ENIGMATIC ETCHINGS

True Religion in Romeyn de Hooghe's *Hieroglyphica*

Enigmatische Etsen

Ware Religie in Romeyn de Hooghe's *Hieroglyphica*

(met een samenvatting in het Nederlands)

Proefschrift

door

Trudelien van 't Hof

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Met de afronding van dit boek is een einde gekomen aan een lang promotietraject. In dit traject hebben veel mensen op allerlei manieren bijgedragen aan de uiteindelijke 'oplevering' van dit onderzoek. Op conferenties en symposia en met name op onze 'Faultline expertmeetings' heb ik veel geleerd van de inzichten en feedback van collega's. Seminars en cursussen van de onderzoeksscholen Huizinga en NOSTER brachten nieuwe inzichten en invalshoeken. Daarnaast waren collega onderzoekers ook op afspraak in werkkamers of via de mail bereid om mee te kijken naar aspecten van Romeyn de Hooghe's enigmatische etsen. Het is ondoenlijk om al deze mensen bij name te noemen, maar bij een paar van hen doe ik dat toch.

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LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Most of the figures in this dissertation come from De Hooghe's Hieroglyphica, when such is the case the description mentions only the plate number.

Chapter one

Introduction
the Book that did not change Europe

Could this be another 'book that changed Europe'?[1] Such was the initial excitement I brought to the subject of this dissertation, a thick book entitled *Hieroglyphica, or emblems of the ancient peoples, Egyptians, Chaldeans, Fenicians, Jews, Greeks, Romans enz. Containing an exhaustive essay on the progressive decline and corruption of religion through the ages, and its recent reformation until the present day,* written and illustrated by one of the famous etchers of the second half of the seventeenth century, Romeyn de Hooghe (1645-1708).[2] Like Bernard and Picart's enlightened 'book that changed Europe', (i.e., their *Cérémonies et coutumes religieuses de tous les peuples du monde* [Amsterdam, 1723-43]) *Hieroglyphica* adopted a broad view of religion, was published in the same period, contained images as well as text, was produced by an artist suspected of controversial religious ideas, and was translated into German.[3]

Unlike many other histories of religion, *Hieroglyphica* contains an account of religion that employs allegorical images as starting points. It epitomises a range of historical and religious topics, which are loosely touched upon but are not thoroughly investigated. The author of the book, Romeyn de Hooghe, is an

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1   See Lynn Hunt, Margaret C. Jacob and Wijnand Mijnhardt, *The Book that Changed Europe. Bernard & Picart's Religious Ceremonies of the World* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010).

2   Romeyn de Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica, of merkbeelden der oude volkeren, namentlyk Egyptenaren, Chaldeuwen, Feniciers, Joden, Grieken, Romeynen enz. Nevens een omstandig Bericht van het Verval en voortkruypende Verbastering der Godsdiensten door verscheyde Eeuwen; en eyndelyk de Hervorming, tot op deze Tyden toe* vervolgt (Amsterdam: Van der Woude, 1735) *Hieroglyphica, or emblems of the ancient peoples, Egyptians, Chaldeans, Fenicians, Jews, Greek, Romans enz. Containing an exhaustive essay on the progressive decline and corruption of religion through the ages, and its recent reformation until the present day.*

3   Bernard and Picart, *Cérémonies et coutumes religieuses de tous les peuples du monde* (Amsterdam: J. F. Bernard, 1723-1734).

intriguing figure.[4] Romeyn de Hooghe's life covers more or less the second half of the seventeenth century, a period that is to some extent reflected in his work.[5] De Hooghe was the most prolific Dutch etcher of the second half of the seventeenth century, producing more than 4500 etchings for all kinds of books, ranging in subject from wrestling techniques and gardens to political satire and devotional illustrations. Although the bulk of De Hooghe's impressive oeuvre consists of loose-leaf prints or book illustrations for other authors, he produced a few works himself: his *Schouburgh der Nederlandse veranderingen, geopent in ses tooneelen* (1674) is a series of prints with accompanying text depicting war scenes from 1672, the Dutch Year of Disaster. Later in his life, he executed larger projects such as *De Bybelsche Historien* (1703), a Bible in pictures with explanatory text, and in 1706 and 1707 he issued his political chorography, *Spiegel van Staat*.[6]

Hieroglyphica was probably De Hooghe's last and most remarkable project.[7] First, the large role played by images is unusual. The book consists of 63 elaborate etchings with extensive explanatory texts. Together the chapters present the history of the emergence, decline and reformation of religion, from its beginning in ancient times until De Hooghe's own period. Each chapter begins with a lively 4o etching in which several allegorical images are presented. The figures in the etching carry a letter, corresponding to those featured in the text, as can be seen in the example below.

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4   For a short biography see chapter 2.

5   John Landwehr, *Romeyn de Hooghe the etcher. Contemporary portrayal of Europe 1662-1707* (Leiden: Sijthoff, 1973).

6   Romeyn de Hooghe, *Spiegel van staat des Vereenigde Nederlands, waar in de macht en 't vry bestier, van yder der zeven verbonde provincien en haar byzondere steeden, zo in rechten als regeeringen werd ontvouwd...* 2 vols. (Amsterdam:
Jan ten Hoorn, 1706/1707). On *Spiegel van Staat* see: Frank Daudeij's forthcoming dissertation.

7   Although it is not clear when exactly De Hooghe wrote the *Hieroglyphica*, the book mentions events that took place in 1702, indicating it was written during the last phase of his life. Similarly he makes reference to Leenhof's book, which was published in 1703.

Fig. 1. De Hooghe, Plate 53 Van de Roomschen Verkeerde Yver [On the erroneous Roman Zeal]

Fig. 2. De Hooghe, Lam Gods [Lamb of God], detail from Plate 53, and explanatory text

Exceptional in particular are the combination of an account of religion's history from its beginning until De Hooghe's own time with the explanation of hundreds of allegorical 'hieroglyphic' images. De Hooghe's remarkable book visualises all kinds of religious manifestations, ranging from biblical history to pagan mythology, and its array of topics encompasses contemporary Reformed churches to references to the hereafter. De Hooghe used a wealth of available information on pagan religion and biblical knowledge, incorporated fragments from other religious histories such as *Pansebeia, or a view of all religions in the World* by the conservative Alexander Ross (1590-1654) and elements from theological novelties like Frederik van

Leenhof's (1647-1715) controversial *Heaven on Earth*, and presented emblematic images informed by new scientific insights.[8] These ingredients, and more, make up the ingredients of De Hooghe's visualised history of religion. *Hieroglyphica* was only published posthumously, in 1735, after a round of editing by the scholar of antiquity Henricus Arnoldus Westerhovius (1677-1738).[9]

My aim here in what follows is to focus on the manner that De Hooghe approaches religion in this unusual book. What does *Hieroglyphica*'s account of the history of religion tell us about the concept of true religion, an idea then in flux? To this end I will pose questions that were highly debated amongst scholars during the second half of the seventeenth century. Where should one search for the origin of religion? What is the relation between religion and idolatry? What is the role of the religious elite? Which source provides the best religious knowledge? Exploring *Hieroglyphica*'s answers to these questions will shed light on how these historically inspired debates about true religion came to play a role in the non-professional vernacular work of a Dutch artist.

1.1 Theoretical framework

Hieroglyphica in historiography
A few scholars have looked into *Hieroglyphica*, especially for reasons of categorisation. The Italian art historian Mario Praz (1896-1982) places it in the emblem genre,[10] whereas the German art historian Eva-Marie Schenk perceives the book to be part of the rebus tradition, in which words are replaced by images.[11] Christian Coppens regards it as a sort of *Ars Memoranda*, in the style of Cesare Ripa's *Iconologia*, a work very influential in the Dutch Republic after its translation was published in 1644.[12] The art historian Derk Snoep, in his *Praal en propaganda*, points especially to the uniqueness of De Hooghe's visual inventions

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8   Alexander Ross, *Pansebeia, or, A view of all Religions in the World : with the several Church-Governments, from the Creation, to these times. Also, a Discovery of all known Heresies, in all Ages and Places: and choice Observations and Reflections throughout the Whole* (London: Sarah Griffin, 1663). Frederik van Leenhof, *Den Hemel op Aarden; of een korte en klaare Beschrijvinge van de Waare en Standvastige Blydschap: Zoo na de Reden, als de H. Schrift, voor alle slag van Menschen, en in allerlei voorvallen* (Zwolle: B. Hakvoort, 1703).

9   Chapter 2 will elaborate on the hieroglyphic genre and on the people involved in it.

10 Mario Praz, *Studies in seventeenth-century imagery* (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1975), 372. The topic of emblems is discussed more elaborate in chapter 2.

11 Eva-Maria Schenk, *Das Bilderrätsel* (Hildesheim & New York: Olms, 1973), 41, 113.

12 Christian Coppens, *Een Ars moriendi met etsen van Romeyn de Hooghe. Verhaal van een boekillustratie* (Brussels: Paleis der Academiën, 1995), 64, 65.

in *Hieroglyphica,* and the Egyptologist Eric Iverson (1910-1990) emphasises *Hieroglyphica*'s attention to ancient architecture, which he considers a 'fashion' of the time.[13]

For my purposes, precise categorisation – although important as background – is less of a priority. More interesting is the status quo on the subject matter of *Hieroglyphica,* its view of religion's origins, decline and reformation. In fact there has not been all that much written on the book's content, which seems strange given De Hooghe's reputation in his lifetime and beyond. One author who referred briefly to *Hieroglyphica*'s content was the historian William Wilson, who characterised it as a 'book of comparative religions' taking up 'the history of religions', offering 'images typical of emblem books like Cartari's' and 'archeological studies on remnants of the classical past' and providing a 'history of heresies', but left it at that.[14] Most extensively, the church historian Jo Spaans has interpreted the book as 'a highly critical *genealogy* of religion', suggesting that in this work De Hooghe presented religion as a result of 'human projection' – expressing the theory that humans projected their fears, hopes and dreams onto a transcendent being. With this account of religion, De Hooghe revealed 'his true colors as a full-blown Spinozist', and as such *Hieroglyphica* should be perceived as a product of the Radical Early Enlightenment.'[15] Whereas I agree with Spaans's interpretation of the book as a critical genealogy of religion, I perceive its leanings not as evidence of radical Enlightened Spinozism, but rather as a compendium of the often messy notions of religion held by a Protestant artisan who was familiar with mythology and the Bible, adopted critical views on philosophy and theology, and was keen to demonstrate his historical knowledge and express his personal views. As far as the book's enlightened ideas on religion are concerned, these turned out to be less 'philosophical' and much more the result of a critical-historical approach, aimed at an ongoing reformation within the Reformed Church.

Aims and research questions
The aim of this thesis is to analyse how true religion is presented in Romeyn de Hooghe's *Hieroglyphica. Hieroglyphica* is not a systematic theological treatise, and we should not expect De Hooghe to describe true religion in a systematic manner. What we *can* search for is what I would call the 'formal' aspects of religion, the ways

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13   Eric Iverson, *The Myth of Egypt and its hieroglyphs in European tradition* (Copenhagen: Gad, 1961), 111.

14   William H. Wilson, *The Art of Romeyn de Hooghe: An Atlas of Eurpean Late Baroque Culture* (1974, Cambridge, PhD thesis), 314- 320. William H. Wilson, 'Romeyn de Hooghe's Emblem Books,' *Quærendo* 8 (1978), 135-156: 155.

15   J. Spaans, 'Hieroglyfen. Verbeelding van de godsdienst,' in *Romeyn de Hooghe. De verbeelding van de late Gouden Eeuw,* eds. Henk van Nierop, Ellen Grabowsky and Anouk Janssen (Zwolle: Waanders, 2008) 48-57: 53, 54. J. Spaans, *Graphic Satire and religious change: the Dutch Republic 1676-1707* (Leiden: Brill, 2011) 202-209.

religion is acquired, its development, its relation to other religions, its authorities, and finally, very roughly, its contents. These elements are what I will be analysing in this thesis. I have focused on a few topics that play important parts in De Hooghe's account, and will comment on their context in several fields of art, theology, philosophy and history. Thus this thesis is not a detailed study on one specific matter but an attempt to grasp something of the question of what kind of book this was, and what light it sheds on the matter of whether ideas about religion were changing in the Dutch Republic around 1700. This study will hence contribute to the field of Early Modern religion by making the current labels of 'orthodoxy' and 'radicality' more nuanced in Early Modern comparative histories of religions. *Hieroglyphica* is one of the examples in which a humanist's attention to the historical context of Christianity, combined with ideas of scholars such Alexander Ross and Athansius Kircher (1602-1680), filtered into the culture in vernacular treatises by writers such as Willem Goeree (1635-1711), Johannes Aysma (+/- 1640-1693), Hendricus Groenewegen (ca 1640-1692), and Johannes d'Outrein (1662-1722), as well as Jean-Frederik Bernard (1680-1744) and Bernard Picart (1673-1733). Whereas Hunt, Jacob and Mijnhardt refrained from analysing Bernard Picart's chapter on Protestantism, I would suggest here that it is precisely in the way Protestantism is presented vis-à-vis other religions that the key to interpretation lies.[16] At the same time this shows that the stringency of the different strands of the Enlightenment is ultimately not tenable.

Second, this dissertation fills a gap in the study of Romeyn de Hooghe's oeuvre. Unlike De Hooghe's political etchings and personal quarrels with the city of Amsterdam, his religious work, although forming a huge part of his oeuvre, has not been properly researched.[17] To be clear, this book is not concerned with casting De Hooghe as an atheist, an epicurean, a Calvinist or any other label. It tries to make sense of how changing ideas about true religion are reflected and propagated in a book not meant to be a polemical religious treatise per se.

Problematic Religious Enlightenment
The Enlightenment has long been perceived as a movement promoting liberalism, rationality and secularism, jettisoning religion as incompatible with these values. This

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16 Hunt, Jacob and Mijnhardt do acknowledge that 'Catholicism is the most 'ceremonialist' of all religions' (*The book that changed Europe*, 202), but do not relate this observation to the possibility of adhering to the apologetical tool of comparison and similarity. Instead, the many signs of comparison and similarity that they find are seen to result from a radical, Deist- inspired notion of natural religion, finalised in a Europe that could not but see its rightness.

17 The matter of De Hooghe's political opinions has been taken up by several scholars. Jonathan Israel, in his *Enlightenment Contested*, labels De Hooghe as a libertine republican, while Meredith Hale has studied De Hooghe's political satire. De Hooghe's political *Mirror of State* will be the topic of the forthcoming thesis of Frank Daudeij.

view originated in Peter Gay's *The Enlightenment. The Rise of Modern Paganism* but found its most popular voice in Jonathan Israel's trilogy. Many scholars have criticised this view, challenging the idea of a secular philosophical Enlightenment cleanly separated from a stringent and orthodox form of religion. The basis for this convergence of the Enlightenment and religion is found in Hugh Trevor-Roper's 'The Religious Origins of the Enlightenment' (1967), a tendency followed by many.[18] Recently, attempts have been made to provide a new grand narrative of the Enlightenment that can incorporate not only the Enlightenment's religious aspects but also its inconvenient political and social elements. The work of both John Robertson and of William J. Bulman indicates that the Enlightenment was much less a philosophical than a political movement: Enlightenment should be seen not as a set of ideological answers but a diverse reaction to the hugely important matter of civil order and human well-being, to which a religiously inspired answer could also be possible.[19]

Despite the reunion of religion and Enlightenment, the notion of Enlightenment remains problematic on a more granular level, entangled in a discourse that still bears the heritage of a quite narrow philosophical anti-religious view. Several studies in the field of Early Modern religion address the notion of religion and Enlightenment, measuring the amount of enlightenment from the amount of anti-religiosity. As historian Jan Wim Buisman remarks, 'Apparently it is hard to wrest us from the nineteenth-century evolutionary perspective of modernisation, suggesting that an age-long war between science and religion was decided on the battlefield of the Enlightenment'.[20]

Jonathan Israel's trilogy, composed of and based on an astonishing amount of historical information and sources, takes pride of place in this approach. Israel's

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18 Hugh Trevor-Roper, 'The Religious Origins of the Enlightenment,' in *Religion, the Reformation and Social Change*, ed. Hugh Trevor Roper (London: 1967), 193-236. James M. Byrne, *Religion and the Enlightenment. From Descartes to Kant* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997); David Sorkin, *The Religious Enlightenment. Protestants, Jews, and Catholics from London to Vienna* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008); William J. Bulman and Robert G. Ingram (eds), *God in the Enlightenment* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016). Knud Haakensson, ed., *Enlightenment and Religion. Rational Dissent in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Peter Harrison, *Religion and the Religions in the English Enlightenment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); For the Dutch context see Ernestine van der Wall and Leo Wessels, eds., *Een veelzijdige verstandhouding. Religie en Verlichting in Nederland 1650-1850* (Nijmegen: Vantilt, 2017); Jan Wim Buisman ed., *Verlichting in Nederland 1650-1850 Vrede tussen rede en religie?* (Nijmegen: Vantilt, 2013); P. Bange et al., ed., *Kerk en Verlichting. Voordrachten gehouden tijdens het Windesheim Symposium te Windesheim op 18 november 1989* (Zwolle, 1990).

19 Bulman, *God in the Enlightenment*. A similar emphasis on human betterment as central to the Enlightenment is found in John Robertson's *Case for the Enlightenment, Scotland and Naples 1680-1760* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

20 Jan Wim Buisman, *Verlichting in Nederland 1650-1850* 10.

overarching view is that the Enlightenment possessed two currents, one radical and anti-religious, the other more moderate and aiming to preserve the core of Christianity.[21] Although most people endorsed the moderate strand, its radical counterpart changed the Western world into a constellation of societies that became secularised and democratic. Spinoza's ideas are of the utmost importance for Israel and function as the touchstone for labeling someone a radical. Although Israel does not discuss *Hieroglyphica*, he describes De Hooghe as a 'radical author' and positions him amongst an assemblage of radical thinkers such as Spinoza (1632-1677), Johan (1622-1660) and Pieter De la Court (1618-1685), Fransicus van den Enden (1602-1674), Adriaan Koerbagh (1633-1669), Ericus Walten (1663-1697), Frederik van Leenhof (1647-1715)and Bernard Mandeville (1670-1733). Although these line-ups mainly concern De Hooghe's political ideas, most of these radicals were highly involved in religious matters.[22]

In the work of Israel and others, however, there is the problematic use of 'radical enlighteners', 'moderate enlighteners' and 'conservative orthodox thinkers' as categories, whose members are deemed so by their degree of anti-religious utterance. Several other detailed studies have shown that such a framework does not correspond with the historical reality, as many seventeenth-century scholars are debated with regard to 'their opinion'. The Whig member of parliament Robert Howard (1626-1689) is labelled a deist and a dissenter,[23] the clergyman and scholar John Spencer (1630-1693) is referred to as an Anglican and a Socinian,[24] the Swiss theologian Jean-Alphonse Turrettini (1671-1737) is portrayed as a Socinian and a Calvinist,[25] Giambatisto Vico (1668-1744) is seen as 'secular' and 'devout',[26] and the intellectual heritage of the theologian and philosopher Pierre

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21 This seems a very obvious distinction, but it's not clear what exactly this 'core' consisted of.

22 Jonathan Israel, *Enlightenment Contested. Philosophy, Modernity, and the Emancipation of Man 1670-1752* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 245-249, 328.

23 S.J. Barnett, *The Enlightenment and Religion. The Myths of Modernity* (Manchester University Press, 2003), 90,91.

24 D. Stolzenberg, 'John Spencer and the Perils of Sacred Philology,' *Past and Present* 214 (2012): 129-163.

25 Martin I. Klauber, 'Jean-Alphonse Turrettini on Biblical Accommodation: Calvinist or Socinian?', Calvin Theological Journal (1990), 7-27.

26 Israel, *Enlightenment Contested*, 513-542; Paolo Rossi, *The Dark Abyss of Time. The History of the Earth and the History of Nations from Hooke to Vico* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 251-266. See, for his interpretation of Vico and Doria, Enrico Nuzzo, 'Between Orthodoxy and Heterodoxy in Italian Culture in the Early 1700s: Giambattista Vico and Paolo Mattea Doria,' in *The Intellectual Consequences of Religious Heterodoxy, 1600-1750*, eds. Sarah Mortimer and John Robertson (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 205-234.

Bayle (1647-1706) is still greatly debated.[27] More generally, Sir Leslie Stephen foregrounds the rational suppositions shared by deists and orthodox Christians in England, and highlights the persistence of traditional elements in the face of new ideas. This resulted in a setting in which 'the rational Protestant could meet the deist halfway. The line of demarcation was shifting and uncertain, and it is hard to say in many cases whether the old traditional element, or the modern rationalising element, predominates'.[28] Foregrounding one or another aspect of the writings of these thinkers is supposed to determine their 'real' ideas concerning religion, which then defines the enlightened category into which they are said to fit.[29]

But ambiguity, combined with a lack of conceptual clarity, runs through the entirety of *Hieroglyphica*, so much so that the book resists being situated according to the fixed categorical divide into radical, moderate and orthodox ideas. Ambiguity not only characterises many themes in *Hieroglyphica* (which will be discussed in the chapters below) but is present in the work of several of De Hooghe's contemporaries. The Lutheran painter Zacharias Webber (1655-1696), for instance, posits conflicting statements about Christ, sometimes the Saviour, sometimes a pious exemplar.[30] The reverend and physician Anthonie Van Dale (1638-1708) denounced oracles and was critical about the existence of ghosts, but he still believed that Jesus had freed people from demonic possessions.[31] The publisher Willem Goeree (1635-1711) can be seen both as a pious scholar and a

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27 Bayle is characterised as either a secret Spinozist or a sceptical believer. Recently Mara van der Lugt argued convincingly against searching for the 'real Bayle', stating that in his *Dictionaire* Bayle deliberately omitted his own judgement in order that readers might find their own view through their reading of it.

28 Leslie Stephen, *History of English thought in the Eighteenth Century* (New York: G. P. Putnam, 1876), 89.

29 Cf. Nicholas Hardy, *Criticism and Confession. The Bible in the Seventeenth Century Republic of Letters* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017) esp. p. 17.

30 Frits Praamsma, *Zacharias Webber (1644-1696): irenisch lutheraan – verlicht protestant. Kerk en theologie in het denken van een zeventiende-eeuwse kunstschilder* (Delft: Eburon, 2013), 215.

31 For a radical interpretation see Jonathan I. Israel, *Radical Enlightenment. Philosophy and the making of modernity: 1650-1750* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 361- 373. Different interpretations are present in Scott Mandelbrote, 'Witches and Forgers: Anthonie van Dale on Biblical History and the Authority of the Septuagint', in *Scriptural Authority and Biblical Criticism in the Dutch Golden Age. God's Word Questioned* ed. D. van Miert et al., (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), pp. 270-306 and Thijs Weststeijn, *The Visible World. Samuel van Hoogstraten's Art Theory and the Legitimation of Painting in the Dutch Golden Age*, trans. Beverley Jackson and Lynne Richards (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2008), 40. In addition, Samuel van Hoogstraten combined logically opposed philosophical statements in his writings.

radical libertine.[32] Actual history is more messy than it may appear.

A measure of just how difficult it is to get around the Enlightenment discourse can be detected in David Sorkin's *The Religious Enlightenment* (2008), which aims at 'reclaiming theology for the Enlightenment'. Representing the ideas of several theologians from around 1700, amongst others William Warburton (1698-1779) and Siegmund Jacob Baumgarten (1706-1757), Sorkin intends to counter the contradiction between religion and Enlightenment, stressing that theologians incorporated elements from science and philosophy in order to renew theology as the basis of a tolerant and peaceful, moral religion. The same idea is present in Guy Stroumsa's notion that the intellectuals whose work he discusses 'were not freethinkers, but rather "enlightened" Christians'.[33] Central characteristics of this 'Enlightenend religion' in Sorkin's book are the steering of a *middle way* between unbelief on the one hand and dogmatism and enthusiasm on the other, the acceptance of natural religion, and the use of 'above reason' instead of 'against reason'. As these elements occur in *Hieroglyphica*, it might be suggested that De Hooghe's book reflected the same 'Religious Enlightenment'. Looking closer, however, many of these characteristics had been present in Christian theology long before the Enlightenment and can be seen as quite orthodox instead of enlightened or even deistic.[34] Sorkin, for instance, views the historicisation of Christianity as characteristic of an enlightened religion.[35] Another telling example in this regard concerns the trope that religion declined due to the behaviour of deceptive priests: Jonathan Israel designates this argument a 'typical Spinozist opinion', when in fact it was used often in orthodox histories of religion.[36]

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32 Jetze Touber, 'Biblical Philology and Hermeneutical Debate in the Dutch Republic in the Second Half of the Seventeenth Century' in *Scriptural Authority and Biblical Criticism in the Dutch Golden Age. God's Word Questioned.* ed. D. van Miert. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 235-347, there 56, 57. For a radical interpretation see Inger Leemans, 'De weg naar de hel is geplaveid met boeken over de bijbel. Vrijgeest en veelschrijver Willem Goeree (1635-1711)', *Nederlandse Letterkunde* 9 (2004): 255-272 and Israel, *Radical Enlightenment*, 447-57. Both Jetze Touber and Gijsbert van de Roemer deny Goeree's Spinozism, pointing at the pious efforts of Goeree, and show similarities to thinkers such as Isaac Newton and Robert Boyle, see Gijsbert M. van de Roemer, 'Regulating the Arts: Willem Goeree versus Samuel van Hoogstraten' in: *Art and Science in the early modern Netherlands. Netherlands Yearbook for History of Art* 61 (2011), 185-207, there 200, 201, and Jetze Touber, 'Applying the Right Measure: Architecture and Philology in Biblical Scholarship in the Dutch Early Enlightenment,' *The Historical Journal* 58 (2015): 959-985, esp. 984.

33 Guy Stroumsa, *A New Science. The Discovery of Religion in the Age of Reason* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2010), 10.

34 Ernestine van der Wall also wonders how enlightened dissenters were, see Van der Wall, 'Religiekritiek en apologetiek in de achttiende eeuw,' *Tijdschrift De Achttiende Eeuw* (2000): 17-35, 25.

35 Sorkin, *The Religious Enlightenment*, 39-53, 142-152.

36 Israel, *Enlightenment Contested*, 98. See further chapter 6 below.

The question, then, is if so many orthodox thinkers possessed enlightened characteristics, what does this actually mean? Were they all enlightened, or should they be labelled Christian scholars defending their religion as best they could? In reverse, the question can then be applied to the (early) Enlightenment: if its characteristics were predominantly elements which had already been present in the perfectly orthodox opinions and debates of Christian scholars and theologians, might it be that approaches to religion that are labelled 'enlightened' actually resulted from confessional research and more precisely from Christian apologetics? The expected answer would be that this overlap counted only for the moderate enlighteners. Such a response, however, does not suffice, because the boundaries between radical and moderate and even orthodox are not as clear-cut as is sometimes presented.[37]

One reason for the inadequacy of such categories probably concerns the boundaries between research fields studying the Enlightenment. Philosophers tend to focus on the writings of philosophers, with emphasis on the important radical figures. Historians adopt a broader perspective, but they often stop at theological treatises. Relatively few theologians were interested in the topic or conducted research from the perspective of a specific denomination. Apart from this division of fields, the urge to look for 'new ideas', 'radical changes' and 'frontrunners' causes the situation in Early Modern mainstream religion to be overlooked. Nevertheless, through the examination of the 'dull' writings of theologians and the minutes of church consistories we can discover that religious 'orthodoxy' seems more flexible and variable than many studies have made it appear. This is underscored by such 'strange' books as De Hooghe's *Hieroglyphica*: they do not fit the created categories and are not easy to pinpoint within the existing tripartite framework of orthodox, radical and moderate thinkers. These books bring forth new questions about the way that Early Modern people viewed religion. Questions emerge concerning how innovative orthodox religion can be, and how fixed ideas actually were.[38] These questions indicate something of a blind spot in the existing history of ideas and Enlightenment discourse, indicating that there we should adopt a more complex and variable view on religion in the Early Modern period. A more integrated approach can build bridges between traditional church history and literary or art history, between the study of elite belief and that of laypersons. Researching the material aspects of religions, such as manifested via image, sound

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37 D. van Miert et al. eds., *Scriptural Authority and Biblical Criticism in the Dutch Golden Age. God's Word Questioned* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 11.

38 See for instance J.J.L. Gommans and I. Loots, 'Arguing with the Heathens: The Further Reformation and the Historical Ethnography of Johannes Hoornbeeck (1617-1666),' *Itinerario, European Journal of Overseas History* 39 (2015): 1-23.

and text, adds layers to the cultural history of Christianity, which has never been the focus of art historians.[39]

Recently, there has been a more integrated approach toward early modern religion; here the flexibility and rational orientation of theologians have come to the fore.[40] Although David Sorkin has displayed convincing material on a select group of theological writers, he omitted Dutch theologians from his research. The historians Ernestine van der Wall and Jan-Wim Buisman have studied the relation between Enlightenment and religion in the Dutch Republic, resulting in a more balanced view. Buisman has only recently emphasised that Christians with enlightened leanings were not only found outside the church, as had been described by Leszek Kolakowski (1927-2009), but also within the church.[41] In his introduction to *Verlichting in Nederland 1650-1850. Vrede tussen rede en religie*, Buisman aptly remarks that although this notion of *chretien sans eglise* is valuable, it does not suffice as 'also within the church enlightened and unenlightened mingled in a, for us, strange manner. The problem [of the relation between religion and Enlightenment, TvtH] is, in other words even more complicated and concerns an even larger group'.[42]

Taking into account these problematic connotations and theory regarding the notion of Enlightenment, this study will avoid as much as possible the overarching discourse of Enlightenment and its relation to religion. Of course, this is not to say that things were not in transition. Enlightenment, perceived as the broader *dissemination*

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39 Interdisciplinary scholarship on Early Modern book illustrations, however, can be found in the work of literary scholars, and a focus on the materiality of religion can be found in the work of Birgit Meyer.

40 Previously, Van der Wall had paid attention to the many shades of Enlightenment in theological writings that possess, as she points out, apologetics as a central feature. There were the more conservative apologists who were very suspicious of innovations, and the more modern colleagues who saw the growing interest in other sources of knowledge besides the Bible, such as reason and history, as means leading to the ultimate opportunity to defend Christianity via these newly developed instruments. At their core these apologists shared a fundamental interest in defending Christianity. Countering the general view on apologetics as a stalemate of conservative activity, Van der Wall, and also Dmitri Levitin, have emphasised the flexibility of Christian apologetics, suggesting that the Enlightenment partly arose from this 'modern' current of apologetics. Van der Wall, *Religiekritiek en apologetiek in de achttiende eeuw* esp. p. 23, 24. See also Van der Wall, 'The religious context of the early Dutch Enlightenment: moral religion and society' in *The Early Enlightenment in the Dutch Republic, 1650-1750* ed. Wiep van Bunge (Leiden: Brill, 2003) 39-58; Dmitri Levitin, 'From sacred history to the history of religion: paganism, Judaism, and Christianity in European historiography from reformation to "enlightenment,"' *The Historical Journal* 55 (2012) 1117-1160. This approach is also present in Hardy's *Criticism and Confession.*

41 Leszek Kolakowski, *Chrétiens sans Église: la conscience religieuse et le lien confessionnel au XVIIe siècle* (Paris : Gallimard, 1969).

42 Buisman, *Verlichting in Nederland 1650-1850,* 11.

of methodological approaches emphasising *ratio* and historical criticism, can indeed be observed during the second half of the seventeenth century. Much Enlightenment scholarship, however, seems to keep connecting Enlightenment with specific ideological or religious beliefs or with unbelief. It is my contention that the changes visible in *Hieroglyphica* were not so much the result of Enlightenments in the sense of philosophical ideas or a deist 'invention' of comparative religion, but rather emerged out of a process of scholarly research and methods, of reformation and of adaptation within confessional boundaries. A notion that seems more appropriate for the development around 1700 is that of 'ongoing reformation', also referred to as the 'Long Reformation', in which Enlightenment methods were applied. Although this Long Reformation has been dated to last approximately from the late Middle Ages until the Thirty Years' War, my contention is that it continued much longer, especially in non-professional writings.[43] Interestingly, in the specific field of the history of religion, the humanist-critical historical approach to theology and the history of the Bible is admitted into books in the vernacular.

In analysing *Hieroglyphica*, the tradition of humanist research into the historical relation between Christianity and other, pagan religions proves most important. The humanist roots of critical biblical history has recently received renewed attention from scholars of Early Modern intellectual history such as Anthony Grafton, Noel Malcolm, Scott Mandelbrote, Jonathan Sheehan, Guy Stroumsa, Justin Champion, Daniel Stolzenberg, Dmitri Levitin and recently Nicholas Hardy. They have all contributed to a flourishing interest in critical 'enlightened' ideas appearing in the writings of Christian humanist authors long before 'The Enlightenment' took hold. The current study, addressing the manner that *Hieroglyphica* presents the history of religions, contributes to this field by indicating how, in a non-expert, artistic environment, seemingly radical ideas had a long pedigree and can be interpreted in different ways.

Popularising the comparison of religions
Hieroglyphica was but one entry in an enormous output of treatises concerning Christianity and 'other' religions. Although the bulk of Renaissance treatises on the relation between the different religions was composed in Latin, the description of different religions was increasingly presented in the vernacular, aligned with the enlightened sense that one should educate the people and make them 'see

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43   Thomas A. Brady, Jr., 'From Revolution to the Long Reformation: Writings in English on the German Reformation, 1970–2005,' *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte – Archive for Reformation History 100,* (1) (2009): 48-64.

from their own eyes'.[44] Examples of Dutch treatises on other religions include, for instance, *Van d'Egiptize Zaaken* (1683) by the Dutch theologian Herman Witsius (1636-1708), and Alexander Ross' *Pansebeia*, *or a view of all religions of the World*, which was translated in 1666 in Dutch as *'s Weerelds Gods-diensten, of Vertoog van alle de religien en ketteryen in Asia, Africa, America en Europa, van 't begin des Werelds tot desen teghenwoordigen tijdt toe.* [45] The publisher Willem Goeree issued his *Voor-Bereidselen Tot de Bybelsche Wysheid, en Gebruik der Heilige en Kerklijke Historien* in 1690, and *Mosaische history* in 1700. One year later, Gottfried Arnold's *Historie der kerken en Ketteren* appeared. Most successful, however, was *Ceremonies of all religions of the world* by Bernard Picart and Jean Frederic Bernard, referred to in the beginning of this introduction. Because this book and *Hieroglyphica* were published during the exact same period, it deserves some attention.

Bernard and Picart's *Ceremonies* can be compared to *Hieroglyphica* in that sense that it also presents a view of religion from the early eighteenth century, via both images and text. There are also differences, for instance the relation between the images and the text. *Ceremonies* primarily contains text illustrated with images, whereas in *Hieroglyphica*, the starting point is always an image by De Hooghe. The images also differ in that *Hieroglyphica's* engravings are predominantly allegorical, while Picart's engravings are meant to present a realistic image of the religious phenomenon depicted in the scene. Moreover, the purposes of the books differ: Bernard and Picart sought a synchronic overview of all known religions, unlike De Hooghe, whose historical approach resulted in a diachronic treatise on the concept of religion. Whereas the former visualised religions spanning the globe from East to West, the latter represented mythological deities and the religions of the book.

Bernard and Picart's joint production was analysed in Lynn Hunt, Margaret Jacob and Wijnand Mijnhardt's *The Book that Changed Europe*. Here, the authors attribute the honor of singlehandedly changing Europe to *Ceremonies of all religions of the world*. Their view is that credit for the spread of radical ideas on

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44   See for the importance of translation: Peter Burke and Ron Po-chia Hsia, eds., *Cultural Translation in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007). For the notion of 'seeing for yourself' see Van der Wall, *Een veelzijdige verstandhouding*, 28.

45   Alexander Ross, *Pansebeia: or a view of all religions in the world. With the several church-governments, from the creation, till these times. Also, a discovery of all known heresies in all ages and places... To which are annexed, The lives, actions and ends of certain notorious heretics* (London: J.Salwell, 1655) Alexander Ross, *'s Weerelds Gods-diensten, of Vertoog van alle de religien en ketteryen in Asia, Africa, America en Europa, van 't begin des Werelds tot desen teghenwoordigen tijdt toe.* Trans. Josua Sanderus (Amsterdam: weduwe van Theunis Jacobsz., 1663).

religion should go not to elitist philosophers or unorthodox ministers but rather to artisans (in their case the etcher Picart) and booksellers (the publisher Bernard). Throughout their seven volumes on all the religions of the world, Bernard and Picart, according to their interpreters, constantly share the same message: there were many similarities between different religions and even between these religions and idolatry, which then points to a natural concept of religion that would be exceedingly rational, cerebral, and anticlerical. More broadly, their natural religion, it is suggested, was very general, fundamentally reflecting human fears and hopes.[46] This radical idea about religion would have been inspired by deistic writings (Bernard owned many such books), and the positioning of deism at the very end of the book suggests their preference for this sort of rational and natural belief. This radical interpretation is, however, not the only possible view on books like these, as has been shown, and I will make this point again when putting forth my interpretation of *Hieroglyphica*.[47]

1.2 Methodology, hermeneutics and the use of images

The methods used for this thesis are the basic tools of an intellectual historian. They consist first and foremost of close reading and the search for as much context as possible concerning genres, sources, social networks and material aspects. Some elaboration is required on the topics of contextualisation, hermeneutics and the way that images should be approached here.

Contextualisation
To achieve insight into the particular concept of religion that is brought to the fore in *Hieroglyphica*, I have adopted several methodological approaches. My most important is contextualisation, a method occurring most famously in Quentin Skinner's writings and later a characteristic of the Cambridge School. This approach regards context to be indispensable in the historical interpretation of sources:

> [W]e need to make it one of our principal tasks to situate the text we study within such intellectual context as enable us to make sense of what their authors were doing in writing them. My aspiration is not of course to enter

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46   Hunt, *The Book that Changed Europe,* 292.

47   For another view on Bernard and Picart's book see Paola von Wyss-Giacosa, *Religionsbilder der frühen Aufklärung: Bernard Picarts Tafeln für die Cérémonies et coutumes religieuses de tous les peuples du monde* (Bern: Benteli, 2006).

into the thought-processes of long-dead thinkers; it is simply to use the ordinary techniques of historical enquiry to grasp their concepts, to follow their distinctions, to appreciate their beliefs and, so far as possible, to see things their way.[48]

In opting for contextualisation here I am fully aware of two important points of critique, concerning contextualising as a methodological tool and the underlying assumption of the possibility of 'seeing things their way'.

First, regarding the context, if a source − in this case, *Hieroglyphica* − is measured with the yardstick of 'the context', this suggests that this context is static, invariable. However, 'what belongs to a context is determined by interpretative strategies; contexts are just as much in need of elucidation as events; and the meaning of a context is determined by events'.[49] However indispensable this warning against the use of context, I still think that contextualisation is the most useful approach to take with regard to historical sources to increase historical awareness. Nevertheless, to hold to this view does imply a scholar's personal – one might say biased – view in the scholarship on offer, and I am completely willing to admit my own limitations as well as those of my sources. Indeed, such a view has restricted as well as guided me as a researcher, and will therefore lie at the heart of my – circumscribed – take on the subject and its context.

More fundamental is the critique expressing scepticism that one can in fact 'see things their way'. Critical theory has greatly emphasised the view that the recovery of authorial intent, or the excavation of the meaning of historical texts, is impossible. In strictly epistemological terms, this is of course true. But then not only does historical knowledge, but also knowledge as such, become problematic. Because what, then, would be the difference between historical and contemporary sources? In the end, you only know yourself (or don't know, for that matter). Again, this cautionary note is completely justified and has consistently informed the execution of this research, but not to the point of making it – or research in general – a vain enterprise.

Despite context having a constructed character and the impossibility of looking into the author's mind, I am nonetheless convinced that one can increase historical understanding and awareness by researching texts in their context, as long as

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48   Quoted in Allister Chapman, John Coffey and Brad Gregory eds., *Seeing Things Their Way. Intellectual History and the Return of Religion* (South Bend, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2009), 2.

49   Jonathan Culler, *Framing the Sign. Criticism and its Institutions* (Norman, University of Oklahoma Press, 1988) xiv, quoted in Mieke Bal and Norman Bryson, 'Semiotics and Art History,' in: 'A Discussion of Context and Senders' in *The Art Bulletin* 73 (1991): 173-208, there 175.

this does not entail a 'complete, perfect reconstruction of the ideas of the people whom we study'.[50] In applying the contextual method to *Hieroglyphica*, several questions should be addressed. What kind of book is *Hieroglyphica*? What is the background of its genre? Who were the people involved in producing and publishing the book? Which issues are emphasised in *Hieroglyphica's* account of the history of religion, and to what extent are these emphases different from those of similar sources?

Hermeneutics: veiling the message: coping with ambiguity
Although the method of contexualisation sounds very basic and in general is employed by historians, hermeneutic approaches result in differences, especially when scholars address the issue of ambiguity. Consisting of images and fragments drawn from several sources, De Hooghe's account of the history of religions is highly allegorical and symbolic. As *Hieroglyphica* is not meant to be a theological treatise on the nature of true religion, the information its author provides is fragmentary, chaotic and sometimes even contradictory. Thus it is a book whose interpretation brings to the surface the varying hermeneutics of the political philosopher and classicist Leo Strauss and the intellectual historian Quentin Skinner. In his famous essay *Persecution and the Art of Writing*, Strauss, who may also be regarded a contextualist, emphasised the need for historians to 'read between the lines' of historical sources – in his case the writings of Maimonides, Judah Halevi, and Spinoza – in order to gain access to their hidden, true meaning. According to Strauss, historians should be aware of the censorship imposed in ages gone by and be attentive to hidden messages in the texts they study. The concealment of radical or heretical opinions in mainstream texts is thus explained by fears of prosecution on the one hand, and their authors' will to spread their ideas on the other. Strauss detects two levels of meaning in esoteric books: 'a popular teaching of an edifying character which is in the foreground; and a philosophical teaching concerning the most important subject, which is indicated only between the lines'.[51] It follows that if 'an able writer' in such a situation appears to contradict himself in setting out his ostensible views, then 'we can reasonably suspect that the was opposed to the orthodox system as such'; his orthodox writing functioned as a smokescreen to deceive his naïve readers, while

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50   Brad Gregory 'Can We "See Things Their Way"? Should We Try?,' in *Seeing things their way. Intellectual History and the Return of Religion,* Chapman et al., ed., (South Bend, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2009), 36.

51   Leo Strauss, 'Persecution and the Art of Writing,' *Social Research*, 8 (1941): 503. On Strauss's 'Reading between the lines' see Winfried Schröder, *Reading between the Lines, Leo Strauss and the History of Early Modern Philosophy* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2015).

his 'trustworthy and intelligent' readers were able to read between the lines.[52]

To some extent, Early Modern writers themselves, who wrote about esotery as a known phenomenon, underscore Strauss's idea that messages are buried in their texts. David Berman lines up several labels to characterise the hiding of such messages: 'what Toland calls the "exoteric and esoteric distinction" has also been called "double doctrine" by William Warburton, "defensive raillery" by Lord Shaftesbury, "irony" by Collins, "secret insinuation" by Hume, dissembling, dissimulation, and sneering by many.'[53] Similar concepts include the art of 'veiling' and the notion of a 'twofold philosophy'; in addition, the hieroglyphic vogue and *prisca theologia* were based on the premise that wise authors concealed their opinions.[54] De Hooghe's oeuvre also contains visualisations of this veiling and revealing of religion: veils are lifted from figures and objects in many of the frontispieces he produced as well as in *Hieroglyphica* (see chapter 6.6 below).

Despite the historicity of the topos of a 'veiled truth', and despite the possibility that authors did enclose their most radical writings in orthodox wrapping, there are several problems with using this axiom as a hermeneutic tool of historical enquiry. The most important critique has been delineated by Quentin Skinner.[55] In Skinner's critique, the first pitfall is that Strauss' approach runs the risk that one reads one's own predilections into the sources. The hunches of the researcher can be confirmed in the snippets of information that are 'read between the lines'. The argument that 'the author doesn't actually say so, but he must have certainly meant this and that' remains very shaky. And more problematic is the underlying axiom concerning authors and readers:

> The fact which makes this literature possible is the axiom that thoughtless men are careless readers, and only thoughtful men are careful readers. Therefore an author who wishes to address only thoughtful men has but to write in such a way that only a very careful reader can detect the meaning of his book.[56]

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52 Leo Strauss, 'Persecution and the Art of Writing,' *Social Research* 8 (1941): 491, 498, 499.

53 David Berman: 'Deism, Immortality, and the Art of Theological Lying' in *Deism, Masonry, and the Enlightenment: Essays honoring Alfred Owen Aldridge,* J.A. Leo Lemay ed., (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1987), 61-78. See also Roger D. Lund, *Ridicule, Religion and the Politics of Wit in Augustan England* (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing, 2013) and Schröder, *Reading between the Lines, 3-6.*

54 Peter Harrison, *Religion and the religions*, 85-97.

55 Many critiques followed; a useful and critical survey of these critiques can be found in Adrian Bleu, 'The irrelevance of (Straussian) hermeneutics,' in *Reading between the Lines, Leo Strauss and the History of Early Modern Philosophy,* ed. Winfried Schröder (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2015), 29-56.

56 Leo Strauss, *Persecution, and the art of writing*, 491.

Thus, if you do not perceive a 'hidden' meaning inside a text, you are just not thoughtful enough or have not read carefully enough: if you were or had, you'd recognise the hidden agenda.[57]

Further methodological criticism can be directed towards the Early Modern 'veiled message' as well. Although many authors used it, they did so in different ways. Primarily, however, the veiling-trope was employed in Christian apologetics, in order to reveal the secret Christian belief of ancient philosophers and sages. Hence Early Modern authors talking about or using notions of veiled truth does not necessarily point to their having radical ideas per se. Moreover, the ubiquity of the veiling-genre is at odds with its perceived purpose. According to Strauss, libertine authors wrote especially for 'new' students, and veiled their stories in order to fly beneath the radar of the rigid authorities. Here, it seems as if Strauss esteems highly the apprentices who are assumed to readily recognise a text's true message, whereas those in charge of inspecting these works – who must have been aware of the trick of veiling – would fail to detect it.

A different view about ambiguity has been proposed by Mara van der Lugt in her thesis on John Toland, in her claim that contradiction and dissimilation formed parts of a lucrative strategy of mystifying one's work. The very idea that a text was coded and needed deciphering appealed to readers and could therefore incite people to actually read (and buy) a given treatise or book.[58] A similar emphasis has been made about images. In his article in *Art in History/History in Art*, the art historian Jochen Becken states that

> offering several different comments on the same picture was a rather popular game in seventeenth-century society. […] there is no reason why we should not suspect that the painter, too, intended different 'solutions' or at least left the meaning of the picture open. A picture is thus seen as an ambiguous communication (text) to be treated in a variety of ways.[59]

This especially concerned Early Modern art: 'generally speaking, ambiguity was a vital necessity for many seventeenth-century Dutch painters. They had to sell their

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57 Quintin Skinner, 'Meaning and understanding in the history of ideas,' *History and theory*, 8. (1969): 3-53, 21,22.

58 Mara van der Lugt, '"I will utter dark sayings of old": John Toland, pantheism and pathos of secrecy,' *De Achttiende Eeuw* 44 (2012): 101-128. See also her 'Pierre, or the Ambiguities: Bayle, Jurieu and the Dictionnaire Historique Et Critique' (PhD diss., University of Oxford, 2014).

59 Jochen Becker, 'Are these girls really so neat? On kitchen scenes and method,' in *Art in history/ history in Art. Studies in seventeenth-century Dutch culture,* ed. David Freedberg and Jan De Vries (Santa Monica, CA: Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities, 1991), 139-174.

products to a widely divergent public on an overcrowded, open market'.[60] The art historian Jan van der Stock points out that the meaning of images, in particular prints, was never static: there was always a difference in its synchronic and diachronic *nachleben*.[61] In the field of art history the whole issue has been echoed in the 'realism-debate' in the Netherlands, where paintings, (especially genre paintings) were seen either as loaded with disguised (moral) meaning, or as mere imitations of nature.[62]

A final, crucial note should be placed on De Hooghe's deployment of allegories. Instead of presenting the reader with enigmas in need of decipherment, De Hooghe works hard to explain his images – some elaborately, others less so. Van der Lugt's notion of the attraction of mystery is here made even more plausible. In *Hieroglyphica* ancient secrets are not only present but are also explained in plain Dutch. That the book was published with the names of De Hooghe (and Westerhovius) on it also belies the idea that it contained subversive religious ideas. Even when veiling these ideas, many radical authors used the safeguard of anonymity.

Theory and methods approaching allegorical images
As the book's 63 etchings seem to function as the starting point for De Hooghe's account of a history of religion, the matter of visuality takes centre stage. Although the era is over in which images were seen as nothing but textual illustrations, the way that images should be viewed is still a matter of debate. In this debate what is most important are the matter of 'meaning' and the question whether images

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60 Cited in Christi M. Klinkert, *Nassau in het nieuws: nieuwsprenten van Maurits van Nassaus militaire ondernemingen uit de periode 1590-1600* (Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 2005), 30.

61 Jan van der Stock, 'Ambiguous intentions, multiple interpretations: an other look at printed images from the sixteenth century', *Netherlands Yearbook for History of Art* 52 (2002): 19-30. See also Jan van der Stock, 'Het gedrukte beeld als historische bron. Enkele methodologische bedenkingen,' *LKJ Beelden in veelvoud* (2002): 17-34, and E.J. Sluijter, 'Didactic and disguised meanings? Several seventeenth-century texts on painting and the iconological approach to Dutch paintings of this period,' in *Art in history/history in Art. Studies in seventeenth-century Dutch culture,* ed. David Freedberg and Jan De Vries (Santa Monica, CA: Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities, 1991), 175-207.

62 Svetlana Alpers, *The Art of Describing: Dutch Art in the Seventeenth Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983); E. de Jongh, *Zinne- en minnebeelden in de schilderkunst van de zeventiende eeuw* (Amsterdam: Nederlandse Stichting Openbaar Kunstbezit en Openbaar Kunstbezit in Vlaanderen, in samenwerking met het Prins Bernhard Fonds, 1967); E. de Jongh, 'Realisme en schijnrealisme in de Hollandse schilderkunst van de zeventiende eeuw' in: *Rembrandt en zijn tijd*, exh. cat. (Brussels: Paleis voor Schone Kunsten, 1971), 143-194, translated as 'Realism and Seeming Realism in Seventeenth Century Dutch Painting' in *Looking at Seventeenth-Century Dutch Art: Realism reconsidered*, ed. Wayne E. Franits (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 21-56.

contain meaning that can be excavated, for instance, by looking at their context.[63]

Two methods that try to make sense of the meaning in images are the iconological and the semiotic or structuralist approach, from which I will use elements in this thesis. In the words of Anne D'Alleva, 'Iconological interpretation investigates the meaning of motives, symbols, and allegories in their cultural context'. Its method found its home among a group of German scholars, including Aby Warburg (1866-1929), Erwin Panofsky (1892-1968), Frits Saxl (1890-1948) and Edgar Wind (1900-1971). Panofky's monograph *Studies in Iconology* (1939) presented the basis of iconology. A three-step approach would allow the researcher to retrieve the meaning of a work of art. Although Panofsky worked with Renaissance art, his ideas were applied throughout art history. Despite this success, iconology met with increasing criticism in the late 1960s, with the reproach that it paid no attention to the social context and the role of the viewer. Structuralist thinkers such as Claude Lévi-Strauss and Roland Barthes were especially prominent in this critique. Although their basic questions were the same as the proponents of iconology (asking questions about what works of art mean, and how they go about creating or expressing these meanings), they found their answers in the far broader field encompassed by the theory of signs. In semiotics, '…signs take the forms of words, images, sounds, gestures, objects and even ideas'.[64] 'Semiotics, as different from iconography, offers a broad and flexible theoretical grounding for inquiry into *how* as well as *what* allegorical images signify; semiotics, in other words had importantly opened up questions about visual allegory as a dynamic structure of signification that operates within a multiplicity of cultural codes.'[65] A bigger difference, however, concerned the valuing of the interpretation: whereas most iconologists thought it possible to reveal the true meaning of a work of art, semioticians regarded images as 'open' signs, with no definitive true meaning. This view was stressed to a greater extent by the post-structuralists.[66]

Although the debates occurred mostly in art history, historians also thought about the use of images for the study of history in general. Peter Burke, in his *Eyewitnessing. The Uses of Images as Historical Evidence*, advocates a careful application of various

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63   The formalists' answer to this question is 'no'. They consider only the formal aspects of the image itself to be important: the material used, for example, and/or the applied technique and the scale of the work of art. For formalists, 'all issues of content and meaning should be set aside, in favour of a pure and direct engagement with the work of art'. Anne D'Alleva, *Methods and theories of Art History* (London: Laurence King Publishing, 2005), 17.

64   D'Alleva, *Methods and theories of Art History*, 23, 24, 29.

65   Christelle Baskins and Lisa Rosenthal, eds., *Early modern visual allegory: embodying meaning* (Aldershot, Burlington: Ashgate, 2007), 3. This volume tries to look at visual allegory from a material point of view, focussing on the 'force which arises specifically from the unruly, less readily-controlled bodily meanings' of the allegorical figures themselves.

66   D'Alleva, *Methods and theories of Art History*, 38, 39.

methods and approaches (iconology, structuralism, as well as approaches derived from the social sciences and psychoanalysis), depending on what is most suitable in a given situation. Burke concludes by pointing at the ambiguous and polysemous character of images, arguing that images are never objective and require a specific approach. He offers four recommendations for cultural historians using images. [67] First, Burke argues, the source is subjective and 'painted'. Second, the picture's context is its most important aspect.[68] Third, a series of images rather than one particular item needs to be studied. Fourth, details can hide clues that might contain new information. Although I endorse and use Burke's practical and flexible approach in researching images, I think the way it differs from textual research should not be overestimated. Both the warnings about images – pictures are not realistic images of historical reality, they are not objective, they do not reflect the mentality of a people or society, and they are part of specific traditions – and the approaches taken with regard to historical images manifest concerns that, similarly, pertain as well to historical texts, for instance pamphlets, newspapers or treatises.[69] The perceived difference between images and text predominantly concerned their influence on the senses. For instance, devotional pictures could make the viewer contemplate the life and suffering of the saint depicted in the image; a sleeping person in a painting would make the beholder yawn; pornographic images would arouse lust.[70] In religious studies, albeit from an anthropological point of view, the notion of images as sources of religiousness has gained renewed attention via the work of David Morgan, Birgit Meyer and Dick Houtman, whose basic claim is that material things should be resuscitated as sources for scholars of religious studies. In putting forth this view, Meyer takes notions from Warburg and put them in a new frame: religious material things, images included, do something to the senses, and thus can be considered as 'sensational forms'.[71]

Although I use iconology, semiotics and Burke's general conceptions, in the case of *Hieroglyphica* things are somewhat different from the 'normal' procedure adopted

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67   Peter Burke, *Eyewitnessing. The Uses of Images as Historical Evidence* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001) 86, 97, 104, 187, 188.

68   The importance of context had been emphasised by several historians before Burke; see Joan M Schwartz, 'Negotiating the Visual Turn: New Perspectives on Images and Archives,' *American Archivist* 67, 1 (2004):107-122. On a very basic level this is explained by Rudolf Wittkower. 'Interpretation of visual symbols', in: Rudolf Wittkower, *Allegory and the migration of symbols* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1977), 173- 187.

69   Klinkert, *Naussau in het nieuws*, 31.

70   Wittkower, *Interpretation of visual symbols*, 182-184. Recently, this attention for the sensory 'work' of images has been foregrounded in the field of religious studies by Birgit Meyer's research on the 'sensational form'. Meyer denounces the primacy of the word, advocating that more attention be paid to the material side of religion.

71   Birgit Meyer, 'Picturing the Invisible: Visual Culture and the Study of Religion,' *Method and Theory in the study of religion* 27 (2015): 333-360.

in search of the meaning of images. In this case De Hooghe follows, although not systematically, the three steps himself. As such, like Cesare Ripa's *Iconologia*, *Hieroglyphica* also belonged to the iconological tradition revived by Panofsky and his colleagues.[72] Often *Hieroglyphica's* commentary begins by describing what is in the image, followed by the particular thing being referred to; most of the time an interpretation is given, explaining why the image appears in the specific etching. For my purposes here it is thus not necessary to start from scratch with an iconological interpretation. It is, however, interesting to see *what* De Hooghe's iconological explanation is, what he included and omitted and what is implied with regard to his ideas on religion. For this analysis it is still necessary to compare De Hooghe's images to his visual context to see how his depiction differs from or is similar to comparable sources.

Moving away from this more theoretical perspective on images, we will now turn to the actual subject of this thesis, namely prints in the Early Modern period. There has been a great deal of scholarship on prints,[73] which have been analysed variously as expressions of religious or political propaganda[74] or as reflections on

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72 Burke, *Eyewitnessing,* 34.

73 Jan van der Waals, *Prenten in de Gouden Eeuw, van kunst tot kastpapier* (Rotterdam: Museum Boijmands van Beuningen, 2006); Nadine M.Orenstein, *Hendrick Hondius and the business of prints in seventeenth-century Holland* (Rotterdam: Sound & Vision, 1996); Bram Kempers ed., *Openbaring en Bedrog, de afbeelding als historische bron in de Lage Landen* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1995).

74 Wolfgang Cillesen, *Krieg der Bilder: Druckgraphik als Medium politischer Auseinandersetzung im Europa des Absolutismus* (Berlijn: Deutsches Historisches Museum, 1997); Judith Pollmann and Andrew Spicer, *Public opinion and changing identities in the Early Modern Netherlands* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2007); Willem Langeveld, *Politiek per prent. Een inleiding tot de politieke beeldcommunicatie* (Amsterdam: Ambo, 1989); Daniel Horst, *De Opstand in Zwart-Wit, Propagandaprenten uit de Nederlandse Opstand 1566-1584* (Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 2001). On religious prints see R. W. Scribner, *For the Sake of Simple Folk: Popular Propaganda for the German Reformation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981); Jo Spaans, *Graphic Satire and Religious Change: the Dutch Republic 1676-1707* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2011) and Jo Spaans and Trudelien van 't Hof, *Het beroerde Rome, Spotprenten op de Paus in een pleidooi voor een 'Nederlandse' katholieke kerk* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2010).

historical[75] or social[76] ideas, as well as instances of satire[77] or as fulfilments of an educational role in their transmission of (technical) information.[78]

One of the discussions that still remains revolves around the actual functioning of images. Since *Hieroglyphica* is a combination of images and text, this is an important question. Did images indeed function as 'text' for the illiterate? Can they be seen as the replacement for script in cases of information being conveyed, as well as for convincing and conversing? The expert in Reformation history Robert Scribner (1941-1998) endorses this idea in his *For the Sake of Simple Folk*, arguing that visuals (maybe with some help from people able to read) acquainted the illiterate with Reformation ideas and persuaded such people to adopt them.[79] But the Reformation historian Andrew Pettegree questions that images functioned this way, concluding that the best that images could do was to 'articulate a newly adopted identity'.[80]

Looking at early modern treatises on prints, we find many functions for prints and images for instance in a treatise by the French engraver Roger de Piles (1635-1709), as has been brought to the fore by the art historian Nelke Bartelings. For De Piles prints were repositories of 'all that is beautiful and informative'. He then notes six advantages, of which the first two also count for painted art.

First, both paintings and prints entertain us with their representations of visible things. When discussing prints, Early Modern authors mostly talk about their design and the technical abilities of the engraver, as they did with painted art. Second, prints (and images in general) are more effective than words. De Piles recalls here the famous notion of Horace in his *Art of Poetry*: 'The mind is stirred less vividly by what's heard than by what the eyes reliably report, all that the spectator sees for himself'. This view is undergirded by the plethora of Early Modern images that contain political, religious or social messages. The third advantage De Piles saw in prints was their educational and mnemonic use. Prints

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75 H. van de Waal, *Drie eeuwen vaderlandsche geschied-uitbeelding, 1500-1800: Een iconologische studie* ('s Gravenhage: M. Nijhoff, 1952).

76 See for instance Anouk Janssen, *Grijsaards in Zwart-Wit De Verbeelding Van De Ouderdom In De Nederlandse Prentkunst (1550-1650)* (Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 2007) on aging.

77 Mark Hallet, *The spectacle of difference. Graphic satire in the age of Hogarth* (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 1999); Mary Dorothy George, *English political caricature: a study of opinion and propaganda* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959); Diana Donald, *The age of caricature: satirical prints in the reign of George III* (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 1996); Paul Knolle *Comiecque tafereelen. Over 18de-eeuwse Nederlandse spotprenten* (Amsterdam: Amsterdams Historisch Museum, 1983).

78 Jessica Evans and Stuard Hall eds., *Visual Culture: The Reader* (London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1999) 72.

79 Scribner, *For the Sake of Simple Folk.*

80 Andrew Pettegree, *Reformation and the culture of persuasion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005) 106-111, 127.

could, via a single image, represent lessons or stories that the viewer would more easily remember. The Dutch painter and art theorist Gerard de Lairesse (1640-1711) stated that everything can be registered in (art's) book of memory and would be remembered eternally. The advantage of images in conveying technical knowledge (for instance in the depiction of flora or of tools) was recognised in many instances. A specific educational task assigned to prints was the education of apprentices in the field of artistic production. De Piles's fourth advantage was practical but no less important than the others: they saved one the costs and trouble of travelling. Instead of travelling to important cities and gazing upon the sights and monuments found there, these marvels could now be gazed upon in prints. The same convenience applied to popular paintings and important portraits of which printed copies were available. De Piles's fifth notion is of special interest here. The artist argues that the possibility of juxtaposing many different printed images provides us with the opportunity to easily compare things. This remark seems particularly applicable to *Hieroglyphica*, in which so many images are included as an open invitation for comparison with other images. The sixth point asserted by De Piles draws the conclusion that thanks to prints the viewer can develop a taste for beautiful things as well as insight into art.[81]

Besides these six advantages outlined by De Piles, there are further uses of images in the Early Modern period: devotion, for example. For instance, the images of saints on so-called *suffragia* were meant to aid the pious in communing with the life and suffering of the specific saint in the image.[82] Here again, the notion of the senses comes into play. The last specific function of prints that was commented upon specifically concerns the frontispiece. This special genre, in which for De Hooghe's work the relation between image and text is so important, will be discussed in chapter 2, which addresses *Hieroglyphica's* genre.

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81 N.L. Bartelings, 'In het kielzog van de schilderkunst. Een onderzoek naar de functie en de positie van de prentkunst in de kunstliteratuur vanaf halverwege de zestiende tot aan de negentiende eeuw' in *Beelden in veelvoud. Het vermenigvuldigde beeld in prentkunst en fotografie*, ed. N.L. Bartelings, A. W. A. Boschloo, B. de Klerck and H. Rooseboom (Leiden: Primavera Pers, 2002), 35-65, 37-45.

82 Hans Belting, *Likeness and Presence. A History of the Image before the Era of Art*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), esp. chapter 19; Roger Chartier, 'General Introduction: Print Culture', in *The Culture of Print. Power and the Uses of Print in Early Modern Europe*, ed Roger Chartier, trans. Lydia G. Cochrane (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), 1-10 there 5,6; Bartelings et al., eds., *Beelden in Veelvoud*, 1-13. These kind of images remained popular into the twentieth century.

1.3 Sources and Structure

The principal source for this study is *Hieroglyphica*, the book etched and written by Romeyn de Hooghe and edited by Arnoldus Westerhovius. This thesis has chronological and thematic limits: I make no claim of presenting a complete study of Romeyn de Hooghe's religious works, and I limit its scope to *Hieroglyphica*. Even so, it is impossible to discuss all of *Hieroglyphica*'s topics in detail. I have based my choice of topics on those that stand out with regard to the question of true religion. I will focus on the 'formal' aspects of religion in its historical, authorial and conceptual facets and in its relation to other religions.

In order to interpret *Hieroglyphica's* view on religion, the book will be contextualised through the consideration of many other sources. This is done, first, by trying to retrieve some of De Hooghe's own sources, some of which he mentions in his introduction and here and there in the chapters. These include artistic sources like Giorgio Vasari's (1511-1574) *Le Vite*, or *Lives of the Most Excellent Painters, Sculptors, and Architects, from Cimabue to Our Times*, and Cesare Ripa's (1560-1522) *Iconologia*, along with ancient authors such as Tacitus, Homer and Ovid and other 'hieroglyphica's' including Horrapolo's *Hieroglyphica* (5th centruy) and Pierio Valeriano Bolzani's (1477-1558) *Hieroglyphica sive de sacris Aegyptiorum litteris commentarii* (1556). In addition he mentions certain scholars, for instance Athanasius Kircher (1602-1680), Samuel Bochart (1599-1667) and Samuel von Pufendorf (1632-1694). But these references, unfortunately, are scarce in *Hieroglyphica*. De Hooghe occasionally name-drops particular authors but unlike his contemporaries he does not make marginal notes informing his reader which author he has taken an idea from. To detect more of the sources informing the book, my method was to proceed both from the bottom up, as it were, and from the top down: themes selected from *Hieroglyphica* were then analysed in the secondary literature, which in turn resulted in lists of primary sources which would then be held up as a mirror to *Hieroglyphica* and vice versa. Another context for interpreting *Hieroglyphica* is De Hooghe's own oeuvre. His illustrations on religious topics will be taken into account, functioning as points of reference when appropriate.

As for further contextualisation, sources in some way or another reminiscent of *Hieroglyhpica* have been analysed with the aim of finding similarities and dissimilarities. Although here the focus lies on the second half of the seventeenth century and the first decades of the eighteenth, important older sources were also consulted. Concerning the genre of religious histories, I account for not only Bernard and Picart's *Ceremonies* – dating from the same period as the publication of *Hieroglyphica* – but also Flavius Josephus' (37-ca 100) *History of the Jews*, a book so immensely popular that De Hooghe probably, and Westerhovius most certainly, owned copies. A similar approach will be applied to other topics

addressed in this thesis. Concerning the visual part of the research, I have employed databases and search engines, such as the database of the Rijksmuseum, emblematic databases, and iconological search engines, to uncover the depiction of topics like those treated in De Hooghe's work.

Structure

Several themes that are important in this evolution of attitudes towards religion are covered in the chapters of this dissertation. Chapter 2, on the making of *Hieroglyphica*, will offer some necessary background. It examines the genre of *Hieroglyphica*, focussing on artistic primers, the hieroglyphic hype and the Early Modern writing of religious histories. Also featured are the various people involved in the book's production, such as the editor Arnoldus Westerhovius and the publisher Joris van der Woude, as well as its German translation, namely the publishers Akstee and Merkus and Siegmund Jacob Baumgarten, the author of the German introduction. Finally, owners and critics of the book will enter the scene.

The remaining chapters are devoted to the manner that religion is presented in the images and text of *Hieroglyphica*. As not all images or all topics touched upon in the book could be researched, I have focussed on what is most salient. Overall, these topics correspond with Early Modern debates connected to the history of religion in general and of Christianity in particular. One of these debates concerned the ways that true religion could be acquired, the topic of chapter 3. Of course there is the contradiction between reason and revelation, but the consideration of a richer pallette of necessary 'channels' can be found in *Hieroglyphica* as well. Homing in on this historical critical shift, I address in chapters 4 and 5 the comparative scope of *Hieroglyphica*. Chapter 4 analyses De Hooghe's chronological religious history, from its origin to the hereafter. In this account true religion (i.e. Christianity in its Protestant form) developed separately from 'other' idolatrous religions. Chapter 5 will look into De Hooghe's thematic plates, in which he juxtaposed all sorts of religions within one thematic etching, emphasising their similarity. I take up the question of the consequences of such an identification for hotly debated topics such as the Flood, the Devil and Creation, and for the sacred position of Christianity. From this search into similarity and difference the specific theme of anticlericalism stands out, as it runs through *Hieroglyphica* as a continuous thread. Chapter 6 will delve into this topic, indicating how this theme was not reserved for radical and deist thinkers only but was firmly grounded in a Reformed notion of a 'priesthood of all believers'. Chapter 7 can be seen as the culmination of the previous chapters. Here we try to find out what De Hooghe considered to be the fundamental dogmas and characteristics of true religion. Combined with the input of the other chapters, the answer to this question will complete the image of true religion as it is presented in De Hooghe's *Hieroglyphica*.

Chapter two

The Making of Hieroglyphica and its Afterlife

This chapter will focus on the traditions and genres that *Hieroglyphica* belongs to, which are important to its interpretation. What is the artistic style of *Hieroglyphica*, and in which tradition(s) should it be placed? How can we try to see the book 'De Hooghe's way'?[1] To get closer to the context in which it was produced, I will examine its 'exterior' aspects – title and shape, goals and genres. In the second half of this chapter I will present the people 'behind' the book: author, editor, publisher and reading public.

As made clear in the studies that have treated *Hieroglyphica* – offering divergent opinions on its content and value – it is useless to try to pin the work to a specific genre. A more promising approach would be to look at how De Hooghe mixed different genres. First, we will examine the genre of the artistic primer, as De Hooghe himself points in that direction in his introduction 'Aan den Leezer' [To the reader]. Subsequently, the title of the book indicates two other genres: namely 'hieroglyphics' and the history of religion. The first part of the title, *Hieroglyphics or emblems of the ancient peoples, Egyptians, Chaldeans, Fenicians, Jews, Greeks, Romans etc.* identifies the form of the book, signaling it will consist of allegorical representations of elements from the cultures of ancient peoples and their religions. The second part announces the topic that is presented through these emblematic images, namely the *exhaustive essay on the progressive decline and corruption of religion through the ages, and its recent reformation until the present day.*

In *Hieroglyphica* De Hooghe thus combines several genres, on the one hand delivering some sort of emblematic encyclopedia of the symbolic images of the ancients, and on the other hand providing a history of religion, with imagery that will serve aspiring young artists with examples to imitate and emulate. The combination, as we will see over the course of this thesis, was unusual, and yet it

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1   Cf. Gregory, *Seeing things their way*.

might not be totally unexpected, given De Hooghe's status, expertise and personal interests. In this chapter I will discuss *Hieroglyphica*'s position vis-à-vis several genres, although I will place greater stress on the exterior elements – the style and background of 'hieroglyphic' images and the embedding of hieroglyphs in an emblematic worldview – and somewhat lesser emphasis on the genre of religious history, as this will come to the fore abundantly in subsequent chapters.

2.1 Ars hieroglyphica and scientia hieroglyphica: an artist's primer

In his introduction De Hooghe presents *Hieroglyphica* as a primer for those who were not trained in the symbolic representation of historical phenomena. In a text of six pages entitled 'AAN DEN LEEZER' [To the reader] Romeyn de Hooghe criticises the way many artists mistakenly and misleadingly picture scenes from ancient periods. They mix up the different customs, clothing and attributes, and they often neglect the two elementary requirements of presenting the correct time and place of the scenes they are depicting. The reason for these shortcomings, according to De Hooghe, is not deliberate error. Rather, they lack knowledge. Such knowledge was important: to be a good painter, etcher or sculptor it was necessary to be well acquainted with antiquity:

> To know the peoples of Antiquity one needs to know one's languages, to have access to the ancient writers, to collect coins, books, and drawings, and to be nurtured by all of these, to be resourceful and prolific in inventiveness and attentiveness to every object. One needs to translate those thoughts into images, and draw the farfetched strangeness of the old Babylonian, Indian and Egyptian images.[2]

This view, far from being merely the opinion of De Hooghe, was commonly held in the Republic and abroad. It was necessary for professional artists to know the classics, to be familiar with the attributes of different kinds of people and to recognise them. Mastery of this body of knowledge should be achieved by a general study of history and poetry read in books, from the examination of coins and medals and image books, and finally through the appreciation of ancient statues in the company of learned men. Some authors made the requirements even

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2   De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 'Aan den leezer'. 'Men moet om die van de Oudheid te kennen, Taalkundig zyn, Leezing der ouder Schrijvers hebben, Penningen, Boeken en Teekeningen by een zamelen, en dan daar van doorvoed, vindingryk en vruchtbaar zyn van verscheyden invallen en gedachten op elk Voorwerp. Men moet die gedachten konnen tot Beeltenissen brengen, en Teekenen de al te ver gezogte vreemdigheyd der oude Babylonische, Indische en Egyptische Beelden'.

more difficult by stating that artists needed to be informed about *all* the sciences. [3]

Such was the widely held ideal. De Hooghe, however, seems to put his finger on a sore spot when he mentions that this kind of learning was just not possible for all artists: many of them were of low birth. *Hieroglyphica* could educate them; otherwise these 'lovers' [of hieroglyphs] were to make do with

> etchings, of which they understood little, by imaginative masters from the past; which [they] then with the right intentions used wrongly; or because they found something in Caesar a [sic] Ripa, Pierius or other such distinguished men, which they used without proper recognition for [the demands of] the present reproduced their imagery, just going by the names [of the things] they needed, not knowing the difference between one or the other interpretation, so that they misapply them.[4]

According to De Hooghe, many engravers and other emblem producers just looked up a word in classical emblem books without any awareness of its different meanings and interpretations, thus mixing up all kinds of emblems. De Hooghe, then, can help them set the record straight. His ambition to teach impecunious beginning artists may have derived from his own experience: he himself was the son of a button-maker, so he may well have known how it felt to be unable to obtain the education required for a promising career in printmaking. For this button-maker's son things turned out well, but it is quite plausible that Romeyn did not forget his early poverty and felt obliged to share his artistic knowledge of ancient history, combining text and images in a single book that could aid less fortunate artists.[5]

The basis for this hieroglyphical knowledge is presented as twofold: as the *ars hieroglyphica* (the art of making emblems) and the *scientia hieroglyphica*

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3   Margery Corbett and Ronald Lightbown, *The Comely Frontispiece. The Emblematic Title-Page in England, 1550-1660* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1979), 27; Lyckle de Vries, *How to create beauty. De Lairesse on the theory and practice to make art* (Leiden: Primavera Press, 2011), esp. 29-31; Willem Goeree, *Inleydingh tot de practijck der al-gemeene schilder-konst, waer in neffens de heerlijckheyt en nuttigheydt der selve, kortelijck wert aengewesen* (Middelburgh, 1670), 58,59.

4   De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, Aan den Leezer. '… Prenten, die zy weynig verstonden, van Vinding-ryke meesters der voorlede Tyd; en dan veeltyds met goede wil verkeert werkten; of omdat zy in Caesar [sic] à Ripa, Pierius of diergelyke groote Mannen wat vindende, zonder onderscheyd der tegenwoordige Tyd, derzelver verbeeldingen aanhingen; ook de namen maar nazoekende, zonder ziften van de gansch verscheyden zaaken op eene en derzelve naam, het een voor het ander uytkipten.'

