inclined towards the Jansenists. Ceyssens, however, believes Fierville to be mistaken, arguing that Le Maistre's host was not baron Van Nevele, but François de Nonancourt (1624–1686), another Jansenist in Gent; cf. LUCIEN CEYSSENS, *De barons van Nevele en Huise en het jansenisme*, in: *Ons Heem* 19 (1965), pp. 189–197; *IDEM*, *Le Sieur de Nonancourt, janséniste gantois*, in: *Bulletin de l'Institut Historique belge de Rome* 39 (1968), pp. 455–480; JACQUES, *Années d'exil* (as in footnote 26), pp. 132–145.

information. For this reason it seems safest to assume that the account was only meant for personal use.<sup>31</sup>

In 1719 Pierre Sartre (1693–1771), a priest of the diocese of Montpellier, travelled to Amsterdam and Utrecht.<sup>32</sup> Unlike Le Maistre a generation earlier, Sartre had a specific aim in mind. As he himself says, he undertook the journey primarily to visit the aged Pasquier Quesnel (1634–1719), who lived as a recluse in Amsterdam.<sup>33</sup> The main object of Sartre's journey was to present to Quesnel the *Acte d'Appel* of four French bishops, with which they protested against the Constitution *Unigenitus Dei Filius* (1713).<sup>34</sup> In comparison to Le Maistre's account, Sartre's has a more systematic structure. He addresses the reader, and gives detailed descriptions of the cities he visits and the peculiarities of the local population. The Dutch are mainly typified by their capability as merchants, which caused their country, although devoid of all natural resources, to be one of the most prosperous in the world. Even religious freedom is motivated by the drive to trade. Sartre is amazed by the hidden churches which are known to all and about the 'klopjes' who perform all sorts of tasks:

<sup>31</sup> These questions are not discussed in the introduction by VAN DE LOUW (ed), *Relation* (as in footnote 23), pp. 13–186.

<sup>32</sup> Abbé Sartre's account of his travels appeared as a reprint from the *Bulletin de la Société de Géographie de Lille* under the title: *Voyage en Hollande fait en 1719 par Pierre Sartre, Prêtre du Diocèse de Montpellier, envoyé en mission vers le Père Quesnel. Publié, avec Préface, d'après le Manuscrit inédit, par Victor Advielle*, Paris: Lechavellier, 1896. Excerpts of it regarding the situation of the Church in the Dutch Republic were translated into Dutch and published in *De Oud-Katholiek* 12 (1896), pp. 48–49, 64–65, 73–74, 77–79, 91–92. For biographical information about Pierre Sartre, see *Nouvelles Ecclésiastiques* 1771, pp. 197–204; [RENÉ CERVEAU] *Suite du Nécrologe des plus célèbres défenseurs et amis de la Vérité, du dix-huitième siècle, depuis 1767 jusqu'à 1778. Tome septième*, [Paris] 1778, pp. 96–199; ELLEN WEAVER-LAPORTE, 'Sartre, Pierre', in: DPR (as in footnote 14), pp. 917–918; EADEM, *Pierre Sartre: une vocation oratorienne victime de l'Unigenitus*, in: *Chroniques de Port-Royal* 50 (2001), pp. 265–280.

<sup>33</sup> About him see DPR (as in footnote 14), pp. 846–849; see also footnote 41. A monograph on Sartre's journey will be published by ELLEN WEAVER LAPORTE. We thank her for allowing us to see her manuscript.

<sup>34</sup> Those so-called 'appellants' were excommunicated by Pope Clement XII with the bull *Pastoralis officii* (1718). For the important parts of *Unigenitus* (in Latin and in German) see HEINRICH DENZINGER/PETER HÜNERMANN (eds), *Kompendium der Glaubensbekenntnisse und kirchlichen Lehrentscheidungen*, Freiburg i.B.: Herder 1991, pp. 670–682.