5   See Henk van Nierop, *The Life of Romeyn de Hooghe 1645-1708. Prints, Pamphlets, and Politics in the Dutch Golden Age* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2018).

(the art of expounding upon these signs).[6] Despite De Hooghe's superficial description of hieroglyphs – as merely a synonym for symbol – he urges the reader not to underestimate them. The point is that the topics depicted in these hieroglyphs cover everything, making hieroglyphic science a boundless field of study. Both arts are presented allegorically in Plate 1, 'UYTLEGGING VAN DE PRENT- EN MERKBEELDEN DER EGYPTENAAREN. WAT DEZELVE ZYN; HAAR OORSPRONG EN VOORTGANG' [Explanation of Egyptian Hieroglyphs, What these are, their Origin and Development] [fig.4], which puts them in an Egyptian setting.

Fig. 4. De Hooghe, Plate 1, UYTLEGGING VAN DE PRENT- EN MERKBEELDEN DER EGYPTENAAREN. WAT DEZELVE ZYN; HAAR OORSPRONG EN VOORTGANG [Explanation of Egyptian Hieroglyphs. What these are, their Origin and Development]

The *ars hieroglyphica* is denoted by an Egyptian, more specifically a Theban woman [A]. *Ars hieroglyphica* is depicted in an Egyptian style because 'the most gifted hieroglyphic connoisseurs came from Egypt'. She sees with a sharp eye 'piercing through to the core of things'. A sphinx is placed upon her head to make sure that her

6   De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica,* 2.

images are not too 'vulgar' – that is, too transparent.[7] Behind this Egyptian woman we find the *scientia hieroglyphica* [D] represented by the figure of an Egyptian priest and scribe. This priest is a researcher of hieroglyphs but keeps his knowledge to himself: the image shows him holding his finger to his mouth.

Whereas the explanatory text for these two figures is not that elaborate, much more attention is given to the subject of the hieroglyphic art, which is nature, depicted as the Egyptian goddess Diana of Ephesus as shown on the right-hand side of the etching.[8] The address to the reader promises that the remainder of *Hieroglyphica* will be devoted to a discussion of all kinds of hieroglyphs, introducing the reader to the art of making emblems and of interpreting them correctly. All this, of course, only added to the status of Romeyn de Hooghe himself, who apparently mastered both the *ars hieroglyphica* (as evident from his images) and the *scientia hieroglyphica* (as is shown in his explanatory text). Therefore, both the Theban woman and the Egyptian scribe can be seen as representations of De Hooghe himself, with the caveat that De Hooghe does not keep his knowledge private.[9]

Romeyn de Hooghe may have suggested that he was the very first to have helped poor draughtsmen who lacked sufficient education, but study books for artists, especially for painters, were widely available at that time. Etchers could rely on the books of Willem Goeree,[10] Samuel van Hoogstraten (1627-1678)[11] and Gerard de Lairesse (1640 -1711).[12] These artists, none of whom were very innovative, all made use of conventional ideas concerning art.[13] They all still relied on Carel van Mander's *Schilder-Boeck: waer in Voor eerst de leerlustighe Iueght den grondt der Edel Vry Schilderconst in Verscheyden deelen Wort Voorghedraghen* (1604). Like his imitators, Van Mander wanted to teach young aspiring artists the art of painting. He explained both the technical elements of painting and its historical development

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7   Idem, 3.

8   On Diana see also paragraph 2.4 below, as well as chapter 3, 'How To Find True Religion'.

9   Joke Spaans*, Hieroglyphen*, 57.

10   W. Goeree, *Inleydingh Tot de Practijck Der Al-gemeene Schilder-Konst* (Middelburg: W. Goeree, 1670).

11   Samuel van Hoogstraten, *Inleyding tot de Hooge Schoole der Schilderkonst* (Rotterdam: Fransois van Hoogstaeten, 1678). Samuel van Hoogstraten was a Dutch painter, etcher and poet who wrote an introduction to the art of painting consisting of nine books. Using the nine Greek muses of art and science as the basis for his books, Van Hoogstraten treated an enormous amount of subjects related to the art of painting.

12   Gerard de Lairesse's *Het groot schilderboek* (Amsterdam: erfgenamen Willem de Coup, 1707) consisted of thirteen separate books describing different elements of technique, including one chapter on engraving, and providing discussions on the different genres such as landscapes, portraits, and still lives. On this primer: De Vries, *How to create beauty*.

13   M. Kwakkelstein, *Willem Goeree: inleydinge tot de al-ghemeene teycken-konst : een kritische geannoteerde editie* (Leiden: Primavera Press, 1998).

by describing the lives of artists. In the part entitled *Uytleghingen* (explanations) Van Mander expounds on allegories inspired by Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. More important here, however, is the final part of Van Mander's book, in which he explained the 'depiction of the figures, and how the ancient pagans represented and discerned their Gods', as stated in part of his title.[14] Even *Hieroglyphica* depends to a large extent on this latter part, and is less indebted to the most popular mythological themes from the *Metamophoses* such as Pomona and Vertumnus (by far the most popular theme in Dutch art) or the Judgement of Paris.[15]

The last and most important art teacher whose writings were used by all seventeenth-century art theoreticians on is Cesare Ripa. Ripa (1560-1622) was an Italian aesthetician whose book *Iconologia* (1593; 'doctrine of the image') became the most important primer of allegorical symbols. Ripa treated the symbols for hundreds of abstract terms like 'astronomy', 'the rational soul' 'philosophy', 'the world' and 'the beginning', all of which are represented in personifications. Again, the content of the *Iconologia* was not original. But though Ripa had imitated the imagery made by other artists, he managed to compress his learning into a handy, complete compilation that served as a convenient handbook for artists and art connoisseurs. Soon after the first edition, a thick book without images, was published, an abbreviated and illustrated version appeared.[16] It was especially this form of *Iconologia* that became very popular and exerted tremendous influence on seventeenth-century artists.

Romeyn de Hooghe was surely acquainted with, and influenced by, Ripa's symbol book. However, in light of the book historian Christian Coppens's statement that *Hieroglyphica*, with its symbols and explanations, is 'a kind of *ars memoranda* after the model of Cesare Ripa's *Iconologia*', one should note that *Hieroglyphica* differs greatly from *Iconologia* in both concept and design.[17] While Ripa's symbols are all personifications, embodying a large number of distinct abstract concepts (fig. 5), De Hooghe makes use of much more complex imagery, in which symbols are not discrete and self-contained but are combined into forms of visualised argument. His images are (except for a few examples) not reusable in other situations. Although it seems that De Hooghe, imitating Van Mander, wants to educate his readers on how to depict the various ancient gods, he does not proceed to instruct them in a systematic way.

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14 'de Wtbeeldinghen der Figueren, en hoe de oude Heydenen hun Goden hebben uytghebeeldt, en onderscheyden.'

15 Erik Jan Sluiter, 'Ovidius' Herscheppingen herschapen. Over de popularisering van mythologische thematiek in beeld en woord,' *De Zeventiende Eeuw* 23 (2007): 45-76.

16 Jochen Becker, ed., *Ripa en de zeventiende-eeuwse beeldspraak: 1644 – Ripa - 1994* (Utrecht: Utrecht Letterenbibliotheek, 1994), 4.

17 Coppens, *Een Ars moriendi*, 64.

Fig. 5. Cesare Ripa, Celerita, from *Iconologia* (Padua, 1611) p. 77, depicting the symbol for celerity. Horapollo's hawk is also used here.

Every study book, from those of Van Mander and Ripa to that of De Lairesse, was structured so that young artists could easily use them. All of these didactic writers presented their subjects in short, clear-cut pieces or chapters, readily navigable and processed. Romeyn de Hooghe, by contrast, did not structure his subjects in the manner of a practical manual but rather presented a historical argument instead of dividing his subject matter according to theme or genre. He even distances himself from Ripa by stating that if artists used *Iconologia* uncritically they risked just picking and choosing elements without knowing how to employ them.[18]

Comparing *Hieroglyphica* with *Iconologia,* Coppens mentions that they both belong to a tradition known as 'ars memoranda'.[19] This art of memory was an umbrella term for mnemonic methods and techniques that originated in ancient times and were very popular in the Renaissance. The part of the method Coppens refers to is the technique of using images to help the memorisation of information.[20] For the teaching and memorisation of facts related to complex issues, as well as of information or abstract concepts, images were used, for instance in title prints.[21] The method had a long history and had been rediscovered and revived by the Jesuits at the beginning of the seventeenth century. They incorporated images into their sophisticated didactic programmes, which were part of the Counter-Reformation's

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18   De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 'Aan den Leezer'.
19   Coppens, *Een Ars moriendi*, 64.
20   The most thorough research on this subject has been Yates, *The Art of Memory*; for its use by Jesuit missionaries see Spence, *The Memory Palace.*
21   Balkenstein *'Doorgaens verciert met kopere platen'*, 34. See also the paragraph on frontispieces below.

'battle for believers'. In the Calvinist world, where the use of pictures was somewhat controversial, it was above all Jan Amos Comenius who propagated the use of images as a teaching aid for children's instruction. His *Orbis sensualium pictus*, which first appeared in 1658 in Nuremberg and was endlessly republished in various European languages, was a children's schoolbook for languages and realia, in which words and images were combined (fig. 6).[22]

Looking at *Hieroglyphica's* images, it is easy to see its resemblance to primers in the way that image and text are connected by numbers or letters. But there are also differences: Comenius and the authors of mnemonic aids used images to assist in the memorisation of text, whereas De Hooghe used text to clarify the meaning of his images. Moreover, illustrations in primers were mostly clear and unambiguous, as De Hooghe was aware, inasmuch as he provided these sorts of non-allegorical etchings intended to serve as mnemonic aids for several instructional books by the reformed minister Johannes Möller. Two of these books, *Ars Hebraica* and *Ars Graeca*, concerned languages, and their images functioned in a rebus-like way. A picture of King David means 'David', a picture of a cart helped one remember the word 'cart'. De Hooghe did not apply this method in *Hieroglyphica*.[23] Here he worked in an overcrowded, baroque and above all 'hieroglyphic' style, which suggests that the etcher wanted to do more than just deliver an artist's primer. He wanted to educate his readers not only in the manner of properly depicting Diana of Ephesus, St Peter or Luther, using their correct attributes, but also sought to inform them about the roles they played in the history of religion. The result is a dazzling collection of images that present De Hooghe's view on the history of religion in an allegorical, emblematic manual.

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22   Coppens*, Een Ars moriendi*, 108.

23   M. Balkestein, E. Heuves and L.D. Couprie, eds, "Doorgaens Verciert Met Kopere Platen". Nederlandse Geïllustreerde Boeken Uit de Zeventiende Eeuw (Leiden: Universiteitsbibliotheek, 1990), 48, 50. The prints De Hooghe made for Möller's other book, *Verklaaring der bybelsche figuuren* (Explanation of biblical figures) (1682), were meant to aid the remembering of stories and persons from the biblical histories, and here De Hooghe divided his prints into ten parts, containing images drawn from ten chapters of a biblical book, in order to support the remembrance of the stories told therein; see Els Stronks, 'Gewapende vrede. Woord, beeld en religie in de Republiek,' *De Zeventiende Eeuw* 25 (2009): 2-25, there 24.
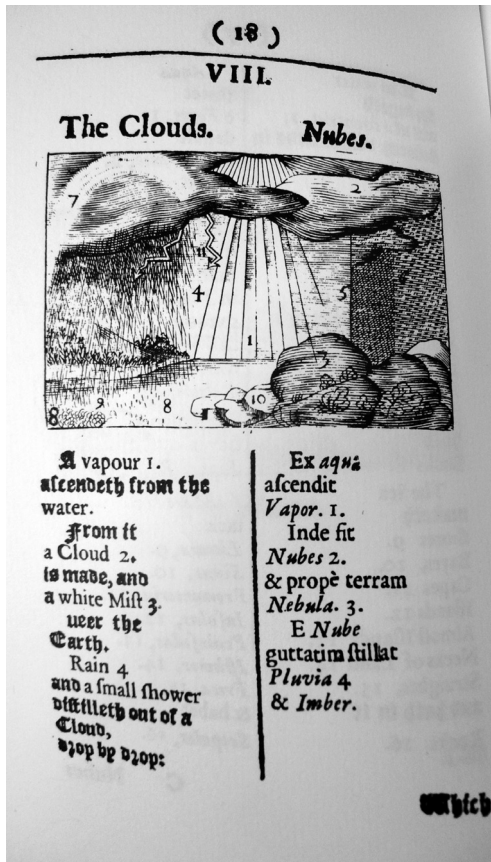
Fig. 6. Image and text connected in Johann Amos Comenius, *Orbis sensualium pictus*, trans. Charles Hoole (London, 1659; facsimile ed., Menston, England: Scolar Press, 1970) p. 18

2.2 The hieroglyphic hype

By giving his book the title *Hieroglyphica,* Romeyn de Hooghe placed it in a long and complex tradition of word-image connections. The Egyptian hieroglyphic script had fallen out of use long ago; the meanings of its characters were lost. But these mysterious ancient images proved fascinating to European observers. They were imbued with new and often fanciful meanings, up to their eventual decipherment in 1798. In short, people regarded Egyptian hieroglyphs as sacred images that possessed the wisdom and knowledge of the original humans. A myth arose around this ancient Egyptian language based on the speculations of several Greek thinkers who had been obsessed by this strange language. They surmised that the images were allegories in which, for example, the image of a hawk meant 'swiftness', because a hawk is swift. Embellishing this idea, the Greek

philosopher Plutarch (+/- 46–120 CE) added the notion that the hieroglyphs did not merely comprise a script in the manner of other scripts: in fact, the images of this written language bore 'ancient hidden wisdom'. A third ingredient of the myth was provided by the neoplatonic philosopher Plotinus (ca. 205-270 CE), who ascribed hermetic powers to the hieroglyphs, which revealed to the initiated the essences of things and their transcendental origins.[24] Such ancient wisdom, considered unsuitable for the vulgar to know, had therefore been hidden within a complex language of signs. This myth proved highly attractive to all kinds of people and deep into the eighteenth century these three conceptions used to understand hieroglyphs were, both together and discretely, absorbed into categories of art, literature, amusement and the occult sciences.[25]

This myth's most important elaboration was to be found in one of the first known *Hieroglyphica*s, a book by the Egyptian grammarian Horapollo, written around the 4th century AD. He explained the images in an allegorical way, probably using his own imagination as well. The Romans also showed great interest in this ancient mystery, and several emperors imported Egyptian obelisks to embellish their cities. However, because there were no more obelisks to be taken from Egypt, Greco- Roman imitations were made, in which the unreadable Egyptian inscriptions where replaced by those praising the emperors. During the Middle Ages the fascination with the mysterious, spiritual and metaphysical meanings of pictorial language decreased. Interest in Egypt and its hieroglyphs was mainly philological: studying the Egyptian language would shed light on the language spoken by Adam and Eve in Paradise; obelisks were little more than the gravestones of emperors; and the pyramids were the granaries of the biblical Joseph.[26]

The Renaissance, with its interest in ancient and classical history, cleared the way for the revival of the hieroglyphic mode, evolving into a genuine hieroglyphic

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24   Corbett, *The Comely Frontispiece*, 22, 23. Iversen, *The Myth of Egypt*, 46.

25   See L. Volkmann, *Bilderschriften der Renaissance. Hieroglyphic und Emblematic in ihren Beziehungen und Fortwirkungen* (Leipzig: Karl Hiersemann, 1923); Peter Ucko and Timothy Champion, eds., *The Wisdom of Egypt. Changing Visions through the Ages* (London, Portland, Coogee: UCL Press, 2003); Brian Curran, *The Egyptian Renaissance. The Afterlife of Ancient Egypt in Early Modern Italy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007); Jan Assmann, *Moses the Egyptian. The Memory of Egypt in Western Monotheism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997); Daniel Stolzenberg*, Egyptian Oedipus. Athanasius Kircher and the Secrets of Antiquity* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2013); Liselotte Dieckmann*, Hieroglyphics. The History of a Literary Symbol* (Washington and St. Louis: Washington University Press, 1970); Don Cameron Allen, *Mysteriously Meant. The Rediscovery of Pagan Symbolism and Allegorical Interpretation in the Renaissance* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1970); Iversen, *The Myth of Egypt*.

26   Iversen, *The Myth of Egypt*, esp. 31, 48, 49, 55

cult in Europe. This renewed interest was sparked by the discovery of Horapollo's *Hieroglyphica* in 1419, after it had been lost for a millennium. The book, with its classical description of hieroglyphs as allegorical bearers of hidden knowledge, was translated, edited and imitated time and again. Together with new editions of the writings of Plutarch and Plotinus, it became greatly important to humanists. These sources contributed to the hieroglyphic mode that emerged from the early sixteenth century onwards, involving artists and authors, philosophers and alchemists, scientists and heretics, for whom Horapollo was, most of the time, their main source.[27] Counting only the books with 'hieroglyphics' in the title, there are more than forty works on the topic, Romeyn de Hooghe's book being one of the last. Famous in the genre were the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* [The Dream of Poliphilus] (1499), ascribed to the unknown Italian Francesco Collona, and *Hieroglyphica, sive de sacris Aegyptiorum, aliarumque gentium literis commentarii* [Hieroglyphics, or a Commentary on the Sacred Writings of the Egyptians and Other Ancient Peoples] (1556) by the Italian humanist Pierius Valeriano Bolzani, regarded as an authority on the subject.[28] Bolzani's *Hieroglyphica* summarised Horapollo's book but broadened its scope to encompass ancient myths, Jewish cabala and the Christian religion. The book was influenced by the main source of literary inspiration in the Renaissance, Ovid's *Metamorphoses*.[29] Valeriano's interpretation of hieroglyphs, emblems and myths was Christianised and was predominantly a moralistic view. Another element in Valeriano's thinking was the idea of reconstructing the mute language of the Egyptians, 'so that all knowledge and ideas could be expressed in a universal system of hieroglyphical symbols'. The appeal here was thus to a written language that anyone, regardless of what language they spoke, could decipher.[30]

Pierio Valeriano Bolzani's *Hieroglyphica* (first edition, 1556) seems to be one of De Hooghe's most important sources of inspiration, as several of the classical figures depicted by De Hooghe are copied from this book. This belies the conviction that the images in *Hieroglyphica* were all De Hooghe's original

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27 Dieckmann, *Hieroglyphics*, 44.

28 Pierius Valeriano Bolzani, *Hieroglyphica, sive de sacris Aegyptiorum, aliarumque gentium literis commentarii* (Lyon: Pauli Frelon, 1602).

29 Allen, *Mysteriously Meant*, 163-200.

30 K. Giehlow, 'Die Hieroglyphenkunde des Humanismus in der Allegorie der Renaissance, besonders der Ehrenpforte Kaisers Maximilian I,' *Jahrbuch der kunsthistorischen sammlungen des allerhochtsen Kaiserhauses* 32 (1915): 1-232, 112; Curran, *Egyptian renaissance*, 230 ; Werner Waterschoot, 'Hieroglyphica te Gent in 1584' in *Schouwende fantasye. opstellen van Werner Waterschoot*, ed. Werner Waterschoot (Gent: Academia Press, 2002); 237. Iversen*, The Myth of Egypt*, 72; Thomas C. Singer, 'Hieroglyphs, Real Characters, and the Idea of Natural Language in English Seventeenth-Century Thought,' *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 50 (1998): 49-70.

inventions. The art historian Derk Snoep states that De Hooghe's *Hieroglyphica* was 'composed of his own inventions only', and historian William Wilson even writes that 'He [De Hooghe] was so successful in avoiding the usual sources for emblems, that I [Wilson] have been unable to find a single image, or even a detail that he has copied and re-used in his 64 plates which include literary hundreds of figures and allegories'.[31] Wilson's quite firm statement can be understood if one considers *Hieroglyphica* to be an emblem book, as the usual sources for that genre are not abundantly used, although De Hooghe does imitate Ripa, see fig. 59 and 60 in chapter 3, and fig. 154 and 156 in chapter 6. However, De Hooghe took his inspiration from the fields of Egyptology, hieroglyphics and mythography. He turned to the work of Bolzani, as we can see in figures 7-12; to Athanasius Kircher (see figs 18-25); to the Mensa Isiaca (see figs 26-29); and to Vincenzo Cartari (see fig. 107 in chapter 5).

Although it was very common for etchers to copy the work of other etchers in this period, the sources Romeyn de Hooghe used for his enormous output of prints are not easily recognised.[32] The main reason for this is due to the fact that he never just copied the examples of other artists, but always adjusted existing images to his own purposes and did so in his own inventive style.[33] Nevertheless, over the course of this thesis we will encounter several instances of images which De Hooghe imitated from others. One clear example is found, for instance, in the images drawn from Bolzani's *Hieroglyphica*, as we see below, with the accompanying text being taken partially from Bolzani as well.[34]

31 Derk Snoep, *Praal en propaganda: triumfalia in de Noordelijke Nederlanden in de 16de en 17de eeuw* (Alphen aan den Rijn 1975), 178; Wilson, *The Art of Romeyn de Hooghe,* 315, 316.

32 Knolle, *Comiecque tafereelen,* 8; Van der Waals, *Prenten in de Gouden Eeuw,* 14, 105.

33 Huigen Leeflang, 'Waarheid, vlugheid en inventie. Ontwerp en uitvoering van de etsen' in *Romeyn de Hooghe. De verbeelding van de late Gouden Eeuw*, ed. Van Nierop et al. (Zwolle: Waanders, 2008), 126-145 there 131, 132.
Coppens, *Een Ars moriendi,* 61.

34 Valeriano Bolzani, *Hieroglyphica*. Bolzani mentions Eusebius' *Praeparatio Evangelica* as his source, which similarly describes a god named Cneph in book III, chapter 11. See also chapter 5 below.

Fig. 7. De Hooghe, Eneph, detail from Plate 6
Fig. 8. Bolzani, Eneph from *Hieroglyphica*, page 620
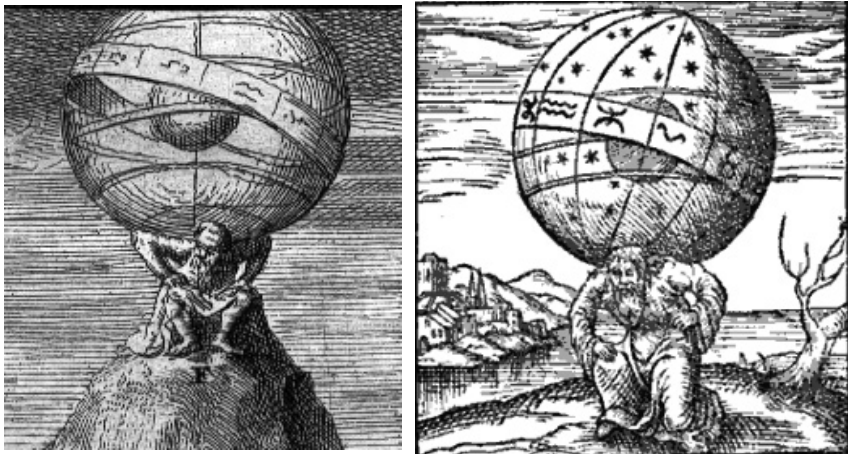
Fig. 9. De Hooghe, Yunx, detail from Plate 6
Fig. 10. Bolzani, Mundi Hieroglyphicum, page 621

Fig. 11. De Hooghe, Juno, detail from Plate 6
Fig. 12. Bolzani, Iuno, page 631

Being fully aware that the various genres in early modern literary history were not separated and that there was close contact between representatives of the different disciplines, I shall give, for reasons of clarity, a brief overview of the function of hieroglyphs art and literature, western esotery and theology, fields that provide the background for an understanding of De Hooghe's *Hieroglyphica*.

Hieroglyphs between literature and art: the emblem and the frontispiece
An important feature in *Hieroglyphica* is its combination of word and image, not uncommon in early modernity; only under the influence of the art theory (1766) of the German critic Gotthold Lessing did a division between poets and artists take hold.[35] In this realm of word-image connections, two important genres were influenced by the hieroglyphic vogue. First, there is the genre of the emblem, of which the Italian art critic Mario Praz considered *Hieroglyphica* to be part.[36]

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35   See for the general multifaceted relation between image and text in the Low Countries: Marc Van Vaeck, Hugo Brems, and Geert H.M. Claassens, eds, *The Stone of Alciato. Literature and Visual Culture in the Low Countries* (Leuven: Peeters, 2003); K. J. S. Bostoen, Elmer Kolfin, Paul J. Smith, eds, *Tweelinge eener dragt. woord en beeld in de Nederlanden, 1500-1750* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2001). For Early Modern emblems see Peter Maurice Daly, *Literature in the Light of the Emblem. Structural parallels between the emblem and literature in the sixteenth and seventeenth century* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1979). For the relation between hieroglyphs and emblems see L. Volkmann, *Bilderschriften der Renaissance. Hieroglyphic und Emblematic in ihren Beziehungen und Fortwirkungen* (Leipzig: Karl Hiersemann, 1923).

36   Praz, *Studies in Seventeenth-Century Imagery,* 372.

Second, the genre of the frontispiece, also influenced by the interest in hieroglyphs, proves important for the analysis of *Hieroglyphica*.

The emblem is a complex entity.[37] It emerged as a distinct literary form in the first half of the 16th century and was also known as 'symbolum'.[38] Emblems had their origins in several related forms such as the *impreses* from Italy, the family and military devices popular in the Middle Ages, and hieroglyphs also helped inspire the formation of the emblem genre. The first emblems were invented by the Milanese jurist and humanist Andrea Alciati, who published his book *Emblemata* in 1531. Alciati was highly interested in the connection between word and image, especially its practical application in art and literature, and developed a structured form for using the two forms together. This literary form, consisting of a standard combination of a motto, picture and allegorical verse, became enormously popular and gave rise to a flourishing genre of emblematic literature (fig. 13).[39] Besides having a fixed structure, emblems conveyed messages that consisted predominantly of general moral or philosophical statements, laid down in short sentences. The famous *festina lente* is a telling example of such a motto.[40] In the emblem genre, hieroglyphs and their mysterious content also played a part.[41] Emblems, like hieroglyphs, were intended to both veil and unveil deeper meanings. Seemingly everyday objects were depicted and given a title (motto), and were accompanied by a somewhat enigmatic poem. The moralistic meaning of the emblem, often quite obvious, was not explained in detail.

Although there are similarities between *Hieroglyphica* and the literary emblem, Romeyn de Hooghe did not author a classic emblem book.[42] His design differs from the format of emblem books; instead of presenting symbols that stand on their own, De Hooghe's prints in *Hieroglyphica* are collages of interrelated allegorical figures. The most important difference, however, lies in De Hooghe's explanations of the meanings of all his hieroglyphic images down to the tiniest details, whereas the messages conveyed by emblems were to some extent left for the reader/viewer to grasp.[43] At the same time, however, the notions of the word-image connection and the interest in hieroglyphs point to the linkage between different early modern genres, and *Hieroglyphica* is certainly an *emblematic* book.

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37 See for a recent discussion of emblem theory see Peter M. Daly, *The Emblem in Early Modern Europe. Contributions to the Theory of the Emblem* (Farnham: Ashgate Publishers, 2014).
38 John Manning, *The Emblem* (London: Reaction, 2002), 15, 16.
39 Iversen *The Myth of Egypt*, 73,74.
40 Corbett, *The Comely Frontispiece*, 35.
41 Schenck, *Das Bilderrätsel*, 41, 113.
42 Wilson, *Romeyn de Hooghe's Emblem Books*, 155.
43 Still, the genres are connected and, as stated earlier, I do not intend to offer the final word as to which genre *Hieroglyphica* does or does not belong.

Thus any attempt to classify books like *Hieroglyphica* as belonging to one specific genre is somewhat pointless, and one should adopt a more fluid view towards these interrelated fields.

Fig. 13. Two emblems from Andrea Alciati's *Emblemata* showing the form's three-part structure

The second word-image tradition which can be related to hieroglyphs and symbols is the genre De Hooghe specialised in, the genre of the frontispiece.[44] His design of more than two hundred title-pages for books in different genres, from ranging from devotional literature to travel accounts and comedies, makes him truly an expert in the field.[45] An analysis of De Hooghe's oeuvre shows *Hieroglyphica*'s engravings to bear a strong resemblance to the frontispieces made by the etcher (see figs 14-17).

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44 The distinction between a title print and a frontispiece is problematic; see Margaret M. Smith, *The Title-page. Its Early Development 1460-1510* (London: The British Library, 2000), 11-15. In this thesis title prints refer to the page bearing the title, be it illustrated or not. Frontispieces are illustrated images preceding or succeeding the title-page.

45 Garrelt Verhoeven and Piet Verkruijsse, 'Verbeelding op bestelling' in *Romeyn de Hooghe. De verbeelding van de late Gouden Eeuw*, ed. Van Nierop et al. (Zwolle: Waanders, 2008), 146-169 there 151.

Fig. 14. De Hooghe, frontispiece of W. v. Blyenburg, *De Kennisse Godts en Godts-Dients* (1671)
Fig. 15. De Hooghe, frontispiece of Godfried Arnold, *Historie der kerken en ketteren*, vol 1 (1701)

Fig. 16. De Hooghe, frontispiece of Antonie van Leeuwenhoek, *Epistolae* (1685), Rijksmuseum Amsterdam

Fig. 17. De Hooghe, Plate 23 Van de Voortgang der Afgoden [On the Development of Idolatry]

Although there is still no historical synthesis on the function of frontispieces, its Early Modern development has been amply researched.[46] The frontispiece had several functions, which were often combined. It was seen as an introduction to the book, summarising its content and preparing the reader for the topics to be presented in the written text. In the same way, frontispieces functioned as mnemonic aids: gazing at the print would help one memorise the core aspects of the book. The Italian philosopher Giambatista Vico (1668-1744) refers to the symbols in his frontispiece in hopes that 'it may serve to give the reader Some conception of this work before he reads it, and, with such aid as imagination may afford, to call it back to mind after he has read it.'[47] According to the historian and mathematician Volker Remmert, four additional functions can be enumerated. His research shows that frontispieces served as a token of patronage, paying homage

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46 Annette Frese, *Barocke titelgraphic am beispiel der verlagsstadt Köln* (Cologne: Böhlau, 1986). See also the outline in Volker R. Remmert, *Widmung, Welterklarung und Wissenschaftslegitimierung. Titelbilder und ihre functionen in der wissenschaftlichen revolution* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2005).

47 Quoted in Remmert, *Widmung*, 16.

to the person paying (or hopefully paying) for the publication. They were meant to underscore the authority of the author and of the scholarly field in which the etching was positioned. Most importantly, however, Remmert points at the debates that are visualised within these images.[48]

From the end of the Renaissance period onwards the frontispiece, under the influence of trends such as the emblem and the vogue for hieroglyphs, became more iconographic and complex.[49] For artists who saw realistic painting as mere craftsmanship – whereas real artists could imbue their works with an additional, philosophical layer of significance – it was very important to be able to visualise a book's content in a somewhat mysterious way. Artists needed a mystical insight into the nature of things to create such things, and demanded in return the same sorts of insight from the spectator so that a work's deeper meaning could be understood. This insight was seen as a divine inspiration, a revelation of the metaphysical message of art, a true 'miracle of understanding'.[50] Complex symbolism needed to be not only new and inventive but also sharp-witted to prevent prints being understood by just any reader. This idea of images 'being closed to the vulgar and open to the learned' formed one of the backbones of the title print genre. Artists needed to avoid making frontispieces too obscure and enigmatic, but their designs should not be so commonplace and obvious that the reader did not need to use his or her wit to grasp its meaning.[51]

In the visual, artistic field, as in its literary counterpart, the notion of hieroglyphs as mysterious soon gave way to a more general notion of symbols, allegories, personifications and signs. Often people combined the Egyptian images with medieval and Christian pictures, making the term 'hieroglyph' but one of the many words to indicate 'symbol'. Losing their original religious connotation, hieroglyphs often became the focus of an intellectual game rather than of a serious concern to search for a general hidden meaning.[52] De Hooghe's work exemplifies the vulgarisation of the hieroglyphic genre. In 1674 he produced the *Schouburgh der Nederlandse veranderingen* [Theater of change in the Republic],

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48   Idem, 7-21.

49   Unlike in most illustrations and paintings, where one part of a story was depicted in detail, the title print needed to depict a book's complex core in a single image that was meant to pique the curiosity of potential readers. To pull off such a difficult task artists, most of the time, made use of allegorical imaginations that were full of symbols and personifications. The ideal title print consisted of a new and creative composition made up of allegorical elements, which could be understood only by reading the book. Worn-out and well-known allegories, lacking any new approach, would not have sufficed for the production of an interesting, attractive frontispiece.

50   Iversen, *The Myth of Egypt*, 77-79.

51   Corbett, *The Comely Frontispiece*, 12, 31.

52   Dieckmann, *Hieroglyphics*, 32, 44, 52.

which depicted the horrors of 1672, the Dutch year of disaster. In his preface the author mentions that he will treat the subject in an unprecedented, combining 'hieroglyphs', 'characters' and 'historic persons' within a single image.[53] He proceeds by explaining that 'hieroglyphs' were 'individual things of several natures depicting complete concepts'. His further remarks mention 'virtues and vices' and 'allegorical examples and personifications', comments that align with the hieroglyph's shift into the much broader genre of symbolic images.[54] In De Hooghe's address to *Hieroglyphica's* readers this superficial description is made even more explicit: De Hooghe's notion of 'Merkbeeld' can be translated as 'emblem', symbol or sign. Still, for De Hooghe the term 'hieroglyph' meant more than a general image: it was a 'true image'. Here De Hooghe adhered to the familiar notion that information entering the mind through the eyes is more efficient than if it arrives through the ears:

> One cannot speak, without previously forming a concept (*merkbeeld*). This art and science (i.e.: the *ars* and *scientia hieroglyphica*) exceeds speaking and hearing; as the eyes are sharper than the ears, and seeing surpasses the sense of hearing. The goal of the Emblem maker is the same as that of the speaker.'…. 'The most noble action of forming the concept comes first, but what persuades the Spectator most powerfully to penetrate into the profoundest understanding of what is shown, is the best of all.[55]

Most of the time De Hooghe, famous for his ability to produce visual abstracts of a book's content, came up with the designs for the images, although usually

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53 Romeyn de Hooghe, *Schouburgh der Nederlandse veranderingen, geopent in ses toneelen, waer op de wisselbeurten des Vereenigde Staets door den Fransen oorlog gebrouwen, in historiele sinnebeelden, vertoont en beschreven zijn* (Amsterdam: Romeyn de Hooghe, 1674), 6.

54 De Hooghe, *Schouwburg der Nederlandsche veranderingen*, 6. 'De manier van 't verhandelen deser Stoffe is sodanig als mijns wetens noch van niemand niet gebruyckt en is, en 't samen gevoegt uyt verscheyde soorten, as Hieroglyphen, Characters en Historiele persoonen. 'enckele dingen van allerley natuyr, heele zelfstandigheden verbeeldende.'

55 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 2. 'Nu kan men niet spreeken, of men heeft eerst het Merkbeeld klaar. En zoo veel overtreft die konst en wetenschap het spreeken en hooren; als de oogen meer treffen als de ooren, en 't gezigt boven 't gehoor gaat. De zin des maakers van het Merkbeeld, is even dezelve als de zin des Spreekers'. … 'De edelste manier van verbeelden gaat voor, maar egter dat gene, het welk op het krachtigste den Beschouwer overhaalt, om in te dringen in het diepste begrip van het vertoonde, gaat boven al.'

the author provided the idea for a title print.[56] De Hooghe's colleagues, though they disliked the etcher personally, noted the quality and originality of his work. The painter and writer Arnold Houbraken, in his *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen* (Amsterdam, 1718-1721), wrote:

> He [Romeyn de Hooghe] was a man who excelled in intelligence and invention, and a man unlike anyone in the skill of composition and in the wealth and variety of innovations, as is witnessed by the innumerable number of book titles and other prints.[57]

De Hooghe's inventions and creativity were appreciated not just for their artistic quality and hieroglyphic, mysterious wit, but also because for their commercial value. Title prints were regarded as selling agents for books: they would greatly entertain the reader, luring buyers without increasing the price too much. Booksellers would often display such pictorial abstracts in the front of their stores to attract people, assuming that a book 'appearing nice was half sold'.[58] Title prints made by gifted etchers such as Romeyn de Hooghe were especially attractive sales hooks, and this was likely the main reason that the relatively expensive De Hooghe was frequently asked to design and produce all kinds of frontispieces.[59] His popularity is especially underlined by the title prints he made for *De Hollandsche Mercurius*, a magazine that discussed current issues. For twenty years the author invented title prints based on the most important events of a given year, which, considering the period, must have been a great success.

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56 Wilson, *The Art of Romeyn de Hooghe*, 6. Balkenstein, '*Doorgaans verciert met kopere platen*', 48. Engravers who invented their own designs may have boosted their status; they were mostly regarded as craftsmen who were simply carrying out the ideas of learned authors. Corbett, *The Comely Frontispiece*, 19.

57 Arnold Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen* (Amsterdam 1718-1721) 257-259. 'Hy [Romeyn de Hooghe] [was] een man uitsteekend in groot vernuft en in vindingen, en die ik niet weet dat zyns gelyk in vaardigheid van orderneeren, in rykheid van veranderingen in de Etskonst gehad heeft waar van het oneindig getal van Boektytels en andere Printen getuygenis geven.'

58 Gerard de Lairesse, cited in N. L. Bartelings, '"Hier toont voor 't oog het tijtelblad den inhout in het boek vervat". De rol van de titelprent in Frans van Mieris' Histori der Nederlandsche vorsten', in *'Tweelinge eener dragt'. Woord en beeld in de Nederlanden (150-1750)*, eds K. Bostoen, E. Kolfin and P. J. Smith (Hilversum: Verloren, 2001), 243-260: 253. E.O.G. Haitsma Mulier, 'Woord en beeld: titelprenten van enkele Neerlandse historische werken uit de 17e en 18e eeuw,' *Holland, regionaal-historisch tijdschrift* 26 (1994): 274-291 there 276.

59 Coppens, *Een Ars moriendi*, 63.

Hieroglyphs in Western esotericism, the influence of Athanasius Kircher
Whereas the frontispieces for the *Hollandse Mercurius* predominantly concerned political issues, the topic of *Hieroglyphica* – religion, including its abuse and reformation – bore an intrinsic relation to the *hermetic* senses that were ascribed to the Egyptian hieroglyphs. Though hieroglyphs in art and literature were generally viewed as indistinguishable from 'symbols' – interchangeable with terms like 'emblem', 'device' and 'enigma' – the metaphysical value of the signs was kept alive in neoplatonic circles.[60] Mystic philosophers – inspired by the writings of Plotinus and Plutarch – were well connected to several currents of spiritualised mysticism and were interested in the occult sciences. These occult sciences were also believed to be closely linked to ancient Egypt, where they had originated in the explorations of the mysterious Egyptian teacher Hermes Trismegistus. This Hermes, a figure who exerted a great imaginative appeal, had prompted many different ideas and visions concerning his character since antiquity. Most important to our subject was the belief that he was the one who bequeathed the script, sciences and culture to the people.[61] He did not, however, deliver his teachings in the usual script; rather he was reported to have written 'the magic words which created the world' down in hieroglyphs.[62] In this realm of the occult sciences, which included astrology, alchemy and Kabbalah, hieroglyphs were important in two ways. On the one hand, there was the idea that hieroglyphs represented the original language and would allow one access to the real essence of things and to the first, true religion.[63] On the other hand, although related to the first idea, there were the attempts to create a universal language, which later became the goal of many other seventeenth-century thinkers.[64]

Although many thinkers and writers like the Rosicrucians, Nicolas Flamel, John Dee and Jacob Boehme were affiliated with these occult sciences, here the figure of the Jesuit scholar Athanasius Kircher in particular should be mentioned. De Hooghe definitely knew his books (in any case widely known in the Republic) because he produced the frontispiece for one of them: *Latium, Id est, nova et parallela Latii tum veteris tum novi descriptio…* (1671).[65] Kircher deserves attention here because he studied both the religions of the ancient Egyptians and their script. A scholar who was

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60   Iversen, *The Myth of Egypt*, 80.
61   Roelof van den Broek and G. Quispel, *Corpus Hermeticum* (Amsterdam: In de Pelikaan, 1991), 13-25.
62   Dieckmann, *Hieroglyphics*, 18-21.
63   Jan Snoek, 'Rationeel en irrationeel: over de bloei van esoterie in de achttiende eeuw,' *De Achttiende Eeuw* 32 (2000): 131-144 there 135.
64   Dieckmann, *Hieroglyphics*, 64.
65   Athanasius Kircher, *Latium. Id est, nova & parallela Latii tum veteris tum novi description* (Amsterdam: J. Janssonium and the heirs of E. Weyerstraet, 1671).

proficient in many languages, Kircher wrote about Egyptology, music, magnetism and comparative religion but was also steeped in hermetic Christian traditions.[66] He was obsessed with deciphering hieroglyphs and researched them endlessly, explaining his findings in several books of which *Aedipus Aegyptiacus* and *Obeliskus Pamphilius* are the best known. In this treatment of hieroglyphs Kircher made use of all the classical sources that were then considered to be 'ancient theology', amongst them the book of Enoch, the writings of Zoroaster, Hermes Trismegistus, Plato and the Hebrew Kabbalah. In his approach to hieroglyphics Kircher held on to the metaphysical view that the script was the 'bearer of hermetic, sacred wisdom'.[67]

Kircher's work highlights the compatibility of science and esoteric trends, rational and irrational views, in the early modern period.[68] Shifting the focus from Horapollo to archeological findings like the Egyptian 'Isaic Table' (or Bembine table), Kircher also contributed to the development of a more scholarly, antiquarian, approach towards hieroglyphics.[69] This antiquarian style was representative of the seventeenth century, in which scholars relentlessly discussed archeological findings old and new, be they in collections of curiosities or in circulating images included in letters distributed within the republic of letters.[70] The images in Kircher's works proved an inspiration for De Hooghe, who imitated several of them. Amongst others we find a Canoptic Jar, a Mesite (mediator) god and the Diana of Ephesus (which Kircher also depicted in his *D'onderaardse Wereld*),[71]

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66 Jocelyn Godwyn, *Athanasius Kircher's Theatre of the World* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2009), 13, 14.

67 Although Jocelyn Godwyn claims that Athanasius Kircher 'did not belong to any of the esoteric currents represented by the these people' (by 'these people' meaning the 'Flamels and Boehme's'), he was surely influenced by the classical metaphysical and hermetical approach to the hieroglyphs. Idem, 182.

68 Snoek*, Rationeel en irrationeel*, 136. 138.

69 See Curran, *The Egyptian Renaissance*, 231–233; Stolzenberg, *Oedipus*, 149, 150.

70 At the beginning of the 18th century, when instead of mysterious hieroglyphic enigmas (Egyptian) archeology became the new subject of interest, art soon followed. Ancient archeological statues and objects were ubiquitous in the imagery of paintings and prints, a development linked to an ever increasing enthusiasm for antiquarian research finding its way to learned treatises, collections of curiosities, and works of art. Sphinxes, obelisks, pyramids and hieroglyphical inscriptions were pervasive in works of art. Romeyn de Hooghe's *Hieroglyphica*, according to Eric Iversen, is one of the first examples of this interplay between art and archeology: De Hooghe depicted archeological *realia* in his images, such as 'the sacrificial priest' and the so-called water-canopus, statues in the water. Iversen, *The Myth of Egypt*, 111. Iversen mentions that the statue of 'the sacrificial priest belongs to the collection of the Louvre now' but does not specify the statue.

71 Athanasius Kircher, *Oedipus Aegyptiana*, 190, 590.
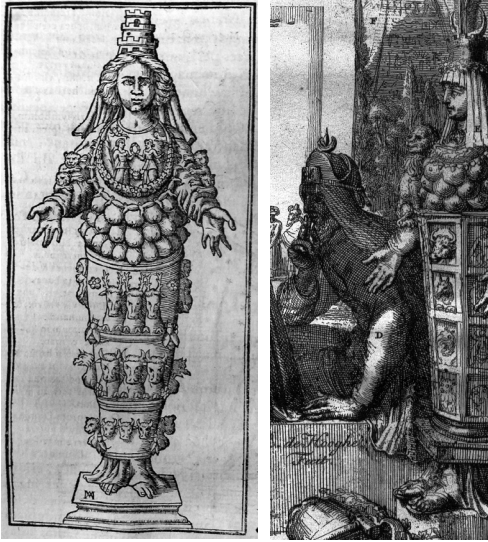
Fig. 18. Diana of Ephesus as depicted in Athanasius Kircher's *Oedipus Aegyptiacus,* vol 1 (1652-1654) p. 190

Fig. 19. De Hooghe, Diana of Ephesus and Harpocrates, detail from Plate 1

Fig. 20. De Hooghe, Plate 3 ᴠᴀɴ ᴅᴇ ᴏᴘ-ᴇɴ ᴅᴏᴏʀɢᴀɴɢ ᴅᴇʀ ᴍᴇʀᴋʙᴇᴇʟᴅᴇɴ [On the Beginning and Continuation of Hieroglyphs]
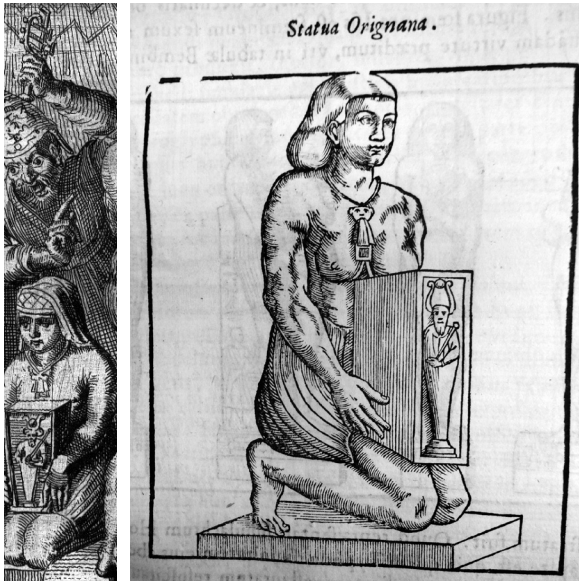
Fig. 21. De Hooghe, Mezite, detail from Plate 3
Fig. 22. Mesite statue in Kircher, *Oedipus Aegyptiacus*, vol. III, 497
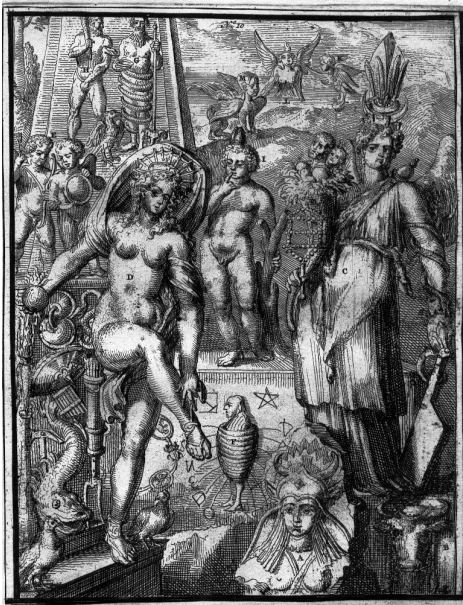
Fig. 23. De Hooghe, Plate 10 Eerste Vervolg van Hemel en Aarde [First Sequel on Heaven and Earth]
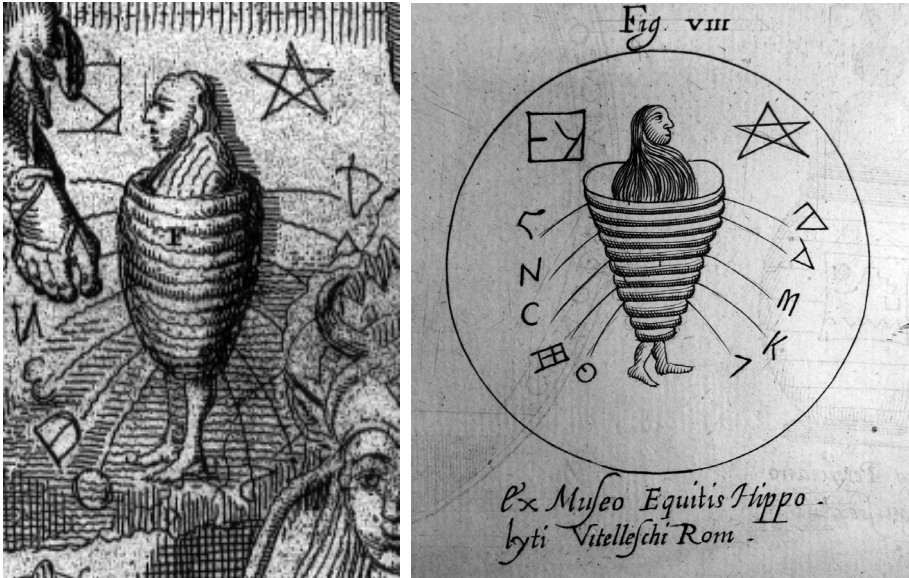
Fig. 24. De Hooghe, Canoptic Jar, detail from Plate 10
Fig. 25. Illustration of canoptic jar from Kircher *Aedipus Aegyptiacus*, vol III, after page 344

These images of antiquarian objects are incorporated into De Hooghe's allegorical etchings, accompanied by quite descriptive legends. De Hooghe vaguely refers to coins and statues which have been found and on which his images are based. More likely, however, De Hooghe took his images from Kircher's books but then, rather than mentioning Kircher as his source, presented his antiquarian material as if he had seen it all himself. Moreover, De Hooghe mingles elements from different (parts of) sources within his own adaptation. One such collage-image occurs in *Hieroglyphica*'s chapter 9, referred to as Yunx or Wise Mind. Here we see an image based on the famous *Mensa Isiaca* or Bembine Table. It could be that De Hooghe saw the table represented in circulating engraved depictions of it, but he could also have used Kircher's copy of the engravings which was included in *Oedipus Aegyptiacus*. Instead of copying the image precisely, De Hooghe seems only to have been inspired by it, re-working the Isaic Isis into his idea of a supreme goddess-image which is venerated across time and place but is based on an Egyptian example. De Hooghe's debt to Kircher becomes clear from the signs he placed on top of the canopy over the throne reading 'ΦVΛO'. These signs he had probably seen in other images made by Kircher (fig. 29). Kircher took these letters from a small detail in the Bembine Table, believing that they corresponded with the Greek word 'Φγλo', Phylo, meaning 'Love'. Kircher saw all kinds of symbolism in the separate and symbolised letters ΦVΛO, inserting and describing them in two of his books, *Prodromus Coptus*, and *Oedipus Ægyptiacus*.

De Hooghe – again without mentioning Kircher – used this word as a title above a representation of the supreme goddess, full of wisdom and knowledge, on which all gods were based.[72] De Hooghe 'translates' the word as 'love and communion' [Liefde en Vereeniging] but does not go into his reason for incorporating it into the image. To a certain extent we might glean something here about how De Hooghe's thought a supreme god should be described; we will return to this point later in this thesis.[73]

Fig. 26. Egyptian goddess Isis, detail from the *Mensa Isiaca*
Fig. 27. De Hooghe, Yunx, detail from Plate 9

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72   The letters ΦVΛΟ return several times in Kircher's *Prodomus Coptus*, 251 – 253, 270, and in his *Œdipus Ægyptiacus, 112*; cf. also Neil Mann, 'George Yeats and Athanasius Kircher' in *Yeats Annual* 16, ed W. Gould (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 163–193.
73   De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 107. See also chapter 3.6 and 7.6 below.
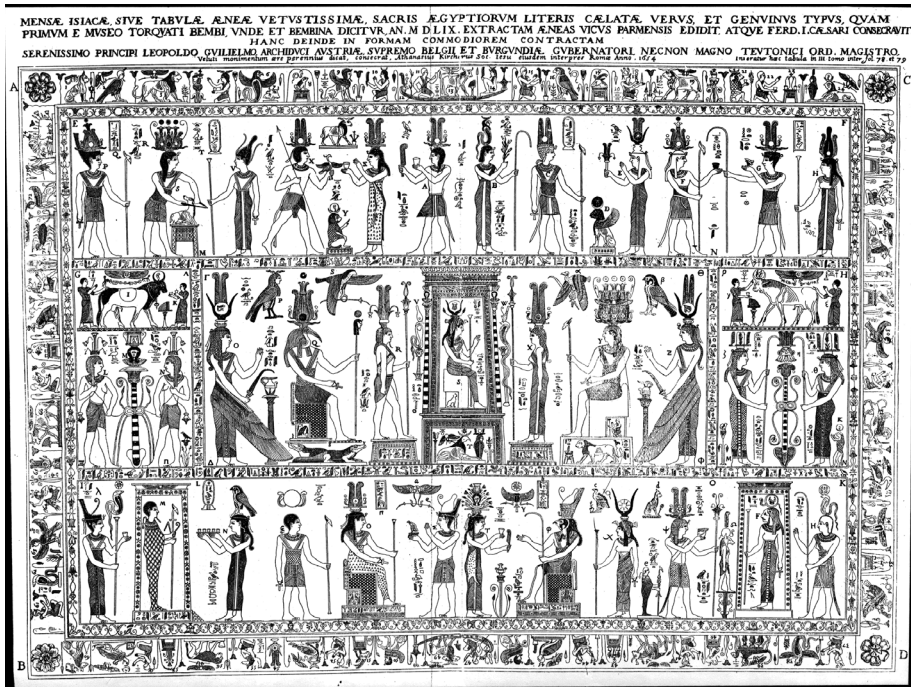
Fig. 28. *Mensa Isiaca* or Bembine Table

Fig. 29. Scarab holding tablet with engravings from Kircher's *Oedipus Aegyptiacus,* vol 1, p 415, copied from a detail of *Mensa Isiaca*

The Emblematic worldview and emblematic theology

Just as Kircher's interest in Egypt was connected to many other fields of interest, Egyptophilia, which in first instance focused on the hidden meaning of Egyptian hieroglyphs, broadened its scope and become what Ashworth has called an 'emblematic worldview'. The essence of such a view of the world is the belief that every kind of thing in the cosmos has myriad hidden meanings and that knowledge consists of an attempt to comprehend as many of these as possible. Thus natural phenomena were seen as signs of a spiritual supernatural order. All sorts of resources were used in this exercise, including 'hieroglyphics', 'antique coins and renaissance medals' 'Aesopic fables', 'classical mythology', 'adages and epigrams' and 'emblems and devices'. For example, Konrad Gesner (1516-1565), in his zoological encyclopedia *History of Animals*, includes an exhaustive study of the signs and symbols associated with the animals under discussion because he 'believed that to know the peacock [or any other thing] you must know its associations'.[74] Within this realm, as in the esoteric field, the connection between heaven and earth played an important part. The earth, a Book of Nature written by God himself, could be deciphered in order to gain a deep and profound knowledge of the Divine. The Book of Nature idea also featured in mainstream Christianity, and thus Christian theologians were not hostile towards an emblematic, symbolic worldview.[75]

Although the rise of the emblematic interpretation of the world seemed at first to correspond with the orientation of Protestant Reformation, it would be that same Reformation that would set up the conditions for its downfall. As Peter Harrison discusses in his work *The Bible, Protestantism, and the Rise of Natural Science*: 'The demise of allegory [...] was due largely to the efforts of Protestant reformers, who in their search for an unambiguous religious authority, insisted that the book of scripture be interpreted only in its literal, historical sense'. This search for an unambiguous authority worked its way into all forms of knowledge both sacred and secular, and was the start of a process that would mean the end of the emblematic worldview. Yet in De Hooghe's time, despite this Protestant hesitation towards allegorical exegesis, many theologians practiced exegesis based on an emblematic worldview. The notion of mysterious hieroglyphs and symbolic emblems resonates strongly in the theology of the era, evident from many examples of 'hieroglyphical'

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74 William B. Ashworth, Jr. "Natural history and the emblematic world view", in *Reappraisals of the Scientific Revolution*, ed. David C. Lindberg, Robert S. Westman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 303-325. See also several contribution to James E. Force and Richard H. Popkin, eds, *Newton and religion. Context, Nature, and Influence* (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1999).

75 See Eric Jorink, *Het 'Boeck der Natuere'. Nederlandse geleerden en de wonderen van Gods schepping 1575-1715* (Leiden: Primavera Press, 2006) and chapter 3 below.

Bible exegesis.[76] These books, in their search for complete and correct understanding, addressed the multiple layers of meaning hidden in biblical texts.[77]

Similar to the emblematics of Cats, where moralistic truths were excavated from all kinds of ordinary things, theologians revealed the hidden spiritual truths in ostensibly everyday phenomena from the Bible (such as eagles, letters or pine trees), infusing them with a sacred meaning. Seminal work in this respect was done by the French Protestant orientalist and minister of Caen, Samuel Bochart (1599-1667), in his books on sacred geography and sacred zoology.[78] Such a sacralisation of biblical language had been advocated by Johannes Coccejus (1603-1669), professor of theology, first in Franeker and later in Leiden. In the Dutch Republic a wave of lexicographical books on emblematics followed in his wake, most of them by Reformed ministers.[79] Nicolaas Lydius (†1687) worked on a *Lexicon Hieroglyphicum* but died before finishing it. Henricus Groenewegen's *Hieroglyphica or Sacred Emblems or Treasury of symbols and examples*, in which he discussed in alphabetical order several animals, stone types, people and natural phenomena, was published in 1693, an effort by the author to explain the 'spiritual allusions the Holy Spirit used in his Word', a form of exegesis he called 'emblematic theology'.[80] In a portrait of Zwingli he could even see

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76   This field has not been thoroughly researched. Most important are the articles by Willem van Asselt, Maria A. Schenkeveld- van der Dussen, and parts of Els Stronks, *Negotiating Differences. Word, Image and Religion in the Dutch Republic* (Leiden: Brill, 2001). An overview of the production of emblematic books is found in Landwehr's *Emblem and fable books printed in the Low Countries 1542-1813. A bibliography. Third revised and augmented edition* (Utrecht: HES, 1988). M.A. Schenkeveld- van der Dussen, 'Theologie en emblematiek. Het *Lexicon Hieroglyphicum Sacro-Profanum* (1722) van Martinus Koning in zijn Nederlandse context', in: *De steen van Alciato. Literatuur en visuele cultuur in de Nederlanden*, ed. Marc Van Vaeck, Hugo Brems and Geert H.M. Claassens (Leuven: Peeters, 2003).

77   The epithet 'sacred' abounded in early modern writings. Besides *historia sacra* – which plays a large part in this book – we encounter *geographica sacra* (dealing with biblical landscape) and *zoologica sacra* (dealing with biblical animals).

78   Samuel Bochart, *Geographia sacra, seu Phaleg et Canaan* (1646) and *Hierozoicon* (1663). On Bochart: Luc Daireaux, 'Au service de l'érudition. Samuel Bochart et les Provinces Unies (1599-1667),' in *Entre Calvinistes et Catholiques. Les relations religieuses entre la France et les Pays-Bas du Nord (XVIe-XVIIIe siècle)*, ed. Yves Krumenacker and Olivier Christin (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2010), 223-238; Zur Shalev, *Sacred Words and Worlds. Geography, Religion, and Scholarship, 1550-1700* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 141-203.

79   A global survey can be found in W. J. van Asselt, 'De neus van de bruid. De profetische en zinnebeeldige godgeleerdheid van Henricus Groenewegen en Iohannes D'Outrein,' in *Profetie en godsspraak in de geschiedenis van het christendom. Studies over de historische ontwikkeling van een opvallend verschijnsel*, eds, F.M.G. Broeyer and E.M.V.M. Honée (Zoetermeer: Boekencentrum, 1997), 163-184.

80   Henricus Groenewegen, *Hieroglyphica* (1693). Cited in Van Asselt, *De neus van de bruid*, 169. 'wat voor geestelyke sinspeelingen de Heilge Geest wel niet gebruikte in sijn Woord'.

the prophet Habakkuk, and in Melanchthon he descried Zefanja; an image of Jacoba van Beieren reminded him of the biblical Ruth. According to Groenewegen, 'what is depicted and what is imagined are only their spiritual image in a more concrete form'.[81] Groenewegen's work stopped at the letter F, as he paused to take up the refutation of Baltasar Bekker, and then passed away before finishing his *Hieroglyphica.* In addition, Petrus Hamer (1646-1716), a minister from Numansdorp, published his *Technologemata Sacra, Of Woorde-boek van Heilige Konstredenen [Technologemata Sacra, or dictionary of Sacred Technical Terms]* in 1699, which was followed a year later by the publication of the famous *Proefstukken der heilige sinnebeelden* [Examples of Holy Emblems] (1700), composed by his Amsterdam colleague Johannes D'Outrein (1662-1722).[82] Whereas Salomon van Til (1643-1713), professor of theology in Leiden, focussed on biblical animals in in his posthumous *Zoologia Sacra* [Sacred Zoology] (1714)[83], Antonius Driessen (1684-1748), his colleague in Groningen, looked more broadly into biblical emblems, allegories and types.[84] Lay writers also took up the genre: the diamant worker and minor poet Hendrik Graauwhart was the author of *Leerzame zinnebeelden, bestaande in christelyke bedenkingen door vergelykinge eeniger schepselen als dieren, vogels, gewassen* [Instructive Emblems, consisting of Christian meditations using Comparisons of certain creatures such as Animals, Birds and Plants], published in 1704, and its sequel *Voorbeeldelyke zedelessen* [Exemplary Moral Lessons] dates from 1709.

Such a layered interpretation of biblical elements was – again – nothing new. Since the Middle Ages theologians had read a 'fourfold sense' in scripture. This form of exegesis explicated the Bible in four 'senses': a literal sense, concerning the literal meaning of the text; an allegorical sense, pertaining to the symbolic meaning of the words; a moral sense, concerning the impetuses that should direct the moral conduct of believers; and a anagogical sense, which had to do with mystical matters such as the nature of God and eschatology. Protestant theologians rejected this form of exegesis as being too ambiguous. Yet, as Harrison demonstrates, the genre of emblematic theology survived within Protestantism in practice.[85] It even eperienced a revival in

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81 Piet Visser, *Broeders in de geest. De doopsgezinde bijdragen van Dierick en Jan Philipsz. Schabaelje tot de Nederlandse stichtelijke literatuur in de zeventiende eeuw* (Deventer: Sub Rosa, 1988), 373, 424: 'afgebeelde én verbeelde zijn slechts concretiseringen van hun geestelijke beeld'.

82 D'Outrein, *Proefstukken* 166; H. De Jong, *Johannes d'Outrein (1662-1722) en zijn emblematische schriftuitleg* (Kampen: Brevier Uitgeverij, 2013), 87.

83 Salomon van Til, *Commentarius de tabernaculo Mosis: ad Exod. 25 - 30 et zoologia sacra* (Dordrecht: H. van der Wall, 1714).

84 Antonius Driessen, *Diatribe de principiis et legibus theologiae emblematicae, allegoricae, typicae et propheticae* (Utrecht: G. van de Water, 1717).

85 Peter Harrison, *The Bible, Protestantism and the Rise of Natural Science* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

the Dutch Republic among Cocceian theologians. However, instead of explaining a text in the customary fourfold sense, they began at the other end, as it were, delving with the help of humanist philology into all the possible shades of meanings of words and textual passages, then explaining the text accordingly – respecting the bounds of Reformed orthodoxy.[86] As Jitse van der Meer and Scott Mandelbrote have pointed out, allegory in this way survived by means of a shifting of categories. Protestants preferred the emblematic approach, with its focus on an original divine meaning, to fourfold interpretation, which was – in Protestant eyes – more subjective.[87]

Most of these emblematic and hieroglyphic works lacked images. Els Stronks has convincingly argued that such a void was due to the Calvinist aversion towards images as conveyers of religious truths, especially when these touched upon the 'mysteries of the faith'.[88] In the eighteenth century, however, the use of images gained acceptance. In 1720 Ripa's images were added to Arnoldus Ruimig's (1668-1726) *Verklaring van de voornaamste heilige en schriftuurlyke zinbeelden, uit verscheidene Oudheden opgeheldert* (1720) [Interpretation of the most important sacred and scriptural emblems, explained from several antiquities]. In 1722 Peter Zaunslifer even adapted Ripa's *Iconologia,* 'with the intention of making Ripa's personifications serve as a means to reveal the mysteries of the faith, just as God Himself had used "zinnebeeldige vertogen" [emblematic elucidations] in the Bible'.[89] Zaunslifer complements Ripa's explanations with material from classical literature and the Bible, and hence those who wanted to create theological emblems could use his work as a handbook. Another example of an illustrated emblematic exegesis is found in the *Lexicon hieroglyphicum sacro-profanum* [Lexicon of Sacred and Secular Emblems] (1722) by the Dutch Reformed minister Martinus Koning (1662-1732). Again the illustrations drew heavily on Ripa's *Iconologia,* although Koning's illustrations are quite different from Zaunslifer's. The latter follows Ripa's example of discussing every emblem in isolation, whereas Koning, like De Hooghe, includes Ripa's images

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86   Willem J. van Asselt, *The Federal Theology of Johannes Cocceius (1603-1669)* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 106-144.

87   Jitse M. van der Meer and Scott Mandelbrote, *Nature and Scripture in the Abrahamic religions,* 2 vols (Leiden: Brill, 2008, 2009). See also, for the diverse senses of scripture in Reformed Protestantism, Richard A. Muller, *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics. The Rise and Development of Reformed Orthodoxy, ca. 1520 to ca.1725 vol 2: Holy Scripture. The Cognitive Foundation of Theology,* 2nd edition (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2003), 487.

88   Stronks, *Negotiating Differences*, 131-135.

89   Petrus Zaunslifer, *Tafereel van overdeftige zinnebeelden, gemaelt naer de deuchden, ondeuchden, gemoetsdriften der menschen, straffen Gods en zegeningen / Eerst beschreven door Casare Ripa, Pierius Valerianus, Orus Apollo, en anderen: maer nu in meerder orde gebracht, met godtsgeleerde aenmerkingen* (Amsterdam: Gerard onder de Linden,1722) vol. **2v, quoted in Stronks, *Negotiating Differences*, 282.

within more complex classical and biblical illustrations, adorning the beginning of every section where his lexicon has reached a new letter of the alphabet.[90]

These books were all part of the wider field of emblematic theology, representing the search for deeper meaning in their effort at biblical exegesis. Their authors conducted these inquiries in a highly structured, encyclopaedic manner, discussing topics related to biblical issues in lexicographical alphabetical order. They also make use of references to their sources, explicating whose writing or opinion they have admitted into their lemmas. That is where De Hooghe's *Hieroglyphica* differs, as his book is ordered not along lexicographical but along historical lines. Nevertheless, the emblematic worldview is still present in *Hieroglyphica*, foregrounding the deeper and symbolic meanings of animals, plants, fruits, signs and symbols.

2.3 Religious history and mythography

De Hooghe not only dealt with allegorical hieroglyphs or emblems but also, as his book's title indicates, also offered an account of the history of religion. That De Hooghe did so in an allegorical form was not his innovation; we have already seen that he was quite familiar with the genre of the frontispiece. Even as he consistently captured the highlights of political history annually for *De Hollandsche Mercurius*, he developed his skills in creating religious imagery by illustrating numerous devotional works and also through his illustrations for *Alle de Voornaamste Historiën der Ouden en Nieuwen Testaments. Verbeeld in uytsteekende Konst-Platen*, accompanied by comments from the Amsterdam Lutheran minister Henricus Vos. In this book De Hooghe provided the most important biblical stories with illustrations, often combining several episodes in a single image. The publisher of this print-Bible, Jacob Lindenberg, used the same prints, and numerous additional ones by De Hooghe and others, for *'t Groot Waerelds Tafereel* (s.a., ca. 1705) [Theatre of World History, also transl. into French as *Le Grand Tableau de l'Univers*, 1714]. Elements from these images – for example Balaam's donkey (fig. 30) – are also used in *Hieroglyphica* (fig. 31).[91]

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90   Martinus Koning. *Lexicon Hieroglyphicum Sacro-Profanum, of Woordboek van Gewyde en Ongewyde Voor- en Zinnebeelden* (Dordrecht: Joannes van Braam, 1722), see further Schenkeveld-van der Dussen, 'Theologie en emblematiek. Het *Lexicon Hieroglyphicum Sacro-Profanum* (1722) van Martinus Koning in zijn Nederlandse context'.

91   Henricus Vos, *Alle de voornaamste Historien des Oudenen Nieuwen Testaments. Verbeeld in uytsteekende Konst-Platen, door den Wyd-beroemden Heer, en Mr. Romeyn de Hooghe. Met omstandige verklaring der Stoffen, en seer beknopte Punt-Digten* (Amsterdam: Jacob Lindenberg, 1703), page on Numbers 22 'Balaks aanbiedinge, en Geschenken aan Bileam.'
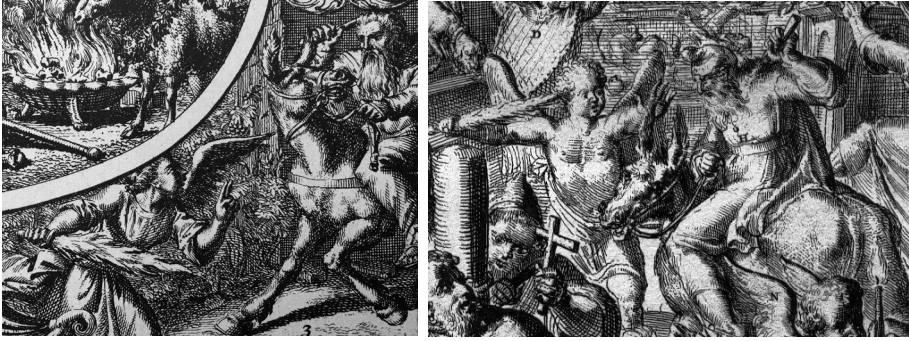
Fig. 30. De Hooghe, Ezel van Bileam [Balaam's donkey], detail from Alle de voornaamste historien
Fig. 31. De Hooghe, Ezel van Bileam [Balaam's donkey], detail from Plate 56

In *Hieroglyphica*, however, De Hooghe's history of religion broadens its scope beyond the biblical account and follows the historical model of decline, as is indicated by the second part of the title, which reads 'the progressive decline and corruption of religion through the ages'.

The view that the Christian religion was declining as history advanced was not new. Within the Christian traditions, Eusebius of Caesarea can be seen as the first Church historian, and his account already saw a decline from a desired state of apostolic purity. [92] Many accounts were issued that following his example. Church historians presented the history of religion as a history of error and of deviation from the original concept of the Apostolic Church. In their accounts, religion had historically been prone to decay, up until their own denomination was established. To avoid the accusation of 'novelty' – regarded as a bad thing – historians tried their best to prove that the new, or adapted, form of religion was in fact *not* new but a return to an earlier period. To legitimise reform, one always needed to present it as a return to the ancient, pure and true form of Christianity embodied particularly in the Apostolic Age. The need for such a restoration lay in the errors that had corrupted the old, established Church. This line of reasoning was especially popular in the Protestant era.[93] It was often combined with a type of historiography that in the modern history of ideas goes under the name of 'sacred history' but was known in De

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92 Eusebius van Caesarea, *Eusebius' Kerkgeschiedenis*, vert. Christiaan Fahner (Zoetermeer: Boekencentrum, 2000), 19; Robert, L. Wilkin, *The Myth of Christian Beginnings* (London: University of Notre Dame Press, 1979), 121-128.

93 We find examples of this ideology in the historical writings of the Dutch ministers Johannes Wtenbogaert and Jacobus Trigland, and in the better-known *History of the reformation and other church histories in and around the Netherlands* by the Dutch minister Gerard Brandt. G. Brandt, *Historie der reformatie en andere kerkelyke geschiedenissen in en omtrent de Nederlanden* (Amsterdam 1671).

Hooghe's era as the history of salvation. This type of historiography embedded the biblical histories of the first humans, the Patriarchs, the prophets and kings, Christ and his Apostles, as well as the history of the Christian Church and its expectations for a heavenly future after the end of time into a single, all-encompassing view of God's intentions for his creation. Decline had started with the Fall of Adam and Eve in Paradise, but the recreation of the elect through the Atonement of Christ shaped world history from that moment onwards. This genre of religious history received a powerful boost via the federal theology of Johannes Cocceius, and several cocceian notions can be found in *Hieroglyphica* as well. Plate and chapter 58 are entitled VAN DE ZEVEN PERIODEN [On the Seven Periods], and concern Cocceius's division of history into seven periods.[94]

Fig. 32. De Hooghe, Plate 58. Van de Zeven Perioden [On the Seven Periods]

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94 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, chapter 58. See further Van Asselt, *The Federal Theology*, 271-284 and Spaans, *A Newer Protestantism*, forthcoming.

Unlike theologians who based their salvation histories mainly on scriptural exegesis, De Hooghe paints an even wider panorama of 'the progressive decline and corruption of religion through the ages'. Including Egyptian, Roman and Greek religions as well as Judaism and Islam, he pinpoints the signs of decay – in religious abuse, schism and, above all, violence and persecution – in all of them, drawing his examples from a wide swathe of human history. History proves to be full of such examples and De Hooghe visualised many of them in different times and locations. He thereby entered the emerging field of religious history, which focussed first and foremost on the cultures of classical antiquity and the ancient Near East as an outgrowth of Renaissance humanism, but was also being fed by ethnographic knowledge that reached a reading public via travel literature, the importing of exotic collector's items from afar, and the descriptions of distant lands that had become part of the era's networks of warfare, trade, diplomacy and scholarly exchange. Occasionally De Hooghe mentions his visits to the libraries and art collections amassed by the Dutch elite, who were often avid collectors of exotic objects, and notes how some of his images are inspired by what he saw there.[95]

In this field of religious history the idea persisted that ancient wisdom contained fragments of the true religion, an idea that spurred scholars' interest in ancient pagan cultures and their religions. Biblical stories were increasingly compared to pagan stories, and Mosaic history was lined up with pagan accounts in order to get the correct understanding of biblical stories.[96] These comparisons resulted in histories of religion having different emphases. On the one hand, differences were foregrounded, especially when the schism between Protestantism and Catholicism was at the centre of the story. On the other hand, the histories going back to ancient times in general tried to search for a shared origin of true religion, which had existed since the earth's creation.[97]

What is conspicuous in De Hooghe's account of religion is his combination of religious history and stories about classical gods and mythology. The parts in *Hieroglyphica* concerning classical religions belong to the genre of mythology and mythography. Whereas mythology is the narrative system of gods and heroes from the past, mythography is the 'exegesis' that abstracts a moral or allegorical interpretation from these stories. Mythography is the rational explanation of

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95   The literature in this latter field is growing by the day. Recent overviews: Michiel van Groesen, *The Representations of the Overseas World in the De Bry Collection of Voyages (1590-1634)* (Leiden: Brill, 2008); Benjamin Schmidt, *Inventing Exoticism. Geography, Globalism, and Europe's Early Modern World* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015); Wim Klooster, *The Dutch Moment. War, Trade and Settlement in the Seventeenth Century Atlantic World* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2016).

96   Stroumsa, *A New Science*, 54.

97   See Rossi, *The Dark Abyss*.

ancient mythologies, and can be defined as the 'moralization and allegorization of classical mythology'.[98] Similar to the Christianisation of visual and literary emblems, mythographers interpreted the classical myths as allegorical stories in which Christian aspects could be found. Hercules, for example, became a god after his death, and so was seen as a type of Christ. Another telling example of mythography is the medieval interpretation of the myth of Pyramus and Thisbe. Here it was posited that this tale was actually a story about the human soul, wandering the world in search of a reunion with God or his Son. Pyramus himself is this wandering soul, the spring where he meets Thisbe is the baptismal font, the mulberry tree stands for the cross and the lion is the Devil, fleeing from the Christian attributes of cross and font. [99]

Examples of mythographies include Vincenzo Cartari's (c.1531–1569) *Magini colla sposizione degli dei degli antichi* [Images depicting the gods of the ancients] of 1556, Giglio Gregorio Giraldi's (1479 – 1552) *De deis gentium varia et multiplex historia* [The Varied and Diverse History of the Pagan Gods] (1548), as well as *Mythologiae sive explicationis fabularum libri decem* [Ten Books of Mythology or Explanations of Fables] (1567) by Natale Conti (1520–1582), and Alexander Ross's *Mystagogus Poeticus or The muses' interpreter* (1648).

De Hooghe mingles Christian, pagan, classical and mythological religious phenomena and includes mythographical explanations of his pagan myths, although they are not very elaborate or concrete. Often he starts a chapter with a mythographical interpretation, explaining pagan gods in a rational manner; in their individual descriptions that occur in the core of these chapters, he refers only sporadically to a Christian meaning in the stories or phenomena he is presenting. Nevertheless, visually he connects ancient myths and Christian stories: De Hooghe juxtaposed images of pagan gods with allegorical Christian representations. Such a combination of biblical history and ancient pagan gods and stories was not common. How this mingling influenced De Hooghe's religious history will be discussed in chapter 5.

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98   Jane Change, *Medieval Mythography. From Roman North Africa to the school of Chartres, A.D. 433-1177* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1994), 1,2.

99   Curran, *Egyptian Renaissance*, 264 ; M.D. Henkel, 'Nederlandse Ovidius-illustraties van de 15ᵉ tot de 18ᵉ eeuw', *Oud Holland 39* (1921): 149-187 there 155,156.

2.4 The people behind the book: author, editor and publisher

After a discussion of the genre of the book, this part of the chapter will deal with the people behind the book. The central person behind *Hieroglyphica* is of course Romeyn de Hooghe himself. As there much biographical information is already available I will provide only a short summary here, and in specific cases refer to other books and articles.[100]

Romeyn de Hooghe was born in Amsterdam, the son of the buttonmaker Romeyn de Hooghe sr. (b. 1620) and his wife Susanne Gerarts (b. probably 1616), who had their child baptised on 10 September 1645. De Hooghe would become one of the most important etchers of the late seventeenth century. His corpus consisted mostly of prints, which was his main endeavor; current researchers estimate that De Hooghe made more than 4300 etchings in what was indeed an extremely productive career of more than forty years.[101]

Little is known about De Hooghe's education. There is only the barely substantiated idea that he attended the Latin school of Franciscus van den Enden, a known libertine. We don't even know where he was apprenticed. The Haarlem artist Nicolaas Berchem may have been his teacher, because De Hooghe's first etchings are in Berchem's style.[102] De Hooghe's career had an early start: in 1667, at the age of 22, he illustrated Constantijn Huygens's *De Zee-straat van 's Graven-hage op Schevening*.[103] A year later De Hooghe went to Paris, where he probably stayed for a year. Back in Amsterdam, De Hooghe's star rose fast: he illustrated several books, was recommended by Samuel van Hoogstraten, and worked for an elite circle. Several images were commissioned by the Jewish Da Costa family and as a result of his work for the Polish king De Hooghe received a title of Polish nobility. Moreover, De Hooghe worked as a propagandist and political agent for William III and became supervisor of William's stone quarry.[104] In 1673 De Hooghe married Maria Lansman

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100 For more background information and details about certain episodes in the life of the artist I refer in first instance to Henk van Nierop, Ellen Grabowsky, Anouk Janssen, Huigen Leeflang, Garrelt Verhoeven, eds, *Romeyn de Hooghe. De verbeelding van de late Gouden Eeuw* (Zwolle: Waanders, 2008), esp. chapter 2. See also M.J.C. Otten, 'Biografie van Romeyn de Hooghe,' *De Boekenwereld* 1 (1988): 21-34, and Van Nierop, *The life of Romeyn de Hooghe.*

101 Henk van Nierop*, '*Inleiding: een venster op de late Gouden Eeuw', in: Van Nierop et al., *Romeyn de Hooghe. De verbeelding van de late Gouden Eeuw* (Zwolle: Waanders, 2008), 8-11, there p. 8.

102 Anna de Haas, 'Commissaris van zijne Majesteit en mikpunt van faamrovende paskwillen. Een biografische schets' in: *Romeyn de Hooghe. De verbeelding van de late Gouden Eeuw,* ed. Henk van Nierop, Ellen Grabowsky, Anouk Janssen, Huigen Leeflang, Garrelt Verhoeven (Zwolle: Waanders, 2008); 12-27, there p. 12.

103 Constantijn Huygens, *De Zee-straat van 's Graven-hage op Schevening* (The Hague, 1667).

104 On the stone quarry see B.C. Sliggers, 'Romeyn de Hooghe, Lingen, Het Loo en Haarlem,' *De Boekenwereld* 1 (1988): 43-50.

(1649-1718), daughter of the minister Andreas Lansman (1624 – 1666) and Anna Mitz. The couple's only child, a daughter named Maria Romana, was baptised on 14 March 1674. The De Hooghes lived in Amsterdam, where Romeyn had an art shop in 'Den Wackeren Hond' [The Dapper Dog] on Dam square.

Although De Hooghe's career flourished, his reputation was damaged by several accusations of ungodliness and immoral behaviour. Jacob Campo Weyerman deemed De Hooghe a 'Whore painter' and an atheist.[105] In the late 1670s De Hooghe was accused of producing pornographic engravings for a pornographic novel *De dwalende hoer* (1678). The government, in its efforts to determine who had been responsible for this scandalous production, found no conclusive proof that De Hooghe had been involved. Subsequently, in 1681, a little book called *Het wonderlijk leeven van 't Boullonois hondtie* was issued. The book contained stories of the dog about his different owners, including De Hooghe, who was supposedly a thief and was so greedy that he even prostituted his wife.[106] All this cast doubts on De Hooghe's civic and religious probity. When De Hooghe in 1682 left Amsterdam for the nearby city of Haarlem, the consistory of the Reformed church, in which he was a full member, refused to give him the required attestation of good standing within the congregation because of his reputation as a 'mocker of God and his word'. Eventually De Hooghe was granted the attestation, if only in 1687, for nobody wanted to testify to De Hooghe's alleged misbehaviour. In Haarlem he became a member of the Walloon church.

In the meantime, De Hooghe kept producing numerous engravings and started a drawing school in Haarlem.[107] Simultaneously, he found his way amongst the elite: he became a landowner in the province of Zeeland, was friendly with the rich and well-connected, anti-Orangist regent Pieter de Graeff, obtained minor regent offices himself in Haarlem, and earned a degree in law in Harderwijk.[108] This ascent upon the social ladder also had its disadvantages, as became clear in the pamphlet war of the 1690s, the result of a power struggle between the city of Amsterdam and William III. Between 1688 and 1690 De Hooghe produced more than twenty satirical Orangist etchings, favoring William III and mocking the

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105 J.C. Weyerman, *De levens-beschryvingen der Nederlandsche konst-schilders en konst-schilderessen*, I (The Hague: wed. E. Boucquet, 1729), 93, 127.

106 See Inger Leemans, 'De viceroy van de hel: radicaal libertinisme' in: H. van Nierop et al., eds, *Romeyn de Hooghe. De verbeelding van de late Gouden Eeuw* (Zwolle: Waanders, 2008), 32-47; A. de Haas, 'Feit en fictie rond de 'Aretijnse' prenten van Romeyn de Hooghe (1645-1708),' *Mededelingen van de Stichting Jacob Campo Weyerman* 28 (2005): 104-113.

107 Paul Knolle, 'Een goede kunstwerkplaats. De Haarlemse tekenschool', in: *Romeyn de Hooghe. De verbeelding van de late Gouden Eeuw*, ed. H. van Nierop et al. (Zwolle: Waanders, 2008), 184-189.

108 De Haas, *Commissaris van zijne Majesteit,* 14, 16, 17.

Amsterdam magistracy's pro-French attitude.[109] In turn, De Hooghe became the target of the Amsterdam propagandists, who in vile pamphlets accused him, again, of blasphemy, theft and the production of pornographic etchings.[110]

De Hooghe was defended by Ericus Walten (1663-1679), who accused his opponents of bribing and intimidating witnesses into presenting false testimonies.[111] The publication of a 'Memorie van Rechten' [a written account of the position of one party in a legal process] by by the Haarlem chief prosecutor Adriaan Bakker, was meant to get De Hooghe arrested. The Orangist Haarlem burgomasters intervened, however, and prevented his incarceration. Subsequently, De Hooghe made several unsuccessful attempts to get this pamphlet censored as a libel and clear his name.

The question whether the rumours about De Hooghe's 'ungodliness' were grounded in fact seems important to the analysis of *Hieroglyphica*, a religious book. The answer, however, remains uncertain. According to Inger Leemans, accusations of De Hooghe's involvement in the production of pornographic books and of atheism make sense to some extent, but the supporting evidence is circumstantial. Moreover, many of the accusations of ungodliness, the mockery of the Bible and bad behaviour stem from the 1690s, at exactly the peak of the slander campaign against De Hooghe. It is highly probable that in this political context De Hooghe was targeted in order to indirectly attack William III.[112]

In his personal life, De Hooghe faced problems with his teenage daughter Maria Romana. De Hooghe hadarranged for his daughter to marry Gaspart Frederik Hennigh, the secretary of Hans Willem Bentinck, earl of Portland and confidant of William III. However, in 1692, at the age of 18, Maria Romana ran away from home with Cornelis van der Gon, a widower from the neighborhood. De Hooghe, furious, employed every available stratagem to get his daughter back and prevent a marriage with Van der Gon. Eventually, De Hooghe got his way: on 22 August 1694 Maria Romana married Hennigh. Tragically, however, she died four months later in London.[113]

During his stay in Haarlem, where he lived as a prosperous burgher and a respected official with an academic degree in law, he wrote two learned and voluminous books. *Spiegel van Staat*, a two-volume chorography of the Dutch Republic, was published

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109 Meredith Hale, *Romeyn de Hooghe and the birth of political satire* (PhD thesis, Columbia University, 2006). See also Frank Daudeij's forthcoming thesis on De Hooghe's *Spiegel van Staat*.

110 See Inger Leemans*, De viceroy van de hel: radicaal libertinisme*, 32-47.

111 Ericus Walten, *Nieuw oproer op Parnassus. Zijnde een verhael van de valsche getuygen, die den advocaet Niclaes Muys van Holy [...] heeft geworven[...] om te getuygen teegen Romein de Hooge.* See De Haas, *Commissaris van zijne Majesteit,* 18, 19.

112 Inger Leemans, *De viceroy van de hel. Radicaal libertinisme*. Especially 35-39.

113 On Van der Gon and Maria Romana de Hooghe see Anna de Haas, *Wie De Wereld Bestiert, Weet Ik Niet. Het Rusteloze Leven Van Cornelis Van Der Gon, Dichter En Zeekapitein 1660-1731* (Amsterdam: Balans, 2008).

in 1706-1707. Renowned all over Europe as an authoritative compendium of Dutch history and the political system of the Republic, it was read throughout the eighteenth century.[114] The second book was *Hieroglyphica*, which would not be published until 1735. In 1708 Romeyn de Hooghe died a rich man, leaving an impressive estate to his wife, Maria Lansman. Her last will (dated February 1717) can be found in the archives of the city of Haarlem, where she died.[115] Here we find the riches of the De Hooghe's inventoried, including some substantial land holdings in Haarlem and two townhouses on the Geldeloze Pad and the Nieuwe Gracht. Apart from the provision that Maria's gardener, Engel Jacobse, could continue to rent the house he lived in, the will remains very general. Maria appointed her sister Helena Lansman as her universal heir, rendering a detailed inventory redundant. (She does, however, specifically exclude Helena's ex-husband from receiving anything or having any say in her sister's inheritance.) Any information about De Hooghe's professional belongings, such as the huge pile of sixty-three *Hieroglyphica* copperplates, is lacking. We know that they were carefully kept, by do not know by whom. De Hooghe's own will has not been preserved, but his sole relative was his wife, so most likely all of his belongings, including the inventory of his workplace and the school, went to her and then to her sister. Neither Maria nor her sister were actively involved in the publishing business, as were the widows of certain other printmakers who continued their late husbands' enterprises. It would have made sense to Maria Lansman to sell off De Hooghe's professional belongings, such as copperplates or instruments, to one of his pupils or colleagues as soon as possible.

The copperplates and the manuscript for *Hieroglyphica* were apparently kept together in the hands of unknown admirers of its contents, who for a long time unsuccessfully tried to get it published. Eventually Henricus Arnoldus Westerhovius (ca. 1677-1737/1738), a candidate for the ministry and the rector of the Latin School in Gouda, was willing to prepare the text for publication. In the words of Westerhovius's own introduction to *Hieroglyphica*:

> Two Amsterdam Friends, visiting me in the previous year 1734, offered me the handwritten manuscripts of Romeyn de Hooghe, and asked me [whether] I wanted to edit it and prepare it for publication. I let them convince me; although they confessed that the work had circulated among different people in order to edit it, without getting closer to the goal of publication.[116]

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114 See Frank Daudeij's forthcoming thesis on De Hooghe's *Spiegel van Staat*.

115 Maria Lansman recorded her will with the notary Melchior van Cleynenbergh. See Noord Hollands Archief, toegang 1617 (Oud Notarieel Archief), inv. nr. 696

116 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, voorrede.

Henricus Westerhovius published widely in classical literature and history, and apparently the project appealed to him. Given Westerhovius' interests he was the right man for editing *Hieroglyphica*, but little is known of how or by whom Westerhovius was asked to take on the project. Landwehr mentions that Westerhovius had been a friend of De Hooghe, but there is little evidence supporting this assertion and Westerhovius's tone in the introduction does not suggest that there was indeed any acquaintance, let alone friendship between him and the artist.[117]

An interesting question, of course, is the extent to which the book was edited. This is important for the matter of authorship: if Westerhovius changed the text profoundly, Romeyn de Hooghe's authorship becomes problematic. Thanks to Anna de Haas, who was so kind to point me to a handwritten manuscript of seven chapters of *Hieroglyphica*, it is possible to shed more light on this issue. The handwriting could not be attributed for certain to Romeyn de Hooghe, as it is in roman, while the handwritten letters that are known to be from De Hooghe's hand are in gothic.[118] The manuscript could be in De Hooghe's handwriting, but the text could also have been prepared for the press by one of his assistants or pupils. Westerhovius's introduction suggests that the text he received from the mysterious 'Friends' was handwritten by De Hooghe.[119]

Comparing the handwritten text in the Haarlem municipal archive to the published book, it turns out that Westerhovius did indeed make emendations to the text that accompanies De Hooghe's images, but these changes were not very numerous, and weremarginal. Westerhovius mainly 'polished' the language, replacing one word with another: after almost twenty years, perhaps he was inclined to substitute a word that had become more fashionable, as for example when 'uitleg' (explanation) is replaced with 'verklaring' (clarification). Westerhovius's main contribution to *Hieroglyphica* was found in some additional elaborations on specific antiquarian themes, but in general his emendation do not seem to interfere with the original text, which follows the (allegorical) explanation of the images.

What could have drawn Westerhovius to *Hieroglyphica*? His background is relatively well known. Westerhovius was born in Hamm (Westfalen, Germany) and came from a well to do family. Like many Germans, he studied theology in the Dutch Republic (Leiden), after which he became court preacher at the court of Philippus van Hessen in Kassel. After the death of Phillipus van Hessen he worked temporarily as an assistant preacher in The Hague, but apparently did not seek ordination and a regular ministry in the Reformed Church. In The Hague

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117 John Landwehr, *Romeyn de Hooghe (1645-1708) as book illustrator. A bibliography* (Amsterdam: VanGendt, 1970), 231.

118 Henk van Nierop was so kind as to help me with the issue of the handwriting.

119 Noord-Hollands Archief: 187 E2 and 187 E3.

Westerhovius married Adriana de Rouw, with whom he had six children, four of which survived childhood. The oldest son studied law, the second medicine and the third, Johannes Henricus, took up theology, studying with the Reformed theologian Joan van den Honert (1693-1758) and becoming a minister. In 1711 Westerhovius declined an offer to become a minister of the Reformed church in Leerdam, and instead became principal of the Latin School in Gouda. He continued in this office until his death in 1737, but that did not keep him from working as a scholar, critic and translator.[120]

Not everyone was pleased with Westerhovius's intellectual activities. According to Lodewijk Kesper, Westerhovius' scholarly work hindered the performance of his duties as head of the Latin school. The school fell into decline and the number of pupils decreased; order and discipline were lacking. Several times the curators of the school asked Westerhovius to be present at school more often, and eventually they even threatened to cut his salary until order and discipline were reinstated. Understandably, he was esteemed not for his competence as rector but rather for his role in the scholarly environment.[121]

Westerhovius's most famous work was probably an edition of *Terentius*, first published in 1726, which remained popular throughout the 18th century. He also contributed to encyclopedias and dictionaries such as the *Algemeen kunstwoordenboek der wetenschappen* and the *Groot Algemeen historisch, geographisch, genealogisch en oordeelkundig woordenboek.* Westerhovius assumed a place in a network of scholars working in the broad fields of history (specifically antiquity) philology, theology and language, and he corresponded with scholars such as the classicists Petrus Burman (1668-1741) and Carl Andreas Duker (1670-1752), both professor in Leiden, and the theologian Jean Le Clerc (1657-1736).[122] Apart from the edition of *Hieroglyphica*, his only other work that might indicate his religious preferences is a translation in 1728 of a Latin defense of the synod of Dordrecht against the claims published by the German Lutheran church historian Johann Lorenz von Mosheim (1693-1755), stating that the Dutch had all succumbed to Arminianism and that a reunion between Lutherans and the Reformed was desirable and possible. Mosheim's publications caused indignation among the Reformed classes and synods. Joan van den Honert (1693-1758), a Cocceian professor of theology in Leiden,

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120 Paul H.A.M. Abels, 'Rector Westerhovius (1677-1738) een miskend talent,' *Tidinge* 30 (2012): 123-128; J.J. de Jong, *Met goed fatsoen, de elite in een Hollandse stad, Gouda 1700-1780* (Amsterdam: De Bataafsche Leeuw, 1985), 192.

121 L.A. Kesper and J.E.J. Geselschap, *Uit de geschiedenis van het Stedelijk Coornhert Gymnasium te Gouda* (z.p. 1974), 42.

122 H.A. Westerhovius, *Brieven van Arn. Henr. Westerhovius aan Petrus Burman* (1668-1741) (1725). Brief van Arnoldus Henricus Westerhovius aan Jean Le Clerc (1657-1736): Leiden University Library HSS-mag.: C 146.

wrote a foreword to Westerhovius' translation of Stephanus Vitus's *Apologie*.[123] All this evidence places Westerhovius firmly within a mainstream current of Reformed Protestantism, though theology never became his core enterprise.

After Westerhovius' copyediting, *Hieroglyphica* was published by the Amsterdam bookseller Joris van der Woude (†1752). One might reasonably guess that Van der Woude was one of the 'Friends' who had come to Westerhovius with the manuscript, which he had at some point bought along with the sixty-three copperplates. The latter items must have been a valuable investment, which allowed him to generate income by the publication and sale of the book. There is, however, no evidence of connections between Maria Lansman and Van der Woude or of Van der Woude and Westerhovius being friends or acquaintances.

Van der Woude is a relatively unknown figure in the Amsterdam book scene. He was registered with the booksellers guild on 17 September 1714, and is mentioned until 1739 as a bookseller on the Brakkegrond, at the corner of the Lombartsteeg.[124] Van der Woude's stocklist varied, ranging from Luther's *Servum arbitrium* to comical farce, and from pamphlets debating the 'Nijkerkse beroeringen' [Nijkerk Troubles, a controversial revival movement in 1749-1752] to Jacob Campo Weyerman's *Den Vrolyke tuchtheer* [The Merry Castigator] (1729). From the information available, none of Van der Woude's publications concerned themselves with classical antiquity or graphic art, and it is not known how he became publisher of *Hieroglyphica*. The most likely answer would be that Van der Woude got hold of the book via some acquaintance or purchased it at an auction after De Hooghe's death. However, it there were such an auction, nothing is known about it. If we believe Westerhovius's claim that the book had been in the possession of many people, it is likely that *Hieroglyphica's* copperplates and manuscript possessed one or more owners before Van der Woude.

Reception and use

The first person to officially 'receive' *Hieroglyphica* was its dedicatee, the nobleman and statesman Johan Hendrik van Wassenaer Obdam (1683-1745). The coat of arms of the Wassenaer van Obdam family is depicted on the book's dedication page, along with an enumeration of his many titles and honourable offices.

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123 Stephanus Vitus, *Apologie in dewelke het synode van Dordrecht ende het hervormd geloove worden verdedigt tegen de lasteringen*, trans H.A. Westerhovius (1728).

124 J. van Goinga van Driel, *Alom te bekomen: veranderingen in de boekdistributie in de Republiek 1720-1800* (Amsterdam: De Buitenkant, 1999), 326.
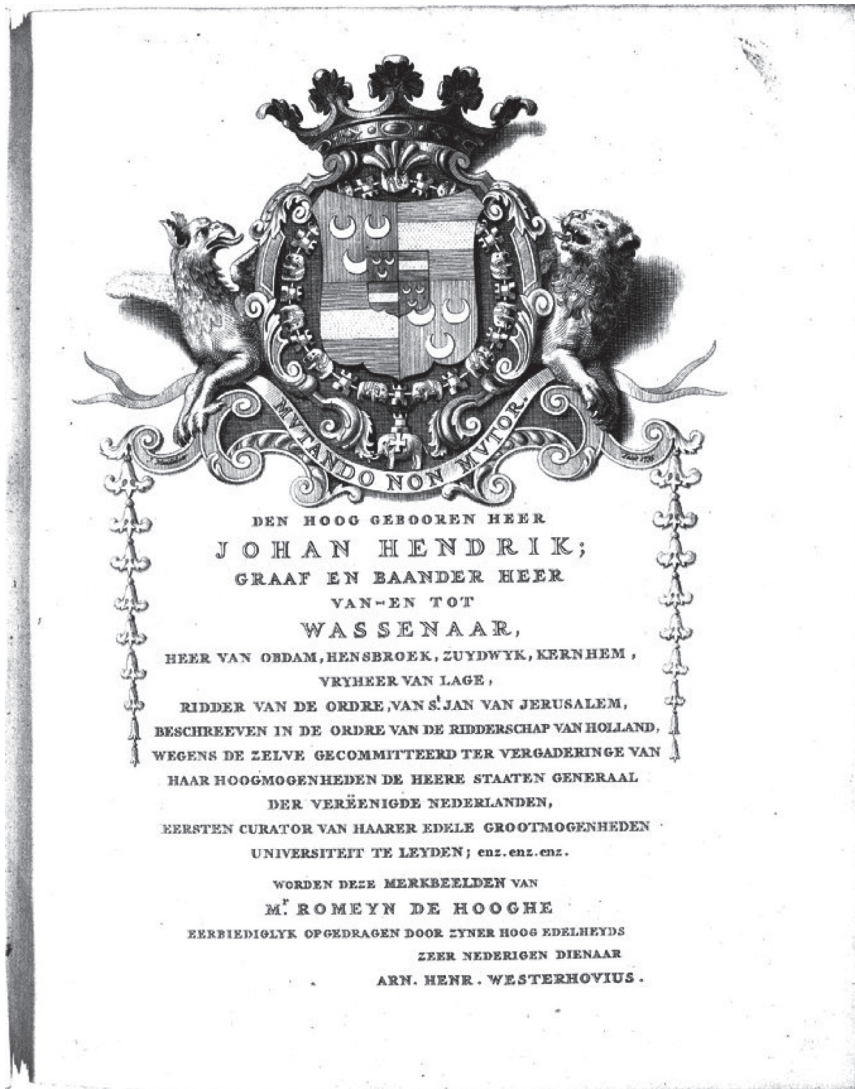
Fig. 33. *Hieroglyphica*'s dedication page.

The son of Jacob II van Wassenaer Obdam, a man who moved in the highest political circles, Johan Hendrik inherited his father's estates in The Hague, including a library containing atlases, maps, prints and illustrated books. He possessed a wide array of cultural interests, enjoying architecture and the collecting of art and antiquities. The auction catalogue of his books (1750), lists more than 1800 books, and includes especially works in the categories of sacred history, Judaism and antiquity. Given

this broad interest in classical subjects, it seems logical that Westerhovius must have known Johan Hendrik: they might have corresponded on classical or matters of Church history. *Hieroglyphica*, however, is not listed in Johan Hendrik's auction catalogue.[125] Perhaps the book was sold separately, or the heirs wanted to keep it, but the reason for its absence must remain speculative. Auction catalogues are shaky sources for the reconstruction of the content of libraries or of the reading habits and preferences of the (previous) owner of books put up for auction.[126]

Users

Reception history is one the most difficult parts of book history, and so it is with *Hieroglyphica*. Concerning De Hooghe's etchings in general, it is believed that these were 'more widely circulated than those of for instance Rembrandt'. According to the art historian Huigen Leeflang: 'De Hooghe's public was not limited to print devotees, but must have included, given his popularity as illustrator, all contemporaries who held a book now and then. News prints, illustrated calendars and even his satirical etchings were aimed at a broad public.' Nevertheless, emblem books were not necessarily all that popular, as they were generally relatively expensive.[127] In 1745 the Leiden theologian Joan van den Honert wrote that the found Ruimig's *Verklaring van de voornaamste heilige en schiftuurlyke zinnebeelden* so very helpful.[128] The *Lexicon* by Martinus Koning received good reviews in the magazine *Boekzael der Geleerde Wereld* of October 1722.[129] This indicates a readership limited to specialists who could afford such books. With *Hieroglyphica* this was certainly the case. Information about prices and owners is scant and quite late in arriving. In Arrenberg's 1773 *Naamregister* the price of the book – mistakenly described as a folio instead of a quarto – is 10

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125 *Catalogus partis bibliothecae, illustrissimi comitis de Wassenaer, et Obdam* (La Haye: Petrum de Hondt, 1750).

126 See Pierre Delsaerdt, 'In de achterkamer van een veilinghuis. De registers van de leuvense boekverkoper J.F. van Overbeke (1727-1810),' *Documentatieblad Werkgroep Achttiende Eeuw 22* (1990): 133-157.

127 Huigen Leeflang, 'Waarheid, vlugheid en inventie. Ontwerp en uitvoering van de etsen' in: *Romeyn de Hooghe's verbeelding van de Gouden Eeuw*, ed. Van Nierop et al. (Zwolle: Waanders, 2008), 126-145.

128 Van den Honert in his preface to Arnoldus Ruimig, *Verklaring van de voornaamste heilige en schriftuurlyke zinnebeelden* (Leiden 1745) cited in Els Stronks. *Negotiating difference*s. *Word, Image and Religion in the Dutch Republic* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 283, 284.

129 M.A. Schenkeveld- van der Dussen, 'Theologie en emblematiek. Het *Lexicon Hieroglyphicum Sacro-Profanum* (1722) van Martinus Koning in zijn Nederlandse context', in: *De steen van Alciato. Literatuur en visuele cultuur in de Nederlanden*, ed. Marc Van Vaeck, Hugo Brems and Geert H.M. Claassens (Leuven: Peeters, 2003). For the review see: *Maendelyke uittreksels, of de Boekzael der geleerde werelt* 8 (Amsterdam, 1722), 595-585.

guilders.[130] In an auction catalogue of 1804, the book could be purchased for 6,75 guilders.[131] 10 guilders was quite a significant amount of money considering that a small entrepreneur, such as a carpenter of butcher, earned some 6-10 guilders a week. This price was of course due the images included in the book, which raised its cost considerably.[132] That *Hieroglyphica* was an expensive book is reflected in the catalogues of people who owned it. In chronological order, these are the catalogues of the advisor to the Emperor in Flanders, G. J. Rooman, of a lawyer Buyse and of one M. Cornille-Baltazar de Sorgher, of a monseigneur Van Braekel (whose books were sold together with the books of 'many other deceased'); it appeared in 1823 in the auction of the books of William Beckford,[133] and in 1825 in the auction catalogue of Joan Raye van Breukelerwaard, a member of a well-to-do family of merchants.[134]

All these people owned many more books and came from wealthy backgrounds, but they did not necessarily belong to the scholarly Republic of Letters. This underscores the idea that *Hieroglyphica* was appreciated by well-off and well-informed readers and art lovers, who were interested in ancient history and religion. Of course, less wealthy people could purchase single etchings from *Hieroglyphica* but. without the explanatory text, their meaning would be almost impossible to grasp. Nevertheless, individual prints are preserved in the Leiden University Library, and an example is known in which plate 47, titled Van de Mahomethaansche Godsdienst [On Mahometan religion], is glued into an eighteenth-century edition of George Sale's translation of the Qur'an.[135] Moreover,

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130 Arrenberg, *Naamregister*, s.v. Hooge.

131 In the *Catalugue D'une belle Collection de Livres, En plusiers Langues et Facultés; Délaissés par Mons. Van Braekel* (Gand: C.J. Ferrand, 1804), prices are added in handwriting. On page 32 De Hooghe's *Hieroglyphica* is found at a price of 6,75 guilders. In comparison, Willem Goeree's *Mozaische Oudheden* (1730) cost 6 guilders and 10 stuivers, Godfried Arnold's *Historie der Kerk en Ketteren* in 3 volumes went for 13 guilders and 10 stuivers, and Basnage and Alewyn's *Groot Weerelds Tafreel* (met pl, 1714, folio), could be purchased for 8 guilders. (Arrenberg, *Naamregister*, 1773).

132 For some, there was reason to omit images from their books. Antoine Banier, *Mythology and Fables of the Ancients*, (1737), XVIII, for instance, writes in his introduction that his did not include images of the gods because it would increase the price.

133 S. Leigh Sotheby, *Auction catalogue, books of Beckford William, 9 September to 29 October 1823* (London 1823), 66.

134 *Catalogue des Livres Précieux et d'une Condition Unique, délaisséz par feu monsieur Jean Raye, seigneur de Breukelerwaard, à Amsterdam* (La Haye, n.p., 1825).

135 This was brought to my attention by Alexander Bevilacqua, and concerns *The Koran: commonly called the Alcoran of Mohammed translated into English immediately from the original Arabic; with explanatory notes, taken from the most approved commentators ... by George Sale* (London: C. Ackers, 1734 [i.e. 1733]), held in Houghton Library, Harvard University. (http://id.lib.harvard.edu/alma/990012933400203941/catalog).

the library of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign contains a volume with only the prints, bound together but without the accompanying text.[136]

As for the appreciation of the artistic merits of De Hooghe's work, it was, again, in general quite high.[137] The art critic Arnold Houbraken (1660-1719) lauded his inventions and compositions.[138] Even the scurrilous pamphlet *Het wonderlijk leeven van 't Boulonnois Hondtie* (1681), in which De Hooghe's reputation is smeared, nonetheless praises his craftsmanship. Its author (presumably Govert Bidloo) wrote that De Hooghe 'was counted among the best masters in Holland'.[139]

Yet other voices were also heard. In his notes the eighteenth-century French print collector and connoisseur Pierre-Jean Mariette (1694-1774) is critical on both the topics and the execution of De Hooghe's etchings, which he judged to be rude and impulsive. He could only appreciate positively those works in which much is happening: sieges, battles, war-torn villages, public festivities and the like. Mariette denounced De Hooghe's famous satirical prints as having an 'unparalleled vulgarity'; the artist should confine himself to historical scenes.[140]

Turning specifically to *Hieroglyphica*, we have only a few, and mostly negative, reactions. The earliest known response comes from the German art historian and archaeologist Johann Joachim Winckelmann (1717-1768) in his *Gedanken über die Nachahmung der griechischen Werke in der Malerei und Bildhauerkunst* [Thoughts on the Imitation of Greek Works in Painting and Sculpture, 1755]. Winckelmann compares the book to the monsters Aeneas encounters in the underworld. Although Winckelmann's book appeared several years after the *Hieroglyphica* was published, it is quite possible that he got to know the book via Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten, his art teacher in Halle, where he studied.[141] Stylistically Winckelmann was a protagonist of a far-reaching neo-classicism, best expressed by his oft-cited quotation 'the only way to become great, yes, inimitable, if it is possible, is the imitation of the

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136 University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Rare Book & Manuscript Library, sign. Emblems Q. 769H76v. Online via https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uiuo.ark:/13960/t3708v75q;view=1up;seq=9

137 Leeflang, *Waarheid, vlugheid en inventie*, 126.

138 Arnold Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen* (Amsterdam 1718-1721), 257-259.

139 '[…] hij wierd voor een der beste meesters gehouden, die er in gansch Holland te vinden waren'. See Verhoeve and Verkruijsse, *Verbeelding op bestelling. De boekillustratie*, 146.

140 Leeflang, *Waarheid, vlugheid en inventie*, 143, 144.

141 Johann Joachim Winckelmann, *Johann Joachim Winckelmann on Art, Architecture, and Archaeology*, transl. David Carter (Rochester: Camden House, 2013), 2,3. See further Clemens Schwaiger, *Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten – ein intellektuelles Porträt. Studien zur Metaphysik und Ethik von Kants Leitautor* (Stuttgart: Fromman-Holzboog, 2011), and Martin Schloemann, *Siegmund Jacob Baumgarten. System und Geschichte in der Theologie des Übergangs zum Neuprotestantismus* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1974).

Greeks'. Winckelmann's admiration of Greek art especially concerned the simplicity that ancient artists had achieved, a simplicity he desired for the art of his own era. Similarly allegorical art should be simple and clear: its design should be as simple as possible and explanatory text was superfluous.[142] Understandably the greatest thorn in Winckelmann's side was the lively, overdone, pompous grandeur of the baroque. *Hieroglyphica*, designed in De Hooghe's high baroque style and containing enigmatic allegorical imagery, all but demanded Winckelmann's harsh critique.

Apparently the book was also received positively in Germany. In 1744 a German translation of *Hieroglyphica* was published by the Dutch-German half-brothers Hans Arkstee (ca. 1700 -1776) and Hendrik Merkus (1714-1774). Their bookselling business, focussing on well-known French authors, had shops in both Leipzig and Amsterdam and was a significant player in the international book trade,.[143] How the brothers came into the possession of *Hieroglyphica* is unclear, but their impressive stock list consisted of many historical books, some of them on iconography. Arkstee's interest in history extended even to his writing of a history of Nijmegen, the city where he had grown up. Such interest might have been the reason why Arkstee and Merkus decided to publish De Hooghe's *Hieroglyphica*. The German translation's introduction by Siegmund Jacob Baumgarten (1706-1757), a renowned professor of theology in Halle, is intriguing. Following the German philosopher Christian Wolff, Baumgarten advocated a more rational view of religion, based on what he regarded as the complementarity of reason and revelation and of natural and revealed religion. At the same time, Baumgarten showed Pietist leanings.[144] In the words of David Sorkin:

> Drawing on the Lutheran heritage and Pietism, the early Enlightenment and English Moderation, Baumgarten advocated natural law and natural religion, toleration and freedom of conscience, while also staunchly defending revelation and scripture. He [Baumgarten] called his alternative to an orthodoxy born of confessional strife 'the true middle way'.[145]

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142 Moshe Barasch, *(Modern) Theories of Art. From Winckelmann to Baudelaire* (New York: New York University Press, 1990), 230.

143 Els F.M Peters, 'Arkstee, Hans Kaspar' *Nijmeegse biografieën*, vol 2, *Jaarboek Numaga* 53 (2006), 22-23.

144 David Sorkin, *The Religious Enlightenment*, 125-127.

145 Siegmund Jacobus Baumgarten's *Kleine Teutsche Schriften* (Halle, 1743) and *Erlauterung der christlichen Alterthümer* (Halle, 1768) cited in Sorkin, *The Religious Enlightenment*, 116.

Fig. 34. Johann Jacob Haid after Gabriel Spitzel, Portrait of Siegmund Jacob Baumgarten

Despite criticism from Pietist colleagues for his Wolffian ideas, Baumgarten's star rose fast; he attracted many students, published an impressive number of books and articles, and became rector of the Halle university in 1748. Baumgarten published extensively in the fields of biblical exegesis, hermeneutics, dogmatics, history and philosophy, paying considerable attention to contemporary threats like Spinozism and more general materialism. Baumgarten presented his views most clearly in *Nachrichten von einer hallischen Bibliothek* (Halle 1748–1751) and *Nachrichten von merkwürdigen Büchern* (Halle 1752–1758), in which he provided an overview of an enormous amount of radical literature, which he refuted vehemently. At the same time, however, he provided a podium for these underground currents, and so brought radical ideas to a wider audience.[146]

During his career Baumgarten increasingly turned towards the study of history, which provides the context to situate his introduction to *Hieroglyphica*. Baumgarten's turn to history becomes clear from the enormous number of books he edited, translated or provided with learned introductions; Martin Schloemann calls his work a true 'Übersetzungsfabrik'.[147] Baumgarten's publication list is indeed impressive, including

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146 On Baumgarten's interest in radical literature see Jonathan I. Israel, *Democratic Enlightenment. Philosophy, Revolution, and Human Rights 1750-1790* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2011), 179-187.

147 Schloemann, *Siegmund Jacob Baumgarten,* 120.

universal histories but even more works on Church history. His most famous work is *Uebersetzung der Allgemeinen Welthistorie*, but he also edited seventeen volumes of an English world history, *A Universal History from the Earliest Account of Time to the Present*, to which he added notes that were later translated into English and published as a supplement.[148] Specific attention for peoples and their religions is present not only in *Hieroglyphica* but also in Baumgarten's contributions to Semler's *Uebersetzung der Nachrichten Plutarchs und Herodots zur Altagyptischen Religion*. Egypt in particular played an important role in Baumgarten's view: since ancient Egypt was the most influential source of religions in antiquity, knowledge of Egyptian religion would not only show the superiority of Christianity but also reveal that 'true divine worship… rests upon ancient events and writings".[149]

Baumgarten's interest in the topics of *Hieroglyphica* might have prompted Arkstee and Merkus to ask him for an introduction, though it may well have been solicited simply because a famous name like Baumgarten's could be expected to sell well. In any case, Baumgarten agreed. We should not, however, overestimate Baumgarten's involvement, as he admits that he never actually read De Hooghe's *Hieroglyphica*:

> A pledge that [I] redeem even with more pleasure, as the proofs that have already been sent to me show that nothing has been neglected in terms of purity and adornment: although [I] am at the same time just so overwhelmed with other work, that therefore I am unable to undertake a thorough review, examination and annotation of the work's content, which also could not be lightly expected from someone here, nor should it be done passingly in a preface.[150]

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148 Then there were the histories of specific countries such as *Algemeine geschichte der Lander und Volker von America* by Johann Friedrich Schroeter, *Algemeine historie von Spanien* by Juan de Ferraras, and finally he translated works on chronology from abbot Nicolas Lenglet du Fresnoy. see David Sorkin, ´Reclaiming Theology for the Enlightenment: The Case of Siegmund Jacob Baumgarten (1706-1757),` *Central European History 36* (4) (2003): 503-530: 520,521.

149 Sorkin, *Religious Enlightenment*, 148.

150 From Baumgarten's introduction to De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica, oder, Denkbilder der alten Völker: namentlich der Aegyptier, Chaldäer, Phönizier, Jüden, Griechen, Römer, u.s.w. : nebst einem umständlichen Berichte von dem Verfalle und der eingeschlichenen Verderbniss in den Gottesdiensten, durch verschiedene Jahrhunderte und endlich die Glaubensverbesserung, bis auf diese Zeit fortgesetzt* (Amsterdam: Arkstee &Merkus, 1744), 'Welche Zusage nunmehr um so viel lieber erfulle, da aus dem mir bereits zugeschickten Abdruck ersehen, dass an Sauberkeit und Zierde desselben nichts verabsäumet worden: ob ich gleich mit anderweitigen Arbeiten anitzo sehr überhäuft bin, und daher eine genaue Durchsichtigung, Prüfung und Erleuterung des gesammten Inhalts der Schrift nicht unternehmen können , die auch nicht leicht von jemand allhier wird erwartet werden, oder in einer Vorrede füglich geschehen mögen.'

This admission shows that *Hieroglyphica* was a product of the 'Ubersetzungsfabrik', in which Baumgarten farmed out the translation work to his assistants (or to Arkstee and Merkus) and wrote only the introductions himself.[151]

Hence the introduction to *Hieroglyphica* is, not unexpectedly, very general. Baumgarten begins with a list of other books on hieroglyphics, including amongst others Horrapollo, Valerianus, William Warburton, Kircher and Menestrier. After attending to the evolution of 'pictorial' characters into alphabetical scripts, Baumgarten addresses the meaning of hieroglyphs. Here he chides Athanasius Kircher for his mystical interpretations, but agrees with him that ancient scholars had been unwilling to share their knowledge with the people and had therefore used enigmatic hieroglyphics to communicate. They had deliberately introduced more idolatry.[152] In addition, Baumgarten denounces as nonsense the purported connection of certain allegorical images to contemporary issues and biblical exegesis. Baumgarten expresses the overall opinion that the hieroglyphic script is still very much a mystery. Still, he writes that *Hieroglyphica* has value, namely as a Church historical survey, an inspiration to engage in ancient archaeology and a spur towards the invention of a new image-script. Furthermore, Baumgarten thinks the book is meant to educate and to incite the reader into conducting further research. He also refers to the introductions by Westerhovius and De Hooghe himself, encouraging readers to form their own opinions. He adds a disclaimer that he is not responsible for 'the truth of the statements and opinions' and even less for the specific dogmas of De Hooghe's denomination (he must have noticed De Hooghe's preferred the Reformed church to the Lutheran); and much less was he responsible for the invention, drawing and preparation of the book's symbols. Although Baumgarten's involvement in *Hieroglyphica* was thus minimal, Baumgarten's approach to theology and history bears a resemblance to the changing context in which this *Hieroglyphica* translation emerged, and to which it contributed. Baumgarten is seen as a transitional figure between Pietism and Semler's Enlightenment theology, functioning in an 'Ubergangstheologie' in which 'man unnotig verhartende Streitigkeiten zu vermeiden suchte'.[153] Despite the rational influence of Wolff – who saw history as lacking certainty – Baumgarten wanted to use history to acquire and sustain a sense of certainty.[154] For Baumgarten, critical history was one of the foundations of true Protestant belief, as he believed

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151 Schloemann, *Siegmund Jacob Baumgarten*, 120, refering to C. Justi, *Winckelmann und seine zeitgenossen*, vol. 1 (Leipzig: Verlag von F.C.W. Vogel, 1898), 159.

152 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica oder Denkbilder der alten Völker*

153 Schloemann, *Siegmund Jacob Baumgarten,* 16.

154 For Baumgarten history was a 'reliable and coherent report on the remarkable events of the society of Christians and their divine worship'. Sorkin, *Reclaiming Theology for the Enlightenment*, 513.

that secular history also served the cause of sacred history. Especially important were reliable witnesses.[155] Though aware of that deists and freethinkers had made history 'their most effective weapon against Christianity', Baumgarten was convinced that secular history also served the faith.[156] The worse the apologetical situation of Christianity grew, the more Baumgarten turned to historical arguments for Christianity. To be sure, history would not replace theology but rather was a tool for 'shedding light on God's word and its salutary effects, and counter slander, idolatry and heresy'.[157] Whereas others used history mainly to research historical elements of Christianity, 'Baumgarten contributed to a "critical" history that defined dogmas through historical exegesis'.[158] Baumgarten's apologetical use of history, however, had an unintended side-effect. Schloemann concludes that by having this focus on history, certain theological problems could be solved only by a radical departure from traditional explanations:

> But such an attention for theology focused on critical historical questions could have unexpected consequences. It may have barely occurred to Baumgarten himself, that he, with his ever stronger effort to push, through history and specifically through his defence of the historical foundation of the teachings of Christianity, the development of decisive problems of theology exactly up to a point, where one can only continue by means of a radical and broad transition that renounces many of the traditional attempts to solve these problems.[159]

This use of history is also present in *Hieroglyphica*, as we shall see in the following chapters. De Hooghe combined secular history with the history of religion, and a growing attention to the influence of historical context on religion's development can be recognised in De Hooghe's *Hieroglyphica,* which at the same time was a

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155 Sorkin, *The Religious Enlightenment*, 142.

156 Idem, 149. Which he mentions in an introduction to Jacques Saurin, claiming that the weapon of history is even more dangerous than the weapon of philosophy. Schloemann, *Siegmund Jacob Baumgarten*, 160.

157 Schloemann, *Siegmund Jacob Baumgarten*, 159.

158 Sorkin, *Reclaiming Theology for the Enlightenment*, 523.

159 Schloemann, *Siegmund Jacob Baumgarten*, 170. 'Aber solche Konzentration der Aufmerksamkeit auf die Theologie durch die kritische Historie gestellten Fragen konnte auch unerwartete Folgen haben. Es durfte Baumgarten selbst kaum bewusst geworden sein, das er mit seiner immer stärkeren Bemühung um die Geschichte und besonders mit seiner Verteidigung der historischen Grundlage der Christlichen Lehre die Entwickelung entscheidender Probleme der Theologie bis genau an den Punkt vorantrieb, wo es nur noch durch einen radikalen Umschlag auf breiter Front unter Abkehr von vielen traditionellen Losungsversuchen weiter gehen konnte.'

product of and a contribution to this changing approach. A short and quite neutral review of the book appeared in the *Fortgesetzte Sammlung von alten und neuen theologischen Sachen* (1744).[160] A shift had occurred: whereas his historical approach had at first garnered scornful reactions, ten years later Baumgarten was being praised as a versatile intellectual.[161]

Meanwhile, in the Netherlands, there is at least one example of the use of *Hieroglyphica* as a reference work, namely *Oudheidkundige Brieven, bevattende eene verhandeling over de manier van Begraven, en over de Lykbusschen, Wapenen, Veld- en Eertekens der Oude Germanen* (1760), composed by Joannes van Lier (1726-1799) and edited by Arnout Vosmaer (1720-1799).[162] This work contains several letters concerning an excavated tomb and the archaeological discoveries found therein. In his description and explanation of the archaeology and history involved, the author uses classic books such as those by Lucretius, Vergil, Ovid and Horace to collect all sorts of comments and knowledge about burial sites and related matters. He also uses glossaries, for instance Lodewijk Meyer's *Woordenschat* and Ludolph Smids's *Schatkamer der Nederlandsse Oudheden*, to interpret words like 'Hune' [Dolmen] and 'Urn' and gain knowledge about things like gravestones, grave-lamps, pots and ashes. In the same manner Van Lier uses specific information from *Hieroglyphica* to thicken his knowledge of portal tombs. In page 34 Van Lier wonders why nobody has yet explained megaliths as pagan idols, because in times 'when art had not formed images yet' gods had been venerated via geometric and other forms. Here Van Lier refers to *Hieroglyphica*, chapter 23, figure B, where a pile of stones is explained as honouring Mercury, under the ancient name of Her.[163] Van Lier uses another fragment from *Hieroglyphica's* chapter 23 to underscore his interpretation of a marking on a certain flat stone that he believed this to be a discus. The marking probably represented the letter E, corresponding to one of the discus throwers. Van Lier defended this interpretation by reference of De Hooghe's mention of the arrows that kings and priests had used in sporting contests. These arrows contained names, so that one could recognise one's own arrow, and this seemed to be the case with the discus as well.[164] Van Lier also refers to *Hieroglyphica's*

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160 *Fortgesetzte Sammlung von alten und neuen theologischen Sachen, Büchern, Uhrkunden, Controversien, Anmerckungen und Vorschlägen 1744* (Leipzig), 145,146.

161 Idem, 172.

162 Joannes van Lier and A. Vosmaer, *Oudheidkundige Brieven, bevattende eene verhandeling over de manier van Begraven, en over de Lykbusschen, Wapenen, Veld- en Eertekens der Oude Germanen, En in het byzonder de beschryving van eenen alouden Steenen Grafkelder, met daarin gevondene Lykbusschen, Donderkeilen, en Donderbylen etc.* ('s Gravenhage; P. van Thol, 1760).

163 Van Lier, *Oudheidkundige Brieven*, 34, De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 201.

164 Van Lier, *Oudheidkundige Brieven,* 184, De Hooghe*, Hieroglyphica,* 203.

chapter 6, but here makes a completely different sort of reference. In his second letter Van Lier talks about certainty and doubt when it comes to the interpretation of the grave and its objects. He confesses a degree of scepticism, but adds – referring to *Hieroglyphica* – that he shall follow Busiris, or Phoenician Jupiter, who kept his right eye open to the sun but his left eye closed to the moon. De Hooghe drew this Busiris or Phoenician Jupiter in plate 6. His comment mentions eyes opened to the sun and closed to the moon, but De Hooghe's meaning here is not clear. Van Lier's explanation is quite clichéd: the light of the sun will lead to the truth, whereas the moon, with its changing shapes, stands for doubt. Why Van Lier chose these three particular fragments from the whole of the thick tome *Hieroglyphica* remains uncertain. The most logical surmise would be that Van Lier browsed *Hieroglyphica*'s images and encountered the image of the stones and of the god Mercury covered with eyes, and these visual depictions best suited the topics that interested him.[165]

The satirical pamphlet *Een gebraden Peertje voor de liefhebbers der Schilderkonst*, which lambasts painters whose work contains ridiculous errors or anachronisms, also copies fragments of *Hieroglyphica*'s text. Several of the historical mistakes made by painters mentioned in the pamphlet are taken from *Hieroglyphica*. On page 13, for instance, the pamphlet's author mentions that 'Vazari, a great artist, depicts the Roman Knights riding [their horses] without bridles, as if they were Numiden or Libiers',[166] which is almost a direct citation from *Hieroglyphica*.[167] There are other overt borrowings: the mention of paintings in which Macedonian and Greek horseman are depicted with saddles and stirrups, a historical inaccuracy, and a reference to one of Antonio Tempesto's paintings, which shows Israelites on horses.[168]

In 1806, the *Neue Leipziger Literaturzeitung* makes a late reference to the German edition of *Hieroglyphica*, praising Baumgarten's introduction but

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165 Van Lier, *Oudheidkundige Brieven,* 48. De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 85, 86.

166 Anoniem, *Een gebraden Peertje voor de liefhebbers der Schilderkonst,* 13*,* 'Vazari, een groot konstenaar, doet de Roomsche Ridderschap in een zegenpraal ryden, zonder Toomen, als ofze Numiden of Libyers waaren'.

167 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica,* 21, 'Men ziet ook zoo van Vazari, waarlyk anders een groot Konstenaar, dat hy de Roomsche Ridderschap, en een Zeegepraal, doet ryden zonder Toomen, als ofze Numiden, of Lybiers waren.'

168 Anoniem, *Een gebraden Peertje voor de liefhebbers der Schilderkonst, waar in een groot aantal, Comique verbeeldingenvan Schilderyen, met belachelyke byvoegzelen verhandelt worden, alles op een vrolyken trant* (Gorichem 1776). The author of *Een gebraden Peertje* also took elements from *De Levens-beschryvingen Der Nederlandsche Konst-Schilders en konst-schilderessen* (part 4) by J.C. Weyerman, see Geraldine Maréchal, 'JCW als smaakmaker in een laat 18ᵉ-eeuws gerecht,' *Mededelingen van de Stichting Jacob Campo Weyerman* 2 (1979): 175-181.

belittling the book itself as an 'Elende Werk' (a poor work).[169] In England, half a century later, one finds a more positive appreciation. In a 1866 reprint of *A Choice of Emblemes and other Devises* by Geoffrey Whitney, the editor, Henry Green, refers to the 'most splendid work of Romein de Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica of Merkbeilden [sic] der oude Volkeren etc*.[170]

Regarding the vogue for hieroglyphics, a change in taste can be observed over the course of the eighteenth century: the symbolic combination of picture and meaning fell out of favour, not least because of a substantive abhorrence towards hieroglyphs as the purportedly superstitious elements of a false Egyptian religion. In addition, attacks aginst the related areas of mysticism and esoteric wisdom chipped away at the foundations of the entire esoteric tradition.[171] Yet another critique directed at the hieroglyphs came from the natural sciences, which proved that many of the symbolic representations were mythical nonsense and made it clear that the Horapollan tradition was incompatible with the age of rationality.[172]

Despite the changing fashions, *Hieroglyphica* was still cited in the later eighteenth century. In 1777-1778 Philipp Gottlieb Seeger's *Die Götter der alten Griecken und Römer* was published posthumously. Seeger, a student of classical mythology and candidate for the ministry, presented a wealth of scholarly information on individual gods and goddesses, as well as on their mythology and on how the ancients had represented them in works of art. He enthusiastically plundered De Hooghe's *Hieroglyphica*, referred to dozens of times, especially for this latter topic. He was particularly impressed by De Hooghe's detailed depiction of Diana of Ephesus.[173] Artists also seemed to continue to value De Hooghe's Diana. In the 1770s, before the publication of Seeger's compendium, Dutch artists presented the Art of Drawing, personified as a woman, beside a statue of Diana of Ephesus, in a composition that closely mirrors De Hooghe's composition in Plate 1 of *Hieroglyphica*.[174] Apparently *Hieroglyphica*, in both the Netherlands and Germany, was still considered an artist's manual, in the way that De Hooghe had initially presented it.

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169 *Neue Leipziger Literaturzeitung* 1 (1806), 2.

170 Henry Green, ed., *Whitney's "Choice of Emblemes": A Fac-simile* (London 1866).

171 Dieckmann, *Hieroglyphics*, 115-119.

172 Idem, 108-110.

173 Philipp Gottlieb Seeger, *Die Götter der alten Griechen und Römer nach ihren Herkunften, Thaten, Nachkommenschaften, Tempeln, Vorstellungen, Benennungen und Bedeutungen nach Anleitung der klassischen Schriftsteller und der Werke der Kunst*, vol 2 (Frankfurt am Main 1777-1778), 122-123.

174 (Design of a) silver prize medal, awarded by the Academie der Teekenkunst in Amsterdam to Abraham van der Hart in 1772, design by Reinier Vinkeles.

Fig. 35. Reinier Vinkeles (I), TEEKENKUNST [The Art of drawing] on a prize medal (1765-1802), Rijksmuseum Amsterdam

Fig. 36. Noach van der Meer (II), TEKENKUNST [The Art of Drawing] in a print (1777-1800), Rijksmuseum Amsterdam

Fig. 37. Johannes Glauber naar Gerard de Lairesse, Allegorie op de Tekenkunst [Allegory of the art of drawing] 1656-1727, Rijksmuseum Amsterdam

Fig. 38. De Hooghe, detail Plate 1

2.5 Concluding remarks

De Hooghe's *Hieroglyphica* was influenced by several 'genres': educational books, emblem books, encyclopedias, and works of religious history and mythography. Furthermore, the book should be understood against the obvious background of an intensive interest in hieroglyphics, although De Hooghe's etchings are predominantly allegorical.

Considering that this interest in hieroglyphics decreased during the first half of the eighteenth century, it is interesting to speculate why *Hieroglyphica* was published only in 1735, many years after its author's death. First and foremost we should cite a continued appreciation of De Hooghe's abilities as an artist, which were still appreciated after his death. The book's reception indicates that *Hieroglyphica* was especially appreciated amongst people interested in art and in ancient and classical history. Its content may provide another reason for its late publication. Whereas interest in enigmatic hieroglyphs withered somewhat – at least among professionals – interest in the history of religion increased, as evident from the number of early-eighteenth-century books on religion's history and its various forms. Accounts of De Hooghe's atheism might have even increased interest in *Hieroglyphica*.[175] Nevertheless, readers mostly used the book for its details about ancient gods, and only Siegmund Baumgarten seems to be even

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175 Wilson, *The Art of Romeyn de Hooghe*, 6.

slightly interested in De Hooghe's narative of religious decay and its recent reformation. Yet De Hooghe's appeal to teach his readers both the allegorical imagination of certain topics and the religious history the topic was part of comes across very clearly, and this combination remains interesting. The central question in the next chapters will be the extent to which the concept of religion as it is presented in *Hieroglyphica* aligned with current debates about the topic.

How to Find True Religion

The second part of *Hieroglyphica*'s title signals the book's most important theme: the decline, corruption and reformation of religion. One of the major questions of De Hooghe's book concerned the origin of true religion. At what point had it begun, and how can we know what this original, pure religion consisted of? The biblical figure of Seth, presented as the steward of such a religion, was crucial for De Hooghe, who excavated and elucidated the form of Seth's belief – as will be elaborated upon in chapter 7 of this thesis. Seth and his religion, however, lay far in the past. The possibility of accessing the true, original, religion was a major issue for many people during the second half of the seventeenth century. What was the most reliable, authoritative source to turn to for knowledge about true religion? What was the key to religious truth? This cluster of related questions was heavily debated and remained controversial. To a large extent these concerns arose in the wake of the Reformation and its particular theological and historical emphases. Protestant Reformers claimed that Christianity, having declined from its original purity, was in dire need of reform. Luther's *sola scriptura* dictum aimed to cleanse theology and the Church of corruptions that had accreted over time, such as the papal hierarchy and the theology underpinning the Catholic Mass, and sought a return to one and only one source: the Bible. In theory many agreed with the Bible's primacy, but in practice it brought about a whole new problem. As Brad Gregory puts it:

> the unintended problem created by the Reformation was therefore not
> simply a perpetuation of the inherited and still-present challenge of how
> to make life more genuinely Christian, but also the new and compounding
> problem of how to know what true Christianity was. "Scripture alone"
> was not a solution to this new problem, but its cause.[1]

This problem, engendered by Luther's adage, soon became manifest: without the
pope being the sole and infallible arbiter of orthodoxy, theologians and believers
began to reach very different conclusions about the Bible's teaching of true
religion. Although the post-Reformation period saw the shaping of a Protestant
identity, the difficulties of achieving a united consensus about the content of true
religion soon became obvious. *Hieroglyphica* is concerned with this very problem.
The title promises its readers 'an exhaustive essay on the progressive decline
and corruption of religions through the ages, and its recent reformation until the
present day'. Theologians looked for solutions in the Bible, but the problem of
varied biblical interpretations caused the very position of the Bible as the unique
source of religious truth to come under pressure. Above all, the enormous increase
in humanist research into every aspect of the Bible resulted in the adoption of a
more critical attitude.[2] At the same time, the wave of new scientific discoveries
posed challenges to the biblical claim to truth, and the philosophy of Descartes
challenged the hegemony of Aristotelianism. Cartesianism promised access to
mathematical certainties, some of which contradicted the claims of the Bible,
whose status as the bearer of truth was still beyond question – or should be,
according to Reformed theology. These related issues then fed into a larger debate
about the relation of reason to revelation, and their respective roles vis-à-vis the
basis of true religion.[3] The discussion came to a head in 1666 with the publication
of Lodewijk Meyer's *Philosophia Scriptura interpres*, a work that presents
philosophy as the proper interpreter of the Bible – and thus no longer theology's

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1   Brad S. Gregory, *The Unintended Reformation. How a Religious Revolution Secularized Society*
     (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2012), 368, 369. See also Diarmaid
     MacCulloch, *Reformation. Europe's House Divided 1490-1700*, (London: Penguin, 2004), which
     paints the Mass and the Pope as the core problem in the Reformation, 4-42.

2   Stroumsa, *A New Science*, 50, 52.

3   Richard H. Popkin, *The History of Scepticism. From Savonarola to Bayle* (Oxford: Oxford
     University Press, 2003) esp 3-16. Aza Goudriaan, *Reformed Orthodoxy and Philosophy, 1625-1750.
     Gisbertus Voetius, Petrus van Mastricht and Anthonius Driessen* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 50. Joris van
     Eijnatten en Fred van Lieburg, *Nederlandse religiegeschiedenis* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2005), 243.

handmaiden. Throughout the second half of the seventeenth century these raging debates made the universities and the Church a theatre of war.[4]

The emphasis on reason as a source of religious knowledge on which all humankind could agree occurred in tandem with a growing attention to nature as God's unequivocal Book. Natural religion especially – based on the idea that knowledge of God and morality could be achieved without revelation – was seen as a promising means of obtaining universal consent about true religion. The works of most orthodox Christians in the period held on to the vision of the Reformers: the Bible, the most authoritative and reliable source, was indispensable for knowledge of true religion, and Revelation (revealing atonement through Christ) was necessary for salvation. Nevertheless, the example of *Hieroglyphica* reveals that the Bible was by no means the sole medium through which people gained religious knowledge. It shows that theologians, scholars and laypeople exercised flexibility in their appreciation of sources beyond the Bible and acknowledges, most importantly, the revelatory nature of the created world, human reason and, above all, the heart. And just as artists could use nature as a 'hieroglyph' for allegorical meanings, symbolised by Diana of Ephesus, so De Hooghe could express his story of the 'progressive decline and corruption of religion through the ages, and its recent reformation until the present day' using hieroglyphs.

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4   As mentioned in the introduction, this thesis is not meant to be a history of the Enlightenment, and only turns to the subject as background for interpreting De Hooghe's presentation of religion. For the cultural history of the Enlightenment period see: Jonathan I. Israel, *The Dutch Republic. Its Rise, Greatness and Fall 1477-1806* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995); on the Radical Enlightenment: Jonathan I. Israel, *Radical Enlightenment. Philosophy and the Making of Modernity 1650-1750* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001); on the impact of Cartesianism: Theo Verbeek, *La Querelle d'Utrecht. René Descartes et Martin Schoock* (Paris: Les Impressions Nouvelles, 1988) and his *Descartes and the Dutch. Early Reactions to Cartesian Philosophy, 1637-1650* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1992); on the promise of Cartesianism: Wiep van Bunge, *From Stevin to Spinoza. An Essay on Philosophy in the Seventeenth-Century Dutch Republic* (Leiden: Brill, 2001); on the clash between natural sciences and Aristotelian theology: Rienk Vermij, *The Calvinist Copernicans. The reception of the new astronomy in the Dutch Republic, 1575-1750* (Amsterdam: Koninklijke Nederlandse Academie van Wetenschappen, 2002). On the relation between religion and Enlightenment see Sorkin, *The Religious Enlightenment* and Bulman, *God in the Enlightenment*. On internal theological debates see F.G.M. Broeyer and E.G.G. van der Wall, *Een richtingenstrijd in de gereformeerde kerk. Voetianen en coccejanen 1650-1750* (Zoetermeer: Boekencentrum, 1994), Van der Wall and Wessels, *Een veelzijdige verstandhouding. Religie en Verlichting in Nederland 1650-1850*, and Buisman, *Verlichting in Nederland 1650-1850. Vrede tussen rede en religie?*

3.1 Hieroglyphs: universal language or cryptography?

Throughout *Hieroglyphica* the hieroglyphic language is foregrounded as a medium for the original religion. This focus on accessing religion via language, specifically in its hieroglyphic form, is foregrounded in the first chapters of De Hooghe's book. In Plate 2 and its accompanying text, De Hooghe kicks off his argument with an account of a legend concerning Seth, the third son of Adam and Eve, who summarised the essential knowledge of true religion in a few hieroglyphs engraved on two different pillars to serve as a record for later generations. In the sixteenth century, the French protestant poet Guillaume de Salluste Du Bartas (1544-1590) popularised this legend, which had been mentioned in Flavius Josephus, in verse, in a work that was reprinted, translated, imitated and plundered endlessly throughout the seventeenth century. De Hooghe's brief comment on the image of Seth preaching beside the columns nicely matches his *La Seconde Semaine*, where Noah's descendent Heber, in the form of a didactic dialogue, explains to his son Phaleg how the pictorial signs left on the two columns by Seth teach the elements of science and the promises of the faith.[5]

This emphasis on the *medium* of transmission of the primeval religion that should be retrieved and restored aligned perfectly with the contemporary interest in original pure and universal language.[6] We saw earlier the increasing seventeenth-century fascination grew with pictorial language as an aid for teaching and memorisation. Philological studies raised hopes even higher: 'the possibility that the primitive language of mankind had been preserved somewhere on the globe excited many seventeenth-century imaginations.'[7] Strenuous efforts were made to find the original language and the connections and trajectories of dissemination among different religions. This interest was spurred not least out of 'patriotic' motives, as researchers tried to trace their own languages back to paradisiacal

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5   Guillaume de Saluste Du Bartas, *La seconde semaine* (Paris: Pierre L'Huillier, 1584), 2, 4. I owe this reference to Joke Spaans.

6   See Singer, *Hieroglyphs.*

7   Harrison, *Religion and the religions*, 147. For the expectations brought to images in a religious and didactic context see above, chapter 2, and note 11 below.

origins.[8] Exemplary in this case is the work of the mathematician and physicist Simon Stevin. Relying on Joannes Goropius Becanus's *Origines Antwerpianae*, which presented Flemish as a language composed of basic monosyllabic signs that corresponded directly with things themselves, Stevin and other Dutch scholars were convinced that Adam and Eve spoke Dutch in paradise.[9]

In this endeavour a strong link was envisioned between language and religion, therefore the search for the oldest religion was closely connected to the search for the oldest language. It all made sense: pristine religion originated in paradise with the first humans and was transmitted via a universal language. Tongues were, however, confused, and humankind dispersed all over the world, after the destruction of the Tower of Babel. This confusion had a great impact: not only did languages become separate, but religions diversified as well. This line of thinking prompted early modern scholars to work on a new universal language which would idealistically overcome misunderstandings, prevent disagreements between peoples, increase human unity and, last but not least, undo the religious division created after Babel.[10] The obvious place to look for the remnants of such a language was in the languages comprising 'real characters', as these were believed

8   People occupied with the search for the origins and development of language included Nicolaes Witsen, Gisbert Cuper, Maturin Veyssière La Croze, Andreas Müller and Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz. See Marion Peters, *De wijze koopman. Het Wereldwijde Onderzoek Van Nicolaes Witsen (1641-1717), burgemeester en voc-bewindhebber van Amsterdam* (Amsterdam: Bert Bakker, 2010), 260-265, and Jorink, *Het 'Boeck der Nature'*, 339. See further M. M. Slaughter, *Universal Languages and Scientific Taxonomy in the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982). On lexicography see John Considine, *Small Dictionaries & Curiosity. Lexicography and Fieldwork in Post-Medieval Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017). On the connection between language and religion see Martin Mulsow, 'Global Intellectual History and the Dynamics of Religion.' in *Dynamics of Religion, ed* Christoph Bochinger and Jörg Rüpke (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2017), 251-272.

9   Charles van den Heuvel, "'As the Author Intended': Transformations of the Unpublished Writings and Drawings of Simon Stevin (1548-1620)" in *Translating Early Modern Science,* ed Sietske Fransen, Niall Hodson and Karl A.E. Enenkel (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 119-153 esp. 130. On Goropius see Eddy Frederickx and Toon Van Hal, *Johannes Goropius Becanus (1519-1573). Brabants arts en taalfanaat* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2015). Although De Hooghe, especially in *Spiegel van Staat*, brags about the excellent virtues of the Dutch, he did not follow this particular discourse in *Hieroglyphica.*

10   Harrison, *Religion and the religions*, 147-149. One of the proponents of this universal language endeavour was Johann Amos Comenius, who propagated that a universal language would bring universal peace, because via this universal language truth would become clear to all. A close relation to religion was expected: a universal language could function as a repetition of the Pentecost miracle, a means by which all people are able to understand Christ's true message.

to refer directly to things and to be universally comprehensible.[11] At first, Egyptian hieroglyphs were of great interest to seventeenth-century researchers, but in time there was an increased appreciation for Chinese characters as representing the vestiges of an original language and religion.[12]

Discussions of this kind were central to developing perspectives on the origins and plurality of religion, more so than might appear at first sight. As the art historian Thijs Weststeijn rightly puts it: 'more was at stake than just scholarly exoticism'.[13] This linguistic project was linked to didactic theories and educational projects and had consequences for questions of religious chronology and authority. Nicolas Witsen, the Amsterdam burgomaster, saw Christian events in certain unknown Chinese ideograms: the crucifixion of Christ, Mary at Christ's tomb, and Joseph of Arimathea. These links proved to him that Christianity had been known in Tartary but had vanished.[14] Isaac Vossius (1618-1689) was convinced that Chinese was the continuation of the universal language that had existed from before the Flood, and therefore it was more ancient and authentic than Hebrew writings and, thus, the Bible.[15] Although this view was controversial, Vossius did not explicate it to its limits and 'refrained from drawing the ultimate conclusion that God had spoken Chinese, a conclusion that would sideline the Bible'.[16] Related to these considerations was the matter of how people received language: was Adam bequeathed a full package of linguistics from God, as Genesis seemed to suggest? Or had he been created as a being *able* to learn language? The early eighteenth

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11   Thijs Weststeijn, 'From Hieroglyphs to Universal Characters: Pictography in the Early Modern Netherlands', in *Art and science in the early modern Netherlands/ Netherlands Yearbook for History of Art*, ed Eric Jorink and Bart Ramakers (Zwolle, WBooks, 2011), 238-281: 253. In addition to the perceived universal understanding embodied in images, visuals were also seen as the best manner to learn and remember. Slaughter, *Universal languages and scientific taxonomy in the seventeenth century*.

12   Harrisson, *Religion and the religions*, 137, 138. Weststeijn, *From Hieroglyphs to Universal Characters*. Important in this context was the Chinese script. Because Chinese characters were 'painted' with paint-brushes, writing was believed to be close to painting, and thus in origin not a script but an art. People like the scholar John Webb and the Jesuit missionaries Louis Le Compte and Philippe Couplet saw the Chinese language and religion as the purest variant, the *prisca theologia*. Kircher had already devoted a book to the anteriority of China, which in turn influenced the ideas of Isaac Vossius, who lauded the Chinese characters as universal pictograms.

13   Weststeijn, *From Hieroglyphs to Universal Characters,* 257.

14   Peters, *De wijze koopman,* 265.

15   Weststeijn, *From Hieroglyphs to Universal Characters* 251. Thijs Weststeijn, 'Spinoza Sinicus: An Asian Paragraph in the History of the Radical Enlightenment,' *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 68, nr 4. (2007): 537-61.

16   Thijs Weststeijn, 'Vossius' Chinese Utopia', in *Isaac Vossius (1618-1689) between Science and Scholarship*, ed Eric Jorink and Dirk van Miert (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 207-242.

century saw a movement towards some middle way: Adam had been fitted out with the basic set of words he had needed to name the animals, but humans mastered the complexity of a complete language only after a long period of time.[17]

Hieroglyphica underscores the idea that debates about religious origin, chronology and language were entangled to a large extent. Several of the points of discussion mentioned above are present, others conspicuously absent. For De Hooghe, who paid no attention to the Chinese language or its character, Egyptian hieroglyphs represented the pristine medium of communication,. According to *Hieroglyphica* the original language was created with the first humans. De Hooghe rejects the idea that script had been invented by Abraham[18], the Assyrian Radamanthus[19], the Chaldean Lumis, Hermes, Orpheus or the Phoenician Cadmus, because people who had lived before these great figures also would have needed to keep records and to communicate, and why would they not have done so in writing as well as verbal speech? Concerning the nature of the language mastered by Adam, *Hieroglyphica* supports the idea that God did not bestow a complete language upon Adam, but rather Adam learned through practice. Nevertheless, whereas certain writers pointed to the enormous amount of time it must have taken for a complete language to develop, *Hieroglyphica* states that the early humans probably succeeded in mastering such an extensive language.[20]

As we have seen, De Hooghe regarded language and religion to be part of the same project, since Seth wrote down religious concepts in the very first act of writing. Although De Hooghe refers to the biblical struggle between Cain and Abel as the beginning of true and false religion, he focusses on the role played by the alterations in the *medium* through which religion was conveyed. Theoretically, religious language originated with Seth, whose 'first hieroglyphs were simple, although not rude'. Almost immediately, however, the art of writing was hijacked by pagan priests, who combined elements of the true religion – as revealed to Adam and his offspring – with their own natural knowledge. But instead of passing on religious knowledge in an understandable manner, philosophers and priests deliberately veiled the knowledge they possessed in hieroglyphic signs, as part of a spurious religion. A shift thus occurred from a religion based on the understandable hieroglyphs of Seth and his offspring to the sort of institution

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17 See Avi Lifschitz, *Language and Enlightenment. The Berlin Debates of the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012) esp. 22-27.

18 The idea that Abraham invented the first letters was one hypothesis about the origin of letters. See for instance Henry Curzon, *The universal library or complete summary of science containing above 60 select treatises* (London 1712) referring to Philo as his source, 39, 40.

19 De Hooghe seems to be mistaken here, since Rhadamanthus was king of Crete.

20 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 82.

dominated by pagan wise men who abused their knowledge.[21]

In this pagan tradition, script became more complex in order to keep the common people of their societies in the dark about matters of religion and nature. *Hieroglyphica's* etchings show that the pagans who hijacked the original language were Egyptians, as according to De Hooghe 'they were capable of piercing through to the core of things'.[22] This expertise is visualised through an Egyptian woman (fig. 38), referring to the art of sign-making [see chapter 2 above]. In their conduct, language was divided into several strands; political; alchemical; hieroglyphs used for trading purposes; and, at the centre, religious hieroglyphs. The commentary tells us that for these different purposes different rules were applied. Political engravings, for instance, needed to be understandable for all kinds of people – 'dumb, smart, native and strangers to the country and its government' – whereas religious hieroglyphs were not supposed to be so clear.[23] This mysterious character is emphasised by depicting, on the headdress of the Egyptian artist, a sphinx, which was known for providing knotty answers which only the sharpest minds could rightly interpret. The same acuity was required for the production of hieroglyphs, as the Theban women had to 'depict these truths in such a manner that they are not vulgar, but only clear to the great minds'.[24] It was an opportunity not to be missed.