There are devout virgins, named *klopjes*, who are sacristans and perform that function very meticulously. They are the ones who light the candles, prepare the altar, take care of the singing and play the organ. They even possess a papal bull allowing them to serve at mass when there are no men in the church. ... The devout virgins I so often tell you about, are girls from every class, who publicly confess their piety, forego marriage, are dressed in standard black dress with a large silk or woollen veil, with which they cover their head in church, who exclusively apply themselves to manual work, prayer or the care of the churches. They live with their parents and some come from the richest families. I knew some who were very clever and very educated. They read the right books, studied Holy Scripture and loved hearing the divine word.<sup>35</sup>

Both travellers were astonished by the semi-legal existence of the local church and the way Catholics managed to practise their religion in spite of the limitations imposed on them by the government. They were surprised by the furniture and interior decoration of the churches, by the tidiness and the serious attitude that prevailed there, by the involvement of the faithful when they attended the celebration of mass, and by their relatively relaxed conversation with those of other confessions. If their accounts are more than just an expression of an idealized private perception, reflecting the problems they were facing at home – messy or neglected churches; believers who were only half committed, or no believers at all; a strict separation between the Catholic majority and scarcely acknowledged groups holding other beliefs – then perhaps they also indicate that the efforts of the apostolic vicars and their clergy seemed successful. In the Dutch Republic it was showed that the Catholic Church could blossom without the benevolent protection of king or pope, even in the midst of a majority which held other forms of Christianity.

---

<sup>35</sup> “Ce sont les dévotes appelées les *Klopi* qui en sont les sacristaines et elles en ont un très grand soin; ce sont elles qui allument les cierges, arrangent l’autel, qui ont soin du chant et qui touchent l’orgue; elles ont même une bulle du pape qui leur permet de servir la messe lorsqu’il n’y a point d’hommes dans l’église. ... Ces dévotes dont je vous parle si souvent, sont des filles de toutes sortes de conditions, qui font profession publique de piété, en renonçant au mariage, portant toujours un habit noir uniforme avec un grand voile de soie ou de laine dont elle se couvrent la tête dans l’église et s’appliquent uniquement au travail des mains, à la prière et au soin des églises; elles demeurent chez leurs parents. On en voit aussi dans les maisons les plus riches. J’en ai connu quelques-unes qui avaient beaucoup d’esprit et qui étaient très instruites, lisant les bons livres, étudiant l’Écriture Sainte et aimant beaucoup à entendre la parole de Dieu.” SARTRE, *Voyage* (as in footnote 32), pp. 42–43.

## 4.2 Refugees

In recent years, religious refugees have attracted growing scholarly interest.<sup>36</sup> In the case of the Dutch Republic, the historian Willem Frijhoff identifies two waves of migration between 1600 and 1800: The first wave of refugees arrived around 1600, when between 100,000 and 150,000 people (equivalent to between seven and ten per cent of the whole Dutch population) arrived from the Southern Netherlands alone, most of them “militant Calvinists”. In later decades refugees included Lutherans from Germany, Puritans from England, Huguenots from France, Waldensians from Piemont, Moravians (with – as most famous of this group – Jan Amos Comenius) and Jews from the Iberian peninsula. From 1650 Jewish refugees came to the Netherlands from Poland and other eastern European regions. Those refugees had huge demographic, economic, cultural and religious influence.<sup>37</sup> As confessional minorities they enriched the cultural landscape of the Republic, but in the long run, most were integrated into mainstream churches. The second wave, around 1700, was made up of about 35,000 refugees from France, for the most part Huguenots after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes (1685). Despite what is often said, they did not have the same influence: “Although they were welcomed with open arms, the Huguenots had great difficulties in adapting to the society of their new homeland, upon which they left not a lasting mark.”<sup>38</sup> Both waves also included Catholics who found a refuge in the Republic.<sup>39</sup>

In contrast to Jansenist clerics such as Le Maistre or Sartre, who travelled to the Dutch Republic with a specific purpose and for a limited time, a number settled in the Northern Netherlands more or less permanently. This migration is part of the second wave described by Frijhoff. The

<sup>36</sup> See e.g. MATTHIAS ASCHE, *Religionskriege und Glaubensflüchtlinge im Europa des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts. Überlegungen zu einer Typendiskussion*, in: FRANZ BRENDLE/ANTON SCHINDLING (eds), *Religionskriege im Alten Reich und in Alteuropa*, Münster: Aschendorff, 2006, pp. 435–458; JOACHIM BAHLKE (ed), *Glaubensflüchtlinge. Ursachen, Formen und Auswirkungen frühneuzeitlicher Konfessionsmigration in Europa* (Religions- und Kulturgeschichte in Ostmittel- und Südosteuropa 4), Münster: Lit, 2008.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. FRIJHOFF, *Kultur* (as in footnote 8), pp. 116–119, here 117.

<sup>38</sup> “Obwohl sie mit offenen Armen empfangen wurden, gelang es den Hugenotten nur mit Mühe, mit der Gesellschaft des Gastlandes vertraut zu werden, auf das sie keinen nachhaltigen Eindruck machten.” Cf. FRIJHOFF, *Kultur* (as in footnote 8), p. 118.