> Seeing the growing awe and respect of the people, they understood, that they should hand over this Knowing sparsely, conceal the clear Truths, and eventually cloak [these truths] in frivolous inventions. They had the best and purest thoughts and insights concealed in caves or subterranean vaults, or set in the Arches, after they had been imprinted and baked into Clay.[25]

Although different explanations glossed this 'betrayal', everyone shared the conviction that the pagan sages had deliberately, and with good reason, veiled the means by which they distributed their knowledge. De Hooghe here echoes the English clergyman and scholar John Spencer (1630-1693), who in turn had quoted

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21 Idem, Verklaring van de Tytelprent.

22 Idem, esp. chapter 3.

23 Idem, 10.

24 Idem, 3. 'dat zij niet plat voor alle groove kykers werkt, maar voor de groote verstanden zoo klaar is als raadzels voor de geringen'.

25 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, Verklaring van de Tytelprent, 'En ziende den aanwasch van de verwondering en achting des Volks, begrepen zy, dat men dit Weten spaarzaam moest overhandreyken, de klaare Waarheden bezwalken, en eyndelyk in vercierde grillen bezwachtelen. De beste en zuyverste gedachten en ondervindingen lieten zy in holen, of onderaardsche wulften, in de Boogen metzelen; zynde op Leem ingegriffyt en gebakken.'

Clement of Alexandria: 'all theologians, barbarians and Greeks, concealed the principles of reality and transmitted the truth only by means of riddles, symbols, allegories, metaphors, and similar tropes and figures'.[26]

One explanation for this concealment of the truth was fear. Many Renaissance thinkers, for example, found Mosaic influences in Plato's writings, but these traces were expressed only in a veiled manner, indicating that Plato had feared that he would suffer the fate of Socrates and therefore had not openly stood up for his 'Christian' beliefs. Another popular opinion was the idea that true religion was veiled to protect it from profanation.[27] This idea is found, for instance, in the work of the Cambridge Platonist Henry More (1614-1687), who stated that the 'Mysterie of God lies not bare to false and adulterous eyes, but is his and wrapped up in decent coverings from the sight of Vulgar and Carnal men'.[28] We also find this theory in the writings of the Italian mythographer, poet and humanist Natale Conti (1520-1582):

> From the earliest times … the thinkers first of Egypt, then of Greece, deliberately concealed the great truths of science and philosophy under the veil of myth in order to withdraw them from vulgar profanation.[29]

De Hooghe adopts this theory that priests had hidden religious truths in hieroglyphs out of a fear of their vulgarisation. In *Hieroglyphica* we encounter two possible motives for the use of hieroglyphs. The first stretches all the way back to Seth, who sought to share religious knowledge via understandable hieroglyphs. Afterwards, pagan priests complicated the symbols. De Hooghe's explanation for their use of hieroglyphs as a veil for the axioms of true, sacred religion does not exonerate the priests for their conceit, as some of his contemporaries would have it. De Hooghe states that the main reason for the clerical and political elite to veil their religious knowledge was self-interest. To ensure that their subjects were submissive and obedient and to increase their own power, they kept their religious knowledge to themselves and created a religion of fear that was designed to proscribe outward habits for the simple believers among the common people. This brings to the fore some quite problematic issues in the realm of hieroglyphs, because which hieroglyphs, or elements of them, contained

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26   Quoted in Assmann, *Moses the Egyptian*, 79.

27   D. P. Walker, *The Ancient Theology. Studies in Christian Platonism from the Fifteenth to the Eighteenth Centuries* (London: Duckworth, 1972), 109, 221.

28   Quoted in Harrison, *Religion and the Religions*, 134.

29   Jean Seznec, *The Survival of the Pagan Gods. The Mythological Tradition and Its Place in Renaissance Humanism and Art* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1972), 248.

pristine truths and which were the nonsensical inventions of deceptive clerics?[30] More fundamental even was the contradiction in the idea of a 'pristine Egyptian language' out of which people tried to recover some pristine 'Sethian' universal language, most of the time conceived of as a pictorial language.[31] Such a view aligned with the Christian view that God had originally revealed himself in an understandable manner to all mankind. The problem, however, that Egyptian hieroglyphs did comprise a 'visual' language, but these hieroglyphs were neither universally comprehended nor unambiguous and understandable exclusively by the initiated elite. For critical thinkers, this contradiction was right up their alley. They saw the idea of deliberate veiling to be insufficient: either this universal language could be understood by not only the initiated elite but everyone, or it was no original language.[32]

De Hooghe's discussion of hieroglyphs suggests an engagement with this criticism, but his solution to the problem was quite simple. Originally, hieroglyphic symbols had been universally understandable, but they were corrupted after being hijacked by pagan priests, becoming obscure and comprehensible only to the initiated. This is where decline and wholesale corruption set in. As we saw, De Hooghe promises in *Hieroglyphica* to unmask this age-old religious deceit by explaining all kinds of hieroglyphs to the common man in the vernacular. This aim is emphasised by De Hooghe's depiction of veils being lifted, a motif that occurs time and again in his etchings.[33] At the same time, offering his argument in hieroglyphic form, he invites his readers to solve the riddle for themselves, and to discover where the voice of God, the original source of revelation in Eden, can be heard most clearly: in the Bible, in Nature, in human reason or in the individual's heart and conscience.

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30 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica,* 54.
31 Weststeijn, *From Hieroglyphs to Universal Characters,* 242. Also the mnemotechnical argument from chapter 2 rested on the idea that these images were very clear. Weststeijn, *From Hieroglyphs to Universal Characters*, 261.
32 Harrison, *Religion and the Religions*, 153; Weststeijn, *From Hieroglyphs to Universal Characters*, 243.
33 See chapter 6.6 below.

3.2 The Bible: undisputed source of knowledge

In *Hieroglyphica*, as in most theological writings of the period, the central source of knowledge of true religion is the Bible. In both the writing and the etchings of De Hooghe the Bible plays a large role, and is always treated with great respect. Not only are the scriptures a major source for De Hooghe's hieroglyphical symbols, but the Bible itself appears several times as a material object. Heretical figures literally drop their Bibles; people inventing tales separate from the biblical stories are called 'Bible murderers', and figures reading the Bible are trampled upon by the pope. At several other places the importance and authority of biblical revelation are emphasised, and De Hooghe criticises the Catholic Church for attributing to tradition the same authority that has been given to the Bible.[34]

Fig. 39. De Hooghe, Plate 30, Van het Goddelyk Woord [On the Divine Word]
Fig. 40. De Hooghe, Zaligmakend Woord [Soul-saving Word], detail of Plate 30

One of the chapters which presents the Bible as the ultimate source of truth is chapter 30. This chapter, entitled Van het Goddelyk Woord [On the Divine Word], is centred on the figure of the Soul-saving Word, which is a gift of 'Divine Grace'.

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34   De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 38, 285, 326, 363, 364.

The relevance of the Bible for the entire world is allegorically visualised by the globe that the figure Divine Word holds under his arm; a harp stands for the songs contained within it; a garment of camel's hair represents the prophecies (referring to John the Baptist announcement of the imminent arrival of Jesus); a lily corresponds to the incarnation of Christ and a cross stands for redemption (of the elect) through His death. The Holy Spirit, visualised in the form of the dove, plays an important role. At several other places in *Hieroglyphica* the author mentions the importance of revelation in acquiring the correct knowledge of God.

> The knowledge of God and of godliness spreads from revelation, as poured out by the Holy Ghost. Flesh and blood do not reveal this knowledge or true wisdom, which saves the soul through faith.[35]

The lack of such revelation had severe consequences, according to De Hooghe. Besides the content of the Bible that effects the soul's salvation, the book also provided answers to questions about the origins of the world:

> While the heathens thus grope in the dark for the true nature and origin of the Universe, God's Grace descends upon his elect, imparting to them the Light of his Soul-saving Word, both in his Old and New covenant…[36]

Considering sun-worship by various peoples, De Hooghe links their superstitious beliefs to their lack of biblical knowledge. He states:

> For to the heathens this largest created Light seemed sufficient for everything. And because they were not granted acceptance of the ineffable God by a revealed faith, their external senses were touched most by this [the sun], and, stirring their minds, they gave to the Sun alone the honour for the existence and the origin of other creatures.[37]

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35 Idem, 31. 'De kennis van God en godvruchtigheid vloeit af van openbaring, als ingestort door gods geest. Vlees en bloed openbaart die kennis of rechte waarheid niet, die zaligmakend is door het geloof.' See also De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 56, 183.

36 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 247. 'Terwyl het Heydendom alzoo schemerende tast naar den waaren stand, en oorsprong van 't Geheel Al, zoo daalt de Goddelyke Genade op zyne Keurlingen, en deelt aan de zelve mede het Licht van zyn Zaligmakend Woord, zoo in zyn Oud, als Nieuw Verbond,...'

37 Idem, 109. 'Want den Heydenen kwam dit grootste geschape Licht voor, als voldeende voor alles. En wyl hen niet gegunt wierd den Onbegrypelyken God door een ingestort Geloof aan de nemen, zoo raakte deze hunne uyterlyke zinnen meest., en bewegende hun verstand, gaven zij […] aan de Zon alle de eer van 't wezen, en worden der andere Schepzelen.'

Although here and elsewhere De Hooghe scorns scholasticism – the arid learning of the schools, weighted down with their myriad distinctions and technicalities –he shows himself a great admirer of learning throughout *Hieroglyphica*. Besides the investigation of literary sources, De Hooghe exhorts people to use coins and other antiquities to clarify biblical issues.[38] This sort of practice aligns with the humanist habit of taking recourse to antiquarian data to fill in gaps and to clarify obscurities in the Bible. Since long ago

> it had become common understanding among students of Scripture that correct reading must be based on correct geography (as well as botany, zoology, and mineralogy). Erasmus warmly recommended the use of maps and cosmographies for the study and animation of Scripture. He ridiculed those who, shamelessly prognosticating or consulting terrible dictionaries, turned towns to fruits, gems to fish, and stars to birds. After all, as Erasmus said following St. Augustine, the mystical sense of scripture often depended on the unique qualities of such things.[39]

An unintended corollary of this use of historical aids was the increased historicisation of the Bible: it became be seen as a product of a specific period instead of a sacred book formed in a historical vacuum. This emerging perspective resulted in an overall view of the Bible and religion that was, of course more historical, and more comparative as well. The comparison of Christianity with other religions, will be further elaborated in chapters 4 and 5 of this thesis, pervades *Hieroglyphica*. Despite, or maybe thanks to, this growing attention towards the Bible's historical context of the Bible, the book's meaning did not become more unequivocal. On the contrary: the use of humanist methods combined with the reading of scripture in the vernacular by lay people made 'biblical scholarship a territory disputed as never before'. This expansion of scholarship and its contestation was not only a the result of pressure 'from below', because ministers had sought, since the beginning of the Reformation, the furthering of biblical knowledge and catechism among their flocks.[40]

This goal did not always work out as intended, as evident from De Hooghe's etching 57, Van de Waare Leer [On True Doctrine]. De Hooghe presents figure B as the Woeste Grauw [raging mob], made up of people who after years of oppression were 'freed' from Catholic rule and the Church's inventions. Poorly educated, however,

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38   Idem, 440.

39   Shalev, *Sacred Words and Worlds,* 8.

40   Idem, 5; Gregory, *The Unintended Reformation*; Spaans, *A Newer Protestantism*, forthcoming. See for a growing number of biblical lexica chapter 2.2 of this thesis.

these people wrongly interpret the Bible, ending up amongst the raving peasants who oppose their lords and innocent people. (The reference here is probably to the Peasant Wars of the 1520s and perhaps also to the rebellious Anabaptists in Münster in 1534-1535).[41] De Hooghe hence recognised that the Bible was not an unproblematic source: people interpreted it in various way, with very different, and sometimes even violent, ramifications.

Throughout *Hieroglyphica* the Bible is thus presented, in a way quite aligned with the mainstream view, as the indispensable source of true religion. Looking at his book as a whole, however, we see that De Hooghe pays a great deal of attention to other sources from which one can gain an understanding of true religion.

Fig. 41. De Hooghe, Plate 57, Van de Waare Leer [On True Doctrine]
Fig. 42. De Hooghe, Woeste Grauw [Raging mob], detail of Plate 57

3.3 Highlighting the Book of Nature: apologetic and subversive

Theologians had long been convinced that religious knowledge could be acquired from nature. Traditionally in Christian theology, the 'Book of Scripture' was accompanied the 'Book of Nature', a metaphor for God's creation. The second article in the *Confessio Belgica* points at these two means of knowing God:

Question: By what means God is made known unto us

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41   De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 409, 410.

> Answer: We know him by two means; first, by the creation, preservation and government of the universe; which is before our eyes as a most elegant book, wherein all creatures, great and small, are as so many characters leading us to contemplate the invisible things of God, namely His power and divinity, as the apostle Paul says, Rom. 1:20. All which things are sufficient to convince men, and leave them without excuse. Secondly, he makes himself more clearly and fully known to us by his holy and divine Word, that is to say, as far as is necessary for us to know in this life, to his glory and our salvation.[42]

Throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, there was greater attention directed towards the connection between religion and nature: researchers in science were highly interested in physics, and the natural sciences gained a prominent place alongside sacred history in theological apologetics.[43] As described by Eric Jorink in his *Het 'Boeck der Natuere'. Nederlandse geleerden en de wonderen van Gods schepping 1575-1715*, this attention to physics was closely interwoven with religion, focussing on the compatibility of new scientific insights with orthodox dogmas. Increasingly, this Book of Nature was seen as a source for natural religion, as opposed to supernatural, biblical religion. Contemplating the intricate beauty, order and efficiency of nature induced scientists and theologians alike – often pious scholars or scholarly theologians – to extol its providential maker. Books such as *Physiologia sacra* (1650) by the Reformed minister and natural philosopher Johannes de Mey (1607-1678) claimed that especially the smallest creatures, such as locusts, testified to God's omnipotence.[44] For many people nature thus functioned as an apologetic instrument. At the same time, however, cooperation was sometimes difficult because of an awareness that physics could not only bolster religious beliefs but also affect the very core of belief and religion.[45] As Jorink puts it: nature was 'both poison and cure' with regard to religion in the Early Modern era.[46]

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42 *Confessio Belgica*, art. 2.

43 Van Asselt, *De neus van de bruid,* 179.

44 Jorink, *Het 'Boeck der Natuere',* 216-218; R.H. Vermij, 'Bernard Nieuwentijt en de physico-theologie,' *Documentatieblad Werkgroep Achttiende eeuw* 20 (1988): 215-229 there 216; Van Einatten and Van Lieburg, *Nederlandse Religiegeschiedenis*, 245; Van Asselt, *De neus van de bruid*, 180. Towards the end of the seventeenth century and throughout the eighteenth, this conviction that every tiny part of nature had its fixed and useful place in Creation developed into the basis of a systematic approach. Increasingly focussing on natural order and regularity it evolved into physico-theology see R.H. Vermij, *Secularisering en natuurwetenschap in de zeventiende en achttiende eeuw. Bernard Nieuwentijt* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1991).

45 Vermij, *Bernard Nieuwentijt en de physico-theologie*, 216.

46 Erik Jorink, "Outside God, there is Nothing'. Swammerdam, Spinoza and the Janus-Face of the Early Dutch Enlightenment,' in *The Early Enlightenment in the Dutch Republic, 1650-1750, ed* W. van Bunge (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 81-109.

De Hooghe had been exposed to the natural philosophy of his time. He illustrated several books on specialised topics from botany and entomology, including works by leading scholars in the field, such as Francesco Redi's book on insects, *Experimenta circa generationem insectorum,* and Abrahamus Munting's *Waare oeffening der planten,: waar in de rechte aart, natuire, en verborgene eigenschappen der boomen, heesteren, ende bloemen ... kenbaar gemaakt worden*.[47] De Hooghe was also familiar with the exchange of learning that took place in private studies and collections. He visited the collection of curiosities assembled by the French Huguenot Nicolas Chevalier, whose library and collection of physical specimens attracted many intellectuals.[48] De Hooghe's visit might have helped him prepare for his work illustrating Chavalier's *Catalogue des medailles qui se trouvent dans le cabinet de Nicolas Chevalier à Amsterdam*.[49] De Hooghe himself also mentions visiting Swammerdam's collection of curiosities and Constantijn Huygens's place.[50] He also illustrated the inventory of Levinus Vincent's cabinet of natural phenomena in Haarlem in Vincent's *Het Wondertoneel der nature* [Wonderful stage of nature] as well as its elaborate sequel, *Tweede deel of vervolg* [Second volume or sequel].[51] Visiting such places must have

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47   Abrahamus Munting, *Waare oeffening der planten, : waar in de rechte aart, natuire, en verborgene eigenschappen der boomen, heesteren, ende bloemen ... kenbaar gemaakt worden. Met 40. kopere plaaten ... verçiert.* (Leeuwarden: Hendrik Rintjes, 1671); Francesco Redi, *Experimenta circa generationem insectorum ad nobilissimum virum CarolumDati* (Amsterdam: Andreas Frisius, 1671).

48   Between 1692 and 1706 Cuper, the antiquary and burgermeester Nicolaus Witsen, the classicist Almeloveen, the Huguenot ministers and scholars Pierre Jurieu, Etienne Chauvin, Jacques Basnage, and Etienne Martin, Jacob Gronovius, Pierre Bayle, Isaac 'sGravesande, Adrian Reland, Frederick Spanheim, J.G. Graevus, Peter Burman, J.F. Cramer, Gregorio Leti, and others signed his visitors' book. See Ann Goldar, *Impolite learning. Conduct and Community in the Republic of Letters, 1680-1750* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 189. The visitors' book is kept in the Koninklijke Bibliotheek: KB 69 B 8 'Description de la Chambre des Raretez', ff. 41 ff., with the remark that 'The visitors' book included engraved portraits and devices, as well as remarks, of some of the visitors.'

49   De Hooghe illustrated several of Chevalier's books. In the context of his visit to the cabinet, De Hooghe's frontispiece for the *Catalogue des medailles qui se trouvent dans le cabinet de Nicolas Chevalier à Amsterdam* (ca. 1696) and his illustrations for the *Description de la Chambre de Raretez de la ville d'Utrecht ...* stand out.

50   De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 125. Jan Swammerdam's father was the pharmacist Jan Jacobsz. Swammerdam op de Oude Schans in Amsterdam, who owned a famous collection of natural phenomena.

51   Levinus Vincent, *Wondertoneel der nature, geopent in eene korte beschryvinge der hoofddelen van de byzondere zeldsaamheden daar in begrepen* (Amsterdam: François Halma, 1706); Vincent, *Het Tweede deel of vervolg van het Wondertoneel der nature* (Amsterdam, 1715). See Jorink, *Het 'Boeck der Natuere'*, 351, 352; Ann Goldgar, *Impolite Learning*, 198.

allowed De Hooghe to present himself as a learned professional, a man who could mingle with the intellectual owners of these collections and their other visitors.
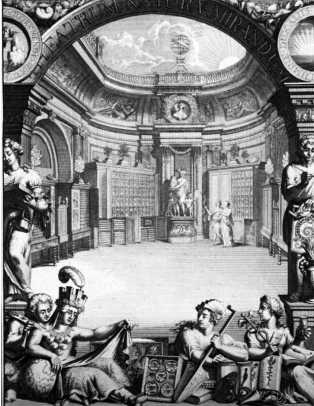
Fig. 43. Jan van Vianen naar Romeyn de Hooghe, frontispiece of Levinus' *Wondertooneel der Natuur*. (Wonderful stage of nature) (1706), Rijksmuseum Amsterdam

Fig. 44. Andries van Buysen (Sr.), Bezoekers in het natuurhistorisch kabinet van Levinus Vincent in Haarlem, naar Romeyn de Hooghe, ca. 1706. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

In *Hieroglyphica* nature is omnipresent as a source of knowledge, but first and foremost for pagans who have not experienced biblical revelation. Via an examination of their natural surroundings, pagans deduced the workings of the world and arrived at an idea of the Divinity that created and sustained the earth. In De Hooghe's images the firmament takes pride of place: according to De Hooghe, the firmament represented the clearest natural language through which God presented himself, appealing mostly to the religious imagination possessed by human beings. *Hieroglyphica*'s images of celestial spheres seem to have emerged from a quite scholarly environment. Unlike the classical, worn-out symbolism often applied to images of animals, De Hooghe's representation of celestial bodies are quite up to date, for instance in plate 12, which presents the Copernican system.

Plate 8, Van de Bewegingen der Planeten [On Planetary Movement], tells how the firmament functioned for the ancients as a book of nature, as was their primary source of knowledge. De Hooghe then continues with examples drawn from antiquarian studies and ethnography, presenting the ways in which the zodiac was visualised by the Greeks, Egyptians, Ethiopians, Indians, Chaldeans etc. Their understanding led the pagans, however, to adopt misguided forms of religion. Here De Hooghe inserts the text of a Brahmanistic morning prayer that venerates the sun. The corresponding image (A) denotes the sun in the hands of a youngster, pointing his finger at figure C, Time. Here De Hooghe, unusually in *Hieroglyphica*, gives the

source that had inspired his image. The legend says that the image was sent to him by a sir Ludolf,[52] probably referring to Hiob Ludolf (1624-1704), a German Orientalist and the author of *Allgemeine Schau-Bühne der Welt, oder, Beschreibung der vornehmsten Welt-Geschichte* (1699), for which De Hooghe provided the illustrations.[53] It remains unclear where the morning prayer comes from, and whether Ludolf connected it in some way to the image or if De Hooghe combined the two elements himself.

Fig. 45. De Hooghe, Plate 8, Van de Beweging der Planeten [On Planetary Movement]

In general, De Hooghe saw the 'visible and sensible creation' as the medium through which pagans came to their recognition of a God.[54] For pagans, this Book of Nature was all they had, and De Hooghe goes so far as to state that 'religion

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52   De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 95.

53   Hiob Ludolf, *Allgemeine Schau-Bühne der Welt, oder, Beschreibung der vornehmsten Welt-Geschichte* (Frankfurt: Zunner, 1699). See H.E. Weijers, *Iets over Job Ludolf den beroemden beoefenaar der Ethiopische letterkunde en geschiedenis* (Leiden, 1833).

54   De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 80. 'Want daar de Heydenen van de Geschape zaken, ja zelf maar de zienlyke, of zinlyke, die in 't begrip derzelve vallen kunnen, alleen God opstelden…'

had its origins in the ideas of pagan priests gazing at celestial movement'.[55] Pagan sages 'read' nature through those celestial bodies, and De Hooghe admired the amount of knowledge they acquired.[56] Although these wise men and scientists came close to grasping divine knowledge and the existence of a sublime, eternal Being, the knowledge they possessed was not sufficient.

> But we know That this [= grasping the mysterious powers of God] was impossible for the pagan sages, though we can attentively understand and comprehend these, and clarify them with the help of the gracious revelation of the Holy Spirit, and give a systematic account of them, so that we may honour, fear and adore them in modest Wisdom, in Faith. But it is safe to assume that everything that intelligent Men could deduce from the light of Nature, was known to them...[57]

The ancient Egyptians even arrived at a monotheistic religion this way, visualising the Supreme God whose characteristics they distilled from nature. De Hooghe describes but does not etch a representation of this supreme being.

> While a Supreme God is indivisible, uncreated, entirely by and in himself, immaterial and beyond mere matter, this is how they have depicted him, sitting on a lotus shrub, denoting how that God is above clay and earth, as a power that rules in those through his spirit. The leaves, the unopened flower bud, and the fruit of the lotus, are all of them round, representing his universal power over created things, that is the same everywhere. Moreover, God exists in and by himself, Holy and to be worshipfully feared, and resting in himself. Wherefore they depict this God as the helmsman of a ship, to show he is the ruler of the world; for even when the helmsman is at a distance from rudder and ship, even in an instant he moves and directs this ship according to his will, and according to how he has set the rudder. But, worshipping this Being in fear, they conceive of the supreme Mediator, the Sun, by which all the constellations, with the movement of the cosmos, are inspired, and whose powers permeate everything. They depict him as a hawk, and add

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55 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 30, 51. 'Heidense priesters deden den godsdienst geboren worden.'
56 Idem, 55, 56.
57 Idem, 56. 'Maar wij weeten dat zulks den Heydensche Wyzen onmoogelyk was, welker doorgronding wy aandachtelyk in, en doorzien konnen, en door de genadige Openbaaring van Gods Geest ophelderen en in het net stellen, om dezelve in eene matige Wysheyd, in het Gelove, te eeren, te vreezen, en aan te bidden. Men kan echter wel denken, dat alles wat 'er voor wakkere Mannen, uyt het het licht der Natuure te haalen was, door hen voldaan is …'

other profound symbols, and add a multitude of powers, commensurate with the things that need to be done, in order to introduce one God in this multitude of Gods, and to demonstrate, in all these combined powers, that one Divine power is omnipresent. See here the record of their pagan concept, retrieved from the Light of Nature. And this is what we will encounter in the Hieroglyphs...[58]

This knowledge that could be acquired from nature did not always come naturally; De Hooghe deemed reason to be important:

Understanding Nature was not possible by just looking, but needed to be grasped in conceptions, which forced people to ascend from natural phenomena to its creating cause, which they did quite impressively as we see from their hieroglyphs.[59]

This is visualised in the first chapters of *Hieroglyphica* and also in the final chapter, 63, where an Ethiopian figure symbolises the impressive knowledge of astrology possessed by people in the orient.

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58 Idem, 58. 'Dewyl een Opper-God, ondeylbaar, ongemaakt, geheel uyt zich zelven, of in zig zelven, onstoffelyk boven alle stoffen is, zoo hebben zij die uytgebeeld, zittende op eene Lothus of Meerbladen struyk, om te beteekenen, dat die God boven al het leem of stof is, als eene macht, die door zynen geest daar in heerst. De Blaaden, de geslooten Blom en Appel van de Lothus, zyn alle rond, betekende de rondom doorwerkende kracht van zyn zin in het Geschapenen over al dezelve zynde. God bestaat, boven deze doening, uyt en in zig zelven, Heylig en eerbiediglyk te vreezen, en in zig zelven berustende. Waarom zy denzelven God verbeelden als Stuurman van een Schip, om te doen zien, dat hy is de Beheerscher der Wereld; want al is de Stuurman vna het Roer en Schip afgescheyden, echter in een zeer licht oogemblik, beweegt en stiert hy dit Schip naar zyn wil, en zoo als hy het Roer heeft vastgesteld. Maar dit Weezen met vreeze aanbiddende, neemen zy den oppersten Middelaar, de Zon, van welke alle Hemels-teekenen, met de beweging van 't Heel-Al worden bezielt, en wiens krachten over al invloeyen. Deze doenze door den Havik verbeelden, en zetten daar andere groote Merkbeelden by; en neemen veelvoudige machten, naar de verscheydenheyd der uyt te voeren zaaken daar by, om, door die menigte der Goden, eenen God in te voeren, en om te toonen, door al de by een gehaalde krachten, dat 'er eene Gods kracht overal by is. Zie daar een verhaal van hun Heydensch Denkbeeld, verre opgehaalt uyt het Natuurlyk Licht. En dit zal ons in de Merkbeelden zo voorkoomen.'

59 Idem, 57. 'Het begrip der Natuurkunde geenzins van buyten te halen moest dan door denkbeelden bevat worden, en dwong de verstanden uit de werken der natuur tot de scheppende oorzaak op de klimmen; waar in zij een zeer schoone gang maakten, gelijk uit hunne Merkbeelden te zien is, maar echter niet op het recht pad kwaamen, dewyl de instorting van Gods Geest, en het Zaligmakend Geloof hen was ontbreekende.'
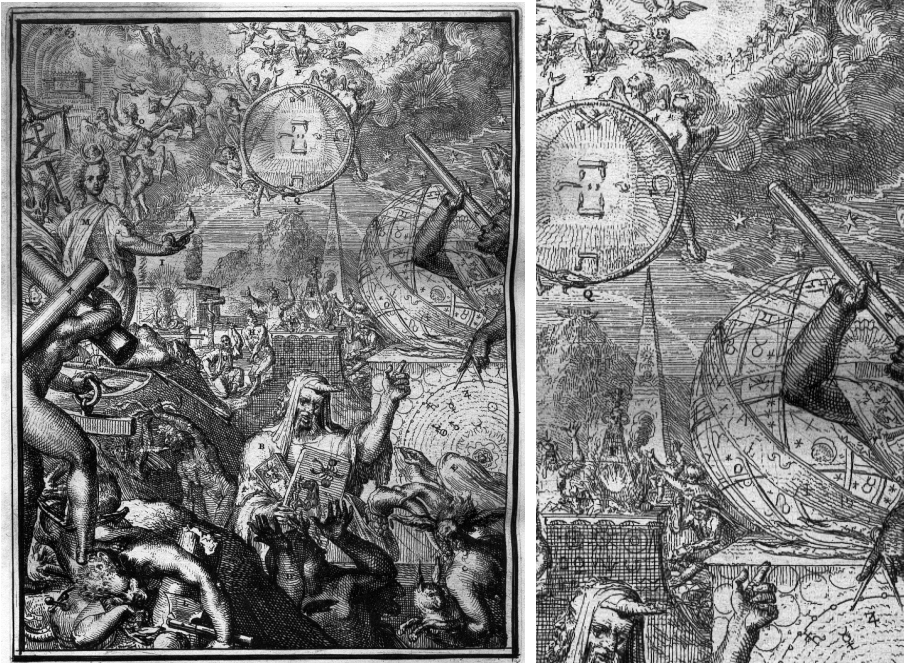
Fig. 46. De Hooghe, Plate 63, Toepassing [Application]
Fig. 47. De Hooghe, Ethiopier [Ethiopian], detail from Plate 63

Although nature brought people to a belief in a Supreme Being, ruler of the World, this natural religion also had its disadvantages, according to De Hooghe. First and foremost there was the danger of superstition: people got only a glimpse of religion, and almost always this limited exposure engendered the worship of natural phenomena themselves, particularly the celestial bodies, as gods.[60] Many examples of such idolatry are found in De Hooghe's images; most frequently it was the sun that had provoked superstition.[61] Another danger of natural religion was that it could lead to the despising of biblical miracles and scriptural dogmas, through their subordination to what was naturally possible. De Hooghe depicts this tendency is depicted by showing a rat nibbling the pages of the Bible in order to

> refute the Miracles done by Our Saviour in the New Testament, and tempt
> people into the Heresy of the 'Naturalists', who declare that everything
> flowed from itself, is maintained by itself, and perishes in itself, without

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60   Idem, 201-204.
61   De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 95 and 109.

conceiving of or believing in God, his eternal ordinance, eternal counsel, merciful creation, fatherly providence and miraculous redemption and salvation.[62]

Besides the celestial spheres, De Hooghe pays considerable attention to the allegorical representation of nature as such. In *Hieroglyphica* the natural world is represented by Diana of Ephesus, a goddess that was familiar both in antiquity and in early modern period. In chapter 2 of this thesis we saw that Diana became the general symbol for the natural world as the subject of the art of drawing (see fig 21).

The Diana-motif appears in *Hieroglyphica* more often than any other figure. The importance of Diana, or Nature, becomes clear in the book's first chapter, where De Hooghe claims that the physical world, nature in its created form, is of utmost importance for gaining religious knowledge, as she is the most important source for hieroglyphic artists.[63] As with his other images, De Hooghe starts by informing the reader about the allegorical figure, who had been venerated in many pagan religions. The story of how the apostle Paul preached against the devotes of this goddess in Ephesus in Acts 19 underscored that she had been worshiped widely 'in all of Asia'. De Hooghe then delves deeply into the specific allegorical depictions of this nature goddess, whose most distinctive feature was her many-breasted torso, denoting her fertility.

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62 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 431. 'Eene vuyle Rot, het Merkbeeld van Laster, knabbelt nog aan de randen van 't zelve Tapyt, om op die Kerkschendige Voet, de Wonderdaden van onzen Zaligmaker in 't Nieuw Verbond, mede te ontzenuwen, en de Menschen te verleyden tot de Kettery der Naturalisten, welke alles uyt zig zelven gevloeyt, door zichzelven onderhouden, in zig zelven vergaande stellen, zonder God, zyn Oneyndig Bestier, Eeuwigen Raad, Genadige Schepping, Vaderlyke Onderhouding, Wonderbaarlykste Verlossing, en Zaligmaking te bedenken of te geloven.'

63 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 4. 'De Kunst van het merkbeelden maken neemt haar onderwerp vooral de natuur. De wetenschap van de merkbeelden, verbeeld door een Egyptische geheimpriester en schriftgeleerde, is een onderzoeker van de rijkdommen der natuur. De kunst is oneindig omdat haar onderwerp, de natuur, oneindig is. Het belangrijkste hoofdbeeld, dat men voor de boekzaal der natuurgeheymen mag schatten is Diana van Ephezen.'

Fig. 48. De Hooghe, Diana van Ephesen [Diana of Ephesus], detail of Plate 1

De Hooghe further explains his foregrounding of the goddess of nature by claiming that not only did priest regard her as an inspiration for hieroglyphs, but she also appealed to ordinary people: 'no people existed who did not worship the nature goddess'.[64] Besides the etching in plate 1, Diana figures in Plates 10, 25 and 27, in slightly different forms, a diversity that De Hooghe explains by stating that the goddess's prototype was venerated in different religions under various names, such as Hecate, Isis, Proserpina, Luna, Cybele, Rhea or Vesta.[65]

The anthropomorphic image of the earth as a mother had existed at least since Lucretius's comparison of the earth to a breastfeeding mother.[66] Whilst interest in ancient literary and archaeological sources surged during the Renaissance, sculptures of Diana were excavated and reinforced her importance. Many Renaissance descriptions of the goddess rely on the work of the late Roman author Macrobius.[67] De Hooghe most probable source , however, was *Symbolica Dianae Ephesiae Statua* by the Jesuit Claudio Menetreio (1631-1705), where Diana is described as the 'hieroglyphic statue par excellence'.[68] This sounds similar to De Hooghe's assessment, and it seems that the artist indeed used not only the images provided by Menetreius but also drew upon

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64   Idem, 6.

65   Idem, 27.

66   Andrea Goesch, *Diana Ephesia. Ikonographische Studien zur Allegorie der Natur in der Kunst vom 16.-19. Jahrhundert* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1996), 51, 52.

67   Goesch, *Diana Ephesia,* 28.

68   Idem, 36. 'Die reichtum des figuralen Schmuckes des Figur verleitete Menetreius dazu, sie als ‚hieroglyphische' Statue par exelence zu deuten.'

the Jesuit's writings, albeit in a much abridged form, when composing his commentary for plate 25. Another source of inspiration might have been Athanasius Kircher, who also had discussed Diana and with whose work De Hooghe was familiar.[69]

Typically for representations of Diana in antiquity and in *Hieroglyphica*, she embodies two concepts: she is both nature itself and the goddess of nature. She symbolises the tangible world via the heavens, the earth and the subterranean realm but at the same time she is the keeper of nature, holding all creatures in her care.[70] Although this equation of the ancient goddess with nature had been common for millennia, the topic of the relationship between nature and God was hotly debated in the second half of the seventeenth century. The most notorious manifestation of this debate is found in the writings of Spinoza, who famous words '*deus sive natura*' equated God and nature. Although Spinoza used these words only a few times, the reactions to his identification of God with nature were severe. He used the existing terms *natura naturans* and *natura naturata* to shore up the same the notion of '*deus sive natura*'. For him each term referred to nature but to separate aspects of it. Whereas *natura naturans* was the creative principle, the complete substance consisting of all attributes (as these attributes engender mode-specific forms such as a tree or a dog), *natura naturata* denoted the creation resulting from the former, consisting of all the modes, finite and infinite alike. *Natura naturata* and *natura naturans* may have already been present in scholastic theology, but after Spinoza they were contaminated with 'spinozism'. People were reluctant to see too much of God in his creation, and most of the time emphatically distinguished the boundaries between a supernatural God and his natural creation. [71]

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69 De Hooghe's descriptions of the Phrygian Cybele, the Elysian Ceres and the Sicilian Diana (*Hieroglyphica,* 215) seem to be taken from Menetreius, *Symbolica Dianae Ephesiae Statua* (Rome, 1688), 12, see Goesch, *Diana Ephesia*, 36.

70 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 111.

71 Piet Steenbakkers, ´Een vijandige overname: Spinoza over *natura naturans* en *natura naturata*', in *Spinoza en de scholastiek*, ed Gunther Coppens (Leuven: Acco, 2003), 35-52: 45, 46; Carlos Fraenkel, 'Maimonides' God and Spinoza's Deus sive Natura,' *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 44 (2006): 169-215.

Fig. 49. De Hooghe, Plate 25, Van de Grieksche Goden [On Greek Gods]
Fig. 50. De Hooghe, Diana van Ephezen [Diana of Ephesus], detail of Plate 25
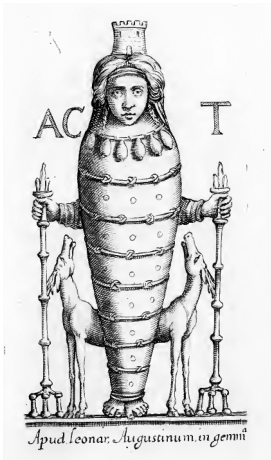
Fig. 51. Diana of Ephesus in Menetreius's *Symbolica Dianae Ephesiae* (Romae, 1688)

De Hooghe's take on this matter is again ambivalent. In his images he conflates the physical with the metaphysical; Diana's appearance represents the creative force of nature, suggesting the *natura naturans*, while the animals sheltering under her cloak represent created nature, the *natura naturata*.[72] De Hooghe's commentary on Diana of Ephesus in chapter 1 shows that he was aware of the problematic connection between God and nature and ostensibly rejects their merging as blasphemous.

> Here, reader, we have an example of the Hieroglyphic art, in which the art of drawing has concentrated the universe, and which the Egyptians and other peoples have given so many different names; seemingly conflating the creator with creation, the keeper and that which is looked after according to the testimony of Hermes, Orpheus and Seneca, and others, among whom, however, the best seem so enlightened that they state: to use the name of Nature to represent the universe with its Creator and keeper, is to defile God's honour with a fickle name, because they prefer to use that word for God and Divine reason incorporated in the world or the universe but existing outside it, eternal and endless.[73]

But here also one detects a pun. Although this passage gives the impression that its author is expressing an orthodox opinion on the matter at hand, the word 'seem' could imply otherwise. These 'best' thinkers are not enlightened; they only *seem* so. A surprising view on the matter comes from the image of Knowledge of God, or Theology (A) from chapter 37, Van de Waarheyd en hare Vyanden [On the Truth and her Adversaries] (see chapter 6, fig. 164). Such a title would lead one to expect the Bible to be paramount in the explanation it contains. It comes as a surprise, then, that De Hooghe devotes only one sentence to the Bible – visualised as the two books of the Old and the New Testament, hanging on the arms of the figure – and focusses to a far greater extent on the knowledge that can be attained through nature, depicted as two globes.

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72 Goesch, *Diana Ephesia,* 110.

73 Romeyn de Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 9. 'Zie daar Leezer een Proefstuk van de Beeldspraak-Konst, waar in de Beeld-Konst heeft in een getrokken 't Geheel-Al, en waar aan de Egyptenaars en andere Volkeren zoo vele en verscheyde Naamen gegeven hebben, het Scheppende en het Geschaapene, de Onderhouder met het Onderhoudene, als in een vermengende; naar het getuigenisse van Hermes, Orpheus, Seneca en anderen, onder welken egter de beste zoo verlicht schynen, dat zy stellen: Dat, de naam van de Natuur te gebruyken, tot afbeelding van het Heel-Al, met zynen Schepper en Onderhouder, is Gods er te bezwalken, met eene veranderde Naam; daar zy dat Woord neemen en willen, voor God en de Goddelyke reeden in de Wereld of 't Geheel-Al, ingelyfd, dog buyten die bestaande, Eeuwig en Oneyndig.'
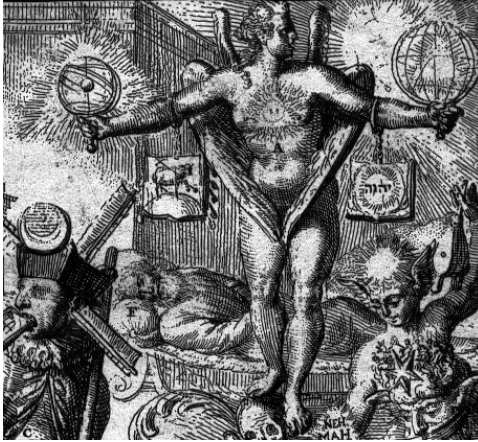
Fig. 52. De Hooghe, Kennisse Gods, Theologie [Knowledge of God or Theology], detail from Plate 37

What strikes the eye are the two symbols in the hands of theology: two worlds, referring to the natural knowledge of God. In her right hand is the world, contained within a radiant triangle; in her left hand, and at which she directs her gaze, is a radiant triangle contained within the world. These figures, De Hooghe explains, are symbols of Morning Knowledge and Evening Knowledge:

> Further, she carries Morning-knowledge in her right hand, symbolised by a triune Ray of Divine Light, where the universe is reflected in God, and Evening-knowledge in her left hand, where she perceives God in the universe. In these two ways Moses saw God's majesty from behind, recognising the greatness of his Almighty God, in his Creation and disposition, and also [recognising] the universe through his God.[74]

Although this symbolism of 'the universe in God' and 'God in the universe' is reminiscent of the heavily debated close connection between God and nature, its background is quite orthodox. The source for this idea of morning and evening manifestations of knowledge was Augustine's *City of God*.[75] It was adopted by

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74 Idem, 279. 'Voorts heeft zy eene Morgen-kennis in hare Rechterhand, zynde verbeeld met een Drieenige Godstraal, waar in 't Geheel-Al bespiegelt word in God, en de Avond-kennis in de Linkerhand, alwaar zy God ziet in het Geheel-Al. Op deze twee manieren zag Mozes de heerlykheyd Gods van achteren, doorgrondende de grootheyd van zynen Almachtigen God, in zyne Schepping en Schikking, en alzoo 't Geheel Al in zynen God.

75 Aurelius Augustines, *De stad van God*, transl. Gerard Wijdeveld (Amsterdam: Ambo, 1983) lib. xi, cp. vi, vii, xxix, xxx. Augustine explains that morning knowledge is the (supernatural) knowledge of things and that evening knowledge is within reach for human beings: viewing creation in all its beauty should cause people to grasp the idea of God.

medieval theologians such as Meister Eckhart, Bonaventura and Thomas Aquinas. This piece of symbolism probably came to *Hieroglyphica* through the latter, as the text also speaks of midday knowledge (theology) and midnight knowledge (the knowledge pagans can have of God), Thomistic concepts that are not, however, found in Augustine.[76] How De Hooghe knew about this quite specialised information from Augustine and Aquinas remains unclear.

So the notion that God and nature are connected had been present both in Catholic and in Protestant sources. In *Hieroglyphica*, both nature and its symbolic meaning belong to the perfectly orthodox notion of the Book of Nature. That Spinoza had taken up this theme was not strange, as scholastic thought had influenced his epistemology.[77] In orthodox theology, however, God and nature remained separate, whereas Spinoza merged them. In general De Hooghe stays well within the accepted boundaries where it comes to nature as the source of knowledge: the Book of Nature was sufficient to make pagans aware of some notions of true religion, but to arrive at the complete picture the Bible was required.

Still, the idea that some religious knowledge, a natural religion, was possible without revelation gained an ever more prominent place in seventeenth-century theology, if only to allow the drawing of a sharp distinction between natural and revealed religion. A Cocceian theologian like Salomon van Til emphatically treated natural theology and revealed theology separately. He divided his *Theologiae utriusque compendium cum naturalis tum revelatae …[Short treatise on theology, both innate and revealed]* (Leiden 1704*)* into two parts.[78] Here, natural religion, the knowledge possible without revelation, became a *propaedeuse* for revealed religion. Part two consisted of revealed revelation, the extra knowledge that Christians gained from the Bible.[79] He criticised the scholastic theology based on Aristotelian philosophy for amalgamating the two too closely – and thus inviting

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76   De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 279. De Hooghe speaks of 'midday knowledge', a term not present in Augustine but mentioned by Thomas Aquinas. It is of course also possible that De Hooghe consulted some other book which contained the ideas of both Augustine and Aquinas. See K. Schilder, *Kompendium-dogmatiek* dl. 7 (Kampen: n.p., 1941), 282, 283.

77   On Spinoza's scholastic background see J. Martin Bac, *Perfect Will Theology. Divine Agency in Reformed Scholasticism as Against Suárez, Episcopius, Cartesius and Spinoza* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 263.

78   See F. Sassen, *Geschiedenis van de wijsbegeerte in Nederland tot het einde der negentiende eeuw* (Amsterdam: Elsevier, 1959), 256, 257.

79   Ernestine van der Wall, 'Til, Salomon van (1643— 1713),' in *The Dictionary of Seventeenth and Eighteenth-Century Dutch Philosophers,* ed Wiep van Bunge et al. (Bristol: Thoemmes, 2003), 981-983.

dangerous border conflicts between theology and natural philosophy.[80]

Hieroglyphica signals this increased attention given to natural theology. In his description of pagan peoples, De Hooghe often refers to natural religion. References to an innate awareness of God and basic religious conscience are ubiquitous. An example:

> In societies of more or less civilised people there are no atheists. Such societies always have religion, no matter how little. Eventually, they all conclude an Eternal Being, in which, and through which All is. To this Being, we attribute (as in describing the properties of God we are limited by the possibilities of our language, and can only speak terms we use for ourselves) Reason and Wisdom, which were with God before the beginning.[81]

Some later freethinkers equated natural religion with a true philosophy, which rejected the existence of God or his relevance to humanity; all established religions, with their theologies, religious laws and rituals, were merely deformed versions of this true philosophy.[82] In this sense, natural religion does not occur in *Hieroglyphica* – De Hooghe explicitly rejects it via the image of the rat cited above. Natural religion was also deployed to counter such 'atheists' of his time, as 'for many apologists in the seventeenth century the innateness of the idea of God constituted incontrovertible proof of God's existence'. This argument of the *consensus gentium* had been used as proof of God's existence since antiquity, and we see De Hooghe invoking it explicitly in the quotation cited above. [83]

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80   Salomon van Til, *Kortbondig Vertoog der beyder Godgeleerdheyd, zoo der Aangeborene als der Geopenbaarde. Nevens een Aanhanzel van den oorsprong en van de noodzaaklyke kentekenen der geschillen onzes tyds*. Transl. Ant de Reus. Vol. 1 (Dordrecht: Dirk Goris, 1712). On Van Til: J van den Berg, 'Til, Salomon van', *Biografisch lexicon voor de geschiedenis van het Nederlands Protestantisme*, vol. 4 (Kampen: Kok, 1998), 424-428.

81   De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 185. 'In de zamenwoning van eenigzins gepolyste Menschen zyn geene Ongodisten. Die zamenwoning heeft overal, hoe weynig zy doorsteekt, Godsdienst. Elk klimt eyndelyk op tot een Eeuwig Wezen, waar in, en door welk, Alles is. Aan dat Weezen, geeven wy (om dat wy in alle uytdrukzels der Toepassingen op God ons gering uytdrukken, en niet, dan door zaken of Denkbeelden, ons Menschen gelyk) Reeden enWysheyd, die voor alle begin by God was.'

82   Thomas M. Lennon, 'Theology and the God of the Philosophers', in *The Cambridge Companion to Early Modern Philosophy*, ed Donald Rutherford (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 274-298; Israel, *Radical Enlightenment*, 649-651.

83   Peter Harrison, *Religion' and the Religions,* 34. See further Jasper Reid, 'The Common Consent Argument from Herbert to Hume,' *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 53 (2015): 401–434.

3.4 Reason as a dangerous friend

The most debated source for religion besides the Bible and nature was human reason. Connected to and often intertwined with the topic of natural religion, the relation between reason and revelation, and more generally between theology and philosophy, became increasingly problematised over the course of the seventeenth century. The major question concerned the way philosophy could be useful. This conflict erupted in the 1630s over Cartesian philosophy and continued throughout the remainder of the seventeenth century. Before these troubles, theology and philosophy cooperated quite well. The use of reason posed no threat to theology; on the contrary, it was highly appreciated. Since the high Middle Ages theology had been formulated and taught in the universities with the help of Aristotelian philosophy. The accretions of human traditions that had cluttered up Christianity were to be removed, a project to be usefully assisted by reason. To the Reformers, religion without reason would lead to the wrong kind of theology, to belief in false miracles and susceptibility to silly mystifications.[84] Protestants after the Reformation 'contrasted their reasonable creed against the superstition and irrationality of Catholicism'.[85]

Descartes, and Cartesian philosophers and theologians in his wake, rejected Aristotelian philosophy, with wide-ranging consequences for theology. Aristotle had been a heathen, but Christian theology had had a 'genuine and positive relationship with Aristotelianism', especially its 'methodological rationalizing process', which was incorporated into scholastic theology.[86] Reformed theologians split over the claims of Cartesianism to provide greater certainty. One of the controversial points was Descartes's emphasis on reason, which led from systematic doubt to the security of absolute certainties, which could be recognised as 'clear and distinct notions'. Descartes himself kept philosophy and theology separate, but some Reformed theologians nonetheless applied the Cartesian method to theology, which brought about fierce conflicts with those who insisted on the doctrine that human reason had been fatally impaired in the Fall of Adam and Eve. The strongest champion

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84 See Aza Goudriaan, 'Theology and Philosophy' in *A Companion to Reformed Orthodoxy,* ed Herman J. Selderhuis (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 27-64; Aza Goudriaan, *Reformed Orthodoxy and Philosophy;* Euan Cameron, *Entchanted Europe. Superstition, reason and religion, 1250-1750* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); Michael Heyd, *'Be Sober and reasonable'. The critique of enthusiasm in the seventeenth and Early eighteenth centuries* (Leiden: Brill, 1995); Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, 889-899; Richard A. Muller, *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics. Vol. 1,* 360-405.

85 S. J. Barnett, *Idol Temples and Crafty Priests. The Origins of Enlightenment Anticlericalism* (Houndmills: Macmillan, 1999), 42.

86 Muller, *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics, vol 1,* 132-146, esp. p 142. This cooperation was not particularly easier than that between Cartesianism and Christianity, but a long process had adapted Aristotelian philosophy for Christian aims.

of Aristotelianism and opponent of Cartesianism – in general, but especially in theology – was Gisbertus Voetius (1589-1676), professor of theology in Utrecht.[87]

Although rational *methods* were highly appreciated in theological circles, the acceptance of rationalist philosophical *principles* such as those of Descartes was vehemently denounced.[88] Several Cartesian authors provoked the wrath of synods and classes for questioning the Church's authority and arguing that 'Cartesian' principles (which in practice often included the critical reading of the Bible in late-humanist fashion) were superior to its teachings. The most notorious of these writers included Lodewijk Meijer, who in his *Philosophia S. Scripturae interpres* (1666) claimed that reason should be used to explain scripture[89]; Lambertus van Velthuysen, who in his *Tractaet van Afgoderye en Superstitie* of 1669 wondered which parts of the Bible were divinely inspired and which were merely human writings[90]; and above all Spinoza, who in his *Tractatus Theologico-politicus* (1670) stated that the Bible was nothing more than a historical book with a useful moral message, a message which nevertheless could also be arrived at via the proper use of reason.[91] In the last decade of the century *De Betoverde Weereld* [The World Bewitched], by Balthasar Bekker (1691), claimed that the States' Translation had elevated the Devil to the status of a second God, without proper foundation in the biblical text, and thus kept the fires of controversy raging.[92]

The rise of Cartesianism in the Dutch universities created division in the theological faculties, where the federal theology of Johannes Cocceius had already led to controversy, although over unrelated matters. As Cartesian philosophy found a positive reception amongst some of the most prominent Cocceian theologians, the controversy over Cartesianism came to be referred to as the Voetian and Cocceian Controversy. In general, however, the orthodox reaction, both Cocceian and Voetian, to the debate was clear: since the Fall, *ratio* had been continuously

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87　See above all Theo Verbeek, *La querelle d'Utrecht. René Descartes et Martin Schoock* (Paris: Les Impressions Nouvelles, 1988).

88　Muller, *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics, vol 1*, 142, 143; Barnett, *Idol temples*, 42.

89　M. R. Wielema, *The March of the Libertines. Spinozists and the Dutch Reformed Church (1660-1750)* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2004), 130.

90　Van Bunge, *Stevin to Spinoza*, chapter 4.

91　Proponents of this conviction are Lodewyk Meijer, Spinoza, Lambertus van Veldhuizen, Frederik van Leenhof, Herbert of Cherbury and John Toland. The idea is also found amongst Socinians.

92　Balthasar Bekker, *De Betoverde Weereld* (Amsterdam: Daniel van den Dalen, 1691). See, Jan Wim Buisman and Jan de Vet, 'Rede, openbaring en de strijd tegen bijgeloof: de vroege verlichting in de Republiek' in *Een veelzijdige verstandhouding. Religie en Verlichting in Nederland 1650-1850,* ed Ernestine van der Wall and Leo Wessels (Nijmegen: Vantilt, 2007), 75-95; Joke Spaans points at Becker crossing the line with not only his ideas but also his critique of the States Translation. Spaans, *Graphic Satire*, 189-191.

affected by sin, and therefore reason was depraved, no longer to be trusted.[93] The debates were quite complicated and complex, not least because people perceived the term 'reason' and 'reasonable' quite variously. In the writings of the Voetian A. Brakel, for instance, reasonable means 'serving God in Spirit and Truth' (referring to Romans 12:1). As for the relation between reason and revelation, Voetians – like other Reformed thinkers – saw no real problem: God was the author both of the Book of Scripture and of Nature, which would thus correspond. In the unlikely event that contradictions should occur, people should cling to the idea that the Bible was never against reason but could be 'above reason', which meant that it contained information that reason was not able to understand.[94]

Another approach to contradictions between rational and biblical knowledge was found in the separation of the respective ambits of philosophy and theology. Theology and philosophy should not be combined; each should remain in its own field, containing its own truth.[95] This view was taken not only by Cartesians but also by Reformed Cocceians such as Christoph Wittich (1625-1687), Abraham Heidanus (1597-1678), and Frans Burman (1628-1679).[96] When he concludes his paragraph on Copernicanism by saying that he 'shall not get involved in the settling of these philosophical disputes, but rather stick to the Divine Revelation', De Hooghe also seems to separate the knowledge obtained from reason from that which is given by revelation.[97] And indeed, he does not wade into such muddied waters. De Hooghe deals with Copernicanism by refraining from choosing between a heliocentric and a geocentric view. On the one hand the artist adheres to Copernicus's system when he states that a new period brought 'new and clearer insights' on the matter.[98] To De Hooghe this new worldview is no sin against Holy Truth and does not detract from Christian basic beliefs. This perspective is depicted, for instance, in plates 12 and 7, denoting the composition of the heavenly

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93   W.J. van Asselt, 'Coccejus anti-scholasticus? Johannes Coccejus (1603-1669) en de scholastieke traditie,' *Theologia Reformata* 44 (2001): 31-47. Goudriaan, *Reformed Orthodoxy and Philosophy,* 47.

94   Sorkin, *The Religious Enlightenment*, 11-14. See also the notion of 'learned ignorance' below.

95   Vermij, *The Calvinist Copernicans,* 297. E.G.E. van der Wall, 'Cartesianism and Cocceianism: a natural alliance?,' in *De l'Humanisme aux Lumières, Bayle et le protestantisme. Mélanges en l'honneur d'Elisabeth Labrousse,* ed Michelle Magdelaine et al. (Paris-Oxford : Universitas -Voltaire Foundation, 1996), 445-455 : 452-455. Still, there was only one Truth: God was the same in his revelation as in his nature, and information of both sources should be in accordance.

96   Van Bunge, *From Stevin to Spinoza*, chapter 3. Ernestine van der Wall, 'Orthodoxy and Scepticism in the Early Enlightenment', in: *Scepticism and Irreligion in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, ed Richard Henry Popkin and Arie Johan Vanderjagt (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 121-141.

97   De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 123.

98   Idem, 122. 'This [geo-centrism] was such general knowledge that opposing it was viewed heretic. The scriptures seemed to concur with that feeling. The fathers said so. Until the Dutch Copernicus, guided and aided by his experience, shipping, telescope etcetera, bashed this construction.'

bodies, with the sun expressing its central position by its placement near the navel of the female figure in the center of the etching.
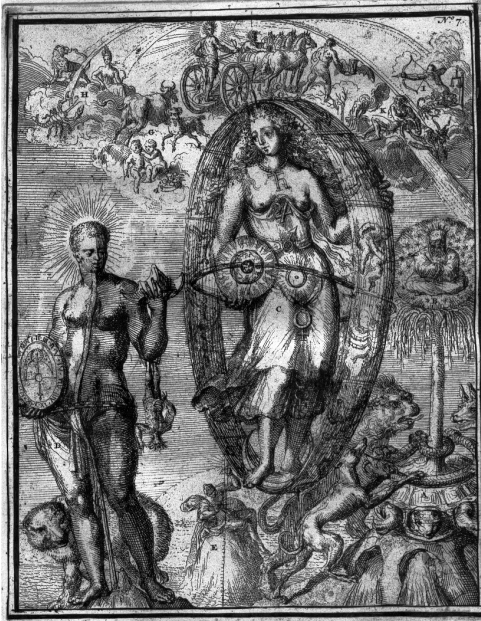
Fig. 53. De Hooghe, Plate 7, Van de Hemelsloop [On Celestial Movement]

Things get exciting when De Hooghe treats the history of Israel and its famous story in Joshua where God summons the sun to stand still, which He of course could do only if the sun actually moved. Remarkably, in this chapter De Hooghe refers to no Copernican issue whatsoever. He just mentions the story in its biblical reading, without acknowledging or trying to resolve the problem of Copernicanism.[99] Theological solutions like biblical accommodation – the idea that the Bible had been adapted to the ways of thinking of its contemporaries – or natural explanations which exegetes also adhered to, I do not find in the *Hieroglyphica*.[100] De Hooghe does not come up with

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99 Idem, 173. In another source De Hooghe explains this event by mentioning that it was a miracle. Apparently De Hooghe believed that miracles were possible. *De bybelsche historien, in naaukeurige prent-verbeeldinge uytgevoerd*, 'Als koning gehangen. Gibeoniten list, zon en maan staan stil'.

100 See: Sorkin, *The Religious Enlightenment*; Israel, *Enlightenment Contested*; Muller, *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics*; Goudriaan, *Reformed Orthodoxy and Philosophy*. On belief in and explanations of the miracle see Bernd Roling, 'Critics of the Critics: Johann Scheuchzer and his Followers in Defence of the Biblical Miracle,' in *Scriptural Authority and Biblical Criticism in the Dutch Golden Age. God's Word Questioned* ed. D. van Miert et al., (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), pp. 372-389.

solutions but simply presents different views, leaving things to the reader to judge. De Hooghe was not alone in using such a strategy with regard to this hotly debated issue; the Cartesian professor of philosophy Adriaan Heereboord (1613-1661), for example, seems ultimately to avoid the question of what should be done when philosophy and theology clash. By the end of the seventeenth century, one could politely agree to disagree.[101] This stance can be explained by a Cocceio-Cartesian distinction between theology and philosophy. But it can also be usefully contextualised if we shift the focus away from political/ theological debates and towards the intellectual search for knowledge. Several scholars, amongst them Dmitri Levitin and Noel Malcolm, point to this different way of looking at 'new insights' in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and reject the idea that every new insight entails an immediate position in the theological debates between orthodox and radicals. In a similar vein, Jetze Touber describes how scholars participating in the Republic of Letters deployed what he calls 'selective neutrality' with regard to some religious matters, so that they could correspond with scholars from very different confessions.[102]
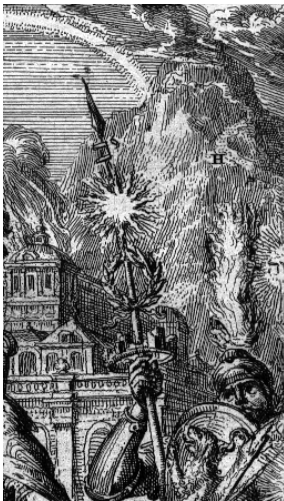
Fig. 54. De Hooghe, Zon staat stil te Gibeon [Sun stands still upon Gibeon], detail of Plate 14

101 Theo Verbeek, 'Tradition and novelty. Descartes and some Cartesians,' in *The Rise of Modern Philosophy. The Tension between the New and Traditional Philosophies from Machiavelli to Leibniz,* ed Tom Sorell (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 167-196: 186, 187. Goldgar, *Impolite Learning;* Jetze Touber, 'Applying the Right Measure: Architecture and Philology in Biblical Scholarship in the Dutch Early Enlightenment,' *The Historical Journal* 58 (2015): 959-985.

102 Dmitri Levitin, 'John Spencer's De Legibus Hebraeorum (1683–85) and 'Enlightened' Sacred History: A New Interpretation,' *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 76 (2013): 49-92; Jetze Touber, 'Religious Interests and Scholarly Exchange in the Early Enlightenment Republic of Letters: Italian and Dutch Scholars, 1675-1715,' *Rivista di Storia Della Chiesa in Italia* 68 (20015): 411-436.

Besides this Cocceio-Cartesian separation of theology and philosophy, *Hieroglyphica* does not offer an analytical view on reason and revelation, and De Hooghe here refrains from using terminology such as 'clear and distinct perception'. Nevertheless, in the broader search for the source of true religion, reason – together with the related topics of knowledge, doubt and superstition – is present in several etchings. In valuing these topics De Hooghe's opinion is both negative and appreciative, expressing a nuanced assessment in line with the orthodox thought of the early modern period.

In *Hieroglyphica* this viewpoint is most evident in the image of the Dangerous Friend in plate 30 (fig. 39). The etching shows us the Divine Word – a large angel-like figure, surrounded by heavenly rays of light – in the centre. This Divine Word is presented as triumphant and soul-saving. She is surrounded by several enemies amongst them the Jewish Kabbalah, heathens and savages. It is in this context of the Bible's enemies that De Hooghe depicts the Light of Nature as symbolised by an old sage (fig. 55), and further characterises him as a 'Dangerous Friend'. The term 'light of nature' was widely accepted, as it was referred to in the *Dordtse Leerregels*, chapters 3 and 4, article 4. Here, according to the question-and-answer, it remained present in human beings after the Fall, which had allowed them to possess some knowledge of God, of natural things and of decency and indecency.[103] Nevertheless, the *Dordtse Leerregels* teach that this light of nature is not sufficient for the soul to attain salvational knowledge of God.

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103 *Dordtse Leerregels*, chapters 3 and 4, article 4 : 'Wel is waar dat na den val in den mens enig licht der natuur nog overgebleven is, waardoor hij behoudt enige kennis van God, van de natuurlijke dingen, van het onderscheid tussen hetgeen betamelijk en onbetamelijk is, en ook betoont enige betrachting tot de deugd en tot uiterlijke tucht. Maar zo ver is het vandaar, dat de mens door dit licht der natuur zou kunnen komen tot de zaligmakende kennis Gods, en zich tot Hem bekeren, dat hij ook in natuurlijke en burgerlijke zaken dit licht niet recht gebruikt; ja veel meer het, hoedanig het ook zij, op onderscheiden wijze geheel bezoedelt en in ongerechtigheid ten onder houdt; en dewijl hij dit doet, zo wordt hem alle verontschuldiging voor God benomen.' [There is, to be sure, a certain light of nature remaining in all people after the Fall, by virtue of which they retain some notions about God, natural things, and the difference between what is moral and immoral, and demonstrate a certain eagerness for virtue and for good outward behaviour. But this light of nature is far from enabling humans to come to a saving knowledge of God and conversion to him – so far, in fact, that they do not use it rightly even in matters of nature and society. Instead, in various ways they completely distort this light, whatever its precise character, and suppress it in unrighteousness. In doing so all people render themselves without excuse before God.]

Fig. 55. De Hooghe, Licht der Natuur [Light of Nature], detail of Plate 30

De Hooghe's image reflects the two sides of this coin: this 'friend' is also 'dangerous'. His sage, surrounded by books, looks at a globe through a magnifying glass. He keeps his ears closed to the true word, De Hooghe explains. Instead of reading the Bible, this philosopher spends his time with his nose buried in other books, thinking through their contents, examining them to the last detail. His goal is to get to the bottom of the world's mysteries, to discover the links between the heavenly and earthly spheres and to descry the 'chains of nature'. Although this 'Light of Nature' sage does not resemble any specific person, De Hooghe may well have had Cartesianism in mind when etching this image.

The interpretation of the Dangerous Friend as an embodiment of Cartesianism is strengthened by the way De Hooghe connects his sage to Doubt. Descartes advocated systematic doubt as the way to move towards 'clear and distinct' perception, and in this plate doubt is treated explicitly in figure G, just behind the sage. Doubt is represented in the figure of the Twyffelachtig Vriend [Doubtful Friend], a close friend of the Light of Nature.

Fig. 56. De Hooghe, Twyffelachtig Vriend [Doubtful Friend], detail of Plate 30

Having read, researched and learned much, the Doubtful Friend is nonetheless not certain of anything and does not accept anything as truth. De Hooghe states that this figure's only silly certainty is 'to doubt everything', and his commentary on these Cartesian figures makes perfectly clear his opinion on whether this philosophy can provide the means to find religion: the Light of Nature and his Doubtful Friend are both aberrations, whose paths will lead to eternal damnation. De Hooghe stresses his abhorrence of systematic doubt in the depiction of another doubting figure in an etching concerning heresy [B]. Besides doubt being a seedbed for heresy, De Hooghe explains his aversion to it in a more pastoral way as well. *Hieroglyphica* contains several references to the insecurity caused by such an overload of knowledge and doubt. The endless reading of books makes believers wander aimlessly, torn between 'all-knowing certainty and complete ignorance', and finally leaves them miserable and scared.[104]

Regarding these rejections of doubt, De Hooghe seems to align himself with Voetius's sharp critique, but at the same time the Cartesian appreciation of doubt is acknowledged in *Hieroglyphica*.[105] In chapter 56, VAN DE AANKOMENDE HERVORMING [On the Dawn of the Reformation], De Hooghe states that 'after doubting and researching, a more righteous and generous freedom was born, from the preaching of God's Word'. Here we find doubt judged positively: through doubting, a layman, using his own powers of discernment, comes to the conclusion that the Church of Rome is unbiblical. This kind of doubt, in the service of questioning authority, could have a function in the creation of faithful Protestants.[106]

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104 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 249, 250, 292.
105 Van der Wall, *Cartesianism and Cocceianism. A natural alliance?,* 451-454.
106 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, chapter 57. See also chapter 6 of this thesis.

Fig. 57. De Hooghe, Plate 39, Van het Verval tot Kettery [On the Decline into Heresy]
Fig. 58. De Hooghe, Wyfelary [Doubt], detail of Plate 39

As with his approach to reason and doubt, De Hooghe treats knowledge and curiosity from two different angles. On the one hand, curiosity, leading to endless study and ceaseless scepticism, recurs many times in *Hieroglyphica*. Adam and Eve had of course been curious, and throughout history curiosity had made people susceptible to heresy.[107] In chapter 39 De Hooghe, inspired probably by Cesare Ripa, depicted Curiosity as a young spinster. Ripa had included the concept of Curiosity in his emblem book with the general description 'wanting to gain more knowledge than is good for one' (fig. 59). We see the resemblance in the figure: the stormy hair, the wings and the ears and frogs on the dress.[108] De Hooghe, however, revised the image (fig. 60). His Heated Curiosity carries a huge stack of books, has a balance wheel (a part in a clock that helps to keep the cogwheels turning) on her head, and, in an excess of zeal, she reaches out with her hands in an attempt to grasp and thus understand eternity. By adding these specific

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107 Idem, 278, 280, 281, 404.

108 Cesare Ripa, *Iconologia*, 20, emblem nr 80. Ears: wanting to hear more than one should; frogs are also described as denoting inquisitiveness, 'by reason of their goggle eyes'.

elements De Hooghe adjusted the image to give it a place within the specific context of the debated sources of truth. The books, so numerous that they are falling from the woman's lap, indicate that the figure's bibliophilia is less about the reading of books than about the desire to know everything. The balance wheel and *ouroboros* are symbols of Cartesianism, which tried to unravel the natural mysteries of nature, even though such mysteries are beyond the human capacity to comprehend them and the efforts to grasp them result in a troubled, restless mind.

Fig. 59. Cesare Ripa, Curiosity, nr. 80 from *Iconologia*
Fig. 60. De Hooghe, Driftige Nieuwsgierigheyd [Heated Curiosity], detail from Plate 39

On the other hand, the same Plate 39 shows a young woman conducting elaborate religious research. Contrasted favourably to the frenzy of Heated Curiosity, Doubtfulness, this modest young woman, dressed neatly and soberly, has calmly sat down to study. Most important is the Bible lying open on her lap. According to De Hooghe, in scripture she will find her 'Creator and Saviour, the Alpha and Omega, beginning an end of everything, from which, wherein and by which all moves'.[109] Still, next to the woman, there are other books by the established authorities, Church Fathers and Councils of the Church, which stand ready for consultation in a well-ordered stack. On top of books is a tortoise, symbolising her slow, sure method of study. On her bosom one sees the Pythagorean letter Y,

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109 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 292, 293.

denoting the moral choice between the broad and the narrow way, and in her hand is a touchstone, with which to test every element of the true Church. This testing, however, she conducts in obedience to the God-given and human teachings contained in the books in the image. De Hooghe further explains that the woman is aware of the Trinity, and carries out her studies cautiously and thoughtfully.[110]

Fig. 61. De Hooghe, Matig en recht onderzoek [Right and moderate research], detail of Plate 39

As mentioned above, *Hieroglyphica* also values knowledge *an sich* as an antidote against ignorance, stupidity, and superstition: the philosophical Light of Nature is perceived not only as dangerous but also as a much-needed friend. Both in image and in text De Hooghe is scornful towards believers' lack of knowledge and emphasises the importance of information of and research into religion. According to De Hooghe, people were so poorly educated that they believed anything and everything: from dream interpretations and astrology to palmistry and the stories of the enthusiastic Anabaptists.[111] Even the Bible itself was misused for fortune-

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110 De Hooghe indicates that this right kind of research is moderate, and this is important. This characterisation aligns with the conclusion of Joris van Eijnatten that after the 1670s modesty became the most important virtue. Joris van Eijnatten, 'Modestia, moderatio, mediocritas. De protestantse geestelijkheid in Nederland en de regulering van het publieke debat (1670-1840),' *Tijdschrift voor geschiedenis* 117 (2004): 26-44. In this virtue we recognise again Voetius's style of thought: to become genuinely wise, one had to be aware of the shortcomings of one's own knowledge. Zur Shalev points to a shift from sinful curiosity to pious curiosity, in which the careful study of the Bible and ecclesiastical antiquity were pursued for pious purposes. Shalev, *Sacred Words and Worlds*, 13 and his chapter 3. See, for the Trinity, chapter 7 of this thesis.

111 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 266, 267, 425.

telling.[112] More fundamentally, the lack of reason is present in the row of 'enemies of the Word' lined up in plate 30. In the lower left-hand corner, we encounter Beastly Inhumanity, an example of a man devoid of reason.[113]

The theological background for this approach of reason, doubt, knowledge and curiosity can be found in two notions put forth by Voetius, himself inspired by Thomas Aquinas: the venerable doctrine concerning 'sinful curiosity' and the notion of 'learned ignorance'. Sinful curiosity encompassed both the knowledge of useless, immoral things and the longing of people to gain knowledge that exceeded their ability to understand it.[114] One should not refuse knowledge as such, but rather acknowledge that 'there are some things that cannot be known, and which, therefore, one must not try to know'. One such topic was predestination.[115]

All this seems to accord perfectly with the notion of a balanced middle road and the avoidance of extremes. Recently, David Sorkin has powerfully argued for this 'middle road' concept as characteristic of a current he calls the Religious Enlightenment.[116] Analysing the writings of six European theologians, he conceives their striving for a reasonable religion, based on the principle of the middle road, as the religious answer to the increasing influence of reason after Descartes.[117] This observation is probably correct. But is such a middle road Enlightened? Notions of a middle way and of a reasonable religion were much older than the Enlightenment, and they were also broadly shared. Thus, either this Religious Enlightenment can be detected in 'mainstream' Protestantism as a whole, or it did not exist as a specific movement. The real shift in the late seventeenth century might lie not in the search for the correct proportions that should govern either reason or revelation, but in the valuing of epistemological instruments. De Hooghe's account of the history of religion testifies to an abhorrence of philosophical methods (both Cartesian and Aristotelian) that lead

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112 Idem, 266, 267. Cf. F.A. van Lieburg, 'De bijbel als orakelboek. Bibliomantie in de protestante traditie,' in *Materieel christendom. Religie en materiële cultuur in West Europa*, ed A. L. Molendijk (Hilversum: Verloren. 2003), 81-105.

113 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 248.

114 Theo Verbeek, 'From "learned ignorance" to scepticism: Descartes and Calvinist orthodoxy,' in *Scepticism and Irreligion in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, ed Richard H. Popkin and Arjo Vanderjagt (Leiden: Brill, 1993), 31-45 there 40.

115 Verbeek, 'From "learned ignorance" to scepticism', 34. This is also mentioned in the Belgic Confession (art. 13), which declares that one cannot curiously research the dogma of predestination. On predestination see chapter 5 below.

116 A huge number of thinkers and writers saw themselves as representatives of a moderate middle road. Cf. David Sorkin, *The Religious Enlightenment;* Israel, *Enlightenment Contested,* 94; Gerard Reedy, *The Bible and Reason. Anglicans and Scripture in Late Seventeenth-Century England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985), 43-46; Van Eijnatten, *Modestia, moderatio, mediocritas*, 26-44.

117 Sorkin, *The Religious Enlightenment*, 11.

to doubt and of a reluctance to choose in contradictory matters that are beyond reason. This increasing awareness of the difficulties in gaining access to true religion suggests that the orthodox adage of 'learned ignorance' had moved towards a suspension of judgement where reason did not lead to certainty and there was an increasing search for true religion in the heart of the individual believer.