<sup>39</sup> As for the first wave, Frijhoff (*ibid.*, p. 118) mentions Catholics from the Southern Netherlands who left their provinces because of economic reasons.



Jansenists came in two distinguishable periods. The first was at the end of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth centuries, when Jansenists fled from France on account of their opposition to the Formula of Alexander VII and later the Constitution *Unigenitus*. The second period came a generation later, around 1750, when Oratorians emigrated to the Dutch Republic in order to live according to their ideals.

The best-known figure during the first period was Antoine Arnauld, the main player during the phase of Jansenism characterized by the first two of the four aspects mentioned above, namely the doctrine of grace and piety. After the discussions about the doctrine of grace had experienced a ten year truce (the Peace of the Church, 1669–1679), the conflict flared up again and many key players had to go into hiding or flee. Antoine Arnauld, who in 1656 had been expelled from the Sorbonne for his defence of Jansenius, travelled north, stayed at the Beguinage in Delft for a short time, and finally moved to Brussels, where he died in 1694.

In 1703 Pasquier Quesnel, whose views were close to those of Arnauld, managed to make a spectacular escape from the prison of the archbishop of Malines where he was being held on account of his Jansenist activities. He, too, fled to the Dutch Republic, ending up in Amsterdam where he died in 1719. The most important things these refugees found in their new abode were safety and rest. In the Dutch Republic their works (books, pamphlets and – often polemical – illustrations<sup>40</sup>) could be printed and there was ample opportunity to correspond. And what did their stay bring the Catholics in the Dutch Republic? At the very least a steady stream of like-minded people visiting their famous leaders. Arnauld also corresponded with the apostolic vicars and offered them advice regarding their strategy towards Rome. Quesnel became even more involved with the defence of the local Church against Rome.<sup>41</sup> That they considered their stay in the Dutch Republic as temporary, is evident from Quesnel's wish

---

<sup>40</sup> Cf. CHRISTINE GOUZI, *L'art et le jansénisme au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Paris: Nolin, 2007. See also PIERRE WACHENHEIM, Bernard Picart graveur des jansénistes: Proposition pour un corpus séditieux, in: KAENEL/REICHARDT (eds), *Kommunikation* (as in footnote 4), pp. 333–356.

<sup>41</sup> J.A.G. TANS, *Pasquier Quesnel et les Pays-Bas*, Groningen: Wolters/Paris: Vrin, 1960; IDEM, *De betrekkingen tussen Pasquier Quesnel en de oud-bisschoppelijke cle-rezie*, in: *Annalen van het Thijmgenootschap* 43 (1955), pp. 251–275; IDEM, *Pasquier Quesnel et le jansénisme en Hollande. Présentation d'Henri Schmitz du Moulin* (Univers Port-Royal 10), Paris: Nolin, 2007.

to be buried in France.<sup>42</sup> However, Quesnel's wish was not fulfilled, his grave is until today in Warmond, near Leiden.<sup>43</sup>

In 1719 Dominique-Marie Varlet (1678–1742), the Bishop of Babyloonia, travelled to Persia.<sup>44</sup> On his journey he stayed some time in Amsterdam and administered the sacrament of confirmation to Catholics of the congregation of Jacob Krijs (1673–1724). A few months later, on arrival in Persia he discovered that he had been suspended, because he had neither signed the Constitution *Unigenitus* (1713) against Quesnel's work nor the bull *Pastoralis officii* (1718) against the appellants who had been excommunicated by Pope Clement XII. Varlet returned to the Dutch Republic where he died in 1742, having consecrated a bishop for the Church of Utrecht on four occasions. His efforts were of exceptional significance to the continuity of the Church of Utrecht.

Another refugee was Nicolas LeGros (1675–1751), who shared Quesnel's accomodation at the *Keizersgracht* in Amsterdam in 1715 and 1716. After the death of Louis XIV, LeGros returned to his place of birth, Reims, where he lectured at the theological faculty of the university. From 1726 he was again in the Dutch Republic, and for about ten years he was professor at the newly founded seminary in Amersfoort.<sup>45</sup> His views on ecclesiology, and especially his plea for the role of the lower clergy, were very influential in the *Cleresie* (Church of Utrecht).

These four refugees settled in different parts of the Dutch Republic. Arnauld's choice of Delft was a temporary one, while Varlet went via Amsterdam to Rijnwijk, the country house of an established noble family (*ridderhofstad*), some six or seven miles east of Utrecht. Quesnel and

<sup>42</sup> According to SARTRE, *Voyage* (as in footnote 32), p. 51.