3.5 The truth in our souls, hearts and consciences

One of De Hooghe's other solutions to the problem of how to gain access to true religion seems to lie in attending to the spiritual experiences of the human heart and conscience. In the first instance this counted for the period before the Bible was available, or, according to the sacred history current at the time, before Moses. In multiple instances true knowledge of God is located in the heart. This is the case in plate 15, where, during the lifetime of Cain, pious people are depicted (H) thus:

> The Pure Mind, with the Morningstar on her head, [stands] steadfast on a square cornerstone in the reflections of God. In her right hand she keeps the mirror, in which she lets God's name, with holy rays shining like a lens, reflect on her bosom, like a sun of righteousness.[118]

But as for times when the Bible was available, De Hooghe often stresses the importance of the Holy Spirit:

> The Bible is the key to the truth. It is not taught by mouth of learned theologians, but by the Holy Spirit in our heart.[119]

This inner knowledge is sharply contrasted with reason and philosophical methods. De Hooghe time and again stresses the importance of simplicity and moderateness in piety, in the style of the Pure Mind. Instead of engaging in sophisticated speeches and debates – which only left a poisonous sting in the minds of common people – Christians should think via a saving knowledge that was contained in

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118 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 154. 'De Zuyvere Geest, met de Morgensterre op haar hoofd, in de bespiegelingen Gods vast staan, op eene vierkante Hoeksteen. Zy houd in hare Rechterhand die Spiegel, war in zy Gods Naam, met H. Straalen schitterende als een Brandglas, op haar Boezem doet wederom straalen, gelyk eene Zonne der Gerechtigheyd.' The mirror probably refers to the 1 Corinthians 13:12. See also *Hieroglyphica*, chapter 3.

119 Idem. 'De bijbel is de sleutel tot de waarheid. Die wordt niet geleerd door schoolgeleerden bij mond maar door de heilige geest in ons hart.'

biblical revelation, and carry out their thinking with a pure heart. This primal role of the heart is reinforced in chapter 57, entitled VAN DE WAARE LEER [On True Doctrine] (fig. 41). Central in the engraving is the Reformation, denoted by a generous young woman (D), who, according to the legend, had the knowledge of God aflame in her heart, burning in her chest, its truth spreading eagerly.[120]
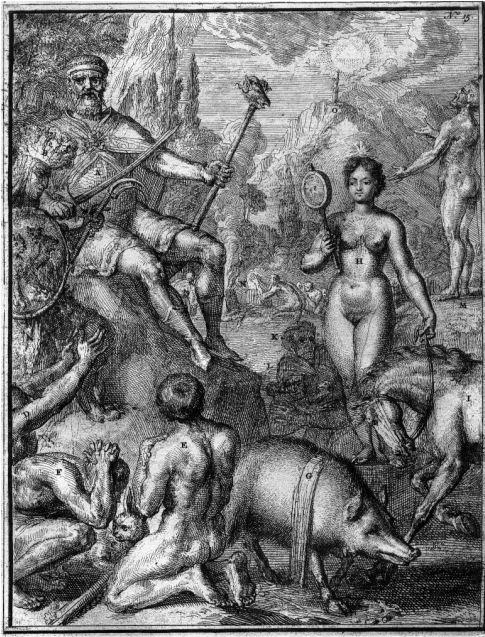
Fig. 62. De Hooghe Plate 15, VAN CAINS ZAAD [On Cain's offspring]
Fig. 63. De Hooghe, Hervorming [Reformation], detail of Plate 57

Concerning the period lasting until the Day of Judgement, De Hooghe follows the same line, stating that the kingdom of God begins within our souls, an idea predominant in Pietism.[121] This idea is reinforced in De Hooghe's description of the afterlife of believers who will be 'incorporated into God'. This unity sounds quite extreme: in general Reformed Christians believed that they were annexed into the chosen people of Israel, or refer to incorporation into the army of God, but

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120 Idem, 58, 59, 411.

121 Idem, 64. The German Lutheran Pietist pastor Johann Arndt was one of the first to put forth this idea in his *Bücher vom wahren Christentum* (1605-1610). On Arndt's *Bücher* see Hermann Geyer, *Verborgene Weisheit. Johann Arndts "Vier Bücher vom Wahren Christentum" als Programm einer spiritualistisch-hermetischer Theologie* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2001).

the idea of merging with God himself suggests a radical-pietistic turn. Although not explicitly linked, it recalls the supreme god Yunx to which De Hooghe added the word ΦVΛO , which he thought meant 'Love and Communion'.[122] However, this confidence in the individual heart can be placed within a broader development amongst theologians who foregrounded the concept of human conscience as an important interpreter of truth. Influenced by Descartes's philosophy, Cocceian theologians such as Johannes Braun (1628-1708), Herman Alexander Röell (1653-1718), Campegius Vitringa (1659-1722), and Antonius Driessen (1684-1748) accepted central parts of Descartes's rational philosophy but favoured conscience over reason in interpreting scripture. Exemplary in this regard was Driessen's natural theology *Lumen et doctrina conscientiae* [Light and Doctrine of Conscience]. Earlier, Johannes Braunius had presented his version of God's revelation in *Doctrina Foederum* (1688). Here he claimed that human conscience was the preeminent location where God's revelation would come to be known. Answering the question of who had interpretative authority, Braunius boldly stated that it was neither the Church nor the synod with her confessions. More fundamentally, nor was it the Bible. The reasonable human being alone was the prime interpreter of truth, not through the use of reason or the practice of philosophy, but rather through the exercise of his conscience.[123] This trend, which grew throughout the eighteenth century, to a certain extent indicates an 'anthropological orientation' in theology in which the criterion for true religion was, increasingly, the individual human being.[124] For De Hooghe, this seems to count solely for his 'own' true Protestant belief and does not affect his judgement of 'other' religions, as we will see in the next two chapters.

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122 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 419, 420, 107, 108. See also chapter 2.2 above and 7.2 below.

123 Jan Snoek, 'Rationeel en irrationeel: over de bloei van esoterie in de achttiende eeuw,' *De Achttiende Eeuw* 32 (2000): 131-141; Broeyer and Van der Wall, *Een richtingenstrijd in de gereformeerde kerk*, 45, 46. Jacob van Sluis, 'Laatcartesiaanse theologie en coccejanisme bij Antonius Driessen,' in *400 jaar Groninger theologie in het publieke domein*, ed Henk van den Belt (Soesterberg: Uitgeverij Aspekt, 2015), 39-79. Goudriaan, *Reformed Orthodoxy and Philosophy*, 277-282. Joris van Eijnatten, *Liberty and Concord in the United Provinces. Religious Toleration and the Public in the Eighteenth-Centrury Netherlands* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 83. The foregrounding of the inner light and conscience is also found in spiritual movements of the seventeenth century, in particular the Quakers.

124 This tendency seems to proceed in the eighteenth century, see Van der Wall, 'Religiekritiek en apologetiek in de achttiende eeuw. De dynamiek van een debat,' *De Achttiende Eeuw* 32 (2000): 17-35; Goudriaan, *Reformed Orthodoxy and Philosophy*, 282.

3.6 Concluding remarks

Where can true religion be found? What medium allows access to this true religion? What is the key to religious truth? These questions were crucial in the search for true religion. Like his contemporaries, De Hooghe was concerned with these related questions, which are touched upon throughout *Hieroglyphica*. Although a 'classical' contradiction is often seen in the clash between 'reason and revelation', De Hooghe's book shows a much more varied conception of the ways that people can access true religion. To be clear: the Bible and reason do play important parts in *Hieroglyphica*, but the book shows considerable unproblematic flexibility in turning to different sources of theological knowledge. As a starting point the Bible is presented as the 'Divine Word', from which people can attain the indispensable knowledge of God; this Word saves the soul. In a Cocceio-Cartesian manner, De Hooghe separates the realm of reason from the realm of faith and revelation. Reason as such is labeled a Dangerous Friend, as De Hooghe sees both pros and cons of the use of reason. In his balanced approach towards reason De Hooghe seems to be an heir to the adage of 'learned ignorance', or an exponent of the reasonable middle way described by David Sorkin. Next to reason and revelation, however, De Hooghe pays attention to other channels that transmit religion. First, we encounter the concept of the Book of Nature, the idea that God can be known through his creation. For De Hooghe, nature provides an innate awareness of God and the basic knowledge of religion. By foregrounding the goddess Diana, a symbol of Nature, in several plates, De Hooghe emphasises the importance of nature as a source of religious knowledge.

As is to be expected, De Hooghe views hieroglyphs to be 'bearers' of the primal true religion; originally universal signs, they became the secret script of a religious elite . By using 'hieroglyphs' himself, De Hooghe seems to want to reveal the elements of religious history that had been kept away from believers. De Hooghe's final and most interesting manner of accessing true religion is the understanding and experience arrived at via the human heart, soul and conscience. At many places in *Hieroglyphica* De Hooghe locates true knowledge of God in the heart: even the Bible reaches us not via ministers and theologians but via the Holy Spirit in our hearts. This pietist inward turn seems to put considerably more weight on the experience and belief of individual believers, marginalising the role of religious leaders, as we will see later in this thesis. But first, in chapter 4, we will look into the way De Hooghe views and compares the more institutionalised religions.

Chapter four

Comparative Religion: Otherness

The recent spate of interest in 'global history' and *histoire croisée* has raised the question of the impact of the reports about faraway peoples and their often puzzling cultures and religions on European worldviews. In his *A New Science. The Discovery of Religion in the Age of Reason*, Guy Stroumsa has argued that the Early Modern period saw the emergence of the 'science of religion' — rejecting the notion that *Religionswissenschaft* or comparative religion emerged only in the nineteenth century.[1] He sketches a development roughly spanning an era beginning with the Renaissance and extending to the advent of Romanticism, and peaking in intensity during Hazard's *Crise de la conscience européenne*, the decades before and after 1700, when the accounts of missionaries, alongside developments in philology and antiquarianism and the shock of the Wars of Religion, take pride of place. In the following two chapters I will argue that Romeyn de Hooghe's *Hieroglyphica*, with its often very explicit comparative approach, fits this Early Modern form of 'comparative religion', although the book pursued different goals. This chapter will analyse De Hooghe's chronologically structured depiction and description of other religions in their 'otherness', whereas chapter 5 will focus on their similarity.

Classifying Romeyn de Hooghe as an early practitioner of comparative religion raises once again the question of his own views on religion in general, and on the Christianity of his time more specifically. Most researchers of nineteenth-century science of religion admit the existence of the Early Modern precursors,

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1   Hans Kippenberg, *Die Entdeckung der Religionsgeschichte. Religionswissenschaft und Moderne* (Munich: C.H.Beck, 1997); Arie L. Molendijk and Peter Pels, *Religion in the Making. The Emergence of the Sciences of Religion* (Leiden: Brill, 1989); Arie L. Molendijk, *The Emergence of the Science of Religion in the Netherlands* (Leiden: Brill, 2005); Arie L. Molendijk, *Friedrich Max Müller and the Sacred Books of the East* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016). For the relation between theology and religious studies see Sigurd Hjelde, *Die Religionswissenschaft und das Christentum. Eine historische Untersuchung über das Verhältnis von Religionswissenschaft und Theologie* (Leiden: Brill, 1994).

primarily among the quite select group of deist and philosophical freethinkers. Only radical heterodoxy and irreligion, for instance in the work of Spinoza and La Peyrère, have been seen to have possessed the capacity to change the ingrained status quo of confessional viewpoints that considered all religions other than their own as idolatries and heresies. Stroumsa questions the radical roots of Early Modern comparative religion in rationalist philosophies, and J.S. Barnett even states that 'in this respect the Deists and *philosophes* were Johnny-come-latelies as beleaguered Protestants and Catholic propagandists already developed the tool of comparative historical inquiry in the late sixteenth century'.[2]

The very origin of Christianity in Judaism made comparisons inevitable from the start. But interest in other religions always went much further, resulting in descriptions of ancient pagan religions, sometimes also in comparison with Christianity. In both cases, the comparison was driven by the problem, deeply felt by Christian apologists and missionaries, of whether there was salvation outside the Church.[3] In the age of discovery, according to Stroumsa, Catholic missionaries reported and reflected on the religions of the peoples in the New World and the Far East, while Protestants contributed to the emergent field of religious studies through philological studies. This growing number of accounts, descriptions and observations provided writers in the seventeenth century with the possibility of charting *all* known religions and of comparing contemporary and ancient religions.[4]

The confessional division of labour between Catholic 'ethnographers' and Protestant 'philologists' was, however, by no means absolute. The Dutch Republic especially was at a crossroads of ethnographic and philological humanist scholarship. Reports of voyages and missions, initially Spanish and Portuguese and but soon Dutch, were avidly consumed. Missionaries' criticisms in particular of the *conquistadores*' heavy-handed methods accorded with the black aura of legendary Spanish tyranny and served to justify the Dutch revolt. It was true, though, that demand for such material was also simply an expression of curiosity on the part of the reading public. A lively printing industry produced books – often beautifully illustrated – on the newly discovered lands and their inhabitants'

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2   Stroumsa, *A New Science;* Barnett, *Idol Temples*, preface. See also Peter Harrison, "*Religion" and the Religions*.

3   The undisputed classic in this field is still Louis Capéran, *Le Problème du salut des infidèles. Essay historique* (Toulouse: Grand Seminaire, 1934); newer approaches and discussion of more recent literature can be found in John Marenbon, *Pagans and Philosophers. The Problem of Paganism from Augustine to Leibniz* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015).

4   Stroumsa, *A New Science*, esp. chapter 1.

cultures for an international market.[5] The Dutch universities were home to internationally renowned philological scholars. They studied non-European languages for the sake of diplomacy and trade, and immersed themselves in biblical Hebrew and Greek as well as the ancient languages of the Middle East in the context of confessional polemic. Humanists as well as theologians became increasingly interested in the context in which the Hebrew state and religion arose, and considered topics ranging from its geographical positioning to its relations with neighboring pagan peoples. Again, the aims of this study of the ancient Hebrews were partly shaped by contemporary purposes: the Leiden professor of Latin, Law and Politics Petrus Cunaeus (1586-1638), for instance, was convinced that the Hebrew state embodied the ideal republican government and should function as a model for the United Provinces.[6]

Comparing languages, cultures and religions thus served several, sometimes overlapping, purposes. Seventeenth-century scholars started to produce compendia which facilitated comparison. A groundbreaking and influential compendium of comparative religion was Alexander Ross's *Pansebeia or view of all religions in the world* (London, 1653). By the early eighteenth century, comparative religion had become so popular that an enterprising publisher detected a market for a lavishly illustrated multi-volume encyclopedia, a cross between a coffee-table book and a scholarly reference work: Bernard Picard and Jean Frédéric Bernard's *Cérémonies et coutumes religieuses de tous les peuples du monde* (Amsterdam, 1720).[7] Christianity was never exempt: the comparison of religions could underpin confessional polemic, equating an opponent's religion to ancient heresy or contemporary idolatry, but it could also serve to critique of one's own confession

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5   Benjamin Schmidt, *Innocence abroad. The Dutch Imagination and the New World, 1570-1670* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); and id., *Inventing Exoticism. Geography, Globalism and Europe's Early Modern World* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015); Michiel van Groesen, *Amsterdam's Atlantic. Print Culture and the Making of Dutch Brazil* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016).

6   See Stroumsa, *A New Science*, 39-61; Lea Campos Boralevi, 'Classical Foundation Myths of European Republicanism: the Jewish Commonwealth,' in *Republicanism. A shared European heritage*, 2 vols., ed Martin van Gelderen and Quentin Skinner (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2002), I, 247-262; Arthur Eyffinger, '"How Wondrously Moses Goes Along With The House of Orange!" Hugo Grotius' 'De Republica Emendanda' in the Context of the Dutch Revolt,' *Hebraic Political Studies* 1 (2005): 71-109. On the study of oriental languages in the Netherlands see J. Nat, *De studie van de Oosterse talen in Nederland in de 18e en 19e eeuw* (Purmerend: Muusses, 1929).

7   R.J.W. Mills, 'Alexander Ross's Pansebeia (1653), religious compendia and the seventeenth-century study of religious diversity,' *The Seventeenth Century* 31 (2016): 285-310; Hunt, *The Book that Changed Europe*; *Bernard Picart and the First Global Vision of Religion*, ed Lynn Hunt, Margaret C. Jacob and Wijnand Mijnhard (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2009).

or bolster the relativist notion that all existing religions were equally good or bad.[8] Ever since antiquity comparison had been embedded in a historical story that linked the different religions in a grand genealogical narrative, in which true religion either degenerate, increased or, sometimes, remained constant. Protestant authors favoured the image of decline through the ages followed by a recent restoration and Reformation, and defined true religion in sharp relief against error and heresy.[9]

Conceptually, religions had been characterised as expressing either true or false religion since Augustine. There was a common fourfold division into the categories of revealed religion, heresy, idolatry, and natural religion. However, the growing attention directed to other religions as well as the newly discovered religions proved challenging, as not all these religions fit into these categories. Needless to say, the comparison of religions was not itself religiously neutral. In many cases the compared religions were not regarded as equals and the goal of the exercise was more often than not apologetic, aiming to support biblical history, often in the service of a specific denomination.[10] Protestants, for instance, pointed to similarities between Catholicism and pagan religions to prove that the former derived from the latter. Similarities detected between religions could be turned against Christianity: for if all religions possessed the same general beliefs and were prone to the same pitfalls, why, then, would Christianity be more true, or more authoritative than any other religion? The endeavour of historical and contemporary comparison could easily develop into a theory of a general, 'natural' religion.[11]

As shown convincingly by several contributors to volume 3 of the *Archiv fur religionsgeschichte*, the philological study of the context in which the Bible had

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8   Rossi, *The Dark Abyss of Time*; Martin Mulsow, 'Antiquarianism and Idolatry: The Historia of Religions in the Seventeenth Century,' in *Empiricism and Erudition in Early Modern Europe*, ed Gianna Pomata and Nancy G. Sirasi (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005), 181-209; Levitin, *From Sacred History to the History of Religion,* 1117-1160.

9   Wouter Hanegraaff, *Esotericism and the Academy. Rejected Knowledge in Western Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 1-107.

10   Zur Shalev, cited in Levitin, 1133. 'syncretism was very restricted… That Saturn hid the truth of Noah did not mean that they were equally valid narrations of the same story. It is therefore problematic to see in [Bochart] a promoter of syncretism, or even cabalism and 'ancient theology', as some scholars do… Bochart approached the Bible mainly as a source for ancient history, not theology.'

11   Stroumsa, *A New Science*, 32 See also Rossi, *The Dark Abyss of Time;* Sorkin, *The Religious Enlightenment*; David A. Pailin, *Attitudes to Other Religions. Comparative Religion in Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century Britain* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984); Jonathan Z. Smith, *Drudgery Divine. On the Comparison of Early Christianities and the Religions of Late Antiquity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990); and volume 3 of the *Archiv für Religionsgeschichte* (2001).

been written and compiled raised its own problems.[12] Paganism obviously preceded the biblical account. How was that possible? What about resemblances and influence between the two? If the empires of the Egyptians, Chinese and Aztecs could boast a longer pedigree than Christianity's estimation of the age of the earth, how authoritative was the Bible?[13] One way of dealing with such problems was to dismiss theories that claimed the history of, for example, China to be older than the Bible as fabrications.[14] A scholar like Giambattisto Vico, whose *Scienza Nuova* (1725) provided the inspiration for Stroumsa's book, 'draws a hermetically sealed border between the traditions of Israel and its Christian sequel on the one hand, and all other traditions on the other'. Generally, however, scholars were able to reconcile the biblical tradition with conflicting observations from the field. [15]

4.1 Comparison in *Hieroglyphica*

How did the availability of new information on the world's religions, past and present, impact De Hooghe's worldview? To what extent does his type of 'comparative religion' reflect discussions within the Dutch Republic? And what was his own position within this still somewhat fluid field? If religion had a common origin in the creation of the first humans and the teaching of their descendants from Seth onwards, but corruption had set in from an early age, this decline had consequences, not only for the religion of God's Chosen People, but for all the world's religions.[16]

In *Hieroglyphica*, De Hooghe approaches the relation between Christianity and other religions in two ways: namely, chronological and thematic. The following two chapters analyse how these two approaches both demonstrate the comparison of religions (plural), whereas in the chronological chapters the emphasis is on 'otherness' and in the thematic plates the similarity of these religions is emphasised (chapter 5 of this book).

As we saw in chapter 2, *Hieroglyphica* is a book that can be positioned within many genres, and one of these is comparative religion. In 63 chapters De Hooghe presents the religions of pagan antiquity, Judaism, several Christian denominations and Islam, which, taken together, form the basis for his '*essay on the progressive*

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12   *Archiv für Religionsgeschichte* 3, issue 1 (2001).

13   See Anthony Grafton, 'Joseph Scaliger and Historical Chronology: the Rise and Fall of a Discipline,' *History and Theory* 14 (1975): 156-185, and Rossi, *The Dark Abyss of Time.*

14   Idem, 158, 164.

15   Stroumsa, *A New Science*, 10.

16   De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 201.

decline and corruption of religions through the ages, and its recent reformation until the present day,' as announced in the title.[17] The plural in the title is telling: it departs from the schedule of religion or idolatry, instead presenting the different religions as parts of the larger history of religion. Such an integration of several religions within one book is characteristic of the sort of comparative approach that gained ground in the seventeenth century but had already been anticipated by several precursors. The German humanist Johannes Boemus (1485-1534), for instance, had compared several (ancient) religions without prejudice in his *Mores leges et ritus omnium gentium* (1520). In a missionary context, the Spanish Jesuit and historian José de Acosta (1540-1600) compared the religious practices of the Indies with other known religions in his *Natural and Moral History of the Indies* (1590). Examples from the first half of the seventeenth century include *Purchas His Pilgrimage; or relations of the World and the Religions observed in all Ages* (1613) by the English cleric Samuel Purchas (c. 1577-1626); *Enquiries Touching the diversity of languages and religions through the chief parts of the world* (1614) by the English scholar and antiquarian Edward Brerewood (c. 1565-1613); *De Diis Syris Syntagmata* (1617) by the English polymath John Selden (1584-1654); and *De theologia gentili* (1642) by the *homo universalis* Gerardus Vossius (1577-1647).

Similar topics, such as the various gods and ceremonies, recur in the De Hooghe's chronological approach to the different religions. In most cases he emphasises not so much the similarity between all religions as the differences between Christianity and other religions, and between Reformed Protestantism and other Christian denominations. Here, De Hooghe foregrounds the sacred history of Christianity. Sacred history can be considered the history of God's relation to his people since the creation of humankind, via his exclusive relation with Jews and then his adoption of Christians as his children, assembled in the Christian Church.[18] It concerned the way God worked through history, unfolding his plan with the world. Contrary to ecclesiology, sacred history did not start

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17 The scope of *Hieroglyphica's* comparative etchings remains quite traditional, comprising first and foremost ancient paganism, the history of the Jews and that of Christianity. There are several instances in which De Hooghe briefly mentions other religions that had more recently been discovered, such as Chinese or Indian beliefs. For De Hooghe this must have been a deliberate choice, as he was well aware of religious variety across the globe. During his career he produced etchings on Islam, Judaism, Catholic devotion, and the indigenous religions of the west, China and elsewhere in the Orient. He also illustrated travel accounts and etched a series himself entitled *Les Indes Orientales et Occidentales*. Historically, De Hooghe's comparisons are not restricted to a specific period but display a diachronic account of religious history that extends up through De Hooghe's own time.

18 John Robertson, 'Sacred history and political thought: Neapolitan responses to the problem of sociability after Hobbes,' *The Historical Journal* 56 (2013):1-29, 8,9.

with the early Church but encompassed the history of Judaism and Christianity so that its pedigree extended all the way back to the beginning of the world. Not confining itself to the Bible as its only source, it added all sorts of historical witnesses to Christian sacred history. Central in sacred history was the special *status aparte* which first belonged to God's Chosen People, the Jews, but was later transmitted to the Christians. History was written to spell out the ways that God's peoples differed from surrounding profane groups, be they pagans, Muslims, Catholics or Protestants.[19] This changed during the late-sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, which saw a development that challenged the sacredness of Christianity's history.[20]

De Hooghe's starting point is the transmission of divine knowledge via human language in *merkbeelden* or hieroglyphs. In his appreciation of different religious sources De Hooghe makes a sharp distinction between teachings in the Bible and those in other writings at several places in *Hieroglyphica*. He observes that very little can be known for certain about the invention of writing in the first place. Christians are compelled by their faith to regard Seth, the ancestor of the Israelites, as the first scribe; afterwards separate peoples developed this art each in their own way.[21] Furthermore, De Hooghe accuses ancient Egyptian priests and philosophers of concealing their knowledge within a smokescreen of poetic nonsense, which they then passed on to their believers. These stories are thus of little value. The chronicles of the Chinese, containing a history that stretched back to a time before the calculated date for the Creation, are rejected as fantasies,

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19   In the sense of Jonathan Sheehan: profane as opposed to sacred. Not in the current meaning of 'having nothing to do with religion.' See Jonathan Sheehan, 'Sacred and Profane: Idolatry, Antiquarianism and the Polemics of Distinction in the Seventeenth Century,' *Past & Present* 192 (2006): 35-66.

20   On the notion of sacred history references are often made to *Sacred History. Uses of the Past in the Renaissance World*, ed Katherine Van Liere, Simon Ditchfield and Howard Louthan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012). Their approach is more broad, however, and addresses ecclesiological history but not really the specific genre of sacred history, as is pointed out in Irana Backus's review. See further: Eric W. Cochrane, *Historians and historiography in the Italian Renaissance* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981)*;* Arnaldo Momigliano, *The Classical Foundations of Modern Historiography* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 84; Timothy J. Furry, *Allegorizing History. The Venerable Bede, Figural Exegesis and Historical Theory* (Cambridge: James Clarke & Co, 2014). For the historiographical development of the genre see Dmitri Levitin's *From sacred history to the history of religion*. One of the first actual Sacred Histories was written by Sulpicius Severus, and is analysed in Gerrit van Andel's thesis, 'The Christian concept of history in the chronicle of Sulpicius Severus' (PhD dissertation, Amsterdam: Vrije Universiteit, 1974).

21   De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 15-16, cf. Jetze Touber, 'Tracing the Human Past: The Art of Writing Between Human Ingenuity and Divine Agency in Early Modern World History,' in *From Confessional Churches to Polite Piety*, ed Jetze Touber and Joke Spaans (Leiden: Brill, forthcoming).

on par with pagan stories about the existence of giants: according to him, these events can be explained by earthquakes. De Hooghe is equally skeptical about alternative theories concerning the Flood. In general De Hooghe distrusts stories that question the biblical account and rejects them as fables.[22]

also uses terms that foreground the difference between Christianity and other religions, and their respective believers. His distinctions are not very systematic; sometimes he adopts a binary opposition between 'true' and 'false' religion, and sometimes one encounters the Augustinian categorisation of Christianity, paganism, idolatry and heresy. From the beginning of *Hieroglyphica*, De Hooghe suggests that it is clear that the ancients were capable of attaining true knowledge but they did not have access to revealed knowledge and thus to the true, saving faith. Chapter 30, VAN HET GODDELYK WOORD [On the Divine Word], starts with the assertion:

> Whereas paganism remains in the dark while it gropes for the real constitution and origin of the cosmos, divine grace descends upon God's elect, and enlightens them with the saving Gospel, in the Old and New Testaments.[23]

De Hooghe here conforms to the notion, put forth by Reformed theologians, that the Church predates Christ and the Apostles and reaches all the way back to the expulsion of Adam and Eve from Paradise. From an early date Reformed theologians had defined the doctrine of the covenant, so as to combine the Old Testament history of the ancient Israelites, the Gospel stories about the life of Christ and the New Testament testimony about the early Church under one theological umbrella. The Old and New Testaments merely presented this one covenant under two different 'economies', human circumstances. Cocceian theology elaborated this idea and by the end of the seventeenth century 'federal theology' had become practically mainstream in the Dutch Republic.[24] This approach is found in several places in *Hieroglyphica*, suggesting that true religion and superstitious idolatry existed in tandem, developing alongside each other but in mutual isolation. This development begins with Cain and Abel, depicted in Plate 15. De Hooghe depicts

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22   De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica,* Verklaring van de Tytel-prent*, 33,* 51-56, 153, 165, 166, 168, 193. See further section 5.3 of this thesis.

23   De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 247. 'Terwyl het heidendom al schemerend tast naar de ware stand en oorsprong van het heelal, daalt de goddelijke genade op zijn uitverkorenen, en deelt aan hen het Licht van zijn zaligmakend woord, OT en NT mee'. See for similar ideas ibid. 31-32 and for their final elaboration ibid. 449-455.

24   De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, chapter 32. See further Jo Spaans, *A Newer Protestantism*, forthcoming.

and describes the separation between Cain's offspring and the 'Holy People'.[25] Cain's offspring is shown as a warrior, a powerful monarch intent on worldly domination. Abel's descendants, however, follow the opposite path: they represent the 'Pure Spirit', sent by God to lead the 'Holy People' through a soft application of the reins (fig. 64).

Fig. 64. De Hooghe, Het Zaad van Cain [Cain's Offspring] (K) and De Zuyvere Geest [a Pure Spirit] (H), detail from Plate 15

Curiously, however, De Hooghe's line of demarcation often runs not just between the religion of the ancient Israelites and Christianity on the one hand and all others on the other, but between religion that deviated from an original truth and religion that gropes towards an original, pure ideal.[26] Although true religion, of course, concerns the true God and true faith, it is remarkable how the difference between true and false, or 'deviant' and 'reformed', belief is often characterised in terms of simplicity and purity, in contradistinction to outward pomp and splendour. In the chapters 30 Van het Goddelyk Woord [On the Divine Word] and 39 Van het Verval tot Kettery [On Decline into Heresy] De Hooghe's description of false religion concerns mainly the wayward deviation of the original humble, pure and simple Church into a pompous, power-hungry, wealthy institution encumbered by all sorts of theological bells and whistles.

De Hooghe not only presents differences between religions but also comments on the causes of such differences. One explanation for the development of different religions involves geography and climate. The theory that natural circumstances influenced the physical and psychological character of peoples, which had existed since antiquity, was based on the Hippocratic grouping of four humours and was

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25   De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica,* 153, 195, 246.

26   False religion, for instance, pops up in the midst of God's Chosen People. Idem*, 201.*

still broadly accepted in the Early Modern period.[27] In *Hieroglyphica* we find both the classical division into warm and cold parts of the world (*zona torrida* and *frigida*) [28] and a more specific elaboration of the consequences of living in different zones based on their distance to the equator, and in the different climate zones of Europe and Asia. In chapter 3, Van de Op- en Doorgang der Merkbeelden [On the Beginning and Continuation of Hieroglyphs], he devotes a long passage to this theory:

> The influence of the Air on the abovementioned parts of Asia and Africa [i.e., those parts of the world where enterprising priests introduced a great variety of idolatrous religions], is fine and well-tempered, between the scorching parts under the Equator, and the coarser Air of Tartary, Scythia, Germany, and parts further North; roughly between the East and the West. The Cimbri, Celts, Getae and Scythians did not fancy the imagining or multiplication of Gods. To many of these Peoples the Gods have remained unknown or unclear, or invented and foisted upon us by the Greek authors and others; those, however, have been repelled by many of the Druids,[29] or have remained devoid of Temples and (sacred) groves or swamps; those that we do find in some places are all foreign, introduced here by the Romans. Everything above 60 degrees and below 10 degrees latitude is either too cold, for religious inventions, or too hot, for decent theology. The North breeds strong bodies, as do the scorched areas under the equator, but both are less apt to produce clear concepts, and are less endowed with bright minds.
>
> This is why the Ancients mentioned above have equated both Cancer and Capricorn (the Tropics of which they considered to be inhabitable, after the Equinox itself) with insipid, dull and stupid ignorance, as can be seen in their hieroglyphs showing the outline of a Kaffir or Moor. The latitudes between ten and sixty degrees, are more well-tempered.
>
> These fifty degrees of temperate latitudes have the following influence on the intellects: those between ten and 35 degrees are warmer on the outside and duller on the inside; fit for private contemplation, with a moderate

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27 For an overview of the climate theory see Harrison, *'Religion' and the Religions,* 112-120; on the adjustment of the climate theories from antiquity in the early modern period see Christine R. Johnson, *The German Discovery of the World. Renaissance Encounters with the Strange and Marvelous* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2008), 64-71.

28 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 8.

29 On seventeenth-century discussions concerning the Druids see Ronald Hutton, *Blood and Mistletoe. The History of the Druids in Britain* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 49-73.

phlegm and melancholia. This temper makes people fit for malice aforethought, secret conspiracies and evil deeds, to produce laws and rule principalities, to invent subtle analyses of matters. The other twenty-five degrees, from 35 to 60, have a colder atmosphere outside, but bodies are warmer inside, produce more powerful bodies than minds, they [the inhabitants] love company and prefer warming beverages, and with the use of their coarser bodies and minds, are predisposed to great achievements, laws, and all the burdens and uncertainties of war. Northwards of these sixty degrees, towards the North Pole, where intemperance increases, engendering even stronger bodies, but inferior minds and high fertility; [the people] are not very apt to command or to follow orders properly, but they are obstinate, stuck in their ways and jealous of their freedom, which once was so great that in all these provinces no kings were to be found, but only in name. The best Roman history-writers and poets have long desisted from calling Asia slavish, and they say about these lands that the value of their freedom was a matter long unknown to them. In the North they are rugged and loyal, in the South cunning and malicious; in the Northerners one finds horrible crimes alongside capital virtues, amply premeditated conceit, subtle endeavours, forceful actions — as they have excellent capacities for knowledge, virtues and flaws. The Southern part is full of superstition. The North was totally different. The South abounded in beautiful temples, oracles, and all the deceptions that go with these. Nowhere were priests and religious more highly respected. Afterwards, others in Europe have followed their example. Priests were held in such awe among the Asians, that they could make the people believe that they could exercise power over spirits, yea, over Gods, to conjure them up, that they conversed with Neph, Yunx, Hecate and others, that their magic chants/ enchantments could bring down the Moon; for that purpose they had *Meziten*, or lesser godlings, which they compelled to court or badger the major Gods as long as it took, to make them willing to serve them.[30]

30 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 39-40. 'De invloed van Lucht, op de bovengenoemde deelen van Asie en Africa, is fyn en best getempert, tusschen de verzengde deelen onder de Linie Aequinoctiaal, of Evenaar, en de grover Lucht van Tartarië, Scythië, Germanië, en de rest naar het Noorden; schier in 't midden van Oost en West. De Cimbren, Celten, Geten en Scythen, hadden zooveel met de verbeelding of vermenigvuldiging der Goden niet op. Voor veele deezer Volkeren zyn de Goden gansch onbekend of duyster gebleven, of verdcht, en ons door Griecksche Schryvers en anderen in de hand gedouwt; die echter van veelen der Druïden gewert, of zonder Tempels en Bosschen en Moerassen gehouden wierden; want zulke, die wy in eenige plaatsen vinden, zyn alle Uytlandsche, door Romeynen hier gebracht. Al wat wederzyds boven de 60. en onder de 10. graden loopt, is te koud, om snellen invloed, ofte verzengt, tot welgezette stellingen. Bekwamer is het Noorden tot sterkte van het lyf, en het verzenfde onder de Linie is ook tot werken vry sterk gemaakt; maar beyde zwakker voor klaare begrippen, en van doorstraalende geesten minder voorzien.

Waarom de Ouden bovengenoemt, Cancer en Capriocornus, (welker Tropici zy beyden, na de Linea Aequinoctialis, voor onbewoonbaar hielden) dezelve in hare Merkbeelden met een Caffers-Mooren-omtrek zien kan. Wat tusschen deeze tien en zestig Graaden begreepen is, voelt beter tempering.

Deze vyftig getemperde graaden zyn van de volgende uytwerking op de verstanden: die van tien graden tot vijf en dertig zyn van buyten warmer, en van binnen flaauwer; bekwaam tot eenzaam doordenken, met een matig Phlegma en Melancholi. Welke tempering tot voorbedachte wyze of raadslagen, tot stille bedenkingen en looze uytvoeringen bekwaam maakt. Wetten vormen en Heerschapyen bestieren, spitsvinnige doorgronding der zaken opleeveren. De andere vyf en twintig graden, van vyf en dertig tot zestig, hebben de Lucht van buyten kouder, het lyf van binnen heeter, zetten sterker de ligchaamen uyt, als de geesten; beminnen gezelschappen, zoeken verhittende dranken, en naar de grofheyd hunner ligchaamen en geesten werkende, zoo zynze tot groote werken, rechten, en alle de last en onbedachtheyd van den oorlog bereyd. Van welke zestig graaden opklimmende naar den Noordpool, als meer en meer die ongetempertheyd aangroeyt; en nog al sterker ligchamen, maar slechter geesten, en groote vruchtbaarheyd opkomen; tot wel gebieden en wel gehoorzamen niet zeer bekwaam, maar hartnekkig op de ingenoome waan, en gezet op vryheyd; welke eertyds zoo groot was, dat men in alle die Gewesten geen Koningen en vond als met de Naam. De besten der Roomsche Geschiedenis- Schrijvers en Dichters hebben zulks al overlang nagelaten, Asië, slaafsch noemende, en zeggende van deze Gewesten, dat derzelver vryheyd een goed was, waar van de waarde by hen onbekend was. De Noordsche zyn grof en trouw; de Zuydelyke zyn loos en kwaadwillig; by de Noordsche zyn groove misdaaden en ongeveynschde Deugden, lang overleyde looze veynzeryen, fyne onderneemingen, vinnige uytvoeringen. Hebbende groote hoedanigheden in weeten, Deugden en gebreeken. Het Zuydelyke deel is vol geloof en bygeloof. Gansch anders was het in 't Noorden. 't Zuyden grimmelde van prachtige Tempelen, Godspraaken, en alle guyteryen die daar aan vast waren; zoo dat men nergens zoo hoog-geachte Priesters en Papen vond. Naar welk model zich anderen in Europa naderhand wel geschikt hebben. Het ontzag der Priesteren klom bij de Azianen zoo hoog, dat zy het volk deeden gelooven, dat zy op Geesten, ja Goden macht hadden, om dezelve te bezweeren; dat zy spraken met Neph, Yunx, Hecate en anderen, dat hunlieder Toverdichten de Maan deeden afdaalen; zy hadden daar toe Meziten, of mindere Godekens, welke zy dwongen de grooter Goden, zoo lang te vryen of te kwellen, tot dat die zelf tot hun dienst gereed waren.'

This passage is interesting for a number of reasons. Regarding religion, De Hooghe states that unlike the north, the south (he is here less precise about which part of the world he means) is full of faith and idolatry and had overflowed with temples, oracles and all kinds of embellishment. This seems a lightly veiled allusion to Southern Europe, where the lively religious world of ancient polytheism lived on in the Catholic religion that De Hooghe denounces throughout *Hieroglyphica* as superstitious and priest-ridden.

Peter Harrison states that 'Environmentalism was proving something of an two edged sword, while generally deployed to support a biblical view of things, it could also stand independently as an alternative, non-supernatural explanation of religious diversity'.[31] What, then, should we think of De Hooghe's geographical explanation of idolatry? De Hooghe does not elaborate on the matter, he simply mentions it in passing. He does, however, point to how this environmental disposition predisposes the Dutch towards (in his eyes sensible) religious preferences. In chapter 1 of *Hieroglyphica* De Hooghe elaborates on the priests' ability, in bad times, to uphold their position as middlemen between the laity and the gods, but because the precise nature and workings of their mediation was very vague, this was not feasible in the Dutch Republic, where 'people would not have taken it.'[32] Remarkably, De Hooghe does not point specifically to Protestant religion, and his environmental theory seems to be an indication of the superior character of the Dutch (too clever to be conned by priests) rather than support for a confessional agenda. De Hooghe derives this idea, which he elaborates on in his chorography of the United Provinces *Spiegel van Staat*, from the 'Scythian thesis' of the Dutch historian Marcus Zuerius van Boxhorn (1612-1653). According to Boxhorn's theory, the Dutch were descended from the Scythians, a freedom-loving nomadic people that had split off from the rest of humanity directly after the Flood, and so remained unaffected by the decline in original purity and the rise of tyranny that led to the building of the Tower of Babel, the subsequent confusion of languages and the dispersion of peoples.[33]

On the whole, De Hooghe chose a historical approach, paying scant attention to the customs, ceremonies and beliefs of peoples in the newly discovered lands. This omission is even more remarkable because De Hooghe was involved in the illustration of 'exotic' lands and cultures. Early in his career, he produced the etchings for Simon de Vries's *Curieuse aenmerckingen der bysonderste Oost- en West-Indische verwonderenswaerdige dingen* (1682), in which all sorts of indigenous customs,

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31   Peter Harrison, *Religion and the Religions*, 116.
32   De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica,* 12.
33   On Boxhorn see Jaap Nieuwstraten, 'Historical and Political Thought in the Seventeenth-Century Dutch Republic. The case of Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn (1612-1653)' (PhD dissertation, Rotterdam, Erasmus University, 2012); on De Hooghe's use of the 'Scythian thesis' see the dissertation of Frank Daudeij (forthcoming).

clothing styles, plants and animals are depicted. We find representations of diverse phenomena, from Abyssinian legal practices, Indian clothing and Tartar fireworks to cannibalism amongst the Tapuyas in Brazil, Mexican art and Japanese trade. In his illustrations De Hooghe does not aim at ethnographic accuracy but rather aims to show the 'exotic other'.[34] In *Hieroglyphica* the only etching featuring the geography of peoples and their religions is plate 9, Van Hemel en Aarde [On Heaven and Earth], in the upper left corner. Here, in a lineage that goes back to Ripa's *Iconologia*, four continents (Asia, Europe, Africa and America) are personified. Despite a biased belief in European superiority, De Hooghe's images contain parts of light and parts of shadow, and the legend mentions aspects that he considers positive and those he regards as negative.

Fig. 65. De Hooghe, Plate 9, Van Hemel en Aarde [On Heaven and Earth]
Fig. 66. De Hooghe, De Vier Continenten [Four continents], detail of Plate 9

Asia (B) is given a Janus-face, so that one face is 'classy and wise and the other is bold and rude'. In the text De Hooghe specifies how the two faces stand, respectively, for

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34 Simon de Vries, *Curieuse aenmerckingen der bysonderste Oost- en West-Indische verwonderenswaerdige dingen. Nevens die van China, Africa en andere gewesten des Werelds* (Utrecht: Johannes Ribbius, 1682). A selection of 35 of these etchings by De Hooghe were later published separately as *Les Indes Orientales et Occidentales, et autres lieux: représentés en très-belles figures, qui montrent au naturel les peuples, moeurs, religions, fêtes, sacrifices, mosqées, idoles, richesses, ceremonies, festins, tribunaux, supplices et esclavages, comme aussi les montagnes, vaisseaux, commerce, etc.* (Leiden: P. van der Aa). Here all sorts of indigenous customs, clothing, plants and animals are depicted. See further Michiel van Groesen, 'De geplukte Tapoeier: Het beeld van de buiten-Europese wereld' in *Romeyn de Hooghe: De verbeelding van de late Gouden Eeuw*, ed H. F. K. van Nierop, et al. (Zwolle: Waanders, 2008), 58-65; Ilja M. Veldman, 'Familiar Customs and Exotic Rituals: Picart's Illustrations for Cérémonies et coutumes religieuses de tous les peuples,' *Simiolus* 33, 1–2 (2007– 8): 94–111, 104.

the dignified parts of the world such as Persia, Syria, India and China and the crude peoples like the Georgians, Anatolians, Parthians, Scythians and Tartars. The sabre symbolises the inclination towards violence on the part of Asian peoples; the censer in the other hand, however, shows their devotion to the Church. The stone tables at her side stand for either the law or medicine, as Asians are talented in both fields. Next to Asia we find figure C denoting Europe, which is only lauded: her helmet with feathers stands for her bravery and militancy for 'the freedom of all', the laurel wreath that adorns her represents her 'Arts, Diligence and War trade'. On her chest is the name of Christ, whose 'soul-saving teachings she embraces', and at her side is a sword that 'infuses the far-off peoples she discovered with fear'.[35] Figure D, Africa, is 'depicted as the worst part' of the world because of its pervasive slavery, but it did bring forth 'the wisdom of Egypt, the blessings of Palestine, the riches of Abyssinia, the brightest philosophers amongst the Moors and the best astronomers with the Arabs'. America (E) is depicted largely in the shadows because for a long time she had been unknown.[36]

De Hooghe continues his chapter by mentioning that all religions, even those in isolated America, contain parts of the Egyptian religions. Central in almost every religion is the veneration of a supreme being, predominantly via the symbol of the sun. Several scientists had tried to explain global spread – for instance, holding that the kingdom of Egypt once stretched into America – but De Hooghe thinks that such explanations are useless. *Hieroglyphica*, however, is useful as it provides information which serves 'painters, sculptors, and poets who want to recite events and histories… with their specific characteristics'.[37] In so many words, De Hooghe claims that all polytheistic systems, whether or not they originated in Egypt, are alike in their deification of the forces of nature. In De Hooghe's attempt to provide artists with the most accurate characteristics of 'other' parts of the world we encounter the view that Europe, 'small but most valuable', is superior, but numerous qualities of the other parts of the world are also valued. It seems that even in De Hooghe's biased images a

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35 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 106. Finally, Europe wears the gown for the many scholars and learned jurists in its population, on which the legend announces that more information will be provided 'later on' It is not quite clear on which part of the figure an elaboration will follow, but the role of academic scholars does return several times: see chapter 6 of this thesis.

36 See David Mark Whitford, *The Curse of Ham in the Early Modern Era. The Bible and the Justifications for Slavery* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009) and David M. Goldenberg, *The Curse of Ham. Race and Slavery in Early Judaism, Christianity, and Islam* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003) esp. chapter 12.

37 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 107.

more nuanced representation of 'other' continents filtered through.[38]

In the remainder of this chapter we will see how De Hooghe described different religions in their otherness: Egyptian paganism, classical mythology, Judaism and Catholicism. Finally, De Hooghe's take on Protestantism is included as well, as I believe that his perspective of Protestantism is of paramount importance to the valuing or denouncing of the 'other' religions.

4.2 Egyptian idolatry and classical mythology

Amongst the oriental religions described in *Hieroglyphica* a prime position is given to Egypt, predominantly in the etchings. From the very first chapters De Hooghe foregrounds the Egyptians' knowledge of nature and Egypt's role in the making of hieroglyphs, as has already been elaborately discussed in chapters 2 and 3 of this thesis. De Hooghe sees the legacy of Egypt to be both good and bad: it is presented to be at once the cradle of true religion and of idolatry. Like Athanasius Kircher, De Hooghe praises the Egyptians' ancient wisdom and their sensitivity to the divine, even as he accuses them of hiding their religious knowledge within hieroglyphs and propagating idol gods.[39] At several places De Hooghe admires the knowledge of nature acquired by bright Egyptian priests, teachers, philosophers, scientists and seers. According to De Hooghe they 'were of an incredible perspicacity and understanding, capable of grasping the beings of the World, and the most noble, which is the first and eternal being of the Upper-World'.[40] De Hooghe also commends the art of hieroglyphs that the Egyptians invented as a way of communicating 'thoughts that were too complicated and delicate to put into words'.[41]

But *Hieroglyphica* also draws attention to the role played by Egyptian sages

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38 Idem, 106. For the influence of travelogues and eyewitness accounts on the personifications of the continents see Edmond Smith, 'De-personifying Colaert's Four Continents: European Descriptions of continental diversity, 1585-1625,' *European Review of History – Revue européenne d'histoire* 21 (2014): 817-835; for later shifts in interpretation see Mark Ashton, 'Allegory, Fact and Meaning in Giambattista Tiepolo's Four Continents in Würzburg,' *The Art Bulletin* 60 (1978): 109-125.

39 On Kircher see Paula Findlen, ed, *Athanasius Kircher. The Last Man Who Knew Everything* (New York: Routledge, 2004); Daniel Stolzenberg*, Egyptian Oedipus. Athanasius Kircher and the Secrets of Antiquity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013); Daniel Stolzenberg, 'The Egyptian crucible of truth and superstition: Athanasius Kircher and the hieroglyphic doctrine' in *Antike Weisheit und kulturelle Praxis. Hermetismus in der Frühen Neuzeit*, ed Anne-Charlott Trepp and Hartmut Lehmann (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2010), 145-164.

40 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, Verklaring van de Tytel-prent, 1, 55-56.

41 Idem, 56.

and their Babylonian, Chaldean and Greek counterparts in the rise of idolatry. De Hooghe laments:

> O Egypt! Egypt! There will be no stories left to later generations but invented fairy-tales of your religion, which your offspring will consider unbelievable. For the inner knowledge – both the natural and the historical – was lost, and filthy, whimsical images stayed, which nobody understood. The excessive multitude of godlings had to collapse by itself, and they [Egypt] chose to make this the basis of religion.[42]

Fig. 67. De Hooghe, Thebaische Vrouw [Theban woman], detail Plate 1,

Furthermore, De Hooghe chides the wise men of the Orient for 'shrouding their knowledge and philosophy of Nature'. Philosophers, natural scientists and priests clung to their elevated status and intentionally veiled their religious and natural knowledge to prevent the masses from becoming as educated as they were. To this end they developed and used the art of hieroglyphs, and history and science became encapsulated in poems and fabricated stories. Eventually, their 'hieroglyphic art became the art of inventing gods'. De Hooghe points, again, to the geographical context of hieroglyphs:

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42 Idem, 54. 'O Egypten! Egypten! Daar zullen in later tyden niet overschieten als verdichte sprookjens van uwe Godsdiensten, en die zullen aan uwe Nazaaten ongelooffelyk zyn; want die innerlyke kennisse, zoo wel Natuurlyke als Historische, ging wech, en de vieze grillige Beelden bleeven, welker uytlegging nog making, niemand in der eerste Keyzers tyden machtig was. De al te groote veelheid van Godekens moest ook door zichzelfs vervallen, en zy maakten dat echter tot een grondslag.'

which should fit 'the country for which the intended hieroglyph is meant'. This means – so says the text – that in Europe hieroglyphs should be clearly understandable, as 'we in Europe love clarity, in cases, writings and images; and desire that one or more hieroglyphs are as obvious as a sign board'. Egyptian hieroglyphs, however – which he illustrated by showing the Egyptians depicting their Supreme God in the form of a dung-beetle – were unclear and even blasphemous in De Hooghe's eyes.

De Hooghe ends by saying that although the Egyptians came a long way on the path of true religion, they did not attain the soul-saving faith. They excelled in deducing their concepts from the light of nature, from human reason. Nevertheless, they stay behind the Jews and the Christians, who can demonstrate the 'divine economy' (a technical term – *Konstwoord* – according to De Hooghe), which refers to the history of salvation drawn from scripture.[43]

Classical mythology

De Hooghe's continues his historical track with a detailed description of the Greek and Roman religions and gods. Chapter 22, Van de Afgodery-Smeding [On the Forging of Idols], states that the ancient peoples created their pantheons after studying the heavens, and claims that they are essentially alike, despite the use of different names. Chapter 24 is entitled Van de Fenicische en Grieksche Goden [On Phoenician and Greek Gods], chapter 25 Van de Grieksche Goden [On Greek Gods], and chapter 26 Van de Grieksche en Roomsche Goden [On Greek and Roman Gods]. De Hooghe explains in detail how the Greek and Roman gods and their stories – sometimes with geographical variations – were conceived of and represented in images and symbols.[44] For instance, there is in chapter 24 a description of Jupiter, which begins:

> Jupiter was seen by the pagans as the true Being, and the Superior Deity, the Romans for [reasons of] his fatherly assistance, and the Greeks for his beneficence. The Egyptians gave him a feather on his head, the symbol of the incomprehensibility of the infinite Being. The Greeks crowned his head with a spiked or iron crown, or with a royal circlet tight around his head, as a sign of his reign over the universe. A round ball of circles or

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43 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, esp. 1-4, 15-25, 53-58. The divine economy plays a prominent role in the theology of Johannes Cocceius (1603-1669), a leading theologian in the Dutch Reformed Church. See Willem J. van Asselt, *The Federal Theology of Johannes Cocceius (1603-1669)* (Leiden: Brill, 2001).

44 Sometimes De Hooghe's characterisations are difficult to link to currently existing stories about the god described. In chapter 25, for instance, we find in figure F. a nymph by the name of *Ajoja* who was venerated as the 'wet nurse of Jupiter'. Though there are different stories about the names of the wet nurse and goat that nursed Jupiter, I did not encounter the name *Ajoja* in the regular descriptions of Jupiter. De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*,, 217.

hoops is beneath his feet, symbolising his creation of the universe…[45]

Fig. 68. De Hooghe, Plate 24, Van de Fenicische en Grieksche Goden [On Phoenician and Greek Gods]
Fig. 69. De Hooghe, Jupiter [Jupiter], detail of Plate 24

Unlike in the factual information on the gods given in chapters 22-24, a more judgmental tone is present in the description of the gods in chapter 26. Here, De Hooghe emphasises the immoral character of many of the ancient gods, especially the gods of booze and banquets, Silenus or Bachus (H) , the Phrygian 'drinking god Homoritus' (M) and 'Connis, god of festive meals' (K) .

One of the consequences is depicted in figure L, centrally positioned in plate 26. Here we encounter the 'deflowering' of a drunk virgin by a marble stone

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45   De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 207. 'Jupiter, door 't Heydendom voor 't waare Weezen, en de Oppervoogd der Goden aangebeden, is van zyne helpende Vaderlykheyd zoo genaamt by den Romeynen, als van zyn weldoen by den Grieken. De Egyptenaars gaven hem eene Pluym op 't Hoofd, Merkbeeld der Ondoorgrondelykheyd van 't Oneyndig Weezen. De Grieken kroonen zyn Hoofd, of met eene Punt- of Straalkroon, of met eene Koninklyke Hoofdband om 't Hoofd gebonden, als een Merkbeeld van zyne Heerschappy over 't Heel-Al. Eene ronde Bol van Cirkelen of Hoepen is onder zyne Voeten, om te vertonen, dat hy dat Heel-Al heeft geschapen...'

Priapus as a symbol of the 'complete lewdness of wanting to rape oneself'. Again, the text goes into detail – from kissing and sucking on the statue to penetration by a 'moisturised stone penis'. This image's central position might suggest that it was meant to spice up *Hieroglyphica* a bit.[46] Nevertheless, the legend continues with the somewhat dry symbolic descriptions of Mars and the Muses. The following chapters, 27- 29, pay attention to the evil and avenging gods, after which chapter 30 turns to the moment when the Divine Word enters the scene of world history. Here the focus shifts to the Hebrew people and Judaism.
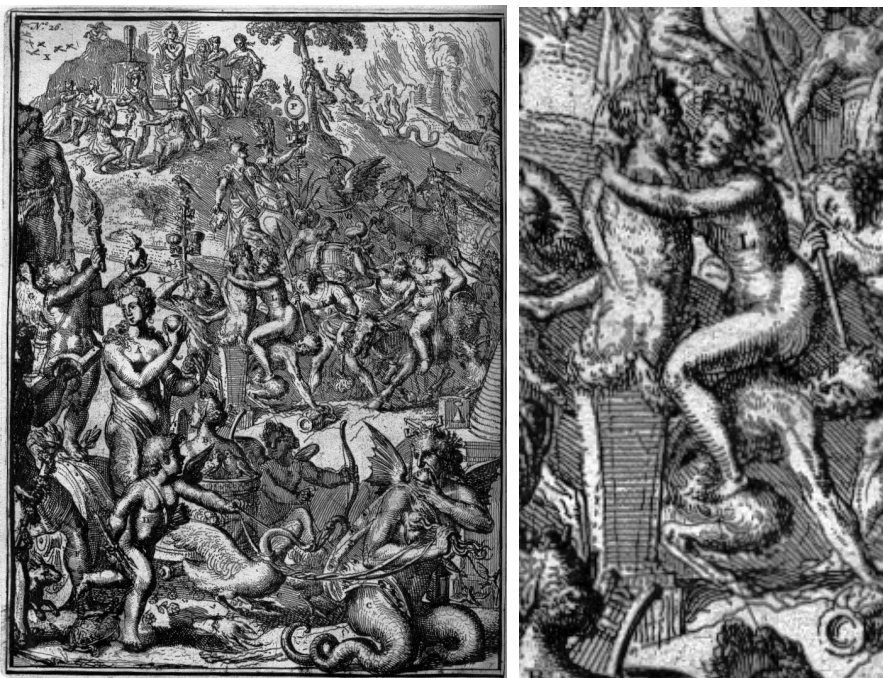
Fig. 70. De Hooghe, Plate 26, Van de Grieksche en Roomsche Goden [On Greek and Roman Gods]
Fig. 71. De Hooghe, Ontmaagding door een stenen Priapus [Self-defloration of a virgin by a stone Priapus], detail of Plate 26

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46   On De Hooghe and pornographic images see Anna de Haas, 'Feit en fictie rond de "Aretijnse" prenten van Romeyn de Hooghe (1645-1708),' *Mededelingen van de Stichting Jacob Campo Weyerman* 28 (2005): 104-117 and Inger Leemans, *Het woord is aan de onderkant. Radicale ideeën in Nederlandse pornografische romans 1670-1700* (Nijmegen: Vantilt, 2002).

4.3 Hebrews and Judaism

Although De Hooghe first characterises the Jewish people as those having the best claim to being the oldest in the world and to have been designated as the Children, Congregation or Church of God, his presentation of the Hebrew religion in *Hieroglyphica* is rather critical. Chapter 14 sketches the biblical history of the Jews in a nutshell, from Adam, via Abraham, Moses, Joshua, and the judges, kings and prophets, to the coming of Christ. The protagonists in the decisive turns in the history of the Chosen People double as 'hieroglyphs' or emblems of the successive stages in the 'divine economy' that led up to the lifetime of Jesus.

Fig. 72. De Hooghe, Plate 14, Van Gods Volk [On God's People]

The last period, visualised by the Lamb of God, is entitled Van de Verblinde Kerk [On the Blinded Church], referring to the Jews' blindness in their rejection of Christ. Nevertheless, at this point De Hooghe does not emphasise this rejection, but continues by explaining different branches of Judaism such as the Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes and 'Rechabites'.[47] Here De Hooghe describes some of their dogmas and ways of

47   De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, chapter xiv Van Gods Volk

living, and mentions in conclusion that he has left out many other examples of Temple servants and people who guarded the 'Laws, Histories, Exegesis and Prophecies'. The text concludes by saying that all this 'served rather the outward splendour and ceremony than true knowledge'. Despite this attention to external display over inner truth, De Hooghe does not describe the Jews as idolaters; rather it is the Church of God that has sunken into the pathways of error and has lost sight of its destiny. The division between outward and inward religion seems to be as important as dogmatic religious errors, a view we will often see expressed over the course of *Hieroglyphica*.

Yet these errors do matter. The next chapters are devoted to Israel's fall into idolatry. Plate 19, Van het Volk, en Konings Bestier over Gods Volk [On the People, and the Reigns of Kings over God's People], treats the histories of Saul, David and Solomon and the increasing veneration of pagan gods. This false path results in the Babylonian captivity, which is the subject of chapter 21.

Fig. 73. De Hooghe, Plate 21, Van het Lyden van Gods Volk [On the Suffering of God's People].

Plate 21 visualises the 'suffering' of the Israelites. Figure A shows a High Priest, mediating the will of God to his people, which then results in a period of prosperity and power. These good times yielded to the ascendance of bad kings to the throne and to idolatry, prompting divine punishment. Figures C and D represent the Babylonian Captivity and figures F and E the sacking and rebuilding of the temple. All this strife

came about, as the text informs us, because of a recurring and growing idolatry amongst the chosen, copied from the pagan peoples surrounding them.[48] This argument echoes the broader attention given to the relation between the Israelites and their neighbouring peoples, for instance in the work of John Selden, John Spencer and the Dutch writer Willem Goeree. The latter, like De Hooghe a craftsman as well as a lay intellectual, popularised in lavishly illustrated books the reconstruction of Jewish antiquities, such as those of Noah's Ark, the Temple of Solomon, the vestments of the High Priest, and the mysterious *urim* and *tummim* that had adorned his breastplate.[49] This accusation of idolatry is extended further in the legend of plate 29, VAN DE KWAADE GODEN [On Evil Gods]. Here we read that the punishment of the Israelites was their just deserts both for their idolatry and for Christ's crucifixion.

> Which most just punishments by God's hand, prophesied by so many Prophets, and by our Saviour himself, were long overdue, not only because of their wickedness in lechery and idolatry, but also in slaying so many holy men and crucifying the Saviour Jesus Christ, as well as their contempt for God's Holy Word and his Laws, perverting the holy salvific and pristine sense of the Holy Pages by their Kabbalists, Talmudists, Sadducees and other sowers of heresy.[50]

Although their support for Christ's crucifixion was a common argument to explain the misery encountered by the Jews, De Hooghe emphasises yet another evil: their distortion of and contempt for the Bible, which is foregrounded in plate 30, VAN HET GODDELYK WOORD [On the Divine Word] (see fig. 39 in chapter 3 above). Here De Hooghe depicted a personification of the Divine Word, surrounded by her enemies, amongst which figure B represents the Jewish Kabbalah. The figure is an old woman, symbolising the venerable age of this exegetical tradition, standing on only one biblical scroll, as Judaism accepts only the Torah. De Hooghe added a veil to her face because Kabbalists 'always search for hidden messages in the Bible' with the help

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48   Idem, 195, 196. In II Maccabees, 6-7 we find the story of a mother and her seven sons, martyred for their refusal to eat pork. Jewish dietary restrictions were otherwise well known.

49   John Selden, *De Diis Syris Syntagmata* (London: W. Stansby, 1617); John Spencer, *De Legibus Hebraeorum, Ritualibus et earum Rationibus libri tres* (Cambridge, J. Hayes,1685); Willem Goeree, *Mosaize historie der Hebreeuwse kerke* (Amsterdam: Willem en David Goeree, 1700).

50   De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 246. 'Welke Rechtvaardigste straffen, door zoo veele Propheten, en onzen Zaligmaker zelfs voorzegt, van Gods Hand lange verdient waren, niet alleen door hare Godloosheden in de wellusten en Afgoderyen, maar ook met het dooden van zoo veele Godgeheyligde Mannen, en het kruycigen van den Heyland Jezus Christus, behalve het verachten van Gods H. Woord en zyne Wetten, het verdraayen van den H. Zaligmakenden en zuyveren zin der H. Bladeren door hunlieder Caballisten, Talmudisten, Sadducceeën en andere Kettery-zaayers'. This notion is repeated in chapter 31 of *Hieroglyphica*.

of numerology. De Hooghe rejects this sort of exegesis as a form of outright deceit, symbolised by the familiar mask of deceit hanging beneath the books.[51] The legend finishes by offering an explanation of the owl, which according to De Hooghe stands for the 'melancholic fools and blind boors' who have invented all this rubbish.[52]

Fig. 74. De Hooghe, Cabbala [Kabbalah], detail of Plate 30

That this concerns only a part of the Jewish religion becomes clear when, in the chapter that follows, De Hooghe writes that 'whereas the Kabbalah subverted the Sacred Text [i.e., the Bible], the Masorah by contrast vigorously supported it'. The Masorah, the vocalised text of the Hebrew Bible, had been 'formed by the conduct, scholarship and wisdom of Ezra'. With this remark, De Hooghe took a position in a debate about the reliability of the Masorah, from which the Protestant Bible translations depended. The German-Jewish scholar Elias Levita (1469-1549) and the French Protestant Louis Cappel (1585-1658) had argued not only that the vocalisation had taken place not earlier than the fifth century AD, but the latter had even convincingly shown that the Hebrew *textus receptus* was corrupt in many places, as was true of other texts from antiquity. Orthodox Protestants had vigorously rejected Cappel's findings, but apparently De Hooghe agreed with them. For De Hooghe, this refinement of the Masorah was done with great care, although it was not clear when it had been done. Because of the carefulness of Ezra

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51   See further chapter 6 on Anticlericalism below.

52   De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 428, 429. The owl is also present in plates 2 and 43. In other instances the owl represented wisdom and, more specifically, the figure of Minerva. Later this changed, and particularly in popular literature and emblematics the owl symbolised fear and stupidity. See Lucia Impelluso, *Nature and its symbols*,… entry: OWL. For Ripa the owl also has a negative meaning.

(or Nehemiah, who was also a possibility for De Hooghe), this book remained a valuable support for the belief that the Bible enjoyed a special status.[53]

Fig. 75. De Hooghe, Plate 31, Van de Joodsche Stand bij Christus Tyden [On Jewry during the lifetime of Christ].

De Hooghe's chapter 31, on Jewish sources and institutes as represented by the figures of serene sages, is quite neutral. In the image, figure A denotes the Masorah and figure B the Talmud, which is said to prescribe civilised morals. The plate's other figures refer to the religious court of the Jews, the Sanhedrin, and to its composition and procedures. At the close of the chapter, however, De Hooghe again notes that the sorrows of the Jews were caused by their complicity in Christ's crucifixion. According to De Hooghe, the Jews had suffered greater disasters and humiliations that any other people, but – he states comfortingly – all this misery did not destroy the Jews, unlike other unfortunate and extinct peoples who live on only in references in books. On the contrary: there are many Jews in the world, they own

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53 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 251, 252. For the debate over the reliability of the Masorah see P.T. van Rooden, *Theology, Biblical Scholarship and Rabbinical Studies in the Seventeenth Century. Constantijn L'Empereur (1591-1648), Professor of Hebrew and Theology at Leiden* (Leiden: Brill, 1989), 222-227.

large treasures, and at some courts they are held in higher esteem than Christians or Turks.[54] If for De Hooghe the Bible was incorruptible, the Jews – God's chosen people and the cradle, so to speak, for later Christianity – were indestructible. He even hints that there may be hope for them. So: De Hooghe reiterates some of the negative images about the Jews that were current in his time.[55] Yet like most of his Christian contemporaries, he repeatedly points out that despite the Israelites' stubborn mistakes, which provoked God to act and eventually to give up his exclusive relation with the Jews, God had not completely forsaken them.[56]

Something more interesting emerges if we consider De Hooghe's engravings outside *Hieroglyphica* that treat contemporary Judaism as a subject. Living in a time of widespread anti-Semitism, with hostility to Jews voiced in visual material as well as other forms of expression, De Hooghe stood out for his sympathetic depictions of Jewish life, customs and architecture. 'Indeed, so much is known about Amsterdam's Jews in the seventeenth century because De Hooghe devoted many etchings and engraving to them'.[57] Such etchings include his depiction of the famous inauguration of the Portuguese synagogue in 1675 and the façade of the home of the Curiel family, and engravings of religious ceremonies show scenes of a circumcision performed on a Sephardic boy in the presence of his family (echoed in Plate 14 of *Hieroglyphica*) and the celebration of Sukkot.[58] These images picture the Jews depicted in them as distinguished, respected citizens. Not everyone appreciated such an exceptionally positive representation: amongst others, the Frankfurt polyhistor Joann Jacob Schudt (1664-1722) denounced De Hooghe's treatment of Jewish culture. He targeted especially the etching of the synagogue interior in which well-dressed Jews cordially met with political leaders. Saskia Coenen Snyder analyses this image and the surrounding medallions and allegories as a paean to religious freedom, 'reinforced with the Latin phrase '*Libertas Conscientiae incrementum reipublicae*' (freedom of worship is the mainspring of the Republic).[59]

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54 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 254.

55 For an exhaustive treatment of the current views of Dutch Reformed theologians on the Jews in this period see Mathijs van Campen, *Gans Israel. Voetiaanse en coccejaanse visies op de joden gedurende de zeventiende en achttiende eeuw* (Zoetermeer: Boekencentrum, 2006).

56 Levitin, *From Sacred History to the History of Religion*, 1139.

57 Hunt et al., *The Book that Changed Europe*, 184. See also Steven Nadler, *Rembrandt's Jews* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 58-61.

58 Adri K. Offenberg, 'De wijze stad aan de Amstel. De joodse prenten in *Romeyn de Hooghe: De verbeelding van de late Gouden Eeuw*, ed H. F. K. van Nierop, et al. (Zwolle: Waanders, 2008), 112-125.

59 Saskia Coenen Snyder, "Acculturation and Particularism in the Modern City. Synagogue Building and Jewish Identity in Northern Europe" (PhD dissertation, University of Michigan, 2008), 91-93.

Fig. 76. De Hooghe, *Interieur van de Portugese Synagoge te Amsterdam, 1675* [Interior of the Portuguese synagogue in Amsterdam] Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

Fig. 77. De Hooghe, *Besnijdenis-scéne bij een Sefardische familie*, 1665. [Circumcision in a Sephardic Family] Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

The intimate images set in Jewish homes might be seen to reflect, in Richard I. Cohen's phrase, the 'mutuality of the unfolding relation between Jew and Christian'. Exchange involving such private matters suggests tolerance and increased interest,

with Christians seeking to learn about Jewish ceremonies and Jews in turn willing to show outsiders their valued practices. Less loftily, one could add that Christians were certainly willing to accept money from Jews. De Hooghe was commissioned to produce these etchings, which probably paid well.[60] We might then wonder about the extent to which the images represented the artist's views. In any case, De Hooghe's work stood out and might even have gotten him in trouble: Coenen, Hunt, Jacob and Mijnhardt believe that his sympathetic representations of Jewish culture contributed to the slander campaign launched against him.[61] Perhaps, but this was probably quite a secondary matter: De Hooghe's colleagues Jan Luyken and Bernard Picart also depicted Jews positively but were not treated like De Hooghe.[62]

Regarding the theme of religious comparison, De Hooghe's description of Hebrew religion and Judaism lacks any concrete comparison with to Christianity, and there is no overt discussion of the relation between the two religions. Only in chapter 4 of *Hieroglyphica* Jews and Christians does one find Christians and Jews jointly opposed to the Egyptians. A bit further on, they are also paired because of their shared idea of a divine economy.[63] Implicitly, however, De Hooghe comments on the relation between Judaism and Christianity. In *Hieroglyphica* Judaism seems to be silently replaced by Christianity. Although there is no mention of a 'replacement theory' that would have Christians occupying the place of the Jews as the new chosen people, De Hooghe talks consequently about 'the Church'.[64] This suggests that De Hooghe shared the opinion of most Reformed theologians of his time, but above all elaborated by Cocceius, that the Church had existed from the beginning of history, starting with the descendants of Adam, and continuing through a lineage of people, first and foremost the patriarchs and the ancient Israelites, who honoured a succession of covenants — all those who did not fall prey to the tyranny of princes and priests and to idolatry. Even the elect had repeatedly been tempted, and as a consequence suffered divine punishment until the covenant was restored through reformation.

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60 Richard I. Cohen, *Jewish Icons. Art and Society in Modern Europe* (Berkeley: University of California Press 1998), 47-49.

61 Mijnhardt, *The Book that Changed Europe*, 184, 185; Coenen, *Acculturation and Particularism in the Modern City*, 92.

62 See also F. Daudeij, who shows in a dissertation (forthcoming) that the main reason for the slander of De Hooghe had to do with his work for William III, who was in constant conflict with the Amsterdam regents.

63 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 53,57.

64 Idem, 32. The only remark is made at the beginning of *Hieroglyphica* chapter 32: 'God's Church had been promised'.

4.4 Islam

Chapters 46 and 47 of *Hieroglyphica* are dedicated to Islam. Ever since Islam became known in the West, the image of this religion has not been very positive. Already in the 8th century John of Damascus had described Islam as the worst of all heresies. This negative view of Islam was strengthened by the expansive threat posed by the Turks. Although defeated at Vienna in 1683, they were still seen as dangerous, and thus fear and enmity contributed to the overall negative view of Islam in Europe. Information and knowledge about Islam came to the west through the accounts and descriptions of travelers, merchants, sailors and slaves, but for a long time there was little interest in any sort of genuine and objective knowledge about this religion. Eventually, in the 17th and 18th centuries, increased attention led to oriental studies becaming part of mainline academic scholarship.[65] Despite the efforts made by great orientalists like Thomas van Erpen (1584-1624), Jacob van Gool (1596-1667) and Adriaan Reland (1676-1718) in the Republic and Edward Pococke (1604-1691) and Henry Stubbe (1632-1676) in England to clarify that many existing ideas about Islam were not actually true, a negative view of Mohammed and the religion he founded remained dominant.[66]

In *Hieroglyphica* De Hooghe presents Muslims as lustful, violent idolaters; Muhammad was depicted as an epileptic imposter who had created Islam by combining elements of different religions.[67] So in general Islam is presented as untrue and definitely as 'other' than Christianity.

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65   Nat, *De studie van de Oostersche talen in Nederland in de 18e en de 19e eeuw*; Van Rooden, *Theology, Biblical Scholarship and Rabbinical Studies in the Seventeenth Century*; J. Brugman, 'Arabic Scholarship', in *Leiden University in the Seventeenth Century. An Exchange of Learning,* ed Th. H. Lunsingh Scheurleer and G.H.M. Posthumus Meyjes (Leiden: Universitaire Pers/ Brill, 1975), 203-215; Alastair Hamilton, 'The Study of Islam in early modern Europe,' *Archiv für Religionsgeschichte* 3 (2001): 169-182; James R. Jacob, *Henry Stubbe, Radical Protestantism and the Early Enlightenment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

66   Jaap van Amersfoort and Willem J. van Asselt, *Liever Turks dan Paaps? De visies van Johannes Coccejus, Gisbertus Voetius en Adrianus Relandus op de Islam* (Zoetermeer: Boekencentrum, 1997), 37, 44; See further Robert Irwin, *For Lust of Knowing. The Orientalists and their Enemies* (London: Allan Lane, 2006); Nasir Khan, *Perceptions of Islam in the Christendoms. A Historical Survey* (Oslo: Solum Forlag, 2006); Michael Frassetto and David R. Blanks, eds, *Western Views of Islam in Medieval and Early Modern Europe: Perceptions of Other* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1999).

67   See also chapter 6 of this thesis below.

Fig. 78. De Hooghe, Plate 46, Van de Mahomethaansche Beginsselen [On the Mohametan Principles]
Fig. 79. De Hooghe, Plate 47, Van de Mahomethaansche Godsdienst [On the Religion of the Mahometans]

In De Hooghe's two etchings that address Islam there is little direct comparison with Christianity, or any other religion for that matter. Still, a few topics of comparison stand out. First there is the symbol that Muhammad chose for his religion, the crescent moon. De Hooghe put a crescent above the heads both of Muhammad in plate 46 and of the female personification of Islam in plate 47. The commentary explains that he had chosen this symbol because, familiar as it was to the adherents of other religions in the region, it made it easier to convert neighbouring peoples to Islam.[68] De Hooghe mentions in so many words that the Arabs were used to venerating the moon because the Babylonians, Syrians and Egyptians had venerated it before them.[69] Another element of comparison concerns morality. Christian commentators saw the way that Muslims could attain Paradise through their behaviour as representing a (false) promise of an easy road to salvation, and this would yet again be a smart way to lure people to Islam.[70] De Hooghe, however, values Muslims' morality: their religion makes them genuinely aware of their behaviour. Muslim

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68   De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 335, 343.
69   De Hooghe claims that he had found evidence for this idea in the writings of one Berkmans, who worked in the region of Basra, see De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica,* 343. I could not identify this Berkman(s).
70   Ross, *Pansebeia,* 176. Van Amersfoort, *Liever Turks dan Paaps?,* 47, 112, 113.

individuals were generally obedient both to their government and to their parents. The last point about parents might have been especially attractive to De Hooghe, who had major difficulties when his daughter ran away with a man he didn't approve of. Moreover, De Hooghe states that Muslims are hardworking, loyal, modest and true to their word. The garrulous and bibulous Christians could learn something from them.[71] Although Muslim morality had been noticed before, it was rejected as 'a fraudulent façade', maintained only for the purpose of proselytising. That this negative interpretation is lacking in *Hieroglyphica* indicates a shift towards a slightly more balanced view, probably informed by the writings of historians.[72]

Another sort of comparison between Islam and other religions is more visual, and concerns the topic of violence. In his images De Hooghe shares the general conviction that Islam was a violent religion that converted believers via the sword rather than through peaceful missionary preaching. This image of a violent people is also present in etching 22, *Turkse Slaverny en Gevanknis* [Turkish Slavery and Imprisonment], of De Hooghe's *Indes Orientales et Occidentalis*, where we see mistreated prisoners being held as slaves (fig. 80).

Fig. 80. De Hooghe, Turkse Slaverny en Gevanknis, etching 22 from *Indes Orientalis et Occidentales*

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71   De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 338. Here De Hooghe follows Ross, in his (unpaginated) Caveat to his edition of the Qur'an. Ross explicitly used Muslim religious discipline as a criticism to direct at the English Puritans, see Nabil Matar, *Islam in Britain 1558-1685* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 79-80; Avinoam Shalem, ed., *Constructing the Image of Muhammad in Europe* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2013), 106. On De Hooghe's issues with his daughter see Anna de Haas, *Wie de wereld bestiert weet ik niet. Het rusteloze leven van Cornelis van der Gon, dichter en zeekapitein 1660-1731* (Amsterdam: Balans, 2008), 57-78.

72   Hamilton, *The Study of Islam in early modern Europe*.

In *Hieroglyphica* de Hooghe pictured Muhammad with a sword, and likewise in his illustrations for Godfried Arnold's *Historie der kerken en ketteren* we find Muhammad depicted as a warrior (fig. 81).[73] Moreover, the woman personifying Islam in chapter 47 of *Hieroglyphica* crushes three other religions under her feet. De Hooghe thus shows her to possess a harsh character (fig. 83).

Fig. 81. De Hooghe, Illustration of Mahometh [Muhammad] in Arnold's *Historie der Kerken en ketteren*, vol 1, p. 469

Fig. 82. De Hooghe, Islam [Islam], detail of Plate 46

Fig. 83. De Hooghe, Islam [Islam], detail of Plate 47

Fig. 84. De Hooghe, Openbare Verkondiging van Luther [Public preaching of Luther], detail of Plate 59

But we see something striking in the first etching. As concerns violence, De Hooghe hints at a similarity between Islam and Christianity. In plate 47 De Hooghe places a member of a military monastic order next to Muhammad: a crusader in full armour who looks every inch as violent as Muhammad himself. Here, the Muslim sword is used not to force people to renounce their religion and convert to Islam but to do battle with equally violent Christian crusaders. And, as we see in chapter 59 of *Hieroglyphica*, even the personification of the Lutheran Church carries a sword, holding it, remarkably, just as De Hooghe depicted Muhammad holding his own weapon in Arnold's book.[74]

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73   Gottfried Arnold, *Historie der kerken en ketteren, van den beginne des Nieuwen Testament tot aan het Jaar onzes Heeren 1688,* vol 1, 469. Dutch translation of German original.

74   T. van 't Hof, 'Old Emblems, New Meaning: A Critical Visual Account of the Reformation in De Hooghe's Hieroglyphica,' in *Imago Exegetica. Visual Images as Exegetical Instruments, 1400-1700*, ed Walter S. Melion, James Clifton and Michel Weemans (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 885-919.

The motif of heads on sticks is a further visual similarity linking Islam and Christianity. Next to Muhammad in plate 46 stands a Tartar (B), denoting Sunni Islam, holding a large stick with the head of a Christian impaled on it. But again, when we look further in *Hieroglyphica* and other works by De Hooghe we see that even this terrible weapon is characteristically wielded not only by Muslims.

Fig. 85. De Hooghe, Zarazijnsche Afgodistery [Saracen Idolatry], detail of Plate 46
Fig. 86. De Hooghe, Allegorie op de overwinningen van Leopold I [Allegory of the victories of Leopold I] 1686-1687, Rijksmuseum Amsterdam
Fig. 87. De Hooghe, detail of fig. 89

In 1686 De Hooghe made an engraving representing Leopold I's victory over the Turks in the Battle of Vienna, 1683. In this picture the same mark of violence as seen above is reversed: a couple of Muslim heads are impaled on sticks held by Christians. Moreover, such violence had flared up not only between the representatives of Islam and Christianity but also among Christians. In chapter 56, De Hooghe visualised how Catholics had slaughtered the Waldensians in France. Again we see the motif of the impaled head, this time for Raymond of Montfort (fig. 88). [75]

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[75] De Hooghe here confused Simon of Montfort, who fiercely battled the Cathars in the Albigensian Crusades (and who is intended here) with their protector Raymond of Toulouse. Until Philippus van Limborch in his *Historia Inquisitionis* (1692) demonstrated the incompatibility of Cathar dualism with any kind of Christian orthodoxy, practically all persecuted heretics were conceived of as 'precursors of the Reformation', including the thirteenth-century Albigensians.

Fig. 88. De Hooghe, Raymond van Montfort [Raymond of Montfort], detail of Plate 56

These examples show that although De Hooghe does not deny Islamic violence – on the contrary – he puts it into perspective by pointing to analogous violence carried out under the aegis of other religions. The visuals support and reinforce what is expressed in the title of De Hooghe's book, which foregrounds the corruption of all religions – clearly evident in the violence inflicted in their names.[76]

4.5. Catholicism

The previous descriptions of classical religions showed Judaism and Islam to share small similarities with true religion. Not so in *Hieroglyphica*'s rendition of Catholicism. This was not unusual: as we have seen, Protestant histories characterised its religion's relation with the Catholic Church as somewhat different than its connection to other religions. Protestantism, a newcomer on the religious scene, had to defend itself against the accusations of 'novelty' because new ideas were considered to be less authoritative than old ideas. Therefore, most Protestant histories portrayed the Catholic Church as the classic example of religious decline and error. Catholicism was hit with the

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76   The issue of knowledge is not explicitly mentioned in these two chapters but is referred to by the stupidity of the silly followers of heretical leaders. The Dutch word 'onnozel' means naïve, stupid, imbecile. The symbol as drawn by De Hooghe is a figure whose human body is joined with the head of a sheep or a donkey, a symbol of recklessness and stupidity. Clearly De Hooghe is stating that such stupid people are an easy target for heretical seducers. He criticises those who just thoughtlessly follow such leaders, implying that people should acquire knowledge, think for themselves and make wise and thoughtful decisions. This opinion aligns with the critique of Islam for its prohibition of discussion about the religion's beliefs and practices. See further chapter 6.6 below.

accusation that it had strayed from its original purity by incorporating a host of pagan beliefs, customs, and ceremonies into its practice and theology. This anti-Catholicism via comparison, termed 'Pagano-papism', is present in much of the work De Hooghe illustrated, such as Brandt's *Historie der Reformatie* [History of the Reformation, 4 vols., 1671-1704]; Gilbert Burnet's *History of the Reformation of the Church of England* (3 vols, 1679-1714); and many satirical anti-Catholic etchings.[77] Rome, with all her superstitious additions to the Bible, and above all with the introduction of the Papal Monarchy of the Roman pontiff, was seen as the actual continuation of pagan religion. Protestantism, by contrast, had restored the Church of the apostles.[78]

Hieroglyphica accepts this view in toto. De Hooghe devotes more than ten chapters to displaying the terrible state of the Catholic Church, showing that the Papal See was too powerful, countless saints had been invented, and various councils and embedded traditions, rather than consultation of the Bible, had determined the 'correct' beliefs and had led to the persecution of people holding divergent, more evangelical views.[79] De Hooghe begins this history of Catholic decline in chapter 38, Van het Verval van de Waarheid [On the Decline of the Truth].

At centre is the figure Zondigende Kerk [Sinful Church] (A), a woman with what De Hooghe calls the 'face of a whore'. Details of her appearance, some quite obvious and others less so, are explained in the legend. On her head is a fanned peacock's tail, the sign of pride. In a pouch of her draped garments, she keeps a papal tiara, bishop's miter, cardinal's hat and the keys to eternal damnation, but the Bible has dropped from her grasp. The flame of the Spirit is leaving her, and she murmurs Scholastic Latin, which nobody understands. Gluttonous, her left hand doesn't stop eating.[80] As the legend concludes: she desires nothing but fame, riches, and worldly power.[81]

The candle that the woman kicks over with her feet has symbolic import. It refers to the light that had been placed onto the candlestick, a symbol of God's Church on earth and an important image of the True Church in *Hieroglyphica* as well as

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77 Joke Spaans and Trudelien van 't Hof, *Het beroerde Rome. Spotprenten op de paus in een pleidooi voor een 'Nederlandse' katholieke kerk, 1705-1724* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2010).

78 See J.Z. Smith, *Drudgery Divine*, esp. p. 20-25 and J.Z. Smith, *To Take Place. Toward Theory in Ritual* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 96-101. For a Dutch context see Van Amersfoort, *Liever Turks dan Paaps?*. The argument that Protestantism signified a return to a pristine Christianity after centuries of error was elaborated above all in martyrologies, see for instance Euan Cameron, ed., *The European Reformation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1991), 356-360.

79 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, chapters 43, 49-61 This clichéd depiction of Catholicism is also found in Bernard and Picart's *Religious ceremonies of the world*. See Hunt, *The Book that Changed Europe*, 202.

80 See Ex. 16:13 and Num 11: 31.

81 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 285.

in other prints.[82] Here the Catholic Church is kicking it away, extinguishing the flame, while in Plate 56 the candle returns in the hands of those representing the first reform movements, the Waldensians, and later in the hands of the Reformed minister in Plate 59.

Fig. 89. De Hooghe, Plate 38, Van het Verval van de Waarheid [On the Decline of the Truth]

Fig. 90. De Hooghe, Licht op de Kandelaar [Light on the Candlestick], detail of Plate 38.

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82   See also section F below.

The central figure Zondigende Kerk [Sinful Church] is opposed to De Eenvoudige Kerke Gods [God's Simple Church] (L), taking up the cross of her Saviour. Dressed in simple clothes, she holds a perfectly balanced pair of scales in her hands, denoting her abhorrence of churchly supreme power and of a hierarchy of rank within Church organisation. This contrast between the image of the Catholic Church, declining under the influence of greedy leaders and its corrupt pompousness, and a plain, pure, original religion recurs throughout the following chapters.

In chapter 40, VAN HET KERKBESTIER [On Church Governance], De Hooghe shows how the Catholic Church changed baptism from a plain and unpretentious act into a ritual full of rules and ostentatious ceremony, and how its original message was buried under a heap of 'decoration, finery, bells and whistles, novel ceremonies, pomp, splendor and claims for supremacy'. The Bible, according to the text, was threatened by Catholic pride, partisanship and heresy, and the plainness and simplicity of the early Christians had been abandoned. The intentions of monastic life, described in chapter 41, had originally been sincere, but over time this form of secluded life also fell prey to corruption: enrichment and outward pretence became more important than 'Poverty, Humility and Sobriety'. At the centre of the etching we see the order of the Jesuits, whose efforts in the refutation of heresy De Hooghe regards quite positively, since heresy – specifically amongst common people – is a horrible thing. Despite all their good intentions, however, their activism produced an evil result: accusations of heresy levelled against all 'intelligent and understanding spirits', resulting in the persecution and murder of intellectuals and of 'Simple Simons' alike.[83]

The next sort of Roman error to be dealt with is the Papal zeal for power. This theme is elaborated in chapters 43, VAN DEN INDRANG TOT OPPERMACHT DER ROOMSCHE STOEL [On the ambition for supreme power by the Papal See], and 44, VAN DE ONTCHRISTENDE KERK [On the de-Christianised Church]. In chapter 43, Rome is compared with the biblical Babel, where the power-hungry lord Nimrod strove to attain a position above that of God. The image shows how the popes wanted to increase their political power, deceiving and defeating kings and princes to achieve that end.[84] In chapter 44 the error-inclined Catholic Church is depicted opposing the early Church. On the left-hand side of the image, the early Church is depicted as pure

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83 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 285-288, 298, 302, 306, 308, 309.

84 *Hieroglyphica*, chapter 43. The biblical Nimrod is merely described as 'a great hunter'. In print Bibles he is often cast as a hunter of men as well as animals, a tyrannical king, and the instigator of the Tower of Babel. See De Hooghe's illustration of Genesis 11.3 in *Alle de Voornaamste Historien des Ouden en Nieuwen Testaments. Verbeeld in uytsteekende Konst-Platen door den Wyd-beroemden Heer, en Mr. Romeyn de Hooghe. Met omstandige verklaring der Stoffen, enseer beknopte Punt-Digten van denEErw. Godsgel. Heer Henricus Vos* (Amsterdam: Jacob Lindenberg, 1703).

and true, in which its humble servants served the community and all believers enjoyed equal status. On the right-hand side, one sees how pride has entered the Church, resulting in a many-layered ecclesiastical hierarchy with different positions – such as bishops and archbishops –bound together in a complex, corrupt order.

Fig. 91. De Hooghe, Plate 44, Van de Ontchristende Kerk [On the de-Christianised Church]

The centre of the image is occupied by a papal figure, De Geestelijke Monarchie [Spiritual Monarchy], who presides over an earthly political government as a spiritual authority. The combination of images in plate 44 indicates how a spiritual ruler increased his political power, coming to hold sway over princes and kings. He crushes heresies underfoot, via inquisitorial trials where the pope's judgement is believed to be equal to that of God. As with De Hooghe's opinion on the Jesuits in chapter 41, here the pros and cons are given. A monarchy ruled by a powerful single arbiter effectively keeps the masses in check; but this papal monarchy crushes not only genuine heretics but honest true believers as well. De Hooghe's subsequent chapters tell the same story of an ecclesiastical zeal for riches and power. Chapter 49, Van der Macht des Roomschen Stoel [On the Power of the Papal See], elaborates how the Catholic Church held sway over people via the imposition of laws, the demand for tithes and the practice of indulgences, and the Inquisition. In chapter 52 De Hooghe explains

how sacraments for which there was no explicit biblical foundation – confirmation, the Mass, and penance – were invented so that the Church could profit from them. Unlike in the previous chapters, which feature few comparisons between Catholicism and other religions, here De Hooghe engages in comparison when he offers his description of the sacrament of the Holy Orders. According to the legend, this specific sacrament resulted in a hierarchical church organisation, which in turn engendered rich monasteries and churches and poor living conditions amongst burghers and farmers. By contrast, 'amongst the Reformed, the Merchants, Burghers, and Farmers houses are overflowing with riches, and the state of the churches is poor or bad'. De Hooghe refrains from criticising the sacraments only of marriage and the anointing of the sick. Concluding the chapter with the topic of inventions, he writes that 'all these new inventions the Christian Religion … is bound and obstructed. It forces Roman Christians to abide by the Rules of Canons, or papal and churchly decrees, instead of living according to the Commandments of the simple New Covenant of Christ'. [85] Similarly, greed and power struggles were responsible for the wrongful zeal so corruptly indulged in by Rome, discussed in chapter 52. Obligatory church attendance, pilgrimages, the celebration of sacred days, alms, fasting and the masses for the dead were practices that ultimately were only directed towards increasing the Church's wealth and power. Chapter 50, Van de Concilien, en de Traditien [On the Councils and the Traditions], again shows that bishops, via their use of tradition bishops, sought to be 'more honourable than the Spirit of God himself'. Chapter 45, Van de Afgescheurde Kerken, [On the Schismatic churches], concerns the discord caused by clerics who want to increase their rule over as many subjects as possible.[86]

Despite this general emphasis of error, greed and the lust for power within the Catholic Church, some of De Hooghe's chapters are quite 'neutral' in their descriptions. The first of these is chapter 51, Van den Kerken Ban [On Churchly Excommunication], the only comparative chapter. Two other chapters also lack the judgemental tone of the previous chapters. In chapter 54, Van de Heyligen bij den Roomschen verbeeld [On the Saints depicted amongst the Roman Catholics] De Hooghe discusses his views on how specific saints should be depicted, either according to their expertise or the city they are patron to.[87] The other example is found in chapter 55, Van de Roomse Feestdagen [On Roman Days of Celebration]. Except for remarks about processions with relics in shrines – 'grotesque and carnivalesque' – his commentary is generally descriptive, explicating his allegorical imaginations of the specific feasts.[88] He seems to have adopted here a relatively

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85   De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 379.

86   Idem, 329, 363, 381. The theme of discord is also present in chapter 42.

87   Idem*, 395.

88   Idem, 400.

neutral approach because these chapters are less theologically oriented and are more educational than the others, and are indeed almost technical, resulting in rather dry descriptions of how a specific feast or saint should be depicted. Figure Y in chapter 54, for instance, is described as follows:

> Saints of the Mountains, the Desert Fathers, such strange Cave- and Rock dwellers, [are depicted in such a way] that people – if they were not saints – should think they were tramps and bandits. There lies a St. Hieronimus with a Lion, Asper with a bear, Vitalius with a snake, Laventius with a wild ass, and Eliah with his ravens. These [animals] are the ones who provide the saints with their food, …[89]

Perhaps, though this is not clear, De Hooghe didn't perceive these specific topics as potentially leading to error or corruption. These remarks are most likely an expression of the professional pride he took in producing historically correct images: artists like De Hooghe worked in relation to a market that possessed high demand for printed images of holy men, whether biblical figures or Catholic saints.[90] De Hooghe, in fact, could be outright positive about aspects of the Roman Catholic Church rejected by the Protestant Reformation, for example in chapter 48, Van de Kruysvaarders en andere Ordens [On the Crusaders and other Orders].

Here the descriptions of several figures in the etching is quite flattering. De Hooghe foregrounds three characteristics of the Crusaders via three female figures. Figure A denotes their sincere Poverty – as distinct from common beggary. Figure B stands for their humble Obedience, and figure C represents their Chastity. Furthermore, De Hooghe describes different orders of knights as 'intelligent heroes, brave Men, chivalrous in their work, if only they were not hampered by the ones that appointed them in the first place'.[91] Unlike many of De Hooghe's images showing Catholic figures or traditions, the figures in this chapter are plain and simple in their appearance; though fierce and combative, they are not murderous or otherwise monstrous.

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89   De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 395. 'Bergheiligen, de Woesteynheyligen, en zulke vreemde Grot- en Rotzebewoonders, dat men, zo zy geene heyligen waren, hen voor Landschuymers, of Boschrovers zoude moeten neemen. Daar leyd een St. Hieronymus met een Leeuw, Asper met een Beer, Vitalius met een Slang, Laventius met een Woud-Eezel, gelyk Elias met zyne Raven. Deze zyn 't, die den Heyligen hare kost bescharen…'
90   Van der Waals, *Prenten in de Gouden Eeuw,* 92-103.
91   De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 355: 'Wakkere Helden, dap-pere Mannen, en Ridderlyke Uytvoeringen, waren ze niet ondermynt, belaagt, ja tegengegaan geweest van die, welke ze eerst ingewyd en aangehitst had'.

Fig. 92. De Hooghe, Plate 48, Van de Kruysvaarders en andere Ordens [On the Crusaders and other Orders]

But De Hooghe, beyond any doubt, rejected the Catholic Church, which was to him the lowest ebb of the 'progressive decline and corruption of religion through the ages'. Clearly, the Catholic Church had drifted away from the original apostolic conception of the true Church. This decline had predominantly been the result of pervasive greed and a lust for power among an ecclesiastical elite, as well as the corresponding corruption of an originally pure and simple piety through the implementation of all kinds of theological and ritual embellishments. Outward religion expanded its octopus-like tentacles to smother the practice of a pure, inward form of religion. The situation demanded to be changed. The change that had come is announced in chapters 56 and 57 of *Hieroglyphica.*

4.6 Protestantism

Although Protestantism here is not some 'other' religion, one must grasp how De Hooghe writes about it, as this provides the orienting reference point governing his treatment of all the other religions, and is thus crucial for the interpretation of

Hieroglyphica.[92] Plate and chapter 56 function as the pivot situated between the time of the Catholic Church's hegemony and the Reformation period (fig. 93).

Fig. 93. De Hooghe, Plate 56, Van de aankomende Reformatie [On the Dawn of the Reformation]

Under the caption Van de aankomende Reformatie [On the Dawn of the Reformation], the etching shows the interior of a church filled with chaotic figures. Although De Hooghe's artistic style is always very lively, this image clearly shows terrible disorder. Several abuses figure in the church; we find discord (D), aberrations (E), the greedy lust for lucrative positions (G), and a lazy, fat monk (slothful and gluttonous, in the vocabulary of the Seven Deadly Sins) in the corner. The whore of Babylon, emblem for the Papacy, oversees the whole confused heap as if she were a general on a battlefield.[93]

Having depicted the errors of the Catholic Church in several figures, De Hooghe continues with an image in which the common man plays an important part: 'On the Dawn of the Reformation'. He introduces this image with a declaration that God's grace

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92 In *The Book that Changed Europe*, Bernard and Picard's treatment of Protestantism is omitted from the description of their 'Religious Ceremonies', which results in an incomplete picture.

93 Bart Rosier, *The Bible in print. Netherlandish Bible illustration in the sixteenth century* vol. 2 (Leiden: Foleor, 1997) 119, 120.

had never been completely obstructed by all these evils of the Church; his light had remained present 'in the "humble believers"'. [94] Here De Hooghe follows the lead of the Protestant martyrologies and their focus on the survival of remnants of the apostolic Church. Through this account they created an unbroken succession of 'true believers' and 'precursors' of the Reformation, which made them invulnerable to the accusation of 'novelty'.[95] De Hooghe depicts the rediscovery of truth through the biblical figure of Balaam's donkey, positioned in the centre of the etching (fig. 94). Balaam, a renowned magician, had been asked by a pagan king to curse the Israelites, as the story goes in Numbers 22-24. On his way to the battlefield, however, he found an angel of God blocking the road. As strange as this might seem, stranger still is that only Balaam's donkey could see the angel; not just that, but the animal was capable of transmitting the angel's message to the magician in human language.[96] This is the image De Hooghe uses to allegorically picture the first signs of the Reformation: the great intellectual leaders and clerics, busy with their shady practices, are literally blind to the signs of God, whereas the humble, despised and patient beast of burden is the creature who heeds heavenly messages. For De Hooghe the animal served as a symbol for the simple people of the Savoy, Bohemia, the Alp regions, and the Pyrenees who were amongst the first to recognise the true light of God after it had been obscured by a corrupt Church.[97]

Fig. 94. De Hooghe, De ezel van Bileam [Balaam's Donkey], detail of Plate 56

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94   De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 405.

95   Because lineage was necessary to avoid the accusation of novelty, the decline was considered only partial. Therefore, it was always assumed, some sparks of true Christianity had somehow survived within the Church after it had fallen into error, and, of course, these remnants of the original fire were what the reformers could claim to have brought back to life. See Parker, *To the attentive, non-partisan reader* and S.J. Barnett, 'Where was your Church before Luther? Claims for the Antiquity of Protestantism Examined,' *Church History* 68 (1999): 14-41.

96   Book of Numbers, 22-24. See also Jo Spaans, *Hieroglyfen. De verbeelding van de Godsdienst*, 55, 56.

97   De Hooghe had depicted this scene in the same way in his earlier *Alle de Voornaamste Historiën des Ouden en Nieuwen Testaments* (Franeker: T. Wever, 1980 [Facs. of Amsterdam: Jacob Lindenberg, 1703]); see the print visualising the story of Balak and Balaam in Numbers 22.

The argument is further developed in the description of figure I, a 'frank man', strong in body and mind but driven to despair by the conduct of the Catholic Church. This man reads the Bible for himself and discovers the lies of the Catholic clergy. He finds no purgatory, no devils, and no indulgences in the Bible; thus enlightened, nothing can stop him from rejecting the coercion of the Catholic preachers and monks. In his hands the 'frank man' holds a mask, the customary symbol of deceit, which he has pulled from the faces of the lying monks. Again, the leaders are mistaken and vile, whereas the common man is he who reads the Bible and grasps the true message of God. De Hooghe continues his story with a representation of the Reformation itself, as we see in Plate 59, Van de Hervorming [On the Reformation].

Fig. 95. De Hooghe, Plate 59, Van de Hervorming [On the Reformation]

'Reading' the image from the beginning, we find the usual elements repeated: lying atop a hotchpotch of Catholic paraphernalia, Roman spiritual stupidity (A) is defeated by a feisty swan, the standard symbol for Lutheranism (B). The centre of the image is occupied by the figure Public preaching of the Word of God (C). Carrying the outward characteristics of Luther, namely a monk's habit and a professor's gown, and standing before the image of the Elector of Saxony, this figure represents the public Protestant Church or 'magisterial' Reformation, closely allied with the state. Positioning this figure in the centre emphasises the top-down approach of educating the people.

De Hooghe's message is clear: religion had declined throughout history, mostly resulting from clerical abuses stemming from their sins of greed and lust. But the echo of the true original Church was always to be found among the common faithful. The Reformation was the movement that had broken the hold of the misguided Catholic Church on the multitudes and had brought them the teachings of the Bible. Here one would expect to find some report of a current of religious improvement in *Hieroglyphica*, but a closer look at the Reformation etching shows a different story. Instead of depicting further historical characteristics of the Reformation, or displaying the positive results from the public teaching of the Bible, De Hooghe demonstrates that one professor, even when supported by a strong prince, had failed to root out the age-old evil of priestcraft. The figures in the image denote clerical deceit in different forms,[98] followed by the most dangerous error of all, the Sin against the Holy Spirit (G), embodied in Jan van Leiden, the self-styled king of the new Jerusalem in Münster in Westphalia. In the background De Hooghe has etched the church tower of Münster showing the three cages which, after the city's reconquest by its prince-bishop, contained the corpses of the rebellion's executed leaders on display for all to see. These leaders' deluded followers, the simple Anabaptists, are represented as a naked figure under the name of 'Spiritual frenzy' (H), referring to their uncontrolled spirituality, which had erupted into an episode of civil disobedience.[99] The enumeration of aberrations even within the Protestant fold continues, with a vengeance, in the next chapter, entitled Van de Afvallige Hervorming [On the Apostate Reformation]. In this etching De Hooghe goes all-out in dishing up a variety of heresies.

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98   For a more elaborate description see chapter 6 below.
99   De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 425.

Fig. 96. De Hooghe, Plate 60, Van de Afvallige Hervorming [On the Apostate Reformation]

In the bottom left corner we immediately see a clairvoyant, completely occupied with the prospect of the heavenly spheres and lacking – literally – a down-to-earth attitude.[100] Next to him, in the forefront of the print, are again the Anabaptists. De Hooghe displayed them naked and in compromising positions, as their idea of returning to the paradisiacal period of innocence was for him but a cover for their shameless sensuality. Other figures in this chapter on heresies are the Quakers, the Socinians and the Pre-Adamites, the latter two groups especially subjected to fierce attacks by De Hooghe.[101] The Socinians are presented as a monster with the face of a whore, because of her 'deceiving qualities'. With her claws she tears the Trinity to pieces, violating the divine truth of Father, Son and Holy Spirit.[102] De Hooghe also severely judges the Pre-Adamites, adherents of a theory in which there were human beings on earth before Adam and Eve and the Bible

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[100] *Idem*, 427.

[101] This fits into the widespread aversion to Socinianism, which was regarded as a belief system as bad as atheism. See Israel, *Enlightenment contested*, 120 and his *Dutch Republic*, 909-916, and more broadly Sarah Mortimer, *Reason and Religion in the English Revolution. The Challenge of Socinianism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

[102] De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 429.

is downgraded to a history of merely the Jewish people: 'Bible-murderers', the inventors of blasphemous propositions, they lead simple people astray and more broadly cause schism in the Church.[103]

Because of such extensive attention directed towards heresy, it has been believed that De Hooghe adhered to the views of the radical pietist Godfried Arnold.[104] We know that he was familiar with Arnold's work because he illustrated the latter's famous *Historie der kerken en ketteren*.[105] This book likely inspired De Hooghe's general approach to religious decline, as the conception of decline provided the framework for Arnold's ideas as well. De Hooghe indeed concurs with Arnold's notion that the Reformation had – as yet – failed.[106] However, Arnold carried this conception further and adhered to the extreme conviction that every institutionalised church was prone to corruption and that true religion was actually to be found amongst the heretics. Therefore Arnold saw heretical thinkers – transcending confessional church boundaries and subject to persecution by religious leaders – as in fact the individuals who preserved true, original Christianity.[107] De Hooghe chose to differ. However much attention given to considerations of heresy and the Church's decline, the artist clearly disdains the 'apostate Reformation' and certainly does not consider these heretics to be the representatives of 'true Christianity'.[108]

Instead of picturing the Lutheran Reformation as the apogee of Protestant history, De Hooghe depicts the event as only a partial success. Lust for power, heresy and moral decline are present throughout all of the religious history given in *Hieroglyphica*, and the sixteenth-century Reformation proves no exception; indeed, it appeared that grave errors and schisms even increased during this period. This emphasis on heresy and decline might give the impression that De Hooghe, like Gottfried Arnold before him, found no good in any established religion. Yet his title promises a presentation of his views on a 'recent reformation'. How, then did De Hooghe represent the religious denomination he himself belonged to, the Reformed Church?

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103 Idem, 431.

104 Spaans, *Graphic satire*, 207.

105 Arnold, *History der Kerken en Ketteren*.

106 De Hooghe titles one of his chapters 'On the apostate Reformation', probably imitating Arnold's *On the defectiveness of the Reformation*.

107 Dixon, *Faith and history*, 43.

108 This selection is underscored by other cases. In his description of Muhammad De Hooghe also makes use of Gottfried Arnold's book, but here also the more radical elements of Arnold – who is quite positive on Muhammad – were not admitted. See De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 335 and Arnold, *History der Kerken en Ketteren*, 469.

4.7 The Dutch Reformed Church

Plate and chapter 61 are devoted to the Calvinist Dutch Reformed Church (fig. 97). This foregrounding of De Hooghe's own denomination, the Dutch Reformed church, suggests that *Hieroglyphica*, like many contemporary books on religion, has first and foremost an apologetic aim, and thus presents a partisan view of true religion.

Fig. 97. De Hooghe, Plate 61, Van de Gereformeerde Godsdienst [On Reformed Religion]

This image and chapter decisively turn away from the preceding argument about religious decline, always, everywhere and in all religions. The centre of the image shows us the Reformed religion as a level-headed, humble, virgin sect, lacking the finery or outward attire of the Catholic Church as well as the militancy of the figure of the Lutheran magisterial Reformation. The text explains that the Reformed religion, especially in its Dutch embodiment, holds on to the original sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper and carries the hat of freedom. It is in this figure that De Hooghe finds the real True Church, as 'she preached the gospel in accordance

with the first Christian churches'. De Hooghe follows the general concept of true religion in stressing the purity of both the doctrine and the practices of this church.
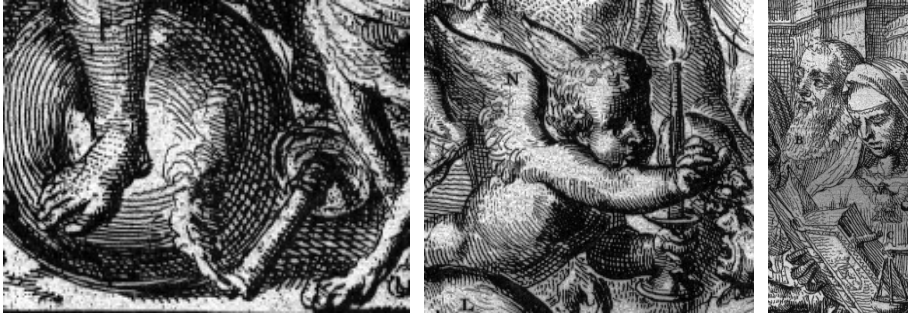
Fig. 98. De Hooghe, Licht op de Kandelaar [Light on the Candlestick], detail of Plate 38
Fig. 99. De Hooghe, Licht op de Kandelaar [Light on the Candlestick], detail of Plate 56
Fig. 100. De Hooghe, Licht op de Kandelaar, gegeven aan gereformeerde ambtsdragers [Light on the Candlestick given to Reformed ministers], detail Plate 61

Not only does De Hooghe refer to the original apostolic setting of the Church, he also visualises the place of the Reformed Church in the genealogy of true believers, going back in an unbroken succession to apostolic times, as had been developed in the Protestant martyrologies. In the hands of the Dutch Reformed minister we find the candlestick which had been kicked away by the figure of the Catholic Church in Plate 38 (fig. 98), and which then appeared with the pre-reformation Waldensians in Plate 56 (fig. 99). This candlestick, with its burning flame, was the symbol of God's presence among his people, the true Christians, and apparently this light of grace had arrived safe and sound in the hands of the Reformed Church (fig. 100).[109]

This reference to the Light on the Candlestick was applied in multiple settings, including, of course, in the notorious treatise of Pieter Balling (?- ca. 1669), *Het licht op den Kandelaar* [The light on the Candlestick]. This Spinozistic text states that the only way to gain true knowledge of God is via the inner light, which present in all humans. Ultimately, this inner light is the judge of the Bible. Although we saw in the previous chapter that De Hooghe emhasises the role of the soul and conscience in one's arriving at knowledge of God, this candlestick metaphor is not being used to make reference to Balling's point of view. Rather, he employed the metaphor as it was used within a Reformation setting. As Joke Spaans has shown, prints with the candlestick theme, shown in many variations and with different purposes, were frequently produced after the Reformation (fig. 101).[110]

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109 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, Plates 38, 56 and 61.
110 Cf. Joke Spaans, 'Faces of the Reformation', *Church History and Religious Culture* 97 (2017): 408-451.

Fig. 101. Anonymous, Het licht is op de kandelaar gestelt (1640-1684), Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

De Hooghe's point remains close to the goal of the original Protestant setting, indicating (as it was predicted in Revelation 2:5) that God's candle had been removed from the Church, i.e. the Catholic Church. The image shows how, with the arrival of Reformers such as Luther and Calvin, the candle has returned. Bringing this imagery further forward in history, De Hooghe has the candle being passed on to the Dutch Reformed leaders. Although De Hooghe does not specifically mention the Reformed Church as the true heir to Seth's original, pure religion, it is presented as the denomination closest to the original Christian Church.

By De Hooghe's time, however, the Reformed Church itself had already dealt with some major troubles. One of those was the schism between the Remonstrants and Counter-Remonstrants faced by the Church in the Dutch Republic in 1618/1619. De Hooghe only briefly refers to this schism as a 'necessary one'. To adjudicate the quarrels between the two groups, it was necessary to seek the guidance of the National Synod, assembled in Dordrecht. De Hooghe shows that he agrees with the decisions made by the Synod in favour of the Counter-Remonstrants. In Plate 61 we see the Government, figure G, holding up a sword to protect the Synod, implying the politics behind the theological arguments. De Hooghe explains that this political involvement is 'the proper way to counter discord and heresy'. Like a true regent he abhorred the former, and in the previous chapters he had shown a marked preference for quite orthodox theological views. Additionally, De Hooghe adds that the States' Translation, published in 1637,

was the 'best translation', and had been overseen every year by 'clever men'.[111] Thus, in De Hooghe's chronological account of religion, the Reformed religion is the option which is least corrupted and closest to the apostolic church. Here he concurs with contemporary orthodox views on religious history, which were predominantly partisan.[112]

Fig. 102. De Hooghe, Twee Zusters [Two Sisters], detail of Plate 61

This image would seem to be an example of religious propaganda – after all, De Hooghe was a member of the Reformed church seeking the withdrawal of accusations of ungodliness levelled at him from the Reformed consistory of Amsterdam and his reinstatement as a member of the Walloon Church of Haarlem. But this interpretation is too simplistic.[113] On closer inspection, the image etched on Plate 61 is somewhat idealistic, a representation of an ideal rather than of the actual situation in the Reformed Church.

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111 On the annual inspection of the manuscripts of the States' Translation see Peter van Rooden, *Religieuze Regimes. Over godsdienst en maatschappij in Nederland, 1570-1990* (Amsterdam: Bert Bakker, 1996), 148-149. De Hooghe is wrong in his claim that the translation itself was reviewed: a committee of political and ecclesiastical dignitaries merely inspected the *material* state of the manuscript, and did so only once every three years. See further Dirk van Miert, *The Emancipation of Biblical Philology in the Dutch Republic, 1590-1670* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018) esp. chapter 3.

112 C. Scott Dixon, 'Faith and history on the eve of the Enlightenment. Ernst Salomon Cyprian, Gottfried Arnold and The history of heretics,' *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 57 (2006): 33-54, 41; Wilkin, *The Myth of Christian Beginnings,* 121-128; Parker, *Nonpartisanship in Netherlandish Religieus Disputes*.

113 For an elaborate reading of irony in *Hieroglyphica* see: T van 't Hof, 'Radicale, partisane ou idéaliste? La présentation historique par De Hooghe du déclin de la religion et de la Réformation dans ses *Hieroglyphica*,' in *Les protestants* à l'époque moderne*. Une approche anthropologique*, ed Olivier Christin and Yves Krumenacker (Rennes: Presses Universitaire de Rennes, 2017), 243-263.

In the upper left-hand corner are two calm sisters, personifications of the era's most important Reformed theological schools, the Voetians and the Cocceians. Whereas the picture shows serene and tolerant sisters, the second half of the seventeenth century – that is, De Hooghe's lifetime – was hardly a time of tranquility for the Reformed Church. Both the primary and secondary literature on the Reformed Church in this period shows that ecclesiastically it was a time of great turmoil in almost every aspect. Church controversies caused so much trouble that the government tried to contain them with resolutions, most importantly the 1694 resolution on the Peace of the Church. The complicated theological ins and outs of the controversy need not detain us here. De Hooghe's predilection for Cocceian notions (touched upon at times thus far in this thesis) apparently did not hinder him from presenting the two groups here as equals.[114] The serene calmness of and apparent harmony among all of the constituent figures of the Church are conspicuous here, as is De Hooghe's foregrounding of liberty in the presence of the Synod of Dordrecht, an ecclesiastical body usually considered as intolerant, given its constriction of doctrinal freedom. On this point, the legend dryly states that the Dutch religious and political authorities forced the minds of their subjects to adopt particular views 'only on matters of serious importance'.[115]

Finally, the problems of the Dutch Reformed Church did not end with the quarrels between the Cocceians and the Voetians. Like the Lutherans shown in etchings 59 and 60, they had to cope with their own heresies and sects after their victory over the Catholic Church. History shows a rich variety of individuals and groups causing trouble in and against the Reformed Church with their divergent opinions. Some examples of such troublemakers are the Verschorists, the Hattemists, the Deurhovians, the groups surrounding charismatic leaders like Jean de Labadie and Antoinette Bourignon,

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114   On Voetian and Coccejan controversies see Van Eijnatten and Van Lieburg, *Nederlandse Religiegeschiedenis,* 212; Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, 889-899, 1030-1032; Broeyer and Van der Wall, *Een richtingenstrijd*; Van der Wall, *Cartesianism and Cocceianism: a natural alliance*?; Spaans, *A Newer Protestantism.*

115   Which matters De Hooghe considered 'of serious importance' are discussed in chapter 7 below.

and the sometimes schismatic 'conventicles' on the fringe of the public Church.[116] From the second half of the seventeenth century onwards even the Cocceians and the Voetians themselves faced divisions within their ranks.[117]

The ideal of the image is in the harmony, unity and tolerance present in the etching. This ideal did not correspond with reality, but De Hooghe visualised it as something that Church communities should aim for. Readers must be aware, given the background of religious corruption in both the thematic and the chronological etchings, that idolatrous influences are still present; error creeps in easily. Even the Reformation of the great Luther had needed adaptation, the Reformed Church was warned. In this etching the remedy for waywardness is found in unity, tolerance and personal belief. Only in the margins of the etchings – even, one might say, in the shadows – do we find the leaders of the Church. Such placement was not accidental: as marginalised as their position is in this ideal image, the bigger their role in the religious decline of all religions everywhere, throughout history. This is the subject of the following chapter.

4.8 Concluding remarks

Concerning the relation between Christianity and other religions, *Hieroglyphica*'s chronological account emphasises the theory of separation and otherness. De Hooghe's descriptions of non-Christian religions stresses the otherness of these religions and their incompatibility with Christianity, and serve as a context for his apologetical account of the truth of Protestantism, or even of Reformed Protestantism. Despite some neutral or even positive notes De Hooghe inserts into his account, the chronological chapters chart a decline of religion from the original true religion of Seth into faiths shot through with idolatry, error and spurious

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116 For a description of these groups see Wielema, *March of the Libertines;* Van Eijnatten, *Nederlandse religiegeschiedenis*, 214-219; C.B. Hylkema, *Reformateurs. Geschiedkundige studiën over de godsdienstige bewegingen uit de nadagen onzer Gouden Eeuw* (Haarlem: H.D. Tjeenk Willink en Zoon, 1900); Fred van Lieburg, 'De Libanon blijft ruisen. Opwekkingen in Nederland in de gereformeerde traditie', and Joke Spaans, 'Veranderende vroomheid,' in *Een golf van beroering. De omstreden religieuze opwekking in Nederland in het midden van de achttiende eeuw* ed. Joke Spaans (Hilversum: Verloren, 2001), resp. 15-38, 79-96. For conventicles see Fred van Lieburg, 'De Libanon blijft ruisen. Opwekkingen in Nederland in de gereformeerde traditie', and Joke Spaans, 'Veranderende vroomheid,' in *Een golf van beroering. De omstreden religieuze opwekking in Nederland in het midden van de achttiende eeuw* ed. Joke Spaans (Hilversum: Verloren, 2001), resp. 15-38, 79-96. On Bourignon: Mirjam de Baar, *"Ik moet spreken". Het spiritueel leiderschap van Antoinette Bourignon (1616-1680)* (Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 2004).

117 Van Eijnatten and Van Lieburg, *Nederlandse religiegeschiedenis*, 217.

inventions. These erroneous religions were disconnected from a sacred history applied only to Judaism and to Protestant Christianity. Chapter 63 underscores the differences between pagan and Christian religion. Here De Hooghe holds that it is useful to end his book with a contrast between the 'false religions and the true soul-saving teaching which is followed by eternal bliss'. Further on in the chapter De Hooghe again uses the word 'opposition' to emphasise the differences that occur between pagans, Jews and idolaters on the one hand and true Christianity on the other.[118] Like his contemporaries writing propagandistic histories adulating their own religions as the correct faith, De Hooghe lauds the Dutch Reformed Church as the denomination closest to the original true religion. Nevertheless, this ideal image did not represent the actual situation and one must keep open the possibility that De Hooghe wanted to present this picture as a much better option than the discord and strife that was all too real at the time. His vision of the true Christian church was indeed a Protestant, Reformed church, but one in which differences existed and were tolerated, even appreciated. The Reformed Church, contrary to the wholesale corruption of the Catholic Church and the errors of the Lutheran Church, was closest, he claims, to the original pure, simple religion.

The analysis I have provided in this chapter of De Hooghe's religious comparisons is not, however, the complete story. De Hooghe is also highly interested in the similarities between Christianity and its competitors, both past and present. This topic, in which similarity and identification play a major part and the basic ideas of a history of religion can be found, will be addressed in chapter 5.

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118   De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 452.

Chapter five

Comparative Religion: Similarity

In the previous chapter we saw how De Hooghe put several religions into a historical, chronological frame while emphasising their otherness and presenting the Dutch Reformed Church as the form of religion that (excepting early Christianity, an ideal to be strived for) was closest to true religion. This view was aligned with a sharp prevailing division between true and false religion. Developing out of (confessionally bound) philological and antiquarian research, however, there emerged a more historical and critical view of the history of Christianity. Historical accounts of Christianity emphasised less its isolated sacredness and more its mundane historicity. Throughout *Hieroglyphica*, De Hooghe added engravings that underscored this view. In these thematic plates, De Hooghe uses the 'identification' theory, pointing to the similarity of religions and identifications among them and thus challenging a strict division between 'true' and 'false' religion. This theory opposed the view that had preceded it: instead of emphasising the gap between true and false histories and religions, it foregrounded the similarities amongst all religious stories and searched for identifications between paganism and Christianity.[1] In this chapter we will see how De Hooghe emphasised the similarities of different religions, including Christianity, and will consider the consequences for the unique and sacred history of Christianity.

Although recent literature has designated an increasing historicity in the search for Christianity's roots as the ultimate bone of contention, Early Modern theologians did not initially regard historicity as a problem. The discovery of new religions posed challenges, but Christian theologians had always busied themselves with their religion's historical origins in relation to Judaism.[2] Many theologians actually used Christianity's historicity to prove its truths, and

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[1] Walker, *The ancient theology*, 255; Rossi, *The dark abyss of time*, chapter 21; Stroumsa, *A New Science*, 7-10.

[2] Stroumsa, *A New Science*, 10,11.

problems only arose with regard to specific issues such as the chronology of the earth and its religions, and the extent of the Flood.[3] Religious similarities were known, explained and used in defence of Christianity. The Bible itself had repeatedly mentioned contact between the Israelites and surrounding peoples, and throughout history thinkers had suggested that this contact had been more than superficial. Inklings of Christian truth in pagan religions had been used as a tool in Christian apologetics from the early Church Fathers onwards. Ancient sages – especially the mythical Hermes Trismegistos – and the Sybils were perceived to be 'witnesses' for the Christian cause, and it was common to read pagan sources as testimony of 'Christian truths'.[4] Hermetic sources, such as *Asclepius* from the *Corpus Hermeticum*, were used to enforce the idea that arcane Christian truths had been conserved amongst pagans. The Christian truths that had been recognised in pagan writings included the concept of a supreme being, characterised as a trinity, who had created the world.[5]

During the seventeenth century, when the study of ancient texts and artifacts increased the amount of knowledge about ancient peoples, the identification strategy was further developed, this time in the historical-critical work of historians like Gherard Vossius (1577-1649), Samuel Bochart (1599-1667) and Pierre-Daniel Huet (1630-1721). In the histories of religion these writers composed, pagan stories were not seen as frivolous inventions but were identified with one another and with Christianity. Pagans had acquired an idea of true religion, it was just that their names had not been correct. According to this theory, the Egyptian god Thot was perceived as a derivative of Moses, the classical Apollo and Hercules were seen as versions or 'identifications' of Joshua – Moses' successor as leader of the Israelite people – and Jupiter was identified with Joshua's father, Nun. To make this explanation historically feasible, it was assumed that influential authors like

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3   On the issues of chronology and the Flood see: Paolo Rossi, *The dark abyss of time. The history of the earth and the history of nations from Hooke to Vico*; Anthony Grafton, 'Joseph Scaliger and historical chronology: the rise and fall of a discipline,' *History and Theory* 14 (1975): 156-185; Anthony Grafton, 'Isaac Vossius: chronologer' in: *Isaac Vossius (1618-1689) Between Science and Scholarship*, ed Eric Jorink and Dirk van Miert (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 43-84; Robert Louis Wilken, *The Myth of Christian beginnings* (London: SCM Press, 1979); Guy Stroumsa, *A New Science*. For partisan writings of religious chronologies see: Dixon, *Faith and history on the eve of enlightenment*; Parker, *To the Attentive, Nonpartisan Reader*, 62, 68-70; Bruce Gordon, ed., *Protestant history and identity in sixteenth century Europe,* 2 vols (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1998).

4   Christianity as such did not yet exist, of course, but the truth of Christianity was believed to have been present from the first human beings onwards.

5   R. van den Broek, 'Hermes en christus. Heidense getuigen voor de waarheid van het christendom', in *Profetie en godsspraak in de geschiedenis van het christendom. Studies over de historische ontwikkeling van een opvallend verschijnsel,* ed F.M.G. Broeyer and E.M.V.M. Honée (Zoetermeer: Boekencentrum, 1997) 214-138, 226.

Homer had actually lived in Palestine but then had fled to Greece, taking with them the memory of all these biblical stories.[6]

De Hooghe does not so much identify biblical persons as he identifies gods. In his introduction De Hooghe claims that all the different gods had been derived from a single supreme being. As we find it in *Hieroglyphica*: 'all supreme Beings are the same'. In De Hooghe's words:

> Yunx also appears with the same powers in the ancient treasure of hieroglyphs. But I believe that Hor, Amun, Hemptha, Eneph, Osiris, Jupiter, and all other names first and foremost refer to a Supreme Being…[7]

This fitted the theory that idolatry did not, in essence, really exist, because the idols' various names actually referred to the same deity, the one and only true God. In the same vein, the veneration of nature was seen as 'symbolic, because via the sun, people actually venerated God.[8] De Hooghe explains the different names by pointing to the characteristics of this supreme being. In Europe for instance, the different languages have different names for God: dios, dieu, god, etc. In addition, divine characteristics resulted in there being several specific names like Jehovah, holy trinity, father or creator.

> In the same manner I consider also many of those names, not [as]referring to so many different Gods, but to the various qualities and emanating powers of one and the same infinite Being.[9]

In most cases, such identifications were used to strengthen the Christian cause: similar stories within pagan religions provided proof of the reliability of the Christian Bible. Nevertheless, the identification model also contained its share

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6   Stroumsa, *A New Science*, 53, 56.
7   De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 42 'Yunx komt ook met die zelve kracht in der Ouden schat van Merkbeelden voor den dag. Maar ik geloove dat Hor, Amun, Yunx, Hemptha, Eneph, Osiris, Jupiter, en alle meerder namen meest een Opperst Weezen alleenlyk beteekenen…'
8   Rossi, *The dark abyss of time*, 152-157. Stroumsa, *A New Science*, 656. Vossius made a distinction between proper idolatry and symbolic idolatry, which Herbert of Cherbury applied to sun-worship, which he deemed symbolic. Justin Champion, *The Pillars of Priestcraft Shaken. The Church of England and its Enemies, 1660–1730* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 141. Mulsow, *Antiquarianism and Idolatry. The "Historia" of Religions in the Seventeenth Century*, 201.
9   De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 42. 'Op die manier acht ik ook al veele van die namen, niet zo veel verscheyden Goden, of de zonderlinge eygenschappen en uytvloeyende krachten van 't zelve oneyndige Weezen te beteekenen.'

of perils. Biblical chronology was considerably shorter than that of some other ancient peoples, such as the Egyptians, Chinese and Aztecs. For many scholars, the claims that exotic royal dynasties stretched back before the computed date of Creation were unthinkable and they stuck to biblical chronology. Scholars had offered solutions to this problem that undercut assertions about the reliability of the Bible. In 1655 Isaac La Peyrère published his *Prae-Adamitae*, in which he suggested that the Old Testament contained the history only of the Jews, and people in fact had lived before Adam. This 'Pre-Adamite' thesis provoked controversy.[10] A few decades later John Spencer (1630-1693), in his *De Legibus Hebraeorum* (1685), claimed that the Israelite religion had been influenced by the older Egyptian religion and had been fashioned by Moses after Egyptian models. This also gave rise to debate: the Dutch theologian Herman Witsius refuted Spencer's ideas in his *Aegyptiaca*.[11]

One of the important matters in these debates had to do with influence. Most scholars saw similarity as a corollary of the view that pagans had imitated Moses, or had plagiarised sacred writing. Pagans imitated – albeit poorly – facets of the true religion. Despite the apologetic value of this insistence on similarity, this imitation theory was itself prone to elicit a more critical view. For if pagans had imitated Moses, this proved that both peoples had lived close to each other and had had close contact; not only were the pagan stories at least as old as the biblical tales,[12] but the interaction between pagans and Christians (and their predecessors the Jews) meant that it was probable that influence between the two groups ran both ways.[13] With acknowledgment of this possible influence of pagan peoples and languages on the Israelites and on the very content of the Bible, we enter what was a fierce discussion. If the history of the Bible was indeed the one true and sacred story, the only correct thesis was that of the plagiarism theory: that pagans had plagiarised the Bible in their own writings, and the only influence exercised by pagan peoples was their cunning means of drawing the Israelites into idolatry, as is told in the Bible. The general Christian opinion was that this had

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10 Richard H. Popkin, *Isaac La Peyrère (1596-1676). His Life, Work and Influence* (Leiden: Brill, 1987).

11 On John Spencer see Jan Assman, *Moses the Egyptian*, chapter, 3 and Stolzenberg, *John Spencer and the Perils of Sacred Philology.* On Witsius see Jan van Genderen, *Herman Witsius. Bijdrage tot de kennis der gereformeerde theologie* (The Hague: G. de Bres, 1953).

12 Rossi, *The dark abyss of time*, 155.

13 Assmann, *Moses the Egyptian*, especially chapter 3 on John Spencer. Another example can be found in Antoni van Dale's *Dissertationes de origine ac progressu Idolatriae et Superstitionum, de vera ac falsa Prophetia, uti et de Divinationibus Idolatricis Judaeorum* (Amsterdam: Boom, 1696), which argues that idolatrous elements from ancient religions entered Judaism, and from there found their way into Christianity.

influenced, of course, individual peoples but not the true religion. Yet a good deal of seventeenth-century research made it clear that the Israelites, in their religion, had indeed been influenced by the pagan peoples surrounding them.

Although De Hooghe does not go into detail the way John Spencer did, *Hieroglyphica* points to the exchange between the religion of the ancient Israelites and that of Egypt. On the one hand, De Hooghe states that the Egyptians had imitated Moses's God, but at the same time De Hooghe cites how Moses had been raised at and influenced by the Egyptian court.[14] De Hooghe calls him 'the lawgiver, who did not forget the Egyptian hieroglyphs into which he deeply penetrated, as I dare to believe'.[15] Interestingly, De Hooghe not only mentions that Moses had been influenced by Egyptian hieroglyphs; the Bible itself had been, too:

> The Holy Scriptures are full of these hieroglyphs, especially in Poems and Songs. Job contains Chaldean wisdom, The Song of Songs is in an Egyptian style, the psalms Egyptian or Phoenician, the Prophets allude to hieroglyphs.[16]

De Hooghe refers here not to the insertion of literal Egyptian hieroglyphs or Chaldean script but to the biblical genre's allegorical, layered style. As for the implications of this view on the literal reading of the Bible, or at least of the biblical books mentioned, De Hooghe does not elaborate. In general, however, seventeenth-century exegetes acknowledged that the speeches of the prophets were sometimes knotty and allegorical. Also, the Song of Songs was explained allegorically by several theologians who were unwilling to see the religious value of erotically explicit love poetry understood only as such.[17] This comment, lacking a clear judgement, indicates that in this case – as in many others – there was space for different interpretations of certain parts of the Bible. De Hooghe thought that books of Job, the Psalms, the Song of Songs, and the prophets had been influenced by an allegorical or typological (hieroglyphic) Egyptian style, which led to a less literal reading of the Bible. Apparently he was not the only one to think so. The stringent idea of the orthodox literal reading of the Bible is made nuanced by this small example.

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14   De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica,* 32, 34, 119.

15   Idem, 186. As the source for this idea was the Bible itself – where in Acts 7:22 we read: 'Moses was educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians' – it was very hard to deny that there had been some influence.

16   Idem, 19.

17   Willem van Asselt, *De neus van de bruid*, 183.

In the current chapter, I analyse how De Hooghe, especially in *Hieroglyphica*'s thematic etchings, uses images and text to display the presence of similarity amongst religions through the ages. Here, De Hooghe compares in one composite image how one specific religious tenet could be discovered in several religions, as if it had stemmed from an original root before branching out into widely divergent forms. The topics depicted in *Hieroglyphica's* comparative etchings are to some extent inconsistent with the tendency of other books of this genre to focus on customs and practises such as baptism, funerals, marriages and offerings. Elsewhere De Hooghe did produce etchings on religious ceremonies, for instance on Jewish funeral and acts of grieving at the cemetery and on practises surrounding death in Catholicism, but almost all the topics addressed in *Hieroglyphica* concern religious dogmas.[18] Fate, Creation, the Flood, the Devil and the Hereafter, which are discussed below, provide striking examples. These cases indicate how the emphasis on similarity amongst religions was something of a two-edged sword: on the one hand the comparative method is applied in an apologetical setting, but on the other hand such comparisons could be damaging to the authority of certain Christian dogmas and to Christian supremacy. We should be aware that the Enlightenment discourse emphasises this latter current, resulting in the framing of comparison in general and of specific topics in particular as 'radical', whereas the views expressed and the debate surrounding these topics were more flexible and 'mainstream' than it appears if we look only at 'radical' authors. Nevertheless, with some of his topics De Hooghe seems to hover somewhere between the two 'approaches' towards religious comparison.

5.1 Visualising comparison

In comparing Christian doctrines with those of non-Christian peoples De Hooghe entered not only the field of antiquarian or theological controversy, but also inserted himself into an artistic debate. De Hooghe's combination of peoples was unusual in the realm of religious history: there is almost no juxtaposition of varied sorts of gods in religious illustrations. We know that such combinations were met with resistance in artistic circles; both in the visual and the literary arts the conflation of pagan gods with

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18   *Hieroglyphica* contains only one example of a more ceremonial angle: Plate 51, Van den Kerken Ban [On Churchly Excommunication], presents the practise of excommunication in different religions. In his *Indes Orientales* De Hooghe's comparative images are also structured thematically, but logically, only on Oriental religions. On pages 38 and 39 for instance we find baptism ceremonies amongst 'Abyssinians Muscovites etc. Chinese and savages'.

the Christian God was regarded as problematic.[19] There was general criticism directed towards the style but also more serious points of specific critique: pagan stories were attacked as being godless and useless fables. [20] Containing as they did all kinds of immoral behaviour – seductions, rapes, acts compelled by hatred – it was believed that these supposedly frivolous stories damaged the morals of Christians exposed to them.[21] Most of the stories were sheer nonsense and paid too much attention to ancient idolatry, which was nothing but unenlightened heathendom.[22] The French writer Jean Louis Guez de Balzac (1597-1654), who studied in Leiden, added a more fundamental objection to the consideration of appropriateness, namely the issue of religious authority. The intermingling of angels and demons would certainly undermine Christianity's claims to truthfulness.[23] This separation of classical mythology and scripture is also advocated in Van Mander's introduction to his translation of Ovid, where he mentions that artists should 'neither desire nor intend the mingling of the holy pure Scriptures with popular or Pagan embellishment'.[24] Like the critique of plays, the attention bestowed on pagan myths and deities was also criticised in the literary and visual realm. Such attention was given, amongst other sources, in a book De Hooghe produced the frontispiece for: Joannes Antonides van der Goes's *Ystroom* (1671).[25]

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19   E.K. Grootes, 'Waarom in 's Hemelsnaam al die Mythologie' in *Vragende wijs. Vragen over tekst, taal en taalgeschiedenis*, ed J.B. den Besten et al. (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1990), 3-11. With the rediscovery of antiquity in the Renaissance, mythology gained a prominent place in the fields of poetry, sculpture, music and theatre. The depiction of classical myths, no longer restricted to statues in private gardens or intermezzos at the theatre, spread to complete plays, public ceilings, and the allegorical representations of kings and princes. In tandem with this development, there arose about the omnipresence of classical myth, and more specifically its relation to Christian stories and arts.

20   The poet and minister Dirck Raphaelsz. Camphuysen stated that 'all pompous learning and pagan mythology, and everything that is not in accordance with the Dutch language is to be avoided'; see Marijke Spies, *Rhetorics, rhetorians and poets, studies in renaissance poetry and poetics* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1999), 73, 74.

21   Eric Jan Sluijter, *De "heydensche fabulen" in de schilderkunst van de Gouden Eeuw: schilderijen met verhalende onderwerpen uit de klassieke mythologie in de Noordelijke Nederlanden, circa 1590-1670* (Leiden: Primavera Pers, 2000), 190.

22   Sluijter, *De Heydense fabulen*, 191.

23   In his criticism of Heinsius's tragedy *Herodius Infanticida* Balzac pointed especially to the combination of pagan and Christian figures on stage. Balzac conceded that 'Herod, being a Romanized Jew and a idolater at that, might have used the name of pagan gods. But introducing an Angel as well as a Roman Fury on the stage in a single play is not acceptable. The pagan gods and demons died with the coming of the Christian God'. Spies*, Rhetoric*, 74.

24   Karel van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck. Uutlegginghe, en sin-ghevende verclaringhe, op den Metamorphosis Publij Ovidij Nasonis. het eerste Boeck.* (Haarlem: Paschier van Wesbusch, 1604), fol. 3v. 'Niet begheerende oft voor hebbende onder een te mengen d'heylige suyver Schrift met de gemeyne oft Heydensche versieringhen'.

25   Joannes Antonides van der Goes, *De Ystroom* (Amsterdam: Pieter Arentsz, 1671).

Fig. 103. De Hooghe, Frontispiece in Van der Goes's *De Ystroom* vol. 4 (1671)

The poet and playwright Joachim Oudaan, a rationalist Anabaptist whose father had been one of the leaders of the Rijnsburg Collegiants, levelled criticism at this laudatory poem on the Amsterdam IJ.[26] In his laudatory poem about Van der Goes's work, Oudaan nonetheless disapproved of its foregrounding of classical gods.[27] Just how much the topic bothered Oudaan became clear six years later, when he condemned the artistic attention given to paganism in a treatise entitled

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[26]   Willem Frijhoff en Marijke Spies, *1650, Bevochten eendracht: Nederlandse cultuur in Europese context* (Den Haag: Sdu Uitgevers, 1999), 416,417.

[27]   In the final part of his ode, Oudaan talks about the 'spurious varnish' (valsch vernis) in the book, which the literary historian Marijke Spies interprets as a rejection of Van der Goesch's use of classical gods in the poem. Although that is probably not untrue, it seems that Oudaan's criticism is more specifically aimed at De Hooghe's illustrations to the book, consisting solely of classical figures. Oudaan's especially targets the 'konstpaneel', which seems to refer to De Hooghe's etching rather than to Joannes Antonides van der Goes's poem. In 1690 Oudaan even wrote a poem aimed at critisising De Hooghe, '*Op de regtsvordering van de Heer Mr. Adriaan Bakker [...] tegen de person van Romeijn de Hooge[...] (1690)*'.

Idolatry disclosed: to present day poets (1677).[28] According to Oudaan, since the church fathers pagan gods had been unmasked as frauds, and so foregrounding denigrated religion and God himself. The extenuating rationale of artistic freedom was insufficient for Oudaan.[29]

Although the debate about combining pagan gods and religion with the Christianity seems to have occurred in the field of poetry and theatre specifically, it provides an interesting context for *Hieroglyphica*'s comparative chapters. Whereas the images in *Hieroglyphica* strongly resemble those of De Hooghe's literary frontispieces, such as the one he created for Van der Goes's *Ystroom* and many of his religious works, what De Hooghe did in *Hieroglyphica* went further than Van der Goes's poem, or Heinsius's entertaining play. Rather than communicating moral values via ancient myths, or passing on 'dry' information about the depiction of ancient gods, De Hooghe deployed his visual skills within the more 'serious' genre of religious history. In the following sections I will analyse five comparative etchings in which similarity is emphasised, raising questions about what belonged to original, true religion and what did not.

5.2 Providence and predestination

The first comparative chapter is chapter 5, Van de Voorbeschikking en het Noodlot [On Providence and Fate] (fig. 104). The engraving shows the concept of fate as manifested in all kinds of religions. The accompanying text introducing the etching is rather elaborate. It starts by explaining how ancient scholars had gained increasing power from their knowledge of the natural world and of all sorts of fields such as shipping and the domestication of animals as well as the discovery of the medicinal properties of herbs. This knowledge, combined with strong ties to those possessing political power, made the masses willing to listen and obey them, according to De Hooghe. Over time, these 'scientists' became more like priests, claiming to be intermediaries between men and gods and therefore able to foretell the future. The uncertain people, lacking knowledge, began to ask these 'artists and knowers' for advice and predictions.

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28   Joachim Oudaan, *Het godendom ontdekt: Aan de hedendaagsche dichters (Amsterdam,* 1677) See on this poem Spies, *Rhetoric,* 76. See further on Oudaan: Grootes, *Waarom in 's Hemelsnaam al die Mythologie.*

29   E.K. Grootes, *Waarom in 's Hemelsnaam al die Mythologie*, 4.

Fig. 104. De Hooghe, Plate 5, Van de Voorbeschikking en het Noodlot [On Providence and Fate]

This was, according to De Hooghe, a tricky business;

> Those asking for advice, the desperate, and fearful, receiving an answer from the Priests, would, if the answers did not match the course of events, have overthrown the exalted position of the Priests; but to protect themselves against such storms they [i.e., the priests – T.v.t. H] invented *Fate*.[30]

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30 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica,* 69. 'De Raadvragers, de vertryffelden, en bevreesden, antwoord van den Priesters ontfangende, zouden, als de antwoorden met de zaken niet over een kwamen, den ontzagchelyken staat der Priesters over hoop geworden hebben; maar om zig zelven tegen zulke stormen te beveyligen, vonden zy het Noodlot uyt.'

Whenever the predictions of these clerics proved wrong the priests told their followers that it was because "fate" had ultimately decided differently. According to De Hooghe, in many religions this disclaimer was inserted via the invention of Fate-gods. Plate 5 presents examples of these gods, starting with the notion of a primordial 'sketch' or plan for the world – Providence – made by the Supreme God. De Hooghe starts with the Egyptian god Ichton, who was the 'notion of a Divine Supreme Being'. Before the beginning of time, Ichton made a plan which was carried out by the respectively good and evil gods Osiris and Typhon. Furthermore, the image displays the Babylonians' Fate as an old man with two wings on his head. One wing is that of a dove, denoting the good things in life, while the other is a bat-wing, symbolising evil. The old man lacks ears, because Fate is inevitable and cannot be influenced by prayers or offerings. Two chains, one of good and the other of evil, are connected in a Gordian knot, comprising the world.

On the right-hand side in plate 5 we encounter Eternal Providence 'as it is believed amongst the Christians'. This figure, so radiant that it is impossible to behold, can only be adored. As with the pagan depictions, Fate's double aspects are shown: both male and female, Providence is imbued with a majesty that is both pleasant and terrible, its gown half-white, half-black. Although the figure is entitled 'Providence' De Hooghe's image and text predominantly elaborate on the concept of predestination. One arm of figure B holds a starry crown that is meant for the elect, while the other arm swings a flaming sword intended for the reprobate. The figure holds the book of Eternal Life and Eternal Damnation, also symbolised by the sheep and the goat (Matth. 25: 31-46). De Hooghe mentions explicitly that the Last Judgement is the outcome of Fate.

De Hooghe continues with a description of Providence amongst the Greeks, embodied in the Fates or Parcae, Clotho, Lachesis and Atropos. Here, he refers to a few other authors and mentions that Appianus, Homerus and Catullus wrote about the Parcae.[31] They work in accordance with the Greek god of Fate, Fatum (G), who again has the double face of prosperity and evil. He pulls the velvet cords and iron chains that comprise the globe behind him. Fatum, in turn, follows the plan and governance of the Supreme God Jupiter (H).

Although the various gods of Fate are described rather matter-of-factly, their side-by-side presentation and the emphasis on similarities raise questions. The introduction, with its view that Fate Gods had been invented to avert the unmasking of priestly deceit, is remarkable. Did De Hooghe insert the Christian figures of

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31   De Hooghe seems to mingle Greek and Roman terminology: Parcae was the Roman term for the Fates, while the names of Clotho, Lachesis and Atropos were Greek.

Providence and Predestination in figure B into this list of pagan inventions to point to the non-original, extra-biblical character of these conceptions?[32] Or was he in fact trying to substantiate Christian dogma by showing that even the pagan ancient religions had ideas about predestination?

Indeed, for the concept of predestination, these central questions seem especially important. This dogma had been highly divisive in the beginning of the seventeenth century, with the rise of controversies between the Arminians (named after Jacobus Arminius, 1560-1609, and later labelled as Remonstrants) and Gomarists (followers of Franciscus Gomarus, 1563-1641, later called Counter-Remonstrants). Although the topic of providential predestination remained important to the maintenance of orthodoxy[33] there emerged a trend in the early eighteenth century that sought to "soften the doctrine of predestination."[34] This current is also visible in De Hooghe's work. Although chapter 5 does not mention the Arminian controversy, De Hooghe does comply with the dogma of predestination in chapters 4 and 61 as well as in other books he worked on.[35] Throughout *Hieroglyphica*, however, he pays little attention to predestination, which does not occur in his short lists of what the basis of true religion is.[36] Moreover, where De Hooghe mentions this dogma, he mostly presents it as the cause of religious and political dissension, resulting in chaotic unrest and trials.[37]

Plate 5 proves amenable to multiple interpretations. On the one hand, De Hooghe underscores the Christian notion of providence (including predestination) by his emphasis on its presence in other ancient religions. On the other hand, by stressing religious unity, he may be indicating that opinions were indeed shifting towards a focus on unity instead of on stringent dogmas. The presence of something analogous to Christian predestination amongst the gods of Fate invented by pagans seems to add up to such unity, either in a conservative manner

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32 De Hooghe calls this figure "Eternal Providence," but the explanatory legend speaks about predestination. For the elect, predestination was indeed providential.

33 In 1755 Antonius van der Os (1722-1807) was dismissed for his alleged Remonstrant ideas about predestination; see van Eijnatten, *Nederlandse religiegeschiedenis,* 216, 217. See also R.A. Bosch, 'Het conflict rond Antonius van der Os, predikant te Zwolle 1748-1755' (PhD thesis: Kampen, 1988).

34 Johannes van den Berg, *Religious Currents and Cross-currents. Essays on Early Modern Protestantism* (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 263, 264.

35 De Hooghe*, Hieroglyphica*, 64,65, 437,438; De Hooghe, *Alle de Voornaamste Historiën des Ouden en Nieuwen Testaments*, 2nd etching, 'Der Boozen Engelen val'. Jacques Basnage, *'t Groot Waerelds Tafereel, waar in de Heilige en Waereldsche Geschiedenissen en Veranderingen zedert de Scheppinge des Waerelds tot het Uiteinde van de Openbaaring van Johannes worden afgemaalt*, transl. from the French by A. Alewyn, vol. 2 (Amsterdam: J. Lindenberg, 1705).

36 See chapter 7 of this thesis below.

37 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica,* 333.

or as an indication that Christian dogmas such as providence and predestination could not be isolated from pagan inventions.

5.3 Creation (from nothing)

A striking example of this emphasis on the resemblance among different religions is found in De Hooghe's chapter 6, De Scheyding van de Chaos, of War-klomp [On the Separation of the Chaos, or undivided Primal Matter]. Introducing the topic of creation, he writes that all poetic, pagan sources take their inspiration from Ovid (Naso), who in turn had drawn from the 'sacred texts and other Hebrew and Phoenician memoirs'. De Hooghe thinks that besides these texts there were also probably other ancient texts, also mentioned in the Bible, but now lost.[38]Although the primacy of Moses writings is made clear in the legend, the way that pagans incorporated elements from Moses's story into their own accounts, for instance on the existence of an eternal God, is also praised. De Hooghe regards Moses's account of the creation in Genesis to be of such quality that it was copied, hence the similarity among all the stories of creation. In this approach, similarity amongst religions is used as an argument for the reliability of biblical or Christian views. The stories, however, had not only been copied from 'sacred texts' but were also the result of a natural awareness of God and religion. A residue of the true, original religion was still present in all humans, resulting in the persistence of faint notions of the ultimate deity.[39] Although De Hooghe is clear about the truth and originality of the biblical account, it seems that his comparison of the biblical stories with pagan myths also influenced his reading and interpretation of the creation story. Plate 6 and chapter 6 from *Hieroglyphica* appear to stress the creation as a separation of chaos into order, not as a creation of matter from nothing.

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38   De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 79.
39   Idem, 80, 'glinsteringen van het Waare Licht'.

Fig. 105. De Hooghe, Plate 6, De Scheyding van de Chaos, of War-klomp [On the Separation of the Chaos, or undivided Primal Matter]

In Plate 6 De Hooghe gave visual form to his beliefs on the topic of creation, stressing how all religions contained similar ideas of a creator-God who creating order out a chaotic cosmos, thereby creating life and beginning the governance of the world. At the bottom of the print we see a figure denoting Chaos, a god whom was pagans named Demogorgon (A). The image shows some resemblance to the depiction of Demogorgon in the second edition of Cartari's *Imagini colla sposizione degli dei degli antichi* [Images depicting the gods of the ancients] (1626), accompanied by the illustrations of Bolognino Zaltieri (fig. 107).[40]

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40   Vincenzo Cartari, *Seconda novissima editione delle Imagini colla sposizione degli dei degli antichi* (Padua: Pietro Paolo Tozzi, 1626), 15-17. Cartari's source might be Boccaccio's *Genealogia Deorum gentilium*. Van Mander also mentions Demogorgon in his *Schilder-boeck, Uutlegginghe, en sin-ghevende verclaringhe, op den Metamorphosis Publij Ovidij Nasonis*, vol. 1r. but only briefly and without images.

Fig. 106. De Hooghe, Demogorgon, detail from Plate 6

Fig. 107. Bolognino Zaltieri, Demogorgon, from Cartari's *Seconda nouissima editione delle Imagini colla sposizione degli dei degli antichi,* (1626) p, 16

According to De Hooghe, pagan religions had considered the demiurge to be the First God, who had created order. He writes that this figure should be depicted as an old, unkempt man, surrounded by a snake biting his own tail, the symbol for eternity. This symbol, the Ouroboros, elicits De Hooghe's compliment directed to the pagans due to their distinguishing of an eternal being, from which other beings received their position and influence, from an eternal first being who 'stands above the infinity of time'. They depicted the very first, omnipotent god as a circle without beginning or end, consisting of radiant stripes radiating from its centre. The snake symbol of the Ouroboros, by contrast, had a beginning and an end in its mouth and tail. The supreme deity of eternity should be regarded as something different from the the snake-circle of Demogorgon. De Hooghe suggests that the latter refers to some sort of cyclical perpetuity rather than to eternity, which – even pagans understood – was reserved for the eternal Supreme Being. This elaboration on eternity and perpetuity is also present in Cartari's comments.[41]

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41   Cartari, *Seconda novissima editione delle Imagini colla sposizione degli dei degli antichi*, 15-17.