<sup>43</sup> The association of priests *Cor Unum et Anima Una* of the Old Catholic Church in the Netherlands takes care of the grave until the present day. Cf. FRED SMIT, *De grafkelder der Oud-Katholieke kerk te Warmond*, in: J.W. MARSILJE ET ALII (eds), *Uit Leidse bron geleverd. Studies over Leiden en de Leidenaren in het verleden. Festschrift drs. B.N. Leverland*, Leiden: Gemeentearchief, 1989, pp. 373–379.

<sup>44</sup> BASTIAAN ABRAHAM VAN KLEEF, *Dominicus Maria Varlet (1678–1742). Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Utrechter Kirche*, in: IKZ 53 (1963), pp. 78–104, 149–177, 193–225.

<sup>45</sup> PETER J. MAAN, *Nicolas LeGros als Exeget*, in: IKZ 39 (1949), pp. 96–104; JAN VISSER, *Quelques conceptions théologiques de Nicolas Le Gros*, in: *Port-Royal en exil (Chroniques de Port-Royal 35)*, Paris 1986, pp. 107–116; IDEM, *Jansenismus und Konziliarismus. Ekklesiologische Anschauungen des Nicolas LeGros (1675–1751)*, in: IKZ 73 (1983), pp. 212–224; DPR (as in footnote 14), pp. 622–623.



LeGros stayed in the capital city, although LeGros was later in Amersfoort. In the past it has been suggested that the majority of Jansenist refugees settled in the archdiocese of Utrecht, because of the monasteries and the large number of parishes in the archdiocese.<sup>46</sup> It might also be added that the quarters around Utrecht such as Den Ham, Schoonauwen or Rijnwijk were less densely populated and closer to the border. Might it also have been the case that the Amsterdam patricians were perhaps less inclined to take care of the refugees, or that these families did not support the cause of the chapter of Utrecht to the same extent as their fellow believers in the diocese of Utrecht?

Willem Frijhoff's observation that the refugees from the second wave to the Republic (from 1700 onwards) were not as well integrated into Dutch society as those of the first wave (around 1600) is true also for several of those discussed here. As Bastiaan A. van Kleef remarks, the French immigrants dominated the Church of Utrecht from 1725 onwards not only by their number, but also by their zealous eagerness to defend what they considered to be the pure Catholic tradition.<sup>47</sup> This domination led to tensions between the immigrants and the Dutch Catholic leaders and at times even to open conflict, for instance when Varlet announced that he was willing to consecrate a bishop for the church of Utrecht only when his demands had been met.<sup>48</sup> His demands indicate that he did not agree with practices of religious life in the Republic which were different from France. In the eyes of the French, the Dutch Catholics were infected by the dominant Calvinistic culture: "C'est sans doute le commerce des Calvinistes qui a corrompu les Catholiques sur ce point."<sup>49</sup>

---

<sup>46</sup> FRED SMIT, *Franse en Zuidnederlandse vluchtelingen binnen het bisdom Haarlem in de 18e eeuw*, in: IDEM, *Batavia Sacra* (Publicatieserie Stichting Oud-Katholiek Seminarie 24), Amersfoort (Stichting Oud-Katholiek Seminarie) 1992, pp. 117–130, here 121.

<sup>47</sup> See VAN KLEEF, Varlet (as in footnote 44), p. 195.

<sup>48</sup> At that time, French Jansenism was witnessing convulsions and miracles at the grave of the deacon François de Paris. According to VAN KLEEF, Varlet (as in footnote 44), p. 204, Varlet was a "zélé défenseur des miracles". He – like most of the French – was against the charging of interest, which he saw as "usury" (ibid., pp. 212–3).

<sup>49</sup> Boulenois to Varlet, 2 January 1723, quoted after ibid., p. 213, footnote 1, discussing the charging of interest and usury.