Fig. 108. De Hooghe, Eneph en Saturnus [Eneph and Saturn], detail from Plate 6
Fig. 109. De Hooghe, Pan, detail from Plate 6

On the right side of the image we find Eneph (B) ('The first God of the Egyptians, and creator of the other Gods'), and Saturn (C), respectively an Egyptian and a Roman god of creation. Eneph, standing on water and rocks, is depicted with an egg in his mouth, symbolising his creative force, and a golden staff in his hand, referring to his omnipotence. Saturn is also imagined as the god of creation and governance; the scythe in his hand is explained as symbol of his ongoing regeneration and perpetuation of life. Although the scythe also refers to death, in this case it is related to the pruning necessary for vegetative growth.[42]

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42 Both the image of Eneph and the comment are taken from Valeriano Bolzani's *Hieroglyphica*, 620, 621 . The scythe is also found in the figure of the Reformation in De Hooghe's Plate 59.
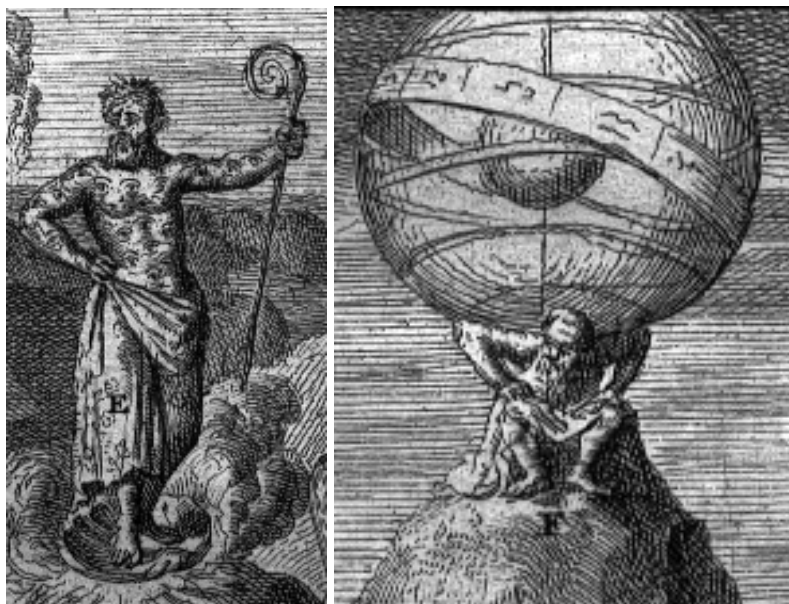
Fig. 110. De Hooghe, Jupiter Argos, detail from Plate 6
Fig. 111. De Hooghe, Yunx, detail from Plate 6

De Hooghe continues with Pan (D), who is depicted as a characterisation of the working cosmos. Pan is also known, according to the artist, for his separation of chaos. The rocks he sits on denote the rough and chaotic beginning of the world, and behind him are the four Aristotelian elements which he brought forth from this primordial lump.[43] Subsequently, the Phoenician god Jupiter Argos (E) and the Egyptian god Yunx (F) are described, both known for their taming of chaos and for putting each of the four elements into its proper place.

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43 The ball behind Pan shows a dolphin for the water, a dragon for the fire, a mole for the earth and a falcon for the air.
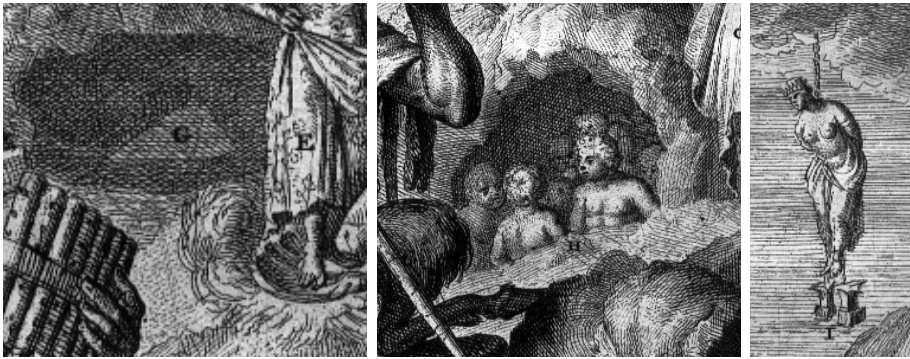
Fig. 112. De Hooghe, Chaldeeuwse Driehoek [Chaldean Triangle], detail from Plate 6

Fig. 113. De Hooghe, Zwarte Steen van Palmyra [Black Stone from Palmyra], detail from Plate 6

Fig. 114. De Hooghe, Griekse Juno [Greek Iuno], detail from Plate 6

The Chaldeans depicted the very first beginning of the earth with an asymmetric triangle (G), still in the ground, to symbolise that the abyss of the earth is still in the ground.[44] In describing the beliefs of the Syrians (H) De Hooghe refers to the city of Palmyra (Tadmor) in Syria. Here, he claims, a black stone was found with an inscription carved with the likeness of a woman, symbolising earth, a man animating this earth and four children for the four elements. The Greeks saw the goddess Juno as their symbol of creation, because without lust, nothing would grow. The anvils on her feet are commented upon twice, first as symbolising air and fire, later as standing for the two heavy elements, water and earth (I).
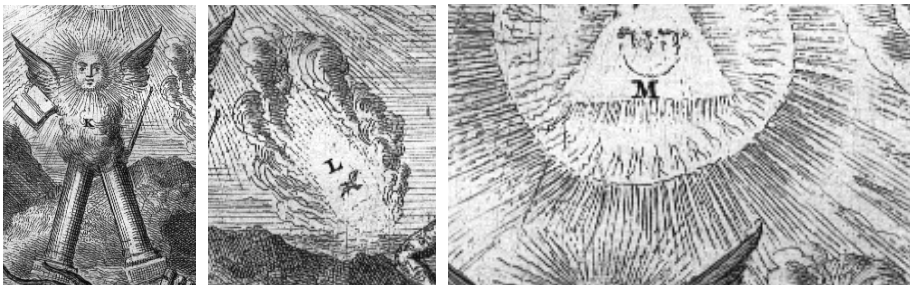
Fig. 115. De Hooghe, Merkbeeld van schepping en onderhouding [symbol of creation and governance], detail from Plate 6

Fig. 116. De Hooghe, Geest [Spirit], detail from Plate 6

Fig. 117. De Hooghe, Bereschitz, detail from Plate 6

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44   It is unclear to me where De Hooghe got this idea from. It could pertain to Plato's ideas on order in chaos which he sees in triangles.

To depict the Christian creation story, De Hooghe chose an allegorical image composed of several biblical elements. Here we find a representation of a figure (K) from Revelation with pillars for legs, one standing on water, the other on earth.[45] Again, these symbols stand for his creation and governance of this world.[46] The account of creation from Genesis is also mentioned. The Lord separated earth, water and air, and his Spirit, depicted in the form of a dove (L), gave life to these elements with heavenly fire. This image also occurs in De Hooghe's earlier work on biblical stories.[47]

At first sight, there seems nothing remarkable here; the similarity across religions expressed in the etching is explained by the copying of the Genesis account by pagans, and the description of the gods is quite technical. Striking, however, is the title of the etching, DE SCHEYDING VAN DE CHAOS, OF WAR-KLOMP [On the separation of primeval chaos], alluding to the problematic dogma of 'creatio ex nihilo', creation from nothing. Beginning with the church fathers Tatian, Theofilus of Antioch and Iraeneus the belief in creation was explicated as having been fashioned 'from nothing', indicating that God created both the world and all matter. The most important reasons given for this description involved the axiom that there were 'no second principles besides God, God's omnipresence and free will'. This draws a strict separation between God and the world he created.[48] If matter (chaos) would have existed in tandem with, or even before, the creator, the creator would have been rendered less powerful and omnipotent than in the ex nihilo myth.[49] Since Augustine this line of thinking was part of the essence of the theological tradition; a vital element of orthodox Christian belief,[50] it became official dogma at the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215.

In addition to criticism derived from Platonic and Aristotelian philosophy, this dogma was also criticised during the Early Modern period. This dogma that the earth had been created from nothing was the subject of an ongoing debate, with opposition divided broadly into two distinct parties. First, there was the scientific

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45   Revelations 1:12-16 and 10:1-3 : 'I saw another powerful angel come down from heaven. This one was covered with a cloud, and a rainbow was over his head. His face was like the sun, his legs were like columns of fire, 2 and with his hand he held a little scroll that had been unrolled. He stood there with his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land.'
      This description was depicted often as an image, Lunenburg, 1672, unknown artist.

46   He also uses this image in *De bybelsche historiën, in nauuukeurige prent-verbeeldinge*.

47   Romeyn de Hooghe, *De bybelsche historiën, in nauuukeurige prent-verbeeldinge* .

48   *Religion Past and Present*, vol 3, 543-545.

49   David Adams Leeming, *Creation Myths of the World. An Encyclopedia*. Vol. 1 (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2010), 9, 10.

50   See also E. J. van Wolde, *Stories of the beginning*: *Genesis 1-11 and Other Creation Stories*, trans. John Bowden (London: SCM, 1995).

conviction that nothing could come from nothing. In this context Cartesianism challenged the reigning dogma. Further, Baruch de Spinoza identified God with nature, thus excluding the possibility that God could have *created* nature. Another extreme example in this line of thinking is Hendrik Wyermars's *Den ingebeelde Chaos, en gewaande werelds-wording der oude, en hedendaagze Wysgeeren, veridelt en weerlegt* [The imagined chaos of the ancient and modern philosophers confuted].[51] Almost all persons suspected of Spinozism – for example the Zwolle church cantor and catechist Barend Hakvoort and the theology student Antony van Dalen –rejected the belief in creation ex nihilo.[52] The libertine Koerbagh also renounced this dogma, stating in his *Bloemhof* that although theologians teach their audience to believe in creation from nothing, wise scholars know that this is impossible. More importantly, Koerbagh argues that the dogma is in contradiction to the Bible.[53]

The other view, found among orthodox theologians such as Voetius, Coccejus, and many other seventeenth-century theologians, expressed unconditional belief in the Bible. They held on to their conviction that creation had occurred out of nothing, rejecting the idea of an initial chaos.[54] This adherence, however, was not a static given: many debates were held and treatises were written about the conditions of the dogma.[55] To some extent this justifies the opinion that 'at the outset (...) the line between the ex nihilo and creation from chaos creations is sometimes thin – even invisible – and that in such cases the categorisation of myths is highly subjective, dependent more on tone and feeling than on specific elements'.[56] The exegetical explanations and interpretations differed, for instance in the reading of *bara* (create) or *kara* (separate) in Hebrew in the first verse of Genesis.[57] Different solutions for the matter were sought. One solution was to

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51 Hendrik Wyermars, *Den ingebeelde Chaos, en gewaande werelds-wording der oude, en hedendaagze Wysgeeren, veridelt en weerlegt* (Amsterdam: Wybrant Alexanders,1710). On Wyermars see Michiel Wielema, 'Hendrik Wyermars (c.1685- na 1749). Een "sodomitise rasphuys ongodist," in *Achter slot en grendel. Schrijvers in Nederlandse gevangenschap 1700-1800*, ed Anna de Haas (Zutphen, Walburg Pers, 2002), 67-72, and Maarten Gaillard, 'De zaak Wyermars of: de ingebeelde tolerantie in de Republiek?,' *Mededelingen van de Stichting Jacob Campo Weyerman* 21 (1998): 1-8.

52 See Wielema, *The March of the Libertines*, 93-100.

53 Adriaan Koerbagh, *Een bloemhof van allerley lieflijkheyd sonder verdriet geplant door Vreederijk Waarmond, ondersoeker der waarheyd, tot nut en dienst van al die geen die der nut en dienst uyt trekken wil* (Amsterdam, 1668), 135, 136.

54 Goudriaan, *Reformed Orthodoxy,* 94, 121.

55 For instance the duration of the creation, and the role of substantial forms. Goudriaan, *Reformed Orthodoxy*, chapter 2.

56 Leeming, *Creation Myths of the World,* 10.

57 In her inaugural lecture (2009) Ellen van Wolde brought the issue up again by suggesting 'kara' as a reading instead of 'bara'.

speak of a 'double creation', one in which God created the chaos and another in which he formed Adam and Eve.[58] This idea, which appears in works by Philo, Origen, and Calvin, also found its way to Caspar Streso, a minister in The Hague, who speaks of two creations in his *History-Catechismus*.[59] Similarly, the minister Johannes Aysma talks about a constructor. In his *Het Ryck der Goden onder den eenige waare God. In veel heerlike vertooningen- bedacht en voort-gebracht* , he treats many religions and their stories. Aysma starts by saying that there are many similarities between the authors of the Bible and, for instance, the Roman poet Ovidius Naso (Ovid), each speaking of a deity making order out of Chaos. But, as Aysma firmly states, 'no-one should think here of this Chaos, and this unstructured mix of the basis of all things, as Matter pre-existing on its own…'.[60] It is exactly this addition that is missing in De Hooghe's *Hieroglyphica.* Besides the mention in one chapter on the Trinity (omitted from the book that 'the universe is created by God from nothing' the principle is mentioned in neither chapter 6 nor the rest of *Hieroglyphica*. Although the lines between creation ex nihilo and creation from chaos were not as rigid as is sometimes thought, De Hooghe refrains from explicitly mentioning the creatio ex nihilo, and neither does he mention the two creations. De Hooghe's comparison of the creation stories of different religions, reinforcing the Biblical account of creation, results in an interpretation of creation as a separation out of chaos. Instead of disclaiming the belief in creation ex nihilo

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58   The issue got really contentious when the diplomat and librarian Isaac la Peyrère explained the two creations not as creation and formation, but as the creation of pagan peoples, and subsequently the creation of the Israelites.

59   Casparus Streso, *History-catechismus: dat is: korte onderwysinge voor de eenvoudige: Reackende de Gheschiedenissen van Gods Regeeringhe over de Wereld ende over de Kercke* ('s Gravenhage: Franc vander Spruyt, 1641), 2. 'gelickerwys als yemant een Huys wil timmeren, eerst verschaft ende by een brenght alle materialen van hout ende andere dingen, ende daer na een eygelick van de selve brenght tot syn behoorlicke gedante, 't eene met het andere vereenighende. Even alsoo heeft oock Godt in de Shceppinge eerst de Materie aller dingen uyt niet voorgebracht, ende daer nae uyt dese Materie alle dingen geformeert ende toebereyt.' [like somebody who wants to build a house, first buying and collecting all materials, either wood or other things, and then combines the materials into a nice form. Likewise, God first created all base material from nothing, from which [He] then formed and made all things.]To the question of what we should understand by the first creation, Streso replies that this is when God created the material from which all things are made from nothing. In his answer to the second question, Streso explicates his division with a metaphor. According to him, this process can be seen as a solution for the two creations mentioned in Genesis, since Philo and, more importantly, Origen. Calvin himself distinguished among creation, production and formation; see Amanda K. Herrin, 'Recycling and reforming origins. The Double creation in Claes jansz. Visschers Theatrum Bibliucm', in *Illustrated Religious Texts in the North of Europe 1500-1800*, ed Dietz, Morton, Roggen, Stronks and Van Vaeck (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014), 183 -204.

60   Johannes Aysma, *Het Ryck der Goden onder den eenige waare God. In veel heerlike vertooningen- bedacht en voort-gebracht* (Amsterdam: Timotheus ten Hoorn, 1686).

from the angle of philosophy and the natural sciences, De Hooghe presents age-old stories of several religions that all speak of a creation of order from chaos. From this perspective it seems obvious that De Hooghe believes that the Christian account of creation should be read in the same manner.

5.4 Four ages and the Flood

Other topics treated in a comparative manner are the Ages of Mankind and the divine wrath that was provoked by human crime. These topics are dealt with in chapters 16 and 17 of *Hieroglyphica*, entitled VAN DE VIER EEUWEN [On the Four Ages] and VAN DE ZONDVLOED [On the Flood], respectively. Like the topic of creation, the Flood was a much debated issue in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. The story raised a host of questions, ranging from whether it was possible to fit a pair of each and every species of animal into the Ark to queries about the destruction of all humans besides the family of Noah – where then did his grandchildren find spouses?– and, most pregnant: where could so much water have come from that it had covered the entire world? This water problem was answered in different ways, of which two responses stand out. The first reaction to note here came from scholars holding that the Bible had told the correct story about the global flood, which they explained via all sorts of natural solutions. For example the Scottish theologian, philosopher and historian Thomas Burnet (1643-1715), chaplain at the English court of William III, claimed that the Flood was universal, but that the earth had looked very different before it had occurred: the world was in fact hollow and thus could contain enough water for the cataclysmic event, and afterwards it had broken up and become deformed.[61] The second reaction dismissed the notion of a universal flood, holding to the idea that there had been a flood (or multiple floods) but this was only a local event. Of such local floods there were also several known stories. This local flood theory was found for example in Spinoza's writings, and in very plain Dutch in the work of Adriaan Koerbagh, who describes the Flood in his *Bloemhof* as follows:

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61 See Don Cameron Allen, *The Legend of Noah. Renaissance rationalism in Art, Science, Letters* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1963); Paolo Rossi, *The dark abyss of time*; Sur Shalev, *Sacred worlds and words*, 63-69; Rienk Vermij, 'The Flood and the Scientific Revolution: Thomas Burnet's system of natural providence,' in *Interpretations of the Flood*, ed Florentino Garcia Martinez and Gerard P. Luttikhuizen (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 150-166; C. P. E. Nothaft, 'Noah's Calendar: The Chronology of the Flood Narrative and the History of Astronomy in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century Scholarship' *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 74 (2011): 191-211; John Casey, *After Lives. A Guide to Heaven, Hell, and Purgatory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009) 331; Eric Jorink, 'De Ark, de Tempel, het Museum. Veranderende modellen van kennis in de eeuw van de Verlichting' (Inaugural address, Leiden, 2014).

diluvium: spilling over, overflow, inundation, flooding. The Bible tells about a general Flood — the Deluge — from which eight people and some specimens from each species of animal were supposedly rescued in a chest or ship. It is quite possible that at some time a few countries were inundated. But it is impossible that the entire earth, which is a sphere with very high mountains on it, should be entirely covered with water. [62]

In De Hooghe's comparative chapter the Flood is inextricably bound up with human corruption. Human error is the common cause of each of the different flood stories. Following a chapter on the Four Ages of Man in pagan literature (chapter 16), in which each successive stage is worse than the one before – a paradigm that De Hooghe probably knew from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* – chapter 17 starts with comparing these pagan Four Ages with a more optimistic Christian periodisation: the original perfection of the first couple in Paradise, followed after the Fall by a harsher regime when humans had to work hard for their livelihood. The third and fourth stage, however, represent a turn for the better, leading to spiritual regeneration and eternal bliss. This fourfold chronology roughly corresponds to the somewhat controversial divisions in the history of salvation found in the theology of Coccejus, although here De Hooghe, who after all was not a theologian, allowed himself considerable poetic licence.[63]

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62   Adriaan Koerbagh, *Bloemhof*, entry: diluvie, 'overspoeling, overvloeying, overwatering, water-vloed.'
      In de bijbel is sprake van een
      algemene overstroming — de zondvloed — waarbij
      acht mensen en enkele exemplaren van alle diersoorten
      in een kist of schip zouden zijn gered.
      Dat ooit een paar landen onder water
      zijn gelopen, dat kan best. Maar dat de aarde,
      die rond is en waarop heel hoge bergen staan,
      helemaal met water bedekt zou zijn geweest, is
      niet mogelijk.'

63   Again, De Hooghe anachronistically speaks of Christians whilst talking about Adam, Eve and their offspring. The pagan ages of men are present in Hesiod and Ovid, who divided the history of men into periods of descending civilisation. Their approach differs slightly in that Hesiod recognised five ages, while Ovid speaks of four. Ovid's approach, followed by De Hooghe, starts with a Golden Age when people lived peacefully and in righteousness, without the need for law; they remained in the same place, collecting food without having to work for it. Second was the Silver Age, in which Jupiter instituted the seasons and people built houses and started to work the land. Subsequently men turned towards warfare in the Bronze Age, which eventually yielded to the final era, an Iron Age, when men sailed the earth, demarcated property and became unjust, greedy and impious. See Ovid, *Metamorphoses* I, 89-150. Willem J. van Asselt, 'The doctrine of the abrogations in the federal theology of Johannes Cocceius (1603-1669),' *Calvin Theological Journal* 29 (1994): 101-116.

Fig. 118. De Hooghe, Plate 17, Van de Zondvloed [On the Flood]

The print starts with a representation of Christian decline. At centre stage in the etching is a figure symbolising a weeping Eve after the Fall (A), full of regret about her disobedience towards God and her inability to resist her seduction by the Devil. The figures around her denote the rapid corruption of the human race after the perfection that the original couple had possessed. The real descent of decline is depicted via the figures of the first murderer, Cain, and his rude offspring (B). We see the waters rise, poured out by Iris from above and whipped up by Neptune from subterranean depths; the boat symbolises the ark. After De Hooghe repeats the biblical account of what had happened,[64] he continues by mentioning similar Flood stories, which De Hooghe avers had existed in the historical accounts of practically all the earth's peoples. He recounts, for instance, the story of the pious Deucalion and his wife Pyrrha (G), who fled to a mountain and survived the Flood, after which they made the other survivors into god-fearing believers.

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64   De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 164. 'De Wateren snellen, tot vyftien ellen hoger als de hoogste Bergen, volgens de Hebreeuwsche Maat, die zoo bleven 150 dagen, met welke 40 Regendagen, en 40 afnemende'. [The waters receded to fifteen cubits higher than the highest Mountains, – following Hebrew measurement – and remained that way for 150 days, including the 40 Days of Rain and 40 of the abating of the waters.] The notion that 150 days include the 40 days of rain seems to have come from the Annotation in the States' Translation.

Fig. 119. De Hooghe, several Flood stories, detail of Plate 17

The explanatory text for several of the figures in the etching (E, G, I) seems based on Van Mander's *Schilder-Boeck*, which in turn elaborated on Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Although the similarity in stories is explained by a 'memory present in all peoples', De Hooghe claims that many of the pagan stories were imitations of sacred sources. Pagan writers, especially Ovid, drew inspiration from Babylonian sources, who in turn had been inspired by Hebrew stories. These myths were thus scrambled versions of the Biblical account and proved the truth of the primacy of the Biblical story.

Regarding the scientific debate about the geographic extent of the Flood – whether global or local – the pagan stories underpin the former view. With a few exceptions, they all speak of global floods.[65] Still, De Hooghe keeps somewhat aloof about the circumstances under which the Flood could have happened. There were seventeenth-century scholars who tried to prove with as many scientific data as possible that the Flood had been a global event,[66] and how, for instance, the Ark could have contained so many animals, but De Hooghe pays no attention to such matters.[67] When he does touch upon the matter of the global or local scale of the Flood, he presents the belief

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65   Idem, 165. 'Van deze schrikkelyke, welverdiende en gedreygde straffen hebben alle Volkeren eenig overschot en geheugen. Alleen de Chineezen en Indostansche Gebeurtenis-verhalen hebben een Tydrekening, in welke zy droomen van eene Overloop in die Landstreeken, en elders van een Scythische, en dan wederom van een Cimbersche Vloed.'[Of these horrible punishments, well-deserved and which were forewarned, all peoples have some idea and memory left. Only the Chinese and Indian accounts have a chronology, in which they dream of regional floods only, and elsewhere (we find memories of) a Scythian, and then, a Cimbrian Flood].

66   Allen, *'The legend of Noah,* 92. Burnet wrote extensively on the Flood, discussing all kinds of solutions to the problems it presented, for instance the local flood solution. The amount of water needed to drown the whole earth presents something quite problematic. According to Burnet the antediluvian world had been flat. De Hooghe does not go into these kind of technical, scientific data. It was quite a discussion in the late seventeenth century. In England, Burnet received many hostile reactions to his work from people like C. Wagner, Herbert Croft and Erasmus Warren, but then John Ray also entered the arena with his 'three physico-theological discourses, concerning I. The primitive chaos and creation of the world. II. The general Deluge, its causes and effects. III. The dissolution of the world and future conflagration'.

67   Jorink, *De Ark, de Tempel, het Museum.*

in a local flood as defended by 'Learned men', but it 'remains reasonable to ascertain the opposite, because of the testimony of Moses himself'.[68] To demonstrate the reliability of Moses, who 'could simply have heard from the eldest of Abraham's generation, infallibly, about antediluvian history, as related by Noah, who got it from Methuselah, who got it from Adam', De Hooghe inserted a table. This table, probably taken from Willem Goeree's *Voor-bereidselen tot de Bybelsche Wysheid*, was derived from Genesis, showing that indeed it was possible that Abraham could have heard the Flood story from Terah, who had been born only two years after Noah's death.[69]

Despite this reliance on the Bible De Hooghe, in his *Spiegel van Staat* [Mirror of State], where the topic of the Flood is also discussed, is much more reluctant to take a stand. He writes that after the Flood,

> When the World recovered, it had only left, like some Jews think, this oeconomy, and two pillars of Stone in which Seth had engraved, the course of events with the human race until his death: others, even very learned professors, preferred to contend, that this punishment [the Flood] did not affect all humans and countries, which I'll leave to others to sort out. [70]

Thus, whereas the specific topic of the universality of the Flood is not a prime topic in De Hooghe's books, he touches upon it in passing, mentioning the different stances with a sort of indifference.

Although De Hooghe's etching is entitled 'On the Flood', its central feature, the Ark, is hardly visible.[71] Whereas other authors elaborately delved into the technical issues, such as the question of how a boat could contain so many animals, or drew images with the measurements of the Ark, De Hooghe only vaguely drew some kind of flat barge. Instead of focussing on the question of whethere there had been a global or a regional flood, De Hooghe foregrounds the horrific nature of the Flood as an

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68 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 165. 'Hoewel zeer Geleerde mannen hier in hebben konnen toestemmen, zoo blyft het redelyk, het tegendeel vast te stellen, om het getuygenis zelfs van Mozes, die bij gewoone overgaaf uyt de oudste der geslachten van Abraham kon heugen, en wel onfeylbaar, aldus uyt den Mond van Noach, en die van Methusalem, en die van Adam, 't geen voor de Zundvloed was geschied.'

69 Willem Goeree, *Voor-bereidselen tot de Bybelsche Wysheid en gebruik der Heilige en Kerklijke Historien* (Amsterdam: Wilhelmus Goeree, 1690), 1235.

70 "De Weereld herleevende, had alleen overig, na 't gevoelen van eenige der *Jooden*, deze huishouding, en twee naalden van steen waar in *Seth* had gegriffyd, de veranderingen der zaken in 't Menschelyk geslacht tot zyn dood, voorgevallen : anderen heeft et 'gelust, zelfs zeer wakkere Hoofdleraars staande te houden, dat deze straf zich niet over alle sterffelyken en Landen uytbreide, welk ik aan anderen laat te schiften." De Hooghe, *Spiegel van Staat,* part 2.I, p. 10.

71 Of course, De Hooghe was aware of the general manner of depicting an Ark, which he did in chapter 18, in figure K, and more prominently in his depiction of the Flood in *Bybelsche Historien.*

actual event, with people racing in vain to the highest places and panicking mothers and children shown falling from trees.[72] In his depiction of antediluvians fleeing to the trees De Hooghe was not original; many later sixteenth- and seventeenth-century engravings on the Flood (for example by Crispijn van de Passe [I], 1564-1637) foreground the people in desperate flight, with the ark in the background.

Fig. 120. Crispijn van de Passe (I) naar Maerten de Vos, De Zondvloed [The Flood] (1580-1588), Rijksmuseum Amsterdam

Fig. 121. De Hooghe, Women and children falling climbing in trees, detail of Plate 17

De Hooghe's reluctance to really take a side in a somewhat complicated debate is something we encounter several times in *Hieroglyphica* – for instance on the matter of Copernicanism.[73] This reticence supports the idea of a 'selective neutrality', in which De Hooghe provides material but – like an encyclopedia – politely leaves it to the reader to form their own opinion.[74] Nonetheless, when chapter 17 with the Flood as its subject is taken together with chapter 16 on the Four Ages of Man – and the continuity in the text of the chapters suggests that we should take them as related considerations – a somewhat different picture emerges. Whereas in pagan views of human history matters progressively worsen, in the biblical account De Hooghe recognises a divine economy, in which a remnant of the human race is saved from destruction.

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72   De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 164.

73   See chapter 3 of this thesis.

74   Cf. Touber, *Religious Interests and Scholarly Exchange*.

5.5 The Devil[75]

Another example of a juxtaposition of an element of the Christian doctrine with something found in pagan religions occurs in the comparative chapters 28, Van de Goede en Kwaade Goden [On Good and Evil Gods], and 29, Van de Kwade Goden [On Evil Gods]. Here we find the Christian Devil in the company of evil gods that are presented as projections of human fears, and depicted with horns, claws and sweeping tails. Included in this list is the Christian Devil in figure E, the 'seducer from the garden of Eden, imagined as a snake with a woman's head'. With this formulation, and in the way he depicted this 'seducer', he leaves it to his readers to decide whether the Devil was real or in fact a 'hieroglyph' for evil thoughts.

Fig. 122. De Hooghe, Christian Devil, detail of Plate 28

Throughout *Hieroglyphica* we encounter ambivalent ideas about the Devil. On the one hand, in his chronological chapters De Hooghe endorses the actual existence of the Devil, as well as his role in the Fall and in sacred history. Moreover, he explicitly states that the third-century theologian Origen had been wrong to interpret the serpent from Genesis allegorically. De Hooghe emphasised that the Devil had really been present in Paradise in the form of a snake.[76] The Devil is depicted in several etchings in *Hieroglyphica*. Chapter 4 presents the Lion of Judah that will conquer the Devil; in chapter 33 we find a reference to the serpent; chapter 51 tells that Judas devoted himself to the Devil; in chapter 58 the Devil tries to destroy the Church. In the illustration for the parable of the wheat and the tares[77] in the book *Het voorhof der ziele* [The Forecourt of the Soul] (1668) by Frans van Hoogstraten (1632-96), De Hooghe who makes the Devil the unidentified enemy sowing weeds among the wheat.[78]

On the other hand, there are examples that question the Devil's origins and instances in which his power is less visible, which aligns with a late-seventeenth-century discourse in which ideas about the Devil had changed, famously so in the

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75 This section has been published in the Faultline 1700 project conference proceedings.

76 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica,* 145

77   Matt. 13:24-30 and Matt. 13:36-43.

78   Wilson, *The Art of Romeyn de Hooghe*, 155.

case of Bekker's *De Betoverde Weereld* [The World Bewitched].[79] Wherever the Devil appears in De Hooghe's account he is positioned very small in the background. As for evil, it is brought to this world first and foremost by human clerics. Furthermore, in chapter 37 Devil worship is mocked as idiotic and stupid, and in chapter 56 a frank man (who in the build-up to the Reformation starts to read the Bible for himself) finds out that there are no ghosts or devils in the Bible.[80] Moreover, De Hooghe states here and in *Hieroglyphica's* chapter 5 that demons and devils had been invented by clever leaders, in attempts to influence their peoples' behaviour by frightening them.[81]

Fig. 123. De Hooghe, Plate 28, Van de Goede en Kwaade Goden [On Good and Evil Gods]
Fig. 124. De Hooghe, Plate 29, Van de Kwade Goden [On Evil Gods]

In chapter 28 De Hooghe juxtaposes the good and bad gods of many pagan religions. Amongst the Egyptians, for example, Osiris was the good god and Typhon the evil one; with the Indians in Calcutta Tomerani was good, Herimis evil. Visually, many of these evil gods are depicted in the same manner, as dragon-like creatures depicted with thorns, claws and sweeping tails. Such figures, De Hooghe notes, also exist amongst Japanese, Koreans, the Slavs, Dacians and Hungarians, Egyptians, as well as in kingdoms in India and amongst the Greeks and Germanic tribes. This list of descriptions of evil gods passes seamlessly over all sorts of evil creatures such as

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79 Bekker, *De Betoverde Weereld*.
80 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 277, 406.
81 Idem, 68, 69.

monsters, ghosts, gnomes, evil witches, harpies and figures of nightmares.

It is clear that De Hooghe's comparative etching foregrounds the similarity between Christianity and other religions: they all know that there is a good and an evil god. The question is how this emphasis on similarity should be interpreted. One interpretation could be that De Hooghe wanted to defend the Christian belief in the Devil by pointing to the presence of evil counter-gods in pagan religions. Another – more plausible – explanation is that De Hooghe's comparative approach serves to criticise the belief in the Devil as idolatry, akin to the idolatry of pagan belief in evil gods. This critical attitude emerges at the beginning of chapter 28, where De Hooghe introduces his topic of evil gods by identifying such gods as an invention of 'pagans and even some Christians', the outcome, he explains, of a dualistic idea about God:

> Most among the pagans, yes even some of the so-called Christians, thought that the Eternal Being, which they envisioned as their Creator and Keeper, was Infinitely good, therefore nothing could come from him but blessing, [therefore] necessarily another Being or principle must exist, withholding good, or pouring out evil on them. [82]

Although De Hooghe's rejection of dualism is entirely in line with orthodoxy (the Devil as an evil entity should not be seen as equally powerful as the good entity God), one expects his comment to be directed towards a too-powerful, unbiblical Satan. Instead, De Hooghe talks about the commonly accepted role of the Devil as seducer. In the legend of chapter 28 De Hooghe emphasises the role of reason in the matter of ghosts and devils, explaining explicitly his addition of such creatures:

> Although in my native country there are some impetuous thinkers who rudely mock ghosts, and even would want to banish the devils themselves out of the Bible, I, however, want to retain some meaningful [descriptions] of ghosts, so they can be used for countries or people who reason a bit less and believe a bit more.[83]

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82 Idem, 237 'De meeste onder de Heydenen, ja zelfs eenige der zoogenaamde Christenen, hebben gemeent, dat het Eeuwig Weezen, het welk zy stelden voor hunne Schepper en onderhouder, was Oneyndig goed, en dat daar niets uyt konnende voortvloeyen als zegen, noodzakelyk een ander Wezen of beginzel moest zyn, het welk zulken goed belette, of kwaden op haar uytstortte.'

83 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 237. 'Hoewel in myn Vaderland zommige dartele verstanden grof spotten met allerley Geesten, ja zelfs de Duyvelen uyt de H. Schriften wel zouden willen weeren, zo acht ik echter niet van alle, maar van zulken die iets betekenen, wat na te laten aan den Liefhebbers, om die te gebruyken in Landen of by Menschen, daar 't onbezonnen Redeneeren wat min, en 't Gelooven wat meer in zwang gaat.'

This notion that De Hooghe added some ghosts and devils in print, on behalf of peoples and countries accustomed to reasoning a bit less, and the mention of 'impious thinkers' implies that inhabitants of the Dutch Republic were too rational to believe these stories, but others might not be.[84] This aligns with De Hooghe's explanations for all sorts of evil creatures via natural causes. The figure of Nightmare, for example, depicted as a night owl with bat-wings, is analysed as a physical feeling of tightness on the chest, and a stunning of the sleeper's brain. This results in the 'contraction of sinews and tendons', leaving the one experiencing this physical feeling in a state of anxiety.[85] Such a rational approach towards folk beliefs is neither surprising nor radical; Reformed theology liked to present itself as being more rational than her Catholic predecessor, whose superstitious beliefs the Reformation had rooted out. Indeed, as such, De Hooghe's rational explanations to account for physical conditions, environmental disasters and the like, as opposed to ascribing all misery to the Devil, is not uncommon in Calvinism. Nevertheless, in practice, Protestants did not instantly jettison a belief in the power of the Devil.[86]

Nevertheless, the specific issue of devils, ghosts and fallen angels and their descriptions in the Bible was a sensitive topic in the Dutch Republic. The Haarlem Mennonite preacher Abraham Palingh (lifespan unknown) wrote *'t Afgerukt mom-aansight der tooverye* (1659), in which he denied that the Devil had any power over nature. Two decades later the Mennonite minister and physician Anthonie van Dale (1638-1708) published his *De oraculis veterum ethnicorum dissertationes* (1683), exposing belief in oracles, demons and magical powers as a form of superstition that had been exploited by the religious elite. The book, translated into both Dutch and French in 1687, led the Genevan theologian Jean le Clerc (1657-1736) and writer Pieter Rabus (1660-1702) to refer to Van Dale as the 'enemy of superstition'.[87] De Hooghe produced the frontispiece for the Dutch translation

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84 De Hooghe's reference to 'other peoples and countries' might indicate hopes for readers outside the Republic, but it could also just be an extra emphasis on the rationality of his own country. Pride in his country is also found in De Hooghe's other book, *Spiegel van Staat*, in which he cannot stop mentioning how good and decent the Dutch are.

85 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 239. Likewise, the belief in a monster in Baje is explained to be in reality an earthquake. Baja of Baiae was a destroyed city near Naples which had been levelled by earthquakes. Baja is also mentioned in Witsen's *Aloude scheepsbestier*, for which De Hooghe made the frontispiece. Furthermore, the city is present in several tour-guides, for instance *Sandys Voyagien*, trans. J.G. (Amsterdam: Baltes Boeckholt, 1665) 252,2 53.

86 See Buisman en de Vet, *Rede, Openbaring, en de strijd tegen bijgeloof;* Van Einatten, *Nederlandse Religiegeschiedenis*, 204-206; Auke Jelsma, *Frontiers of the Reformation. Dissidence and Orthodoxy in sixteenth century Europe* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998) 25-39 esp. par. 6 on the Dutch context. See also chapter 4.3 above.

87 Anthonie van Dale, *Verhandeling van de oude orakelen der Heydenen* (Amsterdam: Hendrik Boom, 1687); Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, 925.

of the book. Adriaan Koerbagh, in his *Bloemhof*, argued that a proper translation of the Hebrew word for 'Satan' would be 'slanderer, accuser or prosecutor'. This word had not been translated because 'they want us to believe that the Devil is an evil spirit' – but there is no proof of this, according to Koerbagh, in the Bible.[88] But most notorious of these sources of disputes was, of course, the controversy surrounding the Frisian minister Balthasar Bekker.

Bekker's book *De Betoverde Weereld* [The World Bewitched] instigated a huge debate within the Reformed Church about the influence of the Devil on earth.[89] Bekker's aim was to purge from religion the idolatrous elements that had infected Christianity. To this end he addressed the topics of spirits and the Devil, based on his thorough research into the meanings of the words of the Bible in their original languages. Bekker believed in angels – spirits without bodies – on the authority of the Bible. Where the Bible was clear about the functioning of angels, its account should be accepted, even when not supported by reason or experience. But Bekker's overall point was that scripture was not always clear about the actions of spirits. Bekker reached the same conclusion as Koerbagh, writing that the word 'angel' meant also 'messenger' and Satan also meant 'opponent', and these words were sometimes used to describe the actions of humans. And whereas the Bible did speak of the actions of good spirits, it did not mention the deeds of bad angels or devils, Bekker argued. Moreover, the Bible explicitly stated that the Devil and his bad angels had been chained and thrown into hell, so they were not capable of performing actions on earth. Thus most of Bekker's arguments came from biblical philology and exegesis; his Bible exegesis and criticism on the States' Translation were the main reasons for his condemnation.[90] In 1692 the ecclesiastical authorities sacked Bekker as minister and prohibited him from taking Holy Communion. Although he was banned from the pulpit, the burgomasters of Amsterdam still paid his salary and several supporters continued to defend him, including Romeyn

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88 Adriaan Koerbagh, *Een bloemhof van allerley lieflijkheyd,* 258, 259. 'Nu tragt en poogtmen ons wijs te maaken, dat de duyvel een boose geest is (dog een lasteraar is boos genoeg) dewelke inden beginne goed gemaakt is, dog is voort vervallen van een goede en gelukkige stant in een kwade en ongelukkige; alhoewel men in de gantse schrift niet een enkel woord daar van leest, de Godsgeleerden willen evenwel dat het waar sal zijn, om dat sy het versiert hebben.'

89 Bekker, *De Betoverde Weereld*.

90 As Andrew Fix states: 'Bekker did make use of Cartesian arguments to criticise traditional beliefs about spirits, but his attack on spirit belief did not arise from Cartisian foundations, nor did his critique rest primarily on Cartesian principles. The more important issues at stake between Bekker and his opponent, and the issues upon which the controversy ultimately turned, were questions of biblical exegesis and Calvinst confessionalism – issues buried deep within the traditional religious worldview'. Andrew Fix, *Fallen Angels. Balthasar Bekker, spirit belief, and confessionalism in the Seventeenth Century Dutch Republic* (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1999) 7, 8, 59-74. See also Spaans, *Graphic Satire*, 188-192.

de Hooghe's close acquaintance Eric Walten, who wrote pamphlets in favour of Bekker's ideas.[91]

Bekker's case was unique but not entirely isolated, as others questioned the powers of the Devil and in some cases doubted his existence. The publisher Willem Goeree (1635-1711) saw the seducer in Eden to be not some evil spirit or fallen angel but rather a representation of the base desires of the flesh. De Hooghe's colleague the painter Zacharias Webber, for instance, bluntly stated that statements in the Bible about the Devil were actually references to the dark and evil hearts of human beings rather than some sort of fallen angel; still, Webber's writings seem contradictory, as he stressed the literal truth of the Bible several times.[92] Most of these Devil sceptics, however, when called to account by church authorities, recanted their more extreme opinions. They all eventually admitted that the Devil existed and had played a role in the deception of Adam and Eve.[93] They were unwilling to explain how precisely the Devil worked his evil in the lives of individuals, as they did not feel personally affected by good or evil spirits. Michiel Wielema suggests that such sentiments may have existed even among ministers.[94] De Hooghe – like Bekker – based his reticence on the Bible, writing that: 'Our understanding of Angels and [demonic] powers remains confused', and, 'the holy scriptures tell us that they are legion, but does not tell us what they are'. They are the 'executors of God's will', but for further ideas about the Devil the Bible provides no ground, argues De Hooghe. De Hooghe does mention that the belief in angels is of great use: a blissful prospect for the pious, it scares the godless. Immediately afterwards he remarks that it had 'opened the door to tremendous deceit' by priests.[95]

The plates and chapters on the good and especially the evil gods are part of an overall argument that from very early on, princes, philosophers and priests introduced a rigmarole of superstitions into religion. The plates and chapters also provided De Hooghe with an opportunity to show off his erudition in comparative ethnology, supposedly for the benefit of aspiring young artists, and his ability to draw scary monsters. With chapter 29's closing paragraph, however, we return to the matter of similarities and mutual influences between religions. Here these two chapters, 28 and

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91 Inger Leemans, 'De viceroy van de hel. Radicaal libertinisme'. in *Romeyn de Hooghe. De verbeelding van de late Gouden Eeuw*, ed Henk van Nierop et al. (Zwolle: Waanders, 2008), 32-47.

92 Praamsma, *Zacharias Webber (1644-1696)*.

93 And in the tempting of Jesus in the desert, which was also an important bone of contention in the debate.

94 Wielema, *The March of the Libertines*, 57-78.

95 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 76. See Balthasar Bekker, *De Betoverde wereld*, II, especially chapter IX, where Bekker keeps repeating that the Bible does not elaborate on specifics about the Devil and evil ghosts.

29, are summarised as a review of the idolatry of pagans, whose history ran parallel to that of 'God's children', who had been seduced into idolatry. The text suggests that the Devil was a pagan invention that had infiltrated Judaism and had contributed to its corruption and downfall under foreign domination. De Hooghe refrains from involving Christianity in this textual summary, leaving it to the reader to interpret what this conclusion should mean for the Christian Devil. Only in *Hieroglyphica*'s chapters 30-32 does the Christian Church become involved in his overall narrative. De Hooghe plays upon the Bekker debate, avoiding any firm position on the argument that the Bible doesn't inform believers about what they are. It seems that De Hooghe's point is not really the amount of influence that the Devil has, but rather the role of priestly deceit in the *progressive decline and corruption of religion through the ages* – the second narrative strategy in his argument, to be discussed below.[96]

5.6 The Hereafter/ Heaven

Chapter 62, Van Verscheyde Gewaande en den Waare Hemel [On Several Imagined Heavens and the True One], is the last chapter in which different religions are compared, this time concerning ideas about the hereafter. Again, the location of this theme within the book as a whole is important: at this point De Hooghe has reached his presentation of the 'recent reform' announced in his title. The etching is structured like the others, full of lively figures with letters referring to the explanation in the commentary, but unlike the ostensibly neutral captions of the previous chapters, such as De Scheyding van de Chaos, of War-klomp [On the Separation of the Chaos, or undivided Primal Matter], Van de Goede en Kwaade Goden [On Good and Evil Gods] and Van de Voorbeschikking en het Noodlot [On Predestination and Fate], the heading of this plate takes a position, distinguishing a true heaven from several other imagined ideas about the hereafter. In this etching comparison is directed towards an apologetic Christian goal; the similarity of conceptions of heaven and hell and their existence across all religions can be attributed to the Bible's dissemination of this idea. In De Hooghe's words:

> The Soul-saving Word, – given as a balm to the Elect only, and not to the Jews, Pagans and Turks, – did, however, leave a widespread impression of heaven and hell, except with Sadducees and Samaritans.[97]

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96 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 237, 238, 406, 443.

97 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 443. 'Het Zaligmakend Woord, aan den Uytverkorenen alleen, tot Balzem geworden, is den Joden, Heydenen en Turken voorby gegaan; maar heeft echter, buyten *Sadduceen en Samaritanen*, Hemel en Hel ingedrukt.'

Notwithstanding this overtly Christian heading, the chapter's first paragraph again shows De Hooghe's taking an ambiguous stance. Here he elaborates on the idea of a hereafter in all religions. He explains this omnipresence of concepts of Heaven and Hell partly as one that eventually came to be understood as originating with God, partly, again, as an invention of 'great-minded' leaders. The text reads:

> The Deity, whose order immutably works towards the Good, wanted his creatures to have reason, and therefore use [their] will, to govern them in the best possible way. Therefore all peoples are given fear, for the evils done by the will, and a hope for the good it does. A worldly reward was too limited to bring forth great merits, or restrain scoundrels, as some acts can escape justice, like perjury, poisoning and the like. So, great minds thought it more efficient to present both punishment and reward as eternal.[98]

De Hooghe repeats here what he had mentioned in chapter 2: the idea of an eternal punishment or reward had been invented by political leaders to encourage the good behaviour of the people under their governance. Although God had endowed his human creatures with reason and fear, 'great minds' formulated the idea of both punishment and reward in a hereafter. Despite the title of the chapter, suggesting a true and an invented hereafter, the making of such a subversive claim in the chapter's introduction might have raised doubts about the reality of the Christian hereafter. The same concern is vented in chapter 37, where De Hooghe mentions that Philosophical Reason produces 'careless sly people': people who mock the eternity of their souls with reward or punishment in a hereafter. Such a rejection of punishment and reward raised fears on the part of De Hooghe about the maintenance of good behaviour and social discipline.[99]

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98 Idem, 443. 'De Godheyd, wiens Order onveranderlyk wel werkt, heeft gewilt, dat zyn Schepzel Reeden had, en daarom *Wil* zou gebruyken, om die ten besten te bestieren. Derhalven is in alle Volkeren ingestort eene Vrees, voor 't geen die Wil kwaad doed, en eene Hope voor 't geen zy goed doed. Die beloning Wereldsch te hebben, was te kleyn, om groote Deugden te baren, of groote Schelmstukken te weêrhouden; wyl 'er ook zommige dingen moeten geacht worden, onnaspoorelyk voor 't Recht, als Meyn-eed, Vergif-geving, en diergelyke. Daarom oordeelde het vernuft dienstiger de Straffe, gelyk ook de Beloning te vereeuwigen.'
99 Idem, 280.

Fig. 125. De Hooghe, Plate 62 Van Verscheyde Gewaande en den Waare Hemel [On Several Imagined Heavens and the True One]

But let us first look at some images in the etching. The first figure in the image is cryptically referred to as the 'Heaven of the rude and indifferent sloppiness', which, the accompanying text explains, as the heaven of the philosopher Diogenes (A) (Diogenes of Sinope, 402-323 BCE), belonging to the school of Cynics. Legends told that he lived like a dog on the street (which explains the dog added to the image), owning only a coat and some cutlery. For this figure, his state of (philosophical) dirtiness and drunkenness is his utmost bliss. De Hooghe's judgement on this heaven is clear: these people simulate a 'Curiussen' dispensation – a reference to Marcus Curius Dentatus, known for his unimpeachable character and incorruptibility – but in reality they drink and feast with whores.

Next to this sloppy Diogenes, depicted as his counterpart, we encounter the Epicurean heaven (B). For adherents to this philosophy, heaven is a state of peace

with Fate, or in De Hooghe's words, the 'surrender [of] oneself to the powers that be'. According to De Hooghe, the Epicurean correctly fulfils his duty, but refrains from interfering with the immoral behaviour of others unconcerned about this life or the hereafter.

Fig. 126. De Hooghe, Hondsche Ongeachte Slordigheid en Hemel der Epikuristen [rude and indifferent sloppiness and Epicurean Heaven] detail from Plate 62

Subsequently, De Hooghe etches the heaven of the Stoics (C), harsh and full of physical exertion; the heaven of the warlords (D), who were to become the heroes of victorious legends; the heaven of the 'Tapoeiers' (E), who were told that the more they suffered in battle, the greater their status would be in the hereafter; and the Poets' heaven (F), described as the idyllic Elysian fields. In figure H we recognise Hercules with his club, who represents the heaven of the Heroes, who became stars, which was also the idea amongst the Canadians of figure (I): 'the more glorious they performed in battle, the shinier a star they would become at another horizon'. In the upper right corner De Hooghe depicted the Turkish and Persian heaven (K) as described in the Quran. Their heaven is imagined as a smorgasbord of every 'wealth and lust', including beautiful women, magnificent jewels and other delights. De Hooghe symbolised this envisioned afterlife via the figure of Muhammad flanked by two naked women and with food on his lap. The general trend is clear: in De Hooghe's view all religions project their own wishes and desires onto their expectations of the hereafter. In so many words he states that it is impossible to know the true nature of the hereafter: even the Bible does not reveal its nature.[100]

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100 Idem, 443, 444, 446.

Fig. 127. De Hooghe, detail of Plate 62
Fig. 128. De Hooghe, detail of Plate 62
Fig. 129. De Hooghe, detail of Plate 62

With figure L De Hooghe arrives at his True Heaven, made visual via a 'pure virgin' dressed in white, cleansed from her smears and stains by the blood of her Saviour. With her 'clean heart and clean hands' she reaches for the Lamb of God. De Hooghe's further comments are loosely based on elements taken from Revelations 20 and 21, interpreted, however, in a surprising manner. Contrary to the idea of a sensuous heaven in Islam, De Hooghe emphasises the spiritual character of this True Heaven, in which the 'souls of the elect' only 'encounter the Spirit of spirits in a spiritual manner'.[101] Explicitly, De Hooghe speaks of 'the souls of the elect',

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101 Idem, 446.

implicitly denying bodily resurrection (or at least the assumption of bodies into Heaven). This view is also found in chapter 63, where the emphasis is completely on the soul entering eternal grace.[102] In chapter 62, De Hooghe elaborates on his non-material view by stating that 'the True Heaven got rid of all kinds of gullible ideas about angels, arch-angels and choirs, and architectural imaginations in so many imagined heavens'.[103] De Hooghe continues with figure (M), standing for the New Jerusalem but, De Hooghe adds immediately, not as a material city of pearly streets, diamond gates and worldly splendour but rather a realm that is glorious in a non-material manner. De Hooghe concludes that in this heaven the Christian elect will be completely free from worldly and bodily pursuits. De Hooghe's spiritualist views on the hereafter also are expressed in a small paragraph on Millennialism, the belief that prior to the Last Judgement, Christ will reign on earth for a thousand years. De Hooghe condemns all proponents of such a reign on earth, summing up all the violence that had been brought forth by the attempts of people such as David Joris, the radical Anabaptists of Münster, and religious fanatics in England. Any urge to build a political, material, heavenly state is a dangerous misconception, according to De Hooghe.

This imagination of the true Christian heaven as a purely spiritual place near the 'Spirit of spirits' is remarkable, although not entirely out of the ordinary. It stands out because one of the basic Christian creeds, the Apostles' Creed, affirms the 'resurrection of the body' and was thus established as one of the basic principles of the Christian faith. Nevertheless, Christians through the ages discussed what they imagined the situation in the hereafter might be, creating all kinds of different ideas and speculations about the precise conditions of heaven. Would the heavenly body resemble that of the earthly body? If the spirit can see God, why is the body still needed? Luther and Calvin were of the opinion that heaven was nothing but being in God's presence. As for the resurrection, they advocated a position that claimed bodily resurrection because Christ's resurrection was bodily. Since the Reformation, there had been a general conviction that heaven was a real place with physical bodies. The central feature of this Reformation heaven remained the 'entering into the glorious and surpassing beauty of God'. [104]

De Hooghe's anti-material view is found amongst pious Puritans and other ardent reformers who anticipated a spiritual heaven. According to these pious believers, heaven could only be completely different from the known world; it could not be some sort of improved earth, if only because such a sphere could

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102 Idem, 453.

103 Idem, 446.

104 John Casey, *After Lives,* 327-334; Alister E. McGrath, *A Brief history of heaven* (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2003), 141-143.

never contain all the Christian saints. Joseph Hall (1574-1656), an Anglican bishop with Puritan leanings, also uses the conception of a different religion – the Turkish heaven – to point to the misconception of a material heaven full of pleasure. According to Hall, 'celestial glory transcends and virtually eliminates everything that belongs to social life. Nature and humanity receive no place in glory.' Thomas Burnet reconsidered Thomas Aquinas's arguments for the resurrection of the body, even in the case of cannibals, whose bodies must have been composed as well of the bodies of the individuals they had eaten, and found them absurd in the light of modern insights into biology — and theologically unnecessary as well. [105] So although the notion of the material resurrection of the body belonged to the basic teachings of the Church, and Reformed dogmatics taught that there was a real heaven with real bodies, within the Church there was space for discussion on this speculative point.

Whereas a spiritual view on heaven was deviant but seems to have been part of an unresolved debate, De Hooghe's next image yields the only concrete 'unorthodox' leaning in *Hieroglyphica*. This figure (N) denotes the concept of 'Heaven on Earth', a heading clearly referring to the much-debated book by Frederik van Leenhof.[106] After Van Leenhof, a reformed minister in the city of Zwolle, published his *Heaven on Earth* in 1703 he was accused of Spinozism. Given the use of Spinozistic terminology and theory and a denunciation of the Reformed consciousness of sin, repentance and humility, this charge was not very farfetched.[107] Van Leenhof himself admitted that he had used elements of Spinoza's work but denied being a Spinozist.[108] It is again remarkable, however, to encounter similarities with Calvinism which also emphasised God's eternal, caring order and preached an attitude that one should accept and enjoy his guidance.[109] Such resemblances were also recognised by an unknown defender of Van Leenhof: if 'all Writers who in their considerations had something in common with Spinoza, in fact embraced Spinoza's entire opinion, then there would be many

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105 Colleen McDannell and Bernhard Lang, *Heaven. A History* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2001), 172, 173.

106 Van Leenhof, *Den Hemel op Aarden*.

107 Israel portrayed him as an 'ardent and consistent Spinozist', Israel, *Enlightenment Contested,* 245-249, 328.

108 Wielema in his *The March of the Libertines* shows how Van Leenhof, like Spinoza, foregrounds God's eternal order, a general belief consisting of some basic notions, and a separation of reason and revelation. See also Michiel R. Wielema, 'Ketters en verlichters. De invloed van het Spinozisme en Wolffianisme op de Verlichting in gereformeerd Nederland' (PhD Thesis: Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, 1999), 54.

109 Wielema, *The March of the Libertines*, 123, 128. Arminian theologians also pointed to the similarities between Spinozism and Calvinism regarding the topic of determinism,

Spinozists'.[110] Also in this connection, the publication of a treatise also entitled *Heaven on Earth* by the puritan minister Thomas Brooks in 1657 is conspicuous. The book's theme is captured in the subtitle: 'or a serious discourse touching a well-grounded assurance of men's everlasting happiness and blessedness'.[111] Although the content of the two books differs, the purport of each is quite similar: those who really believe can be certain of God's grace, and therefore should be the happiest persons on earth. More generally, in Protestant theology, the barriers between heaven and earth seem to have been gradually lowered. A shift occurred in which heaven as a state of being close to God was not exclusively found at the end of history, but became something more internal, already present in this world.[112] So the question should be raised whether a strict demarcation can be made among radical enlightened, moderately enlightened and conservative theological views on this point.

Considering the fierce debate engendered by Van Leenhof's publication and his dismissal from his office, De Hooghe's introductory words about this concept of heaven are remarkable indeed: 'Another heaven on earth exists amongst the true believers, being Heaven on Earth or God's kingdom in the souls'. The legend elaborates on this theory, stating that these people are happy because they are at peace with God's providential order and plan, and their sins have been forgiven through the suffering of Christ on the cross. This awareness 'makes such a heaven in the hearts of the chosen, which is depicted as a laughing an merry man, [who] receives his fate from God with open arms'.[113] De Hooghe's description of a heaven on earth seems in agreement with Reformed dogmas, and he is silent on Van Leenhof or the suspicious Spinozistic elements in the book. Furthermore, De Hooghe explicitly interprets Leenhof's heaven to be a *second* heaven, not ruling out the anticipated final heaven, but locating some heavenly sphere already on earth. Such a position, very close to that of Van Leenhof's broadly condemned book, makes one wonder about the relation between the two men. It is known that Van Leenhof wrote a poetic prologue to De Hooghe's *Alle de Voornaamste Historiën der Ouden en Nieuwen*

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110 E.D.M., *Redenkundige Aanmerkingen, tot Wederlegging van een Brief van den Heer Tako Hajo van den Honert: geschreven tegen den Hemel op Aarden van de Heer Fredericus van Leenhof* (Zwolle: Andries van Damme and Nicolaas ten Hoorn, 1704), 34. 'zullen alle Schryvers, die in hunne bepalingen met Spinoza iets gemeen hebben, het gehele gevoelen van Spinoza omhelzen, dan zoudender vele Spinozisten moeten zyn.'

111 This book, an evergreen devotional work, is still in print.

112 Casey, *After Lives*, 332-334.

113 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 447. 'Dit zoo gezien zynde in de H. Geschiedenissen, en 't voorgezegde door der Propheten, Apostelen en der Heylands Mond, te mets vervult wordende, met onverzette zamenhang der Toepassingen, maakt in 't Hert der Uytverkoren zulken Hemel, die is verbeeld als een lachend en vrolyk Man, met open Armen ontvangende zyn Lot van God.'

Testaments. One finds no further connections, but this conspicuous play on Van Leenhof's theory in *Hieroglyphica* indicates that De Hooghe appreciated this idea, and that the two men might have known each other.

Thus, what De Hooghe depicts in his comparative chapter 62 are all sorts of 'worldly' imaginations of heaven comprising earthly human desires. These imaginations are followed by a presentation of the Christian heaven as a completely and solely spiritual realm, freed from all such pagan, earthly or material human projections born of credulity. Again, De Hooghe's comparison is ambiguous. In first instance he argues that all pagan religions had received their idea of heaven from the Christian Bible, but at the same time his introductory note states that the basic concept of heaven was a fraud. As the chapter continues De Hooghe presents his specific view that the True Heaven did exist, but only in spiritual form. The comparison with pagan religions indicates that any notion of a material, earthly or bodily heaven – notions still present in Protestant theology about the hereafter – represented erroneous pagan ideas that had become untenable in the light of modern science, and of which the true religion should be cleansed. On the whole, De Hooghe endorses a biblical worldview, although he does so critically when a literal reading of the Bible conflicts with scientific insights that by the end of the seventeenth century had become widely accepted. By then the generation of Voetius had passed away, and the initial outcry against Cartesianism and its nefarious effects on Reformed orthodoxy had been silenced.

5.7 Concluding remarks

Although the comparison of different religions throughout history and throughout the world was done predominantly from a Christian perspective, the historical-critical approach orienting much of this scholarship – in fields such as philology, archaeology, theology, history and ethnography – revealed the first outlines of a science of religion. There had emerged a trend that, instead of focusing on difference among religions, foregrounded their similarities. To a large extent this current sought the apologetic goal of validating one's own religion by pointing to similar convictions in other belief systems. The argument, then, was that if all religions showed a certain conviction then that conviction must not only be universal but also true. Still, this endeavour came with a dangerous implication, as it was liable to elicit the equalising of all religions. If many belief systems consisted of the same basic notions, why would Christianity, or another religion for that matter, be the original faith? Was there even a single particular religion that could be said to be more true than the others? What was intended to have been an instrument to substantiate one's own religion with rational arguments resulted in a growing purview that put all religions on par with one another.

In the words of Guy Stroumsa: 'it was this comparative approach of religion, even when done in a perfectly orthodox context and with an orthodox purpose, that proved to be the basis for more radical approaches of religion.'[114] Whereas Stroumsa seems to suggest a strict line between these 'orthodox' and 'radical' approaches, *Hieroglyphica* is an example of how both trends were loosely conflated, sometimes taking a firm Protestant apologetical stand, but alternately putting Christianity into perspective through the same method of comparison. In its approach *Hieroglyphica* can be positioned within the transition from apologetic sacred history to the more general and critical history applied to religions. Both in image and in text De Hooghe's comparison of Christianity with other religions raises questions about the historicity and truth of certain key dogmas of Protestantism. De Hooghe remains subtle in expressing his opinions; it is left to the reader to decide what to make of highly debated topics such as Providence, the Flood and the Devil. The exception occurs in his description of the True Heaven where only one opinion is presented, namely De Hooghe's spiritual heaven, existing in the meeting of the soul with God, both in heaven and on earth. The degree of unorthodoxy in *Hieroglyphica* should not be overestimated; many of the topics mentioned were still undecided in Protestant dogmatics, and even if they were resolved, different views still existed amongst theologians and believers. In addition, within the church there was debate about topics which are suspected of 'radicalism' from the perspective of an Enlightenment framework, even though this did not immediately point in the direction of a Radical Enlightenment. De Hooghe's alternation between a separation theory and an identification theory makes it exceedingly clear that religious comparison was also a topic in which the rigid boundaries among the orthodox, the libertines, and the moderates in the middle does not really apply, and where more flexibility than expected seems to have been present. Two messages of this comparison stand out. The first is that the Reformation did not eradicate all pagan influences that had entered Christianity: an ongoing reformation, in search of the original, pure, true religion, is needed. The second is the need for a reformation of religious leadership, which will be the topic of the next chapter.

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114 Stroumsa, *A New Science*, 54.

Chapter six

On Crafty Priests and Educated Believers

De Hooghe considers the role and functioning of clerics, priests and theologians very often in *Hieroglyphica*, and rarely in a positive way. His views in this regard deserve a chapter of their own, as for De Hooghe the part played by the clergy in 'the progressive decline and corruption of religion through the ages, and its recent reformation until the present day' is crucial. That priestcraft is one of the central themes of the book is announced in typical 'hieroglyphic' fashion, not in so many words in the address to the reader but rather in the imagery De Hooghe used for the frontispiece. Here the entire topic of priestcraft is summarised. De Hooghe introduces the viewer to the cradle of religious deceit, the subterranean temple of the Egyptian God Serapis.[1] The text explains that here, in this subterranean space, were found the secret religious inscriptions – hieroglyphs – were believed to contain 'veiled' information about the essence of religion. In this sacred cave De Hooghe assembled all the actors participating in the secret art of hidden knowledge, each working their part within the framework of religious imposture.

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1   De Hooghe might have been inspired by an engraving of this temple by Maarten van Heemskerck, who depicted the ruins of the outside of the temple of Serapis (ca. 1534).

Fig. 130. De Hooghe, Titelprent [Frontispiece]

Fig. 131. De Hooghe, Bejaarde Leerling [Aged Student], detail of frontispiece
Fig. 132. De Hooghe, Leermeester [Teacher], detail of frontispiece

Figure (A) symbolises an indispensable player in this field of religious fraud, the Aged Student, who has been sworn to silence. He places a finger in front of his mouth, a reference to the Egyptian god of silence, Harpocrates. This Harpocratic figure was well known and appears throughout *Hieroglyphica* as a central figure in the continuation of religious deceit.[2] Even more important is his Teacher (B), a natural philosopher who chose not to share his scientific explanations with common believers but used their fear of nature as a means of controlling them. His knowledge is presented as an indication of his connection to the gods.[3]

Fig. 133. De Hooghe, Urania en Beeldhouwery [Urania and Sculpture], detail of frontispiece

Next are two figures representing muses: Urania (C), patroness of astronomy, and Sculpture (D) (fig. 133). Here De Hooghe turns to one of the key aspects of priestcraft, namely the deification of kings. He writes that the task of Urania and Sculpture was to spread the fame of deified kings through songs, stories and sculptures. Kings, in their lust for power, had elevated deceased royal ancestors to the status of gods, appearing to the human eye as stars.[4] These stars already bore the name of gods, and from there it was but a small step to convince people to perceive the stars as the gods themselves, looking down upon the earth.[5] Thus,

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2 Harpocrates gained much attention in early modernity through the work of Athanasius Kircher, who emphasised the esoteric notion of silence; see *Oedipus Aegyptiacus* vol. 3 (Rome, 1652–4), 590. Gisbert Cuper (1644-1716) gave a more antiquarian view on the child god of silence in his *Harpocrates, sive Explicatio imagunculae argenteae perantiquae; quae in figuram Harpocratis formata representat Solem* (Utrecht: Franciscum Halma, 1687).

3 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica,* 28.

4 Idem, 34.

5 Seznec, *The Survival of the Pagan Gods*, 38.

writes De Hooghe, earthly human kings had fraudulently been transformed into sons of gods, and finally gods themselves.[6] Here we find De Hooghe adhering to a euhemeristic theory of idolatry, which put forth a rational explanation for the presence of idols in history: they had been invented by conniving kings and priests.[7] Whereas several contemporary authors stated that idolatry had been instigated by demons in efforts to thwart true religion, such externalising is absent from *Hieroglyphica*. Nowhere does De Hooghe mention demons as active forces in the history of religion; he attributed all religious evil to human behaviour, including especially human treachery and fraud. Here *Hieroglyphica* resembles the ideas of freethinkers such as Herbert of Cherbury, Charles Blount and John Toland, who also thought the primal cause of idolatry to be priestcraft.[8]

Fig. 134. De Hooghe, Natuurwetenschappers en politici [Natural philosophers and political rulers], detail of frontispiece
Fig. 135. De Hooghe, Natuurwetenschappers en politici [Natural philosophers and political rulers], detail Plate 2

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6   De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, Verklaring van de Tytel-prent, 18, 115.
7   Seznec, *The Survival of the Pagan Gods,* 11-20
8   Harrison, *Religion and the religions,* 141. Examples include Vossius and De Acosta, who both held the devil and his demons responsible for religious decline. See Nicholas Wickenden*, G. J. Vossius and the Humanist Concept of History* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1993), 155, 156. When De Hooghe talks about demons he just mentions that the Bible provides information very summarily about them and therefore we must be careful in talking about them.

In figures M and N of the frontispiece we find a tête-à-tête between the Natural Astronomer and the Political Ruler, an image also found in Plate 2.[9] This discussion, according to De Hooghe, shows a negotiation about the deification of the ruler: the astronomer in figure (M) is willing to support the fabrication that kings and princes are sons of the gods, and in return the political rulers granted power to these religious leaders/philosophers. In an offhand comment, De Hooghe makes an interesting remark about the rewards given to the priests, noting that the astronomers who made the kings into gods received a place at their royal table, whereas the poets who created the poems disseminating their fame were left to go begging. This contrast might indicate that De Hooghe perceived an unjustified discrepancy in esteem between philosophers and scientist on the one side, as opposed to the meagerly appreciated artists on the other. We might even detect a reference to the artist himself, who had designed a complete visual PR campaign for William III's Glorious Revolution but had probably not been invited to the Stadtholder's table.[10]

Fig. 136. De Hooghe, Filosofie [Philosophy], detail of frontispiece

Directly behind the Teacher we meet the figure of Philosophy (E), referred to as the 'Keeper of Morals and Good Behaviour'. On the head of Philosophy is a chimaera, standing for the 'fiery and frivolous nature of youth and the rash acts of men'.[11] Philosophy edifies the people via fables, fear and punishment, so next to this sage we find Fable (F) wearing a mask, because 'her animal fairytales are never true'. To induce good behaviour, these stories were used to terrify people and especially children with tales of hell and of monsters.[12]

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9   De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, Verklaring van de Tytel-prent. In plate 2, figure (C) we find the classic example of a king, Nimrod, who uses the hieroglyphic writing abilities of a Near Easterner to ensure the story of his marvelous achievements are preserved for posterity.

10   Idem, 267. This idea accords with the judgement of Henk van Nierop that De Hooghe was above all a social climber, seeking primarily to elevate his status.

11   De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, Verklaring van de Tytel-prent.

12   Idem, Verklaring van de Tytel-prent.

Fig. 137. De Hooghe, Fabel [Fable], detail of frontispiece
Fig. 138. De Hooghe, Goden-dienst [Religion], detail of frontispiece

De Hooghe's figures all add to the image of religion as a human construct instituted by kings, priests and philosophers, who in turn were aided in that process by artists and students. The collaboration of all these fraudulent and deceitful figures results in Religion (K). Standing higher than the other figures, mirroring a figure representing the Law on the pedestal opposite from her, Religion ('Goden-dienst'), De Hooghe explains, had been introduced deceitfully. Therefore she is depicted

> not simple (because they did not want her like that) but with a Mitre, Cap and a Chasuble, covered in ceremonial attire. They [i.e., the inventors of religion] raised fear amongst the masses by their knowledge of Eclipses, Comets etc. [They] pour burnt offerings at decorated/adorned altars, in many ways; they postulate an all-pervading system of correspondences between all and everything, and thereby compel the minds to please the Gods with worldly things.[13]

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13 Idem, Verklaring van de Tytel-prent, fig. K. 'En wierd alzo de Goden-dienst ingevoert, die hier niet eenvoudig staat (want zoo begeerden zy dezelve niet) maar met Myter, Kap en Cazuyffel, omhangen met alle Plechtigheyds-Klederen. Zy verwekten vreeze in het Volk door de kennis der Eclipsen, Komeeten enz. Plengen Brand-offerende op de opgetooyde Altaren, op veelvoudige wyzen; bestaande uyt eene overeenbrenging van alles tot elkander, om de Wereldsche zaken door te dringen, en den Geesten als te nooddwangen, en door die den Goden te behagen.'

In the last, convoluted sentence here, De Hooghe seems to reject a Neo-Platonist worldview in which higher and lower spheres resonated with each other, and where changes in the spiritual realms influenced the sublunar world and vice versa. In such a worldview, rituals and magic 'worked' — and thereby supported the power of priests. Cartesianism denied that the spirit had power over material bodies, and so, apparently, does De Hooghe. He markedly refrains in this image from attacking Catholic ritual and their worship of saints. Remarkably, too, there is no reference to any notion of the biblical – Jewish or Christian – origin of religion in this frontispiece, and the omission is especially noteworthy because, as we have seen, frontispieces were designed to depict the very core of their books. Yet neither Adam nor Seth, neither Moses nor Christ were given a place in this visual summary of De Hooghe's religious history. In contrast, other frontispieces of books on the origins of religions and on comparisons amongst religions feature representations indicating biblical origins: the frontispiece for the second edition of Witsius's *Aegyptiaca et Dekaphylon* (1696), for instance, shows Moses and the Ten Commandments as the true authority, separate from and opposed to Egypt, which is denounced as the cradle of superstitious idolatry.[14]

Fig. 139. Joseph Mulder, frontispiece of second edition of Witsius's *Aegyptiaca* (1696)

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14 Herman Witsius, *Aegyptiaca et Dekaphylon : sive, De Aegyptiacorum sacrorum cum Hebraicis collatione libri tres. Et de decem tribubus Israelis liber singularis. Accessit diatribe de legione fulminatrice christianorum, sub imperatore Marco Aurelio Antonino*, 2nd edition (Amsterdam: Gerardus Borstius, 1696). This second and third editions contained the frontispiece by Joseph Mulder (1658-1742), a Dutch Golden Age printmaker. The original edition of 1683 lacks a frontispiece.

In the frontispiece of Bernard and Picart's *Ceremonies et Coutumes* (1720) we encounter several varieties of religion, but closest to the tree – a general symbol of origin – is depicted the Christian religion, carrying an open Bible. In Alexander Ross's frontispiece of *s'Weerelds Godts-diensten* (1665) it is the Jewish religion that is both central and on a higher stage than Christianity, Islam and paganism.

Fig. 140. Bernard Picart, frontispiece of Bernard and Picart's *Ceremonies et coutumes* (1727)
Fig. 141. Frontispiece of Alexander Ross, *s'Werelds Godts-diensten* (1665)

That neither Christianity nor Judaism is staged in the frontispiece to *Hieroglyphica* as the true religion preceding the false ones could mean several things. First, it could be that this frontispiece concerned only the practice of religious idolatry as invented by deceitful priests, but this would seem strange, since the book itself concerns the history of religion, including what De Hooghe presents as true Christian religion. One might offer a more radical interpretation of the frontispiece and propose that it suggests that not only idolatry but *all* (outward) religion had originated in human – or, more specifically, Egyptian – inventions. If so, one might be tempted to position Romeyn de Hooghe within an environment of radical and libertine

writers, according to whose thinking religion had originated in an Egyptian fraud perpetrated in distant antiquity and had remained a product of priestcraft ever since. Nevertheless, this idea that religion had begun in a Near Eastern setting was neither new nor especially radical: historians throughout history had considered Egypt the cradle of religion.[15] Arguments in the debate on the origins or religion were not black-and-white but were much more complex. Pre-Christian notions of religiosity, especially the Egyptians' religious wisdom, were not only perceived as pagan or problematic but as playing an important role in Christian apologetics, because many Christian authors managed to put these 'pagan elements' into a framework that still bolstered ideas of biblical and Christian superiority.[16] However, the radical use of this Egyptian origin discourse had made the topic suspect, and discussions and arguments had become ideologically blurred. Notwithstanding this apologetical tradition of matching pagan wisdom with Christian truths, it is remarkable that Christianity is absent entirely from the frontispiece and is not even presented as the true version of religion, as in other frontispieces.

6.1 Anticlericalism and its discursive space

Criticism of the clergy spanned a long history. Conspicuously, though, there is a veritable barrage of arguments about the clergy's shortcomings (and more) in late-seventeenth-century discussions of religion.[17] All sorts of questions were asked. What should be the task of religious leaders? Who was responsible for religious schism? Who was to decide on matters of true or false religion? How was the Protestant clergy different from their Catholic predecessors – if they differed at all? What did the 'priesthood of all believers' actually mean? How far was the government entitled to intervene in church matters? This chapter will show that one can discern in *Hieroglyphica* a larger shift in opinion with regard to the proper role and task of religious leaders.