### 4.3 Emigrants

The second stream of emigrants to the Dutch Republic began to arrive around 1750 and mainly consisted of Oratorians.<sup>50</sup> Unlike the first group, they were not driven to the North by persecution, but were attracted to it by the better opportunities to practise and promote their ideals. This time the central personality was Jean Baptiste le Sesne de Ménilles d'Etémare (1682–1770)<sup>51</sup>, one of the leaders of the resistance against *Unigenitus*. Like his teacher Jacques Joseph Duguet (1649–1733)<sup>52</sup>, d'Etémare was famous for his exposition of Holy Scripture in which he explored not only parallels between the Old and the New Testaments, but also between biblical history and church history. His figurism, as this method of exegesis is called, had a strong millenarian flavour. It expected that the Catholic Church would perish as a result of *Unigenitus*, that the conversion of the Jews would take place and the prophet Elijah would arrive, heralding the end of time. At the Rijnwijk estate, d'Etémare founded a theological academy, which was intended to continue teaching the kind of Catholic theology which was dying out in France. The school never flourished, but it became a favourite place of refuge for many guests from France. The claim that the Church leaders in Utrecht took no decision without consulting the gentlemen in Rijnwijk<sup>53</sup> seems a little overstated. It has, however, been demonstrated convincingly that d'Etémare and his student Gabriel Dupac de Bellegarde (1717–1789), former Count of Lyon, rendered invaluable services to the Church of Utrecht, enlarging its international reputation. Not only were there frequent contacts between Rijnwijk and Paris, but d'Etémare and Dupac published a 'Utrecht' edition of the *Nouvelles Ecclésiastiques*, which appeared every two weeks and recorded resistance against *Unigenitus*, and they also created an international network

<sup>50</sup> FRED SMIT, *Franse Oratorianen en de Clerezie in de jaren 1751–1763* (Publicatieserie Stichting Oud-Katholiek Seminarie 9), Amersfoort (Stichting Oud-Katholiek Seminarie) 1981.

<sup>51</sup> For d'Etémare, see DPR (as in footnote 14), pp. 660–661.

<sup>52</sup> For Duguet, see *ibid.*, pp. 362–365.

<sup>53</sup> Cf. FRED SMIT, *De kerk van Utrecht in de branding*, in PETRUS J. MAAN/KOENRAAD OUWENS/FRED SMIT/JAN VISSER, *De Oud-Katholieke Kerk van Nederland. Leer en leven*, Hilversum: Gooi en Sticht, 1979, pp. 30–42, here 32.

of correspondents.<sup>54</sup> The Provincial Council of 1763, which was to a significant extent prepared and directed by the gentlemen of Rijnwijk, demonstrated that the Church of Utrecht was orthodox with regard to doctrine as well as practices,<sup>55</sup> although this to no avail, since Rome condemned this Council.<sup>56</sup> Dupac nonetheless ensured that the *Acta et Decreta* of the Council were distributed throughout Europe.

The French theologians who stayed in the Dutch Republic during the second half of the eighteenth century reflected a change in Jansenism. The danger of imprisonment faced by earlier Jansenists such as Arnould and Quesnel was much reduced or even non-existent in the cases of d'Etémare or Dupac. Resistance to *Unigenitus* had become linked to the fight against the Jesuits and the call for Church reform, and it had spread through all the Catholic countries of Europe. The gentlemen of Rijnwijk formed an im-

---

<sup>54</sup> The *Nouvelles Ecclésiastiques, ou Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de la constitution Unigenitus* were published between 1728 and 1803 in 2000 to 6000 copies. See for this journal JEAN SGARD, Art. "Nouvelles ecclésiastiques", in: IDEM., *Dictionnaire des Journaux: 1600–1789*, vol. 2, Paris: Universitas, 1991, pp. 951–953.

<sup>55</sup> BASTIAAN ABRAHAM VAN KLEEF, *Das Utrechter Provinzialkonzil vom Jahre 1763*, in: IKZ 67 (1959), pp. 197–228; 68 (1960), pp. 65–92, 194–224. For this council see also DALE K. VAN KLEY, *Civic Humanism in Clerical Garb: Gallican Memories of the Early Church and the Project of Primitivist Reform 1719–1791*, in: *Past & Present* (2008), no. 200, pp. 77–120.

<sup>56</sup> *Acta et decreta secundae Synodi provinciae Ultrajectensis ...*, Utrecht 1764, 219 pages. In Dutch: *Verhandelingen en besluiten van de Kerkvergaaderinge der Roomskatholijke Klerezije van het Uittregtse, en onderhoorige Bisdommen in de Kapelle der parochie kerke van de heilige Gertrudis te Uittregt in Herfstmaand, des jaars 1763 gehouden*. Uit het Latijn vertaald door K.F. D.R., Pr., Utrecht 1765, 352 pages. Pope Clemens XIII, to whom the acts were sent by a letter of 21 September 1763, condemned them. The defence of the Church of Utrecht appeared under the title: *Epistola episcoporum et cleri ecclesiasticae provinciae Ultrajectensis ... ad S.D.N. Clementem P. XIII. ... occasione cujusdam Declarationis quae sic incipit: Non sine acerbo ...* 1767, 46 pages. Interestingly, the condemned acts do not appear in any index. "Es wird pure Vergesslichkeit sein" ["it must simply have been forgotten"], is the judgement of index expert FRANZ HEINRICH REUSCH, *Der Index der verbotenen Bücher. Ein Beitrag zur Kirchen- und Literaturgeschichte*, vol. 2/1, Bonn: Cohen, 1885 (Neudruck Aalen: Scientia, 1967), p. 720. The acts were incorporated in J.D. MANSI, *Sacrorum conciliorum et decretorum collectio nova et amplissima collectio*, Firenze 1759–1798 (continued by J.B. MARTIN and L. PETIT, 1902–1907), tome 38 (1907), cols. 953–1086. On the Council of Utrecht in its broader European context see DALE VAN KLEY, *Catholic Conciliar Reform in an Age of Anti-Catholic Revolution*, in: JAMES E. BRADLEY/DALE VAN KLEY (eds), *Religion and Politics in Enlightenment Europe*, Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2001, pp. 46–118.

portant link in this international connection. The example of the Council of Utrecht in 1763 was followed, in 1786, by the Council of Pistoia.<sup>57</sup>

## 5. An aside: refugees from the Southern Netherlands

When dealing with refugees and emigrants from France, a further group should be mentioned, namely those who left the Southern Netherlands around 1730. In 1728 and 1729, at the instigation of the fervent anti-Jansenist Thomas Philippe d'Alsace, Archbishop of Mechelen, and of Archduchess Maria Elisabeth, the university of Louvain was cleansed of Jansenism, and signing the Constitution *Unigenitus* became mandatory for those who wished to hold any spiritual office or to obtain a university degree. Objectors were removed from office and sometimes subjected to persecution. A number fled to the Dutch Republic; amongst them was Zeger-Bernard van Espen (1646–1728),<sup>58</sup> the best-known canonist of his time. Unlike Arnould and Quesnel, who acted in particular situations, a number of these Dutchmen from the South rendered prolonged services to the Catholics in the Dutch Republic.<sup>59</sup>

During the 1730s and 1740s, the majority of the seminary's professors originated from the Southern Netherlands.<sup>60</sup> Apart from their contribution as teachers at the seminary, they also helped to improve the possibilities of studying theology. Thus, in 1729 Bernardinus Maes (1656–1729) and Jacobus Verniel (ca. 1660–1740) founded the *Brabandsche Kas* (Brabandsche Fund)<sup>61</sup>, the proceeds of which were primarily intended to aid their fellow countrymen without means who had had to leave the Southern

<sup>57</sup> Dupac's considerable correspondence with reform-minded Catholic theologians in France, Austria, Portugal and Italy offers many starting points to map the international connections in Europe.

<sup>58</sup> On him see GUIDO COOMAN/MAURICE VAN STIPHOUT/BART WAUTERS (eds), Zeger-Bernard van Espen at the Crossroads of Canon Law, History, Theology and Church-State Relations (Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovanensium 152), Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2003; DPR (as in footnote 14), p. 989.

<sup>59</sup> In 1728 for instance, Johannes Willemaers (1681–1762) became president of the seminary which the Church of Utrecht had been able to establish three years earlier by consent of the civil authorities of Amersfoort. He was to occupy that position – which he accepted against his will – for thirty years.

<sup>60</sup> See FRED SMIT, Präsidenten, Professoren und Präfekten am altkatholischen Priesterseminar in Amersfoort während der Jahre 1723 bis 1823, in: IKZ 73 (1983), pp. 246–260.

<sup>61</sup> For the *Brabandsche Kas* see SCHOON, Cleresie (as in footnote 6), p. 291.

Netherlands on account of *Unigenitus*. Once these costs had been met, the money could also be used to benefit clergy from the Northern Netherlands or students from the circles of the Church of Utrecht.

Both the clergy from the Southern Netherlands and their fellow believers who had flown from France served the Church of Utrecht by assisting in parish pastoral work. Their efforts must have influenced the spirituality of the parishes where they worked. Studies of parish libraries could shed some further light on this subject.<sup>62</sup>

## **6. Evaluation: the interaction between French Catholics and Catholics in the Dutch Republic**

It is clear that the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries saw a continual exchange between Catholics in France and in the Dutch Republic.