The critical seventeenth-century attitude towards religious leaders belongs to the discourse of anticlericalism, a term that gained currency in the nineteenth century when class became an unavoidable political issue, at a time when the

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15   See Assmann, *Moses the Egyptian*; Daniel Stolzenberg, *The Egyptian crusible of truth and superstition: Athanasius Kircher and the hieroglyphic doctrine.* 145-164; and Dmitri Levitin, *From sacred history to the history of religion,* 1117-1160, esp 1159.

16   See chapter 4 above.

17   Champion, *The Pillars of Priestcraft Shaken*. Barnett, *Idol Temples*, esp. 32.

higher echelons of the clergy often sided with the elite.[18] When used for earlier periods, the term represents, in the words of Peter Dykema and Heiko Oberman, 'attitudes and forms of behaviour which in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe engendered literary, political or physical action against what were perceived as unjust privileges constituting the legal, political, economic, sexual, sacred or social power of the clergy. Significantly different according to place, time and social background, anticlericalism could focus on papal, episcopal, sacerdotal, monastic, ministerial or intellectual power-structures.' In the Reformation era anticlercalism was predominnantly focussed on reform of the clergy, while the more politicised variant of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries displayed an oppositional attitude that sought to undermine the powers of religious leaders.[19]

A few factors complicate efforts to interpret De Hooghe's view of religious leaders and to gauge the extent of his anticlericalism. First, the term anticlericalism, commonly used (for want of anything better) with regard to the Early Modern period, is an anachronism from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and historians differ in their explanations of what it might signify. The term and the phenomenon designated by it play an important role in the discourse of the Radical Enlightenment. Criticism of priests and clerics as well as the theme of religious imposture in late-seventeenth-century sources has received special attention from twenty-first-century scholars interested in the Radical Enlightenment, thus the studies in which anticlericalism was closely connected to, and even identified with, radical and deist Enlightened ideas and thinkers such as Spinoza.[20] That such a connection is a simplification of a complex discourse has been expounded by the historians Stephen Barnett in his *Idol Temples and Crafty Priests* and Justin Champion in his *Pillars of Piestcraft Shaken*. Each convincingly argues that anticlerical ideas were not restricted to Enlightened *philosophes* but emerged from a long tradition of medieval critique directed against the first *ordo*, and played a significant role in (post-)Reformation and humanist discussions about

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18 Hugh McLeod, *Religion and the People of Western Europe, 1789-1989* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).

19 McLeod, *Religion and the People of Western Europe*; Peter A. Dykema and Heiko A. Oberman, eds, *Anticlericalism in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Leiden: Brill, 1994), x.

20 Jonathan Israel describes the idea of a continuous decline from the original pure religion caused by the self-interest of priests as 'typically Spinozist', Israel, *Enlightenment Contested*, 98. Margaret Jacob distinguished two Enlightenments in England and Holland: a "radical" Enlightenment, which she characterised as materialist, republican, and anti-clerical, and a "moderate" variant, which was Newtonian and Christian. Margaret C. Jacob, *The Radical Enlightenment. Pantheists, Freemasons and Republicans* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1981). In general the theory of priestly deceit is discussed within the framework of the radical Enlightenment, or radical libertinage, for instance in Van Bunge's *From Stevin tot Spinoza.*

the necessary changes they felt should be made to religion, as well as in the Enlightenment.[21]

The variety of aims of the anticlericalism discourse has led historians to discern different types of anticlericalism. Barnett distinguishes two approaches to anticlericalism. The first is found amongst religious apologists, who used anticlericalism as a means of consolidating their opinion on true and false religion. Assuming their own religion to be the only true one, they explained the presence of all kinds of false religions as the inventions of priestly impostors. The second approach is found amongst a loose conglomerate of freethinkers and deists for whom clerical deceit was not only applicable to heathen religions or Islam, but was perceived to be a characteristic of *all* religions, so that all religions were tarred with the same brush of unreliability. In between these two groups we encounter what Barnett calls 'radical Protestants' – in his account, particularly the English Dissenters – who used the same terminology as deists did but were not opposed to Christianity in general. It is of paramount importance to look at the context, circumstances and significance of anticlerical writings.[22] According to Peter Harrison, these different types of anticlericalism were separated out in seventeenth-century discussions.[23]

Setting aside certain very clear exponents of the thus-distinguished groups in the debate – Tindal and Collins in the deist camp, and John Wesley and Gerard Brandt in the Protestant fold – categorising all intellectuals according to this division turns out to be not so simple. Much of the literature about radical enlighteners foregrounds their anticlerical attitude as a sign of their radicalism, even as similar expressions of anticlericalism from theologians or churchmen are neglected.[24] Barnett points to this overlap, which appears to have been asserted by Romeyn de Hooghe's ubiquitous

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21 Dykema and Oberman, *Anticlericalism in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe;* Jose M. Sanchez, *Anticlericalism. A Brief History* (South Bend, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1972). For anticlericalism in the reformation period see N. Aston and M. Cragoe, eds, *Anticlericalism in Britain*, c. 1500-1914 (Stroud: Sutton Publishing, 2000), and for the German context, Geoffrey Dipple, *Antifraternalism and Anticlericalism in the German Reformation* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1996). For the role of anticlericalism in the Enlightenment see J.S. Barnett, *Idol Temples and Crafty Priests* and Justin Champion, *The Pillars of Priestcraft shaken.*

22 Champion, *The Pillars of Priestcraft shaken*, 67 and Barnett, *Idol Temples*, esp 16-20. The question remains how many of the radical enlighteners actually intended to cast Christianity into the dustbin; many seem to adhere to some form of regulated religion.

23 Harrison, *Religion and the religions*, 78

24 Barnett, *Idol Temples*, 17, G. Brandt, *Historie der Reformatie en andere Kerkelyke Geschiedenissen in en omtrent de Nederlanden* (Amsterdam: Jan Rieuwertsz and Hendrik and Dirk Boom, 1671).

and eclectic use of the discourse.[25] A final complicating factor is the relative paucity of literature on anticlericalism in the Dutch Republic and certainly on anticlerical sentiments within the churches. To position De Hooghe correctly we have to take into account the Dutch (Protestant) perspective from a vantage broader than a view restricted to philosophers and scholars.

The role of church leaders in Protestant settings was discussed widely in the Dutch Republic, measured according to the yardstick of the 'priesthood of all believers', a Protestant ideal.[26] We find quite a radical approach amongst different loose groups or conventicles who 'practised' their anticlerical ideas simply by convening in religious meetings conducting without interference from ministers or theologians. The famous Collegiants, among whom Spinoza found a home for a while, envisioned a gathering of equals who convened without a preacher, defending this arrangement with the argument that collegiate free-speech services were closer to apostolic Christian practice than traditional religious services conducted by a minister.[27] As written by the Mennonite Collegiant Laurens Klinckhaemer (1626-1687):

> Are they to have the say in everything, and we to follow them like dumb animals? Are they alone the infallible bearers of truth? And has God poured out his Spirit on them alone, so that they are unwilling and unable to lie? Art thou then deaf, blind and daft... We, on the contrary, will point out ... that no one, however powerful, wise or pious, can set himself above others and be the only one to speak unopposed in the congregation, because that is the root of all error, schism, sectarianism, etc. from which come ignorance, sloth, negligence etc., in sum, that this is the source of all reversal, decay and falsity in religion, as from thence come all evil,

25 Barnett, *Idol Temples*, 8, 15-18. Jonathan Israel mentions the similarity between the writings of radical enlighteners and what he calls 'moderate' enlighteners, but focusses entirely on their use in a radical environment in chapter 4 of his *Enlightenment Contested*.

26 See Frijhoff and Spies, *1650*, 412-426. Wielema, *The March of the Libertines*. On the international context see Leszek Kolakowski, *Chrétiens sans Eglise. La conscience religieuse dans le lien confessionnel au XVIIe siècle* (Gallimard: Paris 1987).

27 Andrew C. Fix, *Prophecy and Reason. The Dutch Collegiants in the Early Enlightenment* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 38,39; J. C. van Slee, *De Rijnsburger collegianten: geschiedkundig onderzoek* (Utrecht: H & S, 1980 [repr. Of Haarlem: Bohn, 1895]), 268, 269. See also Gerrit Voogt, 'Anyone Who Can Read May Be a Preacher', in *The Formation of Clerical and Confessional Identities in Early Modern Europe*, ed Wim Janse and Barbara Pitkin (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 409-424 and Spaans, *A Newer Protestantism*, forthcoming.

difficulties and miseries of Christendom...[28]

Other conventicles included the groups that had formed around Pontiaan van Hattem (1645- 1706) and Willem Deurhoff (1650-1717), respectively, and pietist movements like those of Antoinette Bourignon (1616-1680) and Jean de Labadie (1610-1674). In all these gatherings the common denominator was an abhorrence of church authority embodied in ministers and elders who decided on matters of truth and discipline. The Hebrews, a group of believers convening around the lay evangelist Jacobus Verschoor (1648-1700), also adopted an outspoken anticlerical approach.[29] Verschoor, though he preached an orthodox, Cocceian-style Reformed theology, insisted on lay access to the Bible in its original language, especially the Hebrew of the Old Testament, which would teach people all they needed to know. But the ministers, those 'inane bigots and foolish babblers', trampled the simple teaching of the Bible underfoot with their academic learning, and so chased people out of the church. Such ideas met with apprehension in consistories, classes and synods, out of fears of 'insurrection against ecclesiastical authority'. This apprehension was not entirely without foundation, as many of the questioned Hebrews explicitly display their abhorrence of ministers.[30]

Laymen aired out their ideas on what they believed would be the ideal church structure. We find sweeping statements in the work of the physician and jurist Adriaan Koerbagh (1633-1669), who denounced church authority as offering a perverse encouragement for power-prone ministers who withheld the truth from their flock out their own self-interest. In his introduction to *Een light schynenende in Duystere Plaatsen, om te verligten de voornaamste saaken der Gods geleertheyd en Gods dienst* [A light shining in dark places in order to enlighten the fundamentals of theology and religion] (1668), Koerbagh denounced the attitude of Dutch ministers who only preached hatred, especially against Arminians and Socinians. As for the regulation of religion, Koerbagh allotted that task to the government, dismissing the notion that a national synod should exert any influence.

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28 'Moeten die 't alleen zeggen en wij als domme Dieren volgen? Zijn Zij dan alleen de onfeilbare verkondigers der waarheid? En heeft God zijn Geest alleen over hen uitgegoten, dat zij nog willen noch kunnen bedriegen? Zijt gij dan doof, blind en zot? … Wij daarentegen zullen aanwijzen […] dat niemand, hoe machtig, wijs, of vroom, zich boven anderen mag verheffen en zonder tegenspreken in de gemeente het woord alleen te voeren, dat het de grond is van alle doling, scheuring, sekterijen, etc. dat daaruit ontstaan onkunde, traagheid, nalatigheid, etc. in somma, dat het een bron is van alle omkeer, verval en vervalsing in de godsdienst, daar daaruit voorkomen alle onheilen, zwarigheden en ellenden der christenheid,[…].Klinckhaemer, L., Vryheydt van spreecken inde Gemeynte der geloovigen. Beweesen met geboden, exempelen, redenen, weerlegging van tegenwerpingen. (Leiden, 1655) cited in: Frijhoff and Spies, *1650,* 414, 415.

29 See note 115 in chapter 4 above.

30 Wielema, *The March of the Libertines*, 19-52.

In his opinion, the state should make religious laws focussing on the true basis of faith: love of God, obedience to the state in reasonable and honest conduct, and the love of one's neighbour, without railing against others or religious strife.[31] The pamphleteer Ericus Walten (1663-1697) who was 'anything but an ally of ecclesiastical authority or Voetianism', displayed his abhorrence of authoritarian ministers in his defense of Balthasar Bekker (1634-1698).[32]

Ministers were criticised not only because of their leading role in the Church. Their status as academics and their 'learned' preaching also attracted ire and scorn. The Dutch diplomat and history writer Lieuwe van Aitzema (1600-1669) frequently remarks that the Catholic Church had maintained unity more effectively than Protestant ministers and theologians had. According to Van Aitzema, the Reformation had been motivated by the pride and the mercenary attitude of theologians and princes. Unless ministers abstained from engaging in public theological debates, focussing instead on teaching their flocks the basic tenets of faith and how to live good and virtuous lives, it would turn out that the Reformation would not be an improvement on the medieval Church.[33] Similarly Johannes Duykerius, a theologian who had unsuccessfully aimed for a career in the ministry, directed his arrows mainly at the targets of what were in his eyes the pompous excesses of theological learning. In his *Het leven van Philopater* [The life of Philopater] (1691) he satirised theologians who boasted of their learning. The book follows a young *proponent* (candidate for the ministry) who during his youth had been the plaything of various theologians and theological schools, resulting in an addled brain and an ailing body. A recurring theme here is the cynical self-interest of ministers and church leaders, who perform their jobs only for money and esteem. Duykerius had already boldly postulated in his introduction that believers naïvely view their minister to be 'a respectable mind, a brave, decent and honest spirit', adding: 'They do not understand that he is just an effeminate gasbag, who only produces false light, a light incapable of enlightening, who only performs to be seen by the people, not to be appreciated

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31 Adriaan Koerbagh, *A light shining in dark places, to illuminate the main questions of theology and religion*, transl. and edited by Michiel Wielema (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 251-253, 281. For Bekker see below.

32 Israel, *The Dutch Republic,* 929, 930.

33 On Van Aitzema's work see Gees van der Plaat, *Eendracht als opdracht. Lieuwe van Aitzema's bijdrage aan het publieke debat in de zeventiende-eeuwse Republiek* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2003) esp. 201, 258, and Jo Spaans, 'Repenser la Reformation' in *Les protestants á l'époque moderne. Une approche anthropologique*, ed d'Olivier Christin and Yves Krumenacker (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2017), 219-242, 234-237.

by his flock's reason or wit'.[34]

Another relative outsider was the Utrecht theologian and philosopher Lambertus van Velthuysen (1622-1685), who worked as a physician. He became known for his correspondence with Spinoza and his defence of both Hobbes and Descartes, but he also devoted several of his writings to the role and authority of ministers. Two of his treatises are important for our purposes here, *Het Predick-Ampt en 't Recht der Kercke* (1660) and *Een tractaet van de afgodery en superstitie* (1669).[35] The core of both treatises is the position that the Church is not a divine institution with a corresponding authority derived from God, but rather a voluntary human society embedded in a political commonwealth. The real authority in the church lies with the magistrate, who has the right to decide matters without interference from clergy members. If churches wanted to gain the benefits of being a state church, then they should accept the authority of the Christian magistrates who were the protectors and 'foster fathers' of the Church. At the same time Van Velthuysen downplayed the role of ministers. In his *Predick ambt* he used New Testament fragments to show that although the Early Church had had its community leaders, they were never religious teachers.[36] In his treatise he elaborates on this theme, explaining that ministers should stick to teaching and should refrain from trying to gain political or social influence. As for their esteem, they should always remember that their authority was based not on any divine calling or sacerdotal power but on the choice of a congregation in search of a suitable representative.[37] Van Velthuysen's views raised quite a lot of turmoil, resulting in criticism from adversaries that in turn were answered in several apologetic treatises by Van

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34 [Johannes Duykerius], *Het leven van Philopater, Opgewiegt in Voetiaensche Talmeryen en groot gemaeckt in de Verborgentheden der Coccejanen. Een Waere Historie* (Groeningen: Siewerd van den Brug [i.e. Amsterdam: Aert Wolsgreen] 1691), 4. 'braef verstant, een kloeckaert een nette en een syuvere Geest. Men begrijpt niet dat het alleen een windbol, en een verwijfde is, die niet blinckt als door valsch ligt, dat noit verligten kan , die maer beweegt, om dat de menschen oogen en niet om dat se reeden en verstand hebben.'

35 Lambertus van Velthuysen, *Tractaet van de afgoderye en superstitie* (Amsterdam: Gabriël Hendriksz., 1670) and *Het Predick – ampt en 't Recht der Kercke, bepaelt nae de regelen van Godts Woordt en de gronden van onse reformatie* (Amsterdam: Claes Hansz., 1660). On Van Velthuysen see Wiep van Bunge, *From Stevin to Spinoza*, and Henri Krop, 'Spinoza en het calvinistisch cartesianisme van Lambertus van Velthuysen (1622- 1685)' in *Spinoza en het Nederlands cartesianisme*, ed Gunther Coppens (Leuven: Acco, 2004), 61-78.

36 Van Velthuysen in his *Het Predick – ampt en 't Recht der Kercke* continuously emphasises that ministers and preachers are pastors and teachers, while authority (for instance to appoint ministers) lies with the magistrates.

37 See Joke Spaans, 'Repenser la Réformation' in *Les protestants à l'époque moderne. Une approche anthropologique,* ed Christin and Krumenacker, 219-242: 239.

Velthuysen himself.[38]

Obviously, most of the criticism directed at the Protestant clergy came from relative outsiders, but the topic was also debated amongst Protestant ministers and theologians themselves. The conservative theologian Samuel Maresius (1599-1673), for instance, raised the alarm with his treatise *Een kort en Merck-weerdigh tractaet van den bedroefden toestant der H. theologie in ons vereenight Nederlandt*.[39] In this treatise he criticised the permanent state of discord amongst Dutch theologians, who quarrel about all kinds of topics, from their apprehension towards new philosophical and theological ideas to feuds between theological faculties. Searching for a solution, Maresius advocated abidance to the Forms of Unity, the unity between faculties, and advised keeping the quarrels of the past in the past.[40] Similarly, Herman Witsius in his *Twist des Heeren met zijn wijngaard* (1669) points to the ministers as the primary cause of the scanty yield of the Dutch spiritual orchard.[41]

Hieroglyphica's description of clerics, theologians and religious leaders is of the same critical tenor sketched above. In this chapter we will see how De Hooghe designates the clergy as the primal cause of religious decay not only in 'other' religions but also in Christianity. Again he applies his comparative method, intended to identify causes of corruption and signs of recent reform in religion. De Hooghe's anticlericalism indicates that different 'levels' in the anticlerical debate were not neatly separated: both his sacred historical and his thematic etchings contain elements drawn from different 'levels'. First I will discuss De Hooghe's aversion towards leaders of 'other' religions. Here we see how indeed criticism of religious leaders originated within Christianity itself and was aimed at rival confessions and non-Christian religions. Subsequently, De Hooghe presents a more inward critique, pointing to the persistence of priestly corruption within Protestant churches, despite their claims to have introduced reform. Ultimately De Hooghe's work can be seen as a call for a thorough reformation of clerical and theological authority. The chapter finishes with a paragraph on how, according to De Hooghe, responsibilities would be ideally divided between believers and spiritual leaders.

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38 See Abdias Widmarius, *De noodwendigheid van het predikambt, verdedigd tegen L. van Velthuysen* (Groningen, 1671).

39 Samuel Maresius, *Een kort en Merck-weerdigh tractaet van den bedroefden toestant der H. theologie in ons vereenight Nederlandt, en bequaem middel tot herstel des selfs* (n.p., 1673).

40 Maresius, *Een kort en Merck-weerdigh tractaet,* advice nrs 1,8, 10.

41 Herman Witsius, *Twist des Heeren met zijn wijngaard* (Leeuwarden, 1669).

6.2 Anticlericalism aimed at 'other' religions: Popish and Muslim deceit

In *Hieroglyphica* De Hooghe conforms to Barnett's statement that most anticlericalism was firmly rooted in Christian polemic, in which the existence of 'other' religions with their errors was blamed on deceitful priests and false prophets. Often these discussions were aimed at other Christian confessions: since the Reformation, with its emphasis on the priesthood of all believers, almost every Protestant historian had accused the Catholic clergy of manipulating the common people through the creation of a false religion. In *Hieroglyphica* this is mirrored in the image of the Prophet Muhammad in Islam and in the role of oracle priests in paganism, both topics that had recently been the subject of scholarly attention. [42]

The tyranny of the Roman clergy
As with many other religious histories written in the Dutch Republic, *Hieroglyphica* bears its strongest grudge against Catholicism. No fewer than eleven chapters are concerned with the errors of the Roman Catholic Church, and in particular with their crafty priests. This was nothing new: throughout the history of the Church, criticism of its leaders had existed amongst Humanist and Renaissance writers, and Protestants regularly characterised Catholic monks and priests as vultures and gluttons. Remarks on the reprehensible behaviour of Catholic clerics are frequent in *Hieroglyphica*, where we encounter practices of simony and are treated to accounts of fat lazy monks and clerics living luxurious lives despite their vows of poverty.[43] These behavioural flaws, however, are nothing compared to the religious deceit whereby religious leaders led their followers into error. Especially after the Reformation this accusation was levelled in order to render the Catholic clergy the enemy of true Christianity, responsible for the decline of the early Church, an image De Hooghe evokes time and again.[44]

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42 Pailin, *Attitudes to other religions*, 124, 125; Irwin, *For Lust of Knowing*, 48, 49; Israel, *Enlightenment Contested*, 94; Hunt, Jacob, Mijnhardt, *The Book that Changed Europe*, 11,12, 208; Wilfred Cantwell Smith, *The Meaning and End of Religion* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991), 41.

43 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 407, 422, 430, 432, 347, 315, 316, 348, 349, 365, 381.

44 See Barnett*, Idol temples*, and Peter Harrison, *Religion and the religions,* 83- 85.

Fig. 142. De Hooghe, Plate 44 Van de Ontchristende Kerk [On the de-Christianised Church]

Plate 44 shows this standard anticlerical argument in an exemplary manner. In this chapter, entitled Van de Ontchristende Kerk [On the de-Christianised Church], De Hooghe visualised what had gone wrong in the history of the Christian Church. In the upper left corner he situated the beginning of the patristic age, with its restricted amount of offices deemed necessary in the church of Christ, namely the apostles, preachers, elders and deacons (A). In this view, the apostolic Church had been graced by the humble simplicity of its leaders and the equal esteem possessed by all. This situation changed when, in De Hooghe's words, 'pride broke in'. Religious leaders wanted power over others, and a hierarchical structure developed, as is symbolised in figure F in the upper right-hand corner Here we find a group of four clerics, one standing on a dais, the others one or more steps below him. The man occupying the highest position is anointing the second, who in his turn blesses the two lesser figures. The text explains that this hierarchical system, with its inherent bonds of dependency and essential power relations, created fertile ground for privileges and pride to replace virtues and knowledge.[45]

45   De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 324.

This lust for power in image 44 visually 'grows' to its apotheosis: the position of the pope, represented as larger and more central than all the other figures before him and called Spiritual Monarchy (H). Seated on the rock, Petra, and backed by Peter, Paul and the escutcheon of the Roman Republic, the pope is depicted as the representative, 'stadtholder', of Jesus on earth. The unequaled prominence of this position is underscored by the attributes of Spiritual Monarchy: the triple crown, a beautiful cloak with the images of the apostles, and an orb as symbol of political power. On his lap is a book with decrees, allegedly divine in nature and to be obeyed as such. Of course the familiar keys of Peter are in his hands, although De Hooghe gave a twist to this familiar motif. Instead of depicting the usual two keys of heaven, he put three keys in the hand of the pope: the key to forgiveness, the key to heaven, and the key to appoint secular rulers over the peoples of the world.[46] All these attributes show that this power is extraordinary and that neither kings nor rulers – let alone the simple faithful – are capable of challenging the power of Spiritual Monarchy. Therefore, the title of the pope makes sense: although theoretically his power is of a spiritual nature, in practice he proves to be a political monarch, who, like all secular rulers, wants to be the greatest of all. The arrogance of this ambition is found especially in the measurements of the figures in the etching, in which not only bishops and lower clerics and secular rulers are smaller than the pope, but also Jesus Christ himself (L). His image is not even one-third of the size of the Catholic Spiritual Monarchy.[47]

This political success is opposed to the spiritual failure of the Spiritual Monarchy. During the reign of the popes some heresies were suppressed, but the same feet that can trample out error also can crush underfoot true confessors of the Bible. Again we find the worn-out Protestant accusation that Catholic clerics led their followers into idolatry and persecuted the few believers who professed the true evangelical religion. The most important elements in this deceit were the inventions added to the pure and simple original religion. In this context all the familiar Protestant accusations pile up: the Catholic invention of saints, legends and outward splendor as a matter of course, but emphasised most of all was their production of spurious accretions to biblical

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46   The reference to the keys of the pope is from Mathew 16:18,19 but that text speaks only spoken of 'keys' in the plural, without providing an exact number of them. De Hooghe's choice for this explanation seems to be a free interpretation, as the Protestant Heidelberg Catechism speaks of two keys, respectively for the preaching of God's Word and for churchly discipline. (HC, Sunday 31, Q &A 83).

47   Another smart way of gaining influence was through the provision of dispensations on marriages within families. writes De Hooghe. Especially in the royal families, marrying within the family was preferred to marrying outside it, because power and wealth would be lost as a result of divisions. By condoning or dispensing such illegal marriages the Holy See gained political influence, and of course everyone, including the people of lower origin, needed to pay for this juridical service that consented to marriages. De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 359, 360.

teachings, known as the Tradition.[48] De Hooghe explains these additions as the 'leaven' or traces from Judaism and paganism. The outward symbols of bishops had been copied from several ancient religions, as the art of image-making was an Egyptian influence.[49] In the biblical metaphor of leaven and bread (here made poisonous), it only took a few of these traces to infect and corrupt Christianity completely.[50]

In De Hooghe's account religious deceit proved lucrative, as the Church and its power grew. Nevertheless, part of its success is attributed to the use of force. In De Hooghe's depiction of this growth in chapter 49, we find another familiar Protestant accusation concerning Catholic priestly error, namely their use of compulsion.

Fig. 143. De Hooghe, Plate 49, Van de Macht des Roomschen Stoel [On the Power of the Papal See]

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48   Idem, 285, 286, 300- 302, 363,

49   Several elements from the bishop (plate 40 figure D) were picked up from other religions, writes De Hooghe: the mitre has an Egyptian origin, the high priest's breastplate comes from the Jews, the cloak was Dalmatian. De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 297, 299.

50   Matthew 13:23. Throughout the chapters on Catholicism are accusations of the growth of unnecessary obligations and beliefs for believers such as fasting and Purgatory, with clerics surrounded themselves with all sorts of luxury all the while.

This compulsion started with the persecution of heresies.[51] People faced a stark choice: obey the Roman Church, or be condemned to hell — and suffer persecution in this world as well.[52] Hell also served a useful role in the priests' deceit, as they alone could free sinners from this horrible place, as long as these sinners paid for the indulgences the priests provided. To increase their advantage, priests had created annexes to hell such as purgatory, limbo and the 'boat of non-baptised children'.[53] De Hooghe describes all these Catholic innovations as lies, but it is not clear whether he regarded hell itself as a similarly invented stepping stone on the path to clerical preeminence.[54] With its numerous examples of anti-Catholic anticlericalism, *Hieroglyphica* shows that De Hooghe agrees with his predecessors and contemporaries in accusing the Catholic clerical leaders of preserving Jewish and heathen elements, of inventing parts of religion and of wielding extensive power, all for reasons of their own material welfare and social esteem.[55]

The impostor Muhammad

Although Protestants and Catholics, in innumerable writings, engaged in polemic over the necessity of apostolic succession and the precise nature of clerical office, they stood on the same side when it came to Islam, and more specifically to Muhammad. Already in the eighth century the priest and theologian John of Damascus had described Islam as the worst of all heresies, and ever since Christians had presented Muslims as lustful, violent idolaters and their leader Muhammad as an epileptic impostor. The theory that Muhammad had invented a new religion cobbled together from pieces of heretical Christian and Jewish ideas, and had deceived his people into believing that he was Allah's prophet, became a truism.

Although the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries showed an increase in attention to Islam and Islamic sources and Near Eastern studies flourished, many incorrect ideas about Islam remained widespread.[56] The English scholar Humphrey Prideaux (1648-1724), who had never actually been in the Levant, contributed to the misinformation with

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51 De Hooghe was probably influenced by the issuing of Phillipus A Limborgh's edition of heresy trials in 1693.

52 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 363.

53 See for purgatory Jacques Le Goff, *The Birth of Purgatory,* trans. Arthur Goldhammer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984). There was a special Limbo for unbaptised infants, which De Hooghe seems to view as some kind of ark.

54 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 383, 384. Whether De Hooghe had a problem only with the deceit of the impossible liberation of the soul from hell by money, or if he also criticised the very idea of a hell as clerical invention, will be discussed later in this dissertation.

55 Most famous, of course, is Luther with his 'priesthood of all believers', but Erasmus was also critical towards the pope and towards clerical power and riches.

56 As the theologian David Pailin puts it: 'for apologetics with an abhorrence of Islam, there was little pressure to stop seeking to defend Christianity by using longstanding misrepresentations of Muslims beliefs and practices'. Palin, *Attitudes to other religions*, 84.

his *Life of Mahomet* (1697), which sketched Muhammad as an impostor and detailed all the tricks he supposedly used.[57] This sort of representation of Muhammad, ubiquitous in the Republic, is found in almost all contemporary sources. Both the theologian Gisbertus Voetius and his Leiden colleague Johannes Cocceius saw 'Mohammedanisme' as a mixture of other religions. According to Cocceius, the Quran was 'a book containing impudent lies and the vain talks of old woman, a ragbag of lies and little pieces of the truth', composed by Muhammad. This image of Muhammad can also be detected in the way that Romeyn de Hooghe description of the Muslim prophet.[58]

In plate 46, entitled Van de Mahomethaansche Beginsselen [On Muhammadan principles] (see fig 78 in chapter 4), Muhammad is presented as the classic example of religious deceit. The commentary concurs with what was then a general accusation that Muhammad, with the help of assistants, had combined ingredients from various religions into a new faith. In the background three accomplices are present, namely the Nestorian monk Sergius (also known as Bahira), the Jew Abdias (Abdia Ben Salon) and a Jacobite named Bairo, who had helped Muhammad compose the Quran from Christian and Jewish heresies.[59]

Fig. 144. De Hooghe, Sergius, Bairo en Abdias [Sergius, Abdias and Bairo, detail from Plate 46

Besides inventing a religion, Muhammad had used all kinds of tricks to make the Arab people believe his story, according to De Hooghe. For example, he turned his epileptic attacks into a useful device, explaining his convulsions as signs of divine encounters with Allah. The visits he received from a dove, which transmitted divine messages, would have recurred because, De Hooghe explains, Muhammad put birdseed under his turban. Both examples show De Hooghe's abhorrence of the deception of simple

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57   Humphrey Prideaux, *The true nature of imposture fully displayed in the life of Mahomet* (Londen: William Rogers, 1697).

58   Van Amersfoort, *Liever Turks dan Paaps?,* esp. 37, 44; Christian Lange, *Mohammed. Perspectieven op de Profeet*, (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2017). See also the glosses to Revelations 9:1 in the State Bible (Leiden 1637).

59   The first two figures had been mentioned in many Western sources as the men who had helped Muhammad write the Quran and are also present in Prideaux's book; the source for Bairo is less clear. It might be that De Hooghe misread the name 'Bahira', which was the Near Eastern name for Sergius.

people via the presentation of natural phenomena as signs of divine intervention.[60] When all such tricks proved insufficient to convince people outside Muhammad's own tribe of the truth of Islam, Muhammad turned – as Catholic leaders did – to the use of force.[61] Hence the sword in Muhammad's hands. As in Catholicism, this use of force was not only physical but psychological: De Hooghe notes that although Muslims could read the Quran, discussion was forbidden. Again, it was up to the priests to think about its meaning and provide laypeople with explanations.

Although these accusations were familiar and well known from Christian books on Islam, it is interesting to analyse how De Hooghe uses the contemporary literature at his disposal.[62] This task is not easy, however, because he mentions his sources only sporadically. His first likely source is Humphrey Prideaux's book, although there are no passages quoted directly from it. De Hooghe may even have made the illustrations for the French translation of Prideaux's book, given the similarities in figures, positions and style among the etchings. The frontispiece for Prideaux's biography shows very strong similarities with elements from plates 46 and 47 of *Hieroglyphica*. The decidedly effeminate Muhammad of the frontispiece mirrors the female personification of Islam in Plate 47. Other elements from Prideaux's frontispiece – three writing figures surrounding the prophet with warriors in the background – correspond with *Hieroglyphica*'s plate 46. De Hooghe had often worked with George Gallet, the publisher of the book, and so he may well have been responsible for this frontispiece.[63]

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60 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 337, 338. This story, originating in the medieval *Legenda Aurea*, was eventually refuted by Reland in his *De religione mohammedica* (1705), see Lange, *Mohammed*, 113, 114, 117. Akin to the accusation that heathen remnants had been incorporated into Catholicism, De Hooghe states that Muhammad had appropriated the pagan symbol of the moon – which he etched on the head of Muhammad in plate 46 – for use in his new religion. This symbol had been venerated throughout history by the Egyptians, Babylonians, Syrians and also among the Arabs, whose acquaintance with this symbol had eased their religious switchover to Islam. De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 343.

61 Again a recurring accusation against Muhammad: he had used the sword to 'convert' the people to Islam.

62 Hugo de Groot, for instance, also mentions the restriction on researching the Quran in his *Bewys van den waren Godsdienst* (Amsterdam: Evert Vissscher, 1728), 126. 'En den gemeenen man neemtz uit de hand de boeken, Jae op de straff van 't lijff verbied zy t' ondersoeken, Indien dat yemand u verkoght o alfakijn, Een groenen Emeraud of brandende Robijn, En dat hy sey dat gy die noit en most aenschouwen, Nogh brengen aen het light, soud gy die man vertrouwen?'

63 Several older auction catalogues cite De Hooghe as the maker of the engravings. See for instance *Catalogue des livres rares et précieux du cabinet de feu M. de Saint-Martin* (Paris: Tilliard Fréres, 1806). Furthermore, De Hooghe illustrated several books published by Gallet, including the *Contes et nouvelles de Bocace* and La Vigne's *Maniere de se bien preparer a la mort.* It seems logical that De Hooghe used Prideaux's book as a source, but there is no explicit similarity to it in, for instance, the description of Muhammad's accomplices. De Hooghe seems not to have to used Prideaux's additional tract, which defends Christianity against the accusation of deceit.
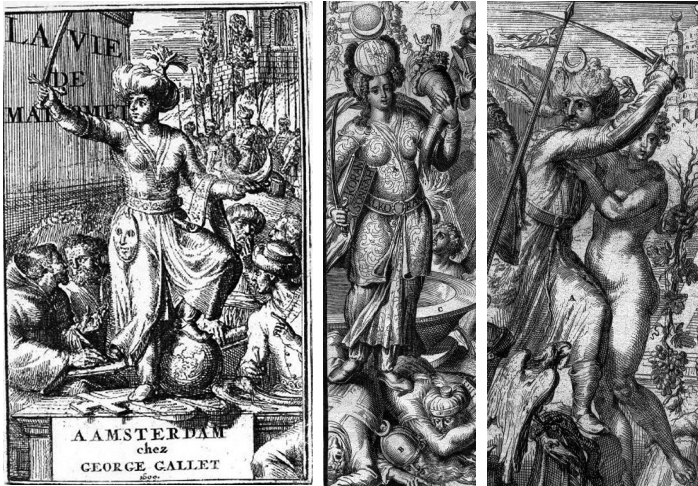
Fig. 145. Unsigned frontispiece of H. Prideaux, *La vie de Mahomet*
Fig. 146. De Hooghe, Islam [Islam], detail of Plate 47
Fig. 147. De Hooghe, Islam [Islam], detail of Plate 46

We can identify with certainty only two sources from which De Hooghe took his information about Islam.[64] The first, used extensively, is Alexander Ross's *Pansebeia, or View of all the Religions in the World* (1652).[65] Although De Hooghe quotes entire paragraphs from Ross's work, he is on the whole less judgmental than Ross in his description of Islam in general.[66] The exception in De Hooghe's tone, however, is found in his treatment of Muslim religious leaders as hypocrites in chapter 47. Here De Hooghe accuses Muslim dervishes, imams and clerics (fig. 148) of pragmatically observing an outward religion that they practised only in front of (esteemed) spectators.

64 Some of the sources he does mention, for example the research of one Berkmans, who had worked in the Basra region and from whom De Hooghe learned of the idea that Muhammad had used the venerated moon as the symbol of his new religion. This 'scientific' evidence, however, was opposed by the theologian Hadrianus Relandus, who in his *De Religione Mohamedanica* corrected many tall tales about Islam. Relandus stated that Muhammad did not choose the symbol of the moon to attract converts and because of its fame, but because this was what he had seen when he fled to Medina. See Hadrianus Relandus, *Verhandeling van de godsdienst der Mahometaanen* (Utrecht: Willem Broedelet, 1718), 166, 117.

65 Ross's *Pansebeia* was translated into Dutch in 1662 as *'sWeerelds gods-diensten of, Vertoog van alle de religien en ketteryen in Asia, Africa, America en Europa, van 't begin des weereldts, tot desen tegenwoordigen tijdt toe.*

66 Pailin, *Attitudes to other religions,* 98; Alexander Ross, *'sWeerelds gods-diensten of, Vertoog van alle de religien en ketteryen in Asia, Africa, America en Europa, van 't begin des weereldts, tot desen tegenwoordigen tijdt toe*, transl. Josua Sanderus (Amsterdam: Michiel de Groot, 1671), 228- 233.

Still, his description was milder than what we encounter in Ross's *'s Pansebeia*, which characterises dervishes as drug-addicted, naked men clad in sheepskins, carrying clubs and running around robbing and murdering.[67]

Fig. 148. De Hooghe, Dervis [Dervish], detail of Plate 47

Although De Hooghe appears to have considered Ross's opinions on Islamic clerics to be quite harsh, the more tolerant ideas of his second source, Gottfried Arnold, also did not make it into *Hieroglyphica*. Arnold's major work, *Unparteyische Kirchen- und Ketzer-historie* [Impartial History of the Church and of Heresy] (1699), is another source for De Hooghe; he had provided the illustrations for its Dutch translation. Again, De Hooghe quoted many paragraphs but refrains from including evidence of Arnold's quite tolerant approach towards Islam and Muhammad. The most important element in Arnold's account was his view that many of the stories about Islam had been invented by Christians embittered by Islam's successes. Whatever the dogmas of Islam, 'nobody could escape the slander of the false Christians'.[68] Arnold writes that Muhammad did not engage in defamation yet became the biggest victim of Christian slander. From an analysis of the parts of the Dutch translation of Arnold's work cited by De Hooghe, one almost has to conclude that he was acquainted with these critical opinions offered by the German pietist.[69] But this critique of the Christian representation of Muhammad as an impostor seems not to have accorded with De Hooghe's concept of clerical deceit. De Hooghe adapted his textual sources to his own argument, much as he did with imagery he copied from others. He chose

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67 Ross, *'sWeerelds gods-diensten,* 228-230.
68 Gottfried Arnold, *Historie der kerken en ketteren*, 471, 472.
69 This is indicated by other sentences that De Hooghe quoted, for example Arnold's statement that Christians were persecuted more harshly under the yoke of the pope than under Islamic rule. Arnold, *Historie der kerken en ketteren,* 472, 473.

to model Muhammad on the well-worn image of the crafty priest: he had invented a religion, had faked divine inspiration and manipulated the minds of the multitude only to gain power, prestige and wealth for himself. This characterisation, of course, confirmed the beliefs of most of his readers and thus could have been a commercial decision, but it also resonated with De Hooghe's display of clerical deceit through the ages in all sorts of religions, and his view that such perfidy was the main cause of religion's decline and corruption.

6.3 Omnipresent priestcraft

In interpreting *Hieroglyphica*'s priestcraft theory, it is important to examine its presentation of the scope of clerical deceit. One must look both at the period in which it is said to occur and at the religions in which it is found – is priestcraft, for instance, limited to 'other' religions or should all religions beware it? This question was pressing, in part because of the circulation of treatises such as *Le Traite the Trois imposteurs*, in which Moses, Jesus and Muhammad were decried as a trio of religious impostors.[70] *Hieroglyphica*'s chapters on the Catholic Church certainly align with the general reading of it: we saw how these chapters connected the fall of the apostolic Early Church to the rise of the power of the Roman clergy. A closer look, however, indicates that De Hooghe believed that clerical deceit had been characteristic of religion long before Christianity arrived on the scene, and is by no means confined to false confessions like Catholicism and Islam but recurs throughout 'sacred history'. It had penetrated Judaism and is still a threat to religions, including Reformed Protestantism. We already saw De Hooghe's emphasis on this theme in the frontispiece, which functioned as a 'window' onto the entire book.

The omnipresence of priestcraft in *Hieroglyphica*'s history of religion becomes clear from the very first chapters. The account follows basically the same pattern: priests and exorcists excelled in the performance of an outward belief, tricking the laypeople into respect and obedience.[71] According to De Hooghe this deception served the government, but it also increased the worldly power, riches and esteem of priests.[72] In De Hooghe's description of ancient religions, people had been very

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70 See further below. On the *Traité des Trois Imposteurs* see: Silvia Berti, Françoise Charles-Daubert and Richard H. Popkin, eds., *Heterodoxy, Spinozism, and Free Thought in Early Eighteenth-Century Europe. Studies on the* Traité des Trois Imposteurs (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1996).

71 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, Verklaring van de Tytel-prent, 17, 27, 28, 38, 44 -52, 69, 76, 108, 203, 264, 268, 385, 421, 423.

72 Idem, 403.

much dependent on nature for their prosperity and well-being, but they could not explain nature's capricious and frightening forces like thunder, lightning, eclipses, falling stars, meteorites and floods. Priests and natural philosophers who understood these forces of nature chose to communicate their knowledge of the natural world via a hermetic language, in order to keep the masses in the dark and in check. The laity, impressed by the priestly interpretation of nature's 'signs', were willing to subject themselves to the religion that the priests had invented around these natural phenomena. Thus when famine threatened, people went to the priest with offerings, hoping that priestly interference with the gods could avert disaster.[73]

De Hooghe pays elaborate attention to the tricks used to con people into believing that priests communicated with the gods, particularly via oracles.[74] The topic of oracles was not new to De Hooghe, as he had illustrated the frontispiece for one of the most famous books in that field, *Verhandeling van de oude orakelen der Heydenen* [Treatise on the ancient pagan oracles] (1687) by Anthoni van Dale. In this book Van Dale, a physician and Mennonite lay preacher, refuted the ancient oracles as nothing but instruments of deception by imposturous priests. Traditionally, the idea had existed that oracles were real but were instruments of the devil, the only 'other' divine creature that really possessed power in the Old Testament.[75] These demonic powers were believed to have ceased after Christ's incarnation. Van Dale thought this theory was a fudge, and his view was later taken further in Bernard de Fontanelle's *Histoire des oracles*. It also played an important role in the work of freethinkers such as Adriaan Koerbagh and Baruch Spinoza, who went so far as to denounce any form of divine revelation, even by the Old Testament God.[76]

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73 Nature – in particular the sun and the moon, which effects were very obvious – had been everything for those people. De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 10, 12.

74 On oracles in early modernity see: Anthony Ossa Richardson, *The Devil's Tabernacle. The Pagan Oracles in Early Modern Thought* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013).

75 See Ossa-Richardson, *The Devil's Tabernacle, esp.* 8,59, 83, 85, 198 and Jonathan I. Israel, *Radical Enlightenment. Philosophy and the making of modernity: 1650-1750* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 359–374.

76 Adriaan Koerbagh also demolishes the belief in oracles in chapter 11 of his *Een ligt schijnende in Duystere plaatsen. Om te verligten de voornaamste saaken der Gods geleertheyd en Gods dienst* (Amsterdam 1668) The same goes for Spinoza; see his *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus* trans. F. Akkerman (Amsterdam: Wereldbibliotheek, 2002), preface, §3.

Fig. 149. De Hooghe, Frontispiece for Anthoni van Dale, *Verhandeling van de oude orakelen der Heydenen* (1687), Rijksmuseum Amsterdam

Fig. 150. De Hooghe, Plate 34, Van de Heydensche Godspraaken [On Pagan Oracles]

Hieroglyphica's Plate 34, Van de Heydensche Godspraaken [On Pagan Oracles] (fig. 150), shows how priests use their pretended means of access to the gods as a means of deceiving the people who sought divine answers to their questions. Here we encounter a virgin priestess in a delirium, whose bodily distress – induced by hallucinogenic herbs – was claimed to signify her possession by a Higher Power as conduit for divine messages. The oracle priest in the middle (B) is part and parcel of the history of priestcraft. In one hand he carries a knife, a symbol of the animals he is cutting to pieces, so that from the creature's entrails he can predict the future for the people asking for such forecasts. De Hooghe cynically comments that 'of course his reading will be such that it can be applied to anyone, at any time'. He carries with him the Books of the Sibyls, 'creatures about whom nothing is certain'.[77] One trick mentioned in these Sibylline books was the use of birds. Their appetite was believed to foretell something about the future: if they started picking grain enthusiastically, that was a positive omen, but if they lacked appetite, terrible things were to be expected.

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[77] On the early modern Dutch discussions of Sibylline books see Rieuwerd Buitenwerf, *Book III of the Sibylline Oracles and its Social Setting. With an Introduction, Translation* (Leiden: Brill, 2003).

Among one another, priests laughed about the people's gullibility; De Hooghe even mentions that the Roman magistrate Cato (234-149 BC), whilst speaking of this preposterous performance, wondered how bird-watching priests could look each other in the eye without laughing uproariously.[78] Other forms of trickery involved the eating habits of the bull Apis, or the use of horoscopy to predict the course of people's lives.

As with the other tools of deception, trust in horoscopes is also denounced by De Hooghe as nonsense. As De Hooghe concludes: the stars are innumerable, and their effects unknown. If anything were to be known from the constellation of the stars at a certain moment, this would then be applicable to so many people (as so many people are born at the same moment) that it could not be applied to the fate of a specific individual.[79] One element of the priest stands out in particular: the bag he wears on his chest, containing black and white stones, used by many religions for drawing lots in order to decide what action should be taken. This is reminiscent of the Biblical *Urim* and *Thummin,* gemstones that the High Priest of the Israelites wore in a breastpiece and through which he communicated with God (Ex 28:30, Lev. 8:8). Although De Hooghe's images of this oracle priest and the Israelite High Priest differ, the text emphasises that such oracle stones had been present in many religions. In De Hooghe's description of Moses in chapter 14 we encounter these Israelite oracle stones which De Hooghe describes quite factually and without the negative judgement put forth in Plate 34.[80]

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78   De Hooghe*, Hieroglyphica*, 265.

79   Idem*,* 268.

80   Idem, 148, 264, 265. Early modern sources include John Spencers's *Dissertation de Urim et Thummim* (Cambridge, 1669); Willem Goeree wrote extensively on the Urim and the Thummim, see for instance chapter 12 of his *Mosaïze Historie der Hebreeuwse Kerke*, vol 4. For an encyclopaedic treatment of the stones see Martinus Koning, *Lexicon hieroglyphicum sacro-profanum, of woordboek van gewyde en ongewyde voor- en zinnebeelden* vol 6. (Dordrecht, Amsterdam: Joannes van Braam en Gerard Onder de Linden, 1727), 192-197. See further C. van Dam, *The Urim and Thummim. A Study of an Old Testament Means of Revelation*, 2 vols (Kampen: Van den Berg, 1986) and Jetze Touber, 'The right measure. Architecture and philology in biblical scholarship in the Dutch Early Enlightenment, *The Historical Journal* 58 (2015): 1-27 there 23.

Fig. 151. De Hooghe, Orakelpaap [Oracle priest], detail from Plate 34
Fig. 152. De Hooghe, Wetgever Mozes [Moses the Lawgiver], detail from Plate 14

6.4 Criticism turned inward: reforming Protestant leaders

Not only do Catholic, Muslim and pagan priests come in for criticism in *Hieroglyphica.*
Protestant leaders do as well. At the end of the seventeenth century, an inward turn
of the anticlerical discourse extended such thinking into the realm of Protestantism
itself, up to the point where freethinkers and deists were now questioning any form
of institutionalised religion, including (Protestant) Christianity. But they were not the
only ones criticising Church leaders: the tendency of internal critique was derived
from Protestant Dissenters and radical Pietists, from all who eventually sought their
salvation outside the established churches. The critique of Church leaders remained,
however, an active topic within the Church. In England, Anglican dissenters
considered the clerical estate to be an erroneous remnant of Catholicism, still prone
to the power disease that inevitably infected the Roman hierarchy. For them the
Reformation was not yet complete because the most substantial cause of Catholic
errors remained in power in the Anglican episcopate, a quasi-papist institution. Clergy
and state still helped each other to stay in control (bishops were members of the House
of Lords), excommunication still existed and exerted civil effects, and people could

be imprisoned for taking an overly rational approach to the Bible. Hence, in the eyes of Dissenters, the Church could truly be reformed only by installing a Presbyterian church organisation, in which hierarchy was abrogated and the clerical office was turned into a truly spiritual one.[81] Contrary to deists like Herbert of Cherbury, who propagated a religion without the presence of a mediating caste, most Dissenters did not object to priesthood as such. Rather, they held that it needed a thorough revision so that the basic values of humility and helpfulness and a overwhelmingly spiritual attitude would become the sole requirements for ecclesiastical office.[82]

For radical pietists, priestcraft was at the root of Church decline, and therefore the Church would be better off without clerics. Such opinions make it especially difficult to distinguish radical Pietism from deism, as the former also challenged the very existence of religious ministries.[83] According to Pietists, history showed that the true Church had most frequently been found in the shadow of established forms of religion: small groups of believers had flown under the radar of institutionalised churches, though they were often persecuted by the establishment. They were able to persevere on the path of true religion. One of the adherents of this theory was the German minister Gottfried Arnold, mentioned earlier, who went a step further in stating that true religion had most of the time been found amongst groups whose members were seen as heretics in their own time.[84]

The extension of anticlericalism from a polemical attack on 'other' religions towards a broader critique which was also aimed inward is evident in *Hieroglyphica*. The frontispiece identifies the origin of the decline and corruption of religion, and De Hooghe's plates and chapters show how, throughout history, the errors of religion were instigated by crafty priests so that they might gain wealth and power. This corruption had started at the very beginning of religion, but had been counteracted by the Apostolic Church. Soon after, though, there was again an inexorable process of decline: the Catholic clergy had invented all kinds of embellishments to the simple Christian faith, by which they favoured themselves and burdened their followers with unnecessary religious practices. Although the Reformation brought some amelioration, the basic problem of clerics in pursuit of power remained present. In *Hieroglyphica*, this shift from polemical discussions between the usual opponents, to the locating of priestcraft in religions of all times and places, including Protestantism, finds its most intriguing and potentially far-reaching representation in plates 59, entitled Van de Hervorming [On the Reformation] and 60, Van de Afvallige Hervorming [On the Apostate Reformation].

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81   Barnett, *Idol Temples*, 76.

82   Champion, *Pillars of priestcraft shaken*, 71.

83   Dixon, *Faith and history*, 2

84   Spaans, *Graphic Satire,* 207. Dixon, *Faith and history*, 43.

Fig. 153. De Hooghe, Plate 59, Van de Hervorming [On the Reformation]

In plate 59, Van de Hervorming [On the Reformation], De Hooghe visualised the respective situations before, during and after the Reformation. Figure A represents the errors of the Catholic clergy, which, instead of serving God and the community of the faithful, was keen only on the acquisition and maintenance of power, wealth and their own advantages of office. Figure B shows a swan, a symbol of Martin Luther, who shone a new light within the darkness of religious decay. His endeavour resulted in figure C, the Public Preaching of the Word, who stands in the centre of the image. De Hooghe took this image from Cesare Ripa, who had designed the basic features of his emblem of 'reformation', but adapted the image to a Lutheran context. Although De Hooghe leaves no doubt that the Reformation was an improvement, he is not entirely positive about Luther – who carries the man-made Augsburg Confession instead of the Bible and holds a sword, a weapon that indicates the violence perpetrated in the initiation and defence of his Reformation. De Hooghe glosses over this violence as necessary self-defense but also argues that 'truth is not served by this kind of weaponry'.[85] It is quite possible that in this critique of the Reformation De Hooghe had been influenced by Arnold, who regarded the outbreak of the Reformation as a truly Christian event, crediting Luther with being 'an agent of the holy spirit on earth'.

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85   See Van 't Hof, *Old emblems, New meaning*, esp. 899-910.

Its continuation, however, was disappointing. The great Luther stepped into the same pitfalls as his Catholic predecessors had: he became intolerant and arrogant, and had enmeshed himself in worldly affairs.[86]

Similarly disappointing in *Hieroglyphica* is the effect of the Reformation. One would expect the figures following Luther to show the success of the Lutheran Reformation – these would exclusively comprise God-fearing ministers and well-educated believers. However, nothing is further from the truth: the Public Preaching of the Word, far from resulting in a body of well-educated believers, instead gave rise to a group of even craftier clerics than the men they had supplanted. We encounter an Anabaptist leader, holding both a mask and a money-bag in his hand; leaders who 'deceive' the followers with their complex logical sophistries and their twisted explanations of the Bible; and rabble-rousers who pretend to be possessed by the spirit and in some sort of divine trance: all these figures manipulate simple believers.[87] In addition, there are still hypocritical Catholic clerics after the Reformation, though these are generalised by De Hooghe: religious deceivers 'have been there in that time, are still here, and will always be there'.[88]

The deceit by clerical leaders is specifically foregrounded in figure D. Here De Hooghe presents the figure of Fooling and Advising. This charismatic leader takes advantage of the ignorance of the masses to fool them into believing all kinds of nonsense. To show such deceit De Hooghe adapted existing images to his own aims: Ripa's 'Persuasion', inspired by the mythological figure of Hercules, and 'Eloquence'. Whereas such images used to have a positive connotation – Hercules was even compared with Christ himself – De Hooghe deploys them in a quite negative manner, expressing a loathing for the fake stories those impostors had fabricated to convince their followers that they interacted with divine powers.[89]

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86 Dixon, *Faith and history*, 41, 53. Arnold's blunt and straightforward way of writing elicited much criticism, so much so that he even distanced himself from what he had written, declaring that the book's tone had been too sharp and too critical.

87 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, Plate 61.

88 Idem, 424.

89 On this positive notion of Hercules see Heinrich F. Plett, *Rhetoric and Renaissance Culture* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2004), 513-516; Anthony Grafton, Glenn W. Most and Salvatore Settis, eds, *The classical tradition* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010), 427. Andrea Alciati describes the emblem of Eloquence represented by Hercules as 'Eloquence superior to strength': 'His left hand holds a bow, his right hand a stout club, the lion of Nemea clothes his bare body. So this is a figure of Hercules. But he is old and his temples grizzled with age – that does not fit. What of the fact that his tongue has light chains passing through it, which are attached to men's pierced ears, and by them he draws them unresisting along? The reason is surely that the Gauls say that Alceus' descendant expelled in eloquence rather than in might and gave laws to the nations. Weapons yield to the arts of peace, and even the hardest of hearts the skilled speaker can lead where he will.' Andrea Alciati, *Emblemata,* Facsimile of the 1550 Lyons edition. Transl. Betty I. Knott (Aldershot: Scholar Press, 1996), 194.

Fig. 154. De Hooghe, Wysmaking en aanrading [Fooling and Advising], detail of Plate 59
Fig. 155. Eloquentia fortitudine praestantior [Eloquence superior to strength] from Alciati, *Emblemata* (Lyon, 1550) p. 194
Fig. 156. Cesare Ripa, Persuasione, from *Iconologia* (Padua, 1611) p. 419

The commentary says it all:

> For the untrained mind, judgement is hard. Many find it easier to believe
> the judgement of others, than to form one themselves. Moreover, those
> set in authority over others scorn the judgements of their subordinates, on
> the lazy assumption that the latter's independent judgement will lessen
> his own authority. Therefore most arguments are in fact groundless,
> merely artful instigation and persuasion. From time immemorial this
> art has been practiced by great spiritual counsellors in the cure of souls.
> Depending on the character of the one giving the counsel, it will be false,
> merely imagined on insufficient grounds, or inspired by the Spirit of
> God, working a holy effect in hearts and minds. Here Spiritual Counsel
> has been depicted as a staid and stately man — respectable age and grey
> hairs easily convince young minds. From his tongue many golden cords
> proceed, keeping in thrall the assent of his hearers and followers. His
> head is in the clouds, as he pretends to receive his revelations straight
> from Heaven. He boldly displays texts and images as pieces of evidence,
> imitating the divine revelations received by Moses, but in his other hand he
> holds the mask with which he scandalously deceives the peoples. He acts
> as if inspired, and his followers actually assist in his inspired rambling.
> All this is represented by a cat at his side, emblem of attentiveness, a
> monkey, the example of demonstrative imitation, and a dog, symbol of

submissive docility.[90]

The clearest mark of deceit is the mask in the hand of the priest, the most evident indication that the figure is pretending to be something he was not. Furthermore, De Hooghe added clouds to the existing image to point to the idea that such leaders have always pretended that they have received their knowledge directly from heaven; the papers held in hand are analogous to the stone tablets given to Moses on Mount Sinai. De Hooghe placed his impostor in front of a mountain, because 'the distance from the eye [i.e., the absence of witnesses] must support the deceit, which was the case with historical leaders such as Mahometh, Lycurgus and Numa Pompilius'.[91]

Fig. 157. De Hooghe, Wetgever Mozes [Moses the lawgiver], detail of Plate 14

90   Romeyn de Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 423, 424. 'Het Oordelen, voor die onbedacht zyn, is zwaar; en daarom by vele gemakkelyker, anderen te geloven, als zelf naauw te onderzoeken. Ook lyd de meerder zelden geern het oordeel van zynen minderen, en vermoed lichtelyk, dat het onderzoek en oordeel van zynen minderen, tot nadeel en inbreuk, van zyne achting zal zamen werken. Waarom de Wysmaking en aanrading veel op de Herten werkt. In alle tyden is deze Konst om de Zielen te leyden tot het oogwit der groote Voorgangers gebruikt. Zy is naar de verscheydenheyt van den Rader, valsch, verdicht en loos gegrond, of door Gods Geest geleyd, van een H. werking op de Gemoederen. Hier is dezelve afgemaalt, door een bedaagt en deftig man; wan de Jaren en grze Hayren, nemen de jonge Verstanden licht in. Aan zyne Tong heeft hy veel Gulde Koorden, aan welke hy gevangen houd de toestemming van zyne Toehoorders, die hem volgen. Hy heeft zyn Hoofd in de olken, om dat hy wil schynen, zyne Openbaringen rechtdraats uyt den Hemel te ontfangen. Hier van toont hy stoutelyk Afschriften en taferelen,; nabootsende de Goddelyke Openbaringen aan Mozes geschiedt; maar heeft in de andere Hand, de Mom, door welke hy schendig de Volkeren durft misleyden. Hy draagt zig Goddelyk; en zyne Medestanders helpen hem die Goddelyke zamenspraken uytblateren. Hy heeft aan zyne Zyde eene Kat, het Merkbeeld van Opmerking; een Aap, het voorbeeld van opgesmokte nabootzin; en eenen Hond, het teeken van onderworpen Leerzucht.'

91   Idem, 424.

Of course, the fake divine encounters that impostors claimed to have experienced are reminiscent of Moses's encounter with God, and thus in De Hooghe's plate 14 Moses stands in front of Mount Sinai. The commentary offers a traditional Christian explanation: Moses's *true* experience with God on Mount Sinai had inspired priests to invent *false* stories that would prop up their supposedly divine authority. Pagans like Lycurgus and Numa Pompilius, recognising the usefulness of religion to their own self-serving ends, had copied the basics from Moses and then added all kinds of gods, rites, and natural signs.[92] The image also underlines this relationship: Moses looks up and has the name of God written on his chest; the impostor looks down and holds a mask of deception in front of his chest.

Whatever their intended import, these images bring us to the heart of the matter regarding the categorisation of historical criticism and anticlericalism, and the question of the point at which Christian polemical arguments became radical and suspect. During the seventeenth century Moses's position became controversial, as people began to ask why all religious leaders – with the sole exception of Moses – who had claimed to have received their revelation out of sight were called impostors. Radical thinkers thus labelled Moses as just as much a fraud as any of the other leaders; Christianity became just one more historical religious fabrication.[93] In the extremely radical, infamous and forbidden *Traité de trois imposteurs*, Moses and Jesus himself formed, with Muhammad, a troika of religious impostors.[94] Although *Hieroglyphica's* general depiction and description of Moses – as a truly divine leader, and the historian of the world starting from its origin – never intimates that he should be seen as a fraud, De Hooghe does not refrain from levelling criticism at Moses's unassailable position. When he refers, for example, to an occasion when the Israelites themselves accused Moses of priestcraft, ridiculing his conversations with God because they believed them to be a means of enhancing his own power, De Hooghe does not contradict

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92 Idem, 423,424.

93 The work of John Spencer displays a turning point in the view of Moses; instead of viewing Moses as an Israelite, different from the idolatrous Egyptians, Spencer argued that Moses had been highly influenced by his Egyptian upbringing, as much of the Mosaic ritual law was taken from Egyptian religious rituals. Similar ideas on Moses's role are present in the works of Hobbes, Thomas Morgan and Spinoza. See further Assmann, *Moses the Egyptian;* chapter 4 in Israel, *Enlightenment Contested* and chapter 6 in Stroumsa, *A New Science.*

94 Both the identity of the author and the history of the treatise remain unclear; see Berti, *Heterodoxy, Spinozism, and Free Thought in Early Eighteenth-Century Europe.*

these charges.[95] His picturing of such a crucial point – a revelation on a mountain, out of sight of witnesses – indicates the slippery slope of the argument of clerical deceit in 'other' religions, but in *Hieroglyphica* these impostors are still separated from spiritually inspired Christian leaders (and their precursors in Judaism), leaving the ultimate answer to the judgement of his informed readers.

Fig. 158. De Hooghe, Plate 39, Van het Verval tot Kettery [On the Decline into Heresy]

Whereas clerics were accused of using tricks and even force to fool believers into crediting priests with supernatural powers, *Hieroglyphica* also blames them for showing off with their scholastic theological prowess.[96] In plate 39, Van het Verval tot Kettery [On the Decline into Heresy], De Hooghe staged all sorts

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95   De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 178. De Hooghe may have gotten this idea from Flavius Josephus, who tells a more elaborate version of the story of the Israelite men who fell for the women of Midian in Numbers 25. Josephus adds that a certain Zambrias – who is stabbed in the biblical account – accused Moses of exercising tyranny over the Israelites under the pretence that it was warranted by divine laws; see Flavius Josephus, *De Oude Geschiedenis van de Joden*, transl. F.J.A.M Meijer and M.A. Wes (Amsterdam: Ambo, 2005), 375.

96   For the critique against and use of scholastic theology see Willem J. van Asselt., *Introduction to Reformed Scholasticism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Reformation Heritage Books, 2011).

of conditions that favoured the rise of heresy and damaged true religion. In figure (H) (on the right in the etching) he pokes fun at the pedantic academic theologian, depicted as a dark figure, peglegged and half-blinded with a blindfold, carrying traps and snares and crowned with a little writing board exhibiting such theologians favourite word, ERGO, which they invariably use to prove some point or other. According to De Hooghe, their academic scholasticism had originated in the Catholic university of the Sorbonne, but his repudiation extends to all scholastic theologians, who pedantically use their pretended knowledge and complicated theological terms and rituals to impress and seduce naïve believers:

> Fig. H. The SCHOLASTICISM of the teachers of superfluous science, with their high ranks and (high) bonnets. […] He crept out of the Parisian Sorbonne, wandering from one University to another, with his subtle definitions, distinctions, exceptions, and a thousand other technical terms, proliferating out of all control. Like the sellers of rat- and mousetraps, they set their evil snares and tripwires to catch naive souls, seducing their intellects and hearts with unknown words and whims.[97]

Not only does De Hooghe criticise this behaviour when it is used to influence people without formal education, he also scoffs at the often heated culture of disputation that obsesses over matters of definition or other technicalities, in conflicts that metastasise into ecclesiastical strife and schism. In De Hooghe's words: 'the first danger for the church came from theological chicanery, or the sophisticated scholastic knowledge of God, which clouded and obscured the will of the Father from his children. They read any book but the Bible'. Moreover, such sophistic disputes had distracted pious believers and had ruined the true Church.[98]

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97 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 294, 295. 'De Schoolhazery der hoog Getytelde en Gekapte Leeraars der onnutte Wetenschappen. [...] Hy is uyt de Sorbonne van Parys gekroopen, lopende van de ene Hooge School na de andere, met zyne Spitszinnige bepalingen, verdelingen, uytzonderingen, en duyzend andere, sporeloos aan een gesmeede Kunstwoorden, als de Rotten- en Muyzeval Verkopers, open zettende hunne looze Vallen en Strikgarens, om de Zielen te knappen, derzelver Herssenen en Gemoederen verlydende met onbekende Woorden en Grillen'.
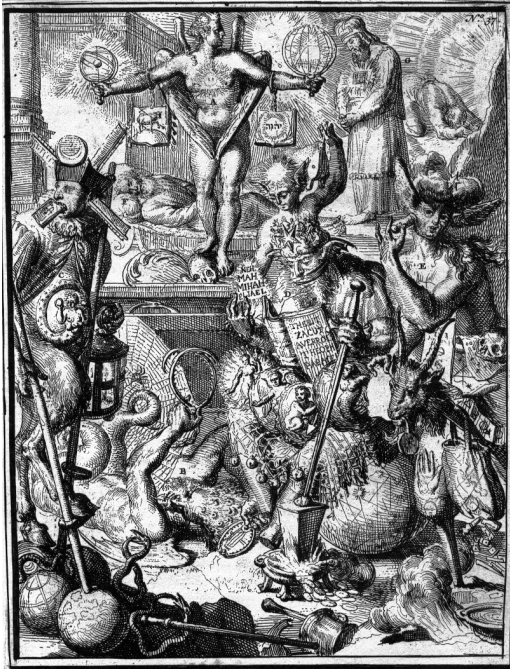
98 Idem, 261, 300.

Fig. 159. De Hooghe, Plate 37, Van de Waarheyd en hare Vyanden [On the Truth and her Adversaries]

In etching 37, Van de Waarheyd en hare Vyanden [On the Truth and her Adversaries], the disputatious theologian is also present in the figure of Discussion and Argument (C on the left), situated among an array of Enemies of the Truth. Wearing the bonnet of a doctor of theology, this figure keeps debating religious matters, doubting all beliefs. Balancing on the stilts of craftiness and arguments, he cannot keep his equilibrium for long, and ultimately he must crash to the ground.[99]

According to De Hooghe these theological discussions and disputes had serious effects: as with discord, heresy increased and there were even outright schisms. Clerics, due to their depravity and lust for power, were the main cause of churchly discord and schism.[100] This accusation is supported with plentiful examples, for instance in chapter 42, entitled Van der Kerken Tweedracht [On Churchly Discord]. Here, in the plate with which the chapter opens, De Hooghe depicted two fighting rams representing the Early Church and the Catholic Church, respectively, crushing the ram of the Orthodox Churches.

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99   Idem, 280, 281.
100 Idem, 329.

Fig. 160. De Hooghe, Plate 42, Van der Kerken Tweedracht [On Churchly Discord]

De Hooghe's comment on these animals is telling. Although the rams symbolise the different churches, his specific criticism is that their leaders had tried to gain more power than is compatible with true godliness. De Hooghe concludes: 'from early on such was the abominable state of Christian teachers, which will, in smaller or bigger magnitude, never cease to exist'.[101] Chapter 45, Van de Afgescheurde Kerken [On the Schismatic Churches], starts with the same observation that there are inevitably going to be schisms because priests and prelates always want to rule over ever more people, never being satisfied with their current positions or the extent of their power. Because this form of misguided learning is presented as a perennial phenomenon, we can conclude that De Hooghe directed his criticism not only at the polemicists of antiquity and the medieval scholastics but equally at those participating in the rivalry between the Voetians and Cocceians schools that had caused so much trouble in the last decades of the seventeenth century.

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101 Idem, 311.

6.5 True pastors

Although De Hooghe emphasises the role of priests and ministers in religious decay throughout the ages in *Hieroglyphica*, he is not entirely dismissive towards the clerical profession, since 'no sheep can be pastured without a shepherd'.[102] De Hooghe even provides historical examples of good priests, as in his account of the God-fearing priests of the Israelites, who restrained their congregations when the people wanted to follow their base desires. Such good leaders were recognised by their willingness to sacrifice themselves for the wellbeing of their flock, and through this behaviour showed themselves to comport themselves unlike more typical clerics, whom De Hooghe believed to be inclined heavily towards self-interest, lust for power, and greed. Moreover, virtuous leaders should abstain from any form of compulsion, as too many evil clerics had used violence to persecute pious believers. Might one of their sheep wander off, they should not react like cruel drovers, but use only gentle persuasion to direct their sheep towards improvement.[103]

Fig. 161. De Hooghe, De Hervormde Godsdienst en haar ambten [Reformed Religion and its offices], detail from Plate 61

De Hooghe's ideal of spiritual leadership is depicted in plate 61, Van de Gereformeerde Godsdienst [On the Reformed Religion] (see fig. 97 in chapter 4). Perhaps after all, one might think, he is making partisan use of the discourse of anticlericalism.[104] In such a view, the spiritual leaders of erroneous religions could be pictured as evil, even if within the true Reformed Church they can function according to the ordinance of the Bible.[105] Such blame directed towards false (especially Catholic) Churches, along with the extolling of the Reformed Church's virtues, is present in De Hooghe's *Spiegel van Staat*. In this work on the

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102 Idem, 436.

103 Idem, 150, 178, 193, 275, 288, 291, 357-361,

104 Richard Muller, *Post-Reformation reformed dogmatics. The rise and development of reformed orthodoxy, ca. 1520 to ca. 1725*, 55, 110, 156, 167, 171.

105 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 435-441. See also Van 't Hof, *Radicale, partisane ou idéaliste?*

political constitution of the Dutch Republic, he praised the Reformed Church as the continuation of the Apostolic Church. As we have seen, a church could receive no greater compliment.[106] In plate 61 of *Hieroglyphica* De Hooghe endorses this view, arguing that the church's organisation was based on the apostolic example. This organisation is formed by the three figures behind the figure of Reformed religion, representing the offices, respectively, of ministers, of elders and of deacons. This image recalls De Hooghe's depiction of the situation in the Early Church. As opposed to the corrupted leaders we encountered earlier, the elderly figures presented here are 'true servants of God's word, their hearts full of the Holy Spirit, free from clerical hierarchy, partisanship, improper ambitions and avarice'. The Waldensian candlestick, once held by the Waldensians as precursors of the Reformation, is now in the hands of the Dutch Reformed Church.[107]

De Hooghe leaves the authority in dogmatic matters to the synods, under supervision of the state. In chapter 61 figure F denotes the National Synod of Dordrecht (1618/1619), the council that condemned the Arminian, Remonstrant view on predestination. De Hooghe respectfully calls this figure an 'honourable and wise, divine woman, with no intention of ruling over people'. She deliberates carefully, uses the Hebrew text of the Old Testament and the original writings of the apostles and Church Fathers, and the sieve in her hand will sift the wheat from the chaff. In her lap we find a 'steal hammer with diamond nails of the Divine Election and Predestination, triumphant over the Quarrellers', a reference to the topic of predestination. De Hooghe ends his explanation by stating that this council had truly been made up 'of all peoples, who had sent their brightest minds'.[108]

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106   Romeyn de Hooghe, *Spiegel van Staat* I (Amsterdam, 1706), 60, 71, 125.
107   See also chapter 4 above, figs. 98-101.
108   De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 435-438.

Fig. 162. De Hooghe, Nationale Synode van Dordrecht, en de Commissaris Politycq [National Synod of Dordrecht and the Political Commissioner], detail of Plate 61

The supervising state is present in figure G, standing for the Commissaris Politycq, the representative of the political authorities present at the Synod of Dordt.[109] The political supervisors were tasked with opening the meeting, keeping it up to speed, and ensuring no political issues were debated, nor things that a provincial synod could deal with. Furthermore, they decided on the voting rights of foreign theologians and were to make sure that Church policy would not contradict state policy, for instance in the sensitive matter of the traditional rights of the nobility over Church appointments. In all these aspects they probably had a huge influence on what took place during the synod. De Hooghe describes this figure as the 'most powerful' of those present, responsible for the reception and approval of the council's decisions as well as the punishment of 'disturbers of the peace of the church'. But, the legend continues, the Reformed Church remains free from 'the tyranny of high priests or papal power; because otherwise the Synodal Decree would only differ in name' [that is, from its Catholic predecessor].[110] In De Hooghe's image, the authority to decide on dogmatic differences lies with the church synods and the state.

At this point we could conclude that De Hooghe was writing propaganda: his anticlericalism was used only against 'other' religions, whereas within his own denomination all leadership functioned in an exemplary fashion. This inference

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109 Johannes Theodoor de Visser, *Kerk en Staat*, vol. 2 (Leiden 1926-1627) 485-489. See also G. Groenhuis, *De Predikanten. De sociale positie van de gereformeerde predikanten in de Republiek der Verenigde Nederlanden voor ± 1700* (Groningen: Wolters-Noordhoff, 1977), 26-29.

110 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 439. 'Gelyk God zelf in zyn Woord aan ons voorgaat, latende naauw de overeenstemmende getuygenissen van de noodzakelyke Kennisse Gods, Christus Menschwording, Lyden, Opstanding, H. Geest, Heerlykheyd enz. …'

is partly correct, but there are a few things complicating such a black-and-white conclusion. First – as argued in the previous chapter – De Hooghe's image offers an idealistic vision of the leaders of his church. The image in plate 61 present a picture that differed completely from what was actual going on within the Dutch Reformed Church.[111] Polemical exchange, not contained within the halls of the academy, was brought before a wider public via the media. Ministers were sacked for being too Cocceian or too Voetian, and the appointments of ministers and professors of theology were based as much on the theological as on the political allegiance of the specific minister. Sources tell us about the recurring hatred and malice running through the process of the ministerial appointments, and the sharp invective used in pamphlets exchanged between the opposing theological camps. To avoid disturbances, local governments saw to it that a balanced proportion in the appointment of ministers of Cocceian and Voetian to urban congregations; every city should have such an equilibrium of ministers. Nevertheless, as the minutes of the church council meetings show, this was not enough to quiet the steady spate of quarrels and polemical discussions. So, then, the Reformed Church was a far cry from the paragon of a united Church free from partisanship and mutual discord. Voetians and Cocceians were everything but the 'two sisters' working harmoniously together; on the contrary, they would slander each other on every possible occasion.[112]

Second, De Hooghe's idealised image mirrors the critique of the function, power and influence of church leaders, as analysed above. Throughout *Hieroglyphica*, he shows how priests, time and again, gained wealth and influence by deceiving their flocks and threatening them into obedience. In this picture, the ministers, elders and deacons of the Dutch Reformed Church, however, are presented as being diametrically opposed in their behaviour: they are 'true servants of God's word, their