1. Although this interaction was continuous, it was subject to change and even experienced a certain reversal. During the seventeenth century the predominant direction was from the North to the South. The Church being rebuilt in the Dutch Republic, and especially its leaders, drew their inspiration from the flourishing Gallican Church in the South. Van Neercassel and Codde, later to become apostolic vicars, received part of their education in the houses of the Oratory. During the eighteenth century this movement is reversed and we mainly find French theologians and clergymen staying in the Dutch Republic for periods of time.

2. What did the French find in the Dutch Republic? Our second conclusion concerns the reason for their arrival. In the case of Arnould, Quesnel and a group of people from the South of the Netherlands it is still possible to speak of an escape from the threat of imprisonment. However, this is no longer the case for the wave of Oratorians and kindred spirits around 1750. The reason why this group emigrated to the Dutch Republic was rather the greater degree of freedom to express their ideals which they found there. The Dutch Republic's international reputation as a nation of tradesmen probably played its part, as is evident from the contacts between the gentlemen of Rijnwijk and their neighbours. The changing character of

---

<sup>62</sup> According to FRED SMIT, *Franse en Zuidnederlandse vluchtelingen* (as in footnote 46), pp. 128–129. Cf. WILLEM FRIJHOFF, *Vier Hollandse priesterbibliotheken*, in: *Ons Geestelijk Erf* 51 (2–3/1977), pp. 198–302; IDEM, *Hollandse priesters en hun boekenbezit*, in: IDEM/WILLEM HEIJTING, *Hollandse priesterbibliotheken uit de tijd van de Republiek*, Amstelveen: Eon Pers, 2005, pp. XV–XXXIII.



Jansenism as it developed into an international movement of Church reform in several European countries, must also have contributed to the choice of the Dutch Republic with its relative freedom of press.

3. A conclusion, which is not drawn for the first time, is that those who emigrated made important contributions to the Church of Utrecht in its life, its theological formation, and its pastoral care as well as in terms of ecclesiastical politics. After its conflict with Rome turned out to be insoluble, the Church received the consecration of four of its archbishops from bishop Varlet. This in turn consolidated its episcopal structure. The refugees also offered important service to the Church of Utrecht in the area of theological education in Amersfoort and with regard to the pastoral care in some parishes. Finally we should mention the influence of the French Oratorians during the preparations for and in the actual proceedings of the Provincial Council of 1763. Without these friends from France, their ambitions, scholarship and international contacts, this council would probably have been impossible.

4. To the French refugees and emigrants, the Church in the Dutch Republic principally offered a place of asylum and a laboratory for their ideas. Here, thanks to the relative freedom of press, they could maintain and promote their positions. As the resistance to *Unigenitus* and the Jesuits increased during the eighteenth century, the Church of Utrecht became a model for movements of Church reform elsewhere in Europe. With all the limitations inherent to its small size, this Church accorded with what were considered Jansenist ideals, namely the priority of the local Church over centralized Church authority in Rome, a disciplined morality and a high degree of lay involvement in the liturgy. The contacts with French kindred spirits continued far into the nineteenth century. Although this mainly applied to the small circle of those who kept the memory of Port-Royal alive and theologians whose intensive studies of church history provided the inspiration to take positions with regard to church politics, it nonetheless shows that it is possible to speak of a real, albeit modest, contribution from the Dutch Republic towards Catholicism, especially in France.

5. However, the interaction came at a price. Varlet did not offer his services without making demands, and the Church of Utrecht could not meet these demands without a certain level of conflict.<sup>63</sup> The relationship

---

<sup>63</sup> The French involvement with the Council of Utrecht (1763) also required certain concessions. See above notes 55 and 56. Dale van Kley is preparing a publication about it.

between the different – Dutch and French – parties shows their conflicting social-religious ideals. The very fact of their being ‘foreigners’ may have encouraged Varlet and his friends to pursue their ideals to such an extent. And the very fact of being ‘indigenous’ probably meant that the Amsterdam merchants would not simply allow the realization of those ideals.

6. Finally, these exchanges were important for interrelations within the Roman Catholic world. The French Jansenists saw the Catholics of the Dutch Republic as kindred spirits, with whom they shared questions and convictions. The Dutch Republic was not just geographically a place of refuge, but a place where the refugees and emigrants found and recognized fellow believers who, in their specific situation, were involved in a similar quest. Their interaction thus contributed to a numerically modest, but in its ideas very interesting, undercurrent of the Western Catholic tradition.<sup>64</sup>

*Angela Berlis (geb. 1962 in München). 1981–1988 Studium der Theologie in Bonn und Utrecht. 1991–2000 wissenschaftliche Mitarbeiterin am Altkatholischen Seminar der Universität Bonn. 1996 Priesterweihe. 1996–2000 Rektorin des Bischöflichen Seminars Bonn, 1998 Promotion an der Katholischen Universität Nijmegen NL. Ab 2000 Dozentin für Praktische Theologie am Altkatholischen Seminar der Universität Utrecht, ab 2002 dessen Rektorin. 2006–2009 Professorin für Alte katholische Kirchenstrukturen einschliesslich der Geschichte und Lehre der Altkatholischen Kirchen an der Fakultät für Theologie (seit 2008 Departement für Theologie der Geisteswissenschaftlichen Fakultät) der Universität Utrecht. Seit Herbst 2009 Professorin für Geschichte des Altkatholizismus und Allgemeine Kirchengeschichte am Departement für Christkatholische Theologie der Universität Bern.*

*Adresse: Seidenweg 73, CH-3012 Bern, Schweiz. E-Mail: angela.berlis@theol.unibe.ch.*

*Dick J. Schoon (geb. 1958 in IJmuiden NL). 1977–1981 Studium der Psychologie in Amsterdam und 1981–1988 der Theologie in Amsterdam und*

---

<sup>64</sup> Suggestions for further research: a) How might an international network, such as that of Jansenists, be mapped using the observed behaviour of those crossing the borders? This involved refugees, travellers, emigrants, but also ‘material border crossing’, e.g. books, objects used in liturgy (vestments, chalices, etc.) and images. b) Here we have focused on theologians and churchmen. It is obvious that ‘religion’ plays an important role as a factor in the interaction between France and the Dutch Republic. How far does religion reach? In what other areas (trade, politics, diplomacy, etc.) does religion play a part? c) What is the relationship between the theological significance of Jansenism and its cultural significance? In other words: what effect(s) did the exchange of theologians have on religious life at the grass roots?



*Utrecht. 1989 Priesterweihe. 1988–1992 Hilfsgeistlicher in Amsterdam und Aalsmeer, 1992–2007 Pfarrer in IJmuiden, danach in Amsterdam. 2003 Dekan der Bistums Haarlem. 2004 Promotion an der Freien Universität Amsterdam. Seit 2008 Bischof von Haarlem.*

*Adresse: Ruysdaelstraat 37, NL-1071 XA Amsterdam, Niederlande. E-Mail: djschoon@planet.nl.*

### *Zusammenfassung*

Der Beitrag behandelt den theologischen und kulturellen Austausch zwischen katholischen Geistlichen und Theologen im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert. Zunächst werden Sichtweisen und Ausprägungen des «Jansenismus» in Frankreich und in den Vereinten Provinzen der Niederlande, d.h. in der Kirche von Utrecht, vergleichend beschrieben. Der Austausch zwischen dem Jansenismus in Frankreich und in den Niederlanden vollzog sich in verschiedenen Formen: im 17. Jahrhundert durch Theologiestudenten aus den Nördlichen Niederlanden, die an Ausbildungsstätten der Oratorianer in Frankreich studierten und später führende Rollen in der Cleresie übernahmen; im 18. Jahrhundert in umgekehrter Richtung durch reisende französische Theologen und Kleriker, die über die Situation der katholischen Kirche in den Niederlanden nach der Reformation heimwärts berichteten; dann durch französische Jansenisten, die ab Ende des 17. Jahrhunderts in die Nördlichen Niederlande flüchteten; und zuletzt durch Emigranten (vornehmlich Oratorianer), die seit etwa 1750 in die Nördlichen Niederlande emigrierten, da sie hier bessere Möglichkeiten fanden, ihre theologischen Ansichten zu verbreiten und die jansenistische Bewegung zu einem internationalen Netzwerk zu verknüpfen. Die Zugewanderten gewannen grossen Einfluss auf die Kirche von Utrecht, was zuweilen auch zu Spannungen führte, da die Franzosen an ihren Überzeugungen festhielten und sich nicht von der spezifisch niederländischen, calvinistisch bestimmten religiösen Kultur prägen liessen. Ein Exkurs widmet sich jansenistischen Immigranten aus den Südlichen Niederlanden, von denen einige am Seminar in Amersfoort lehrten.

Der Artikel trägt zur Erforschung des internationalen jansenistischen Netzwerks im europäischen Katholizismus bei und will zu weiterer Forschung anregen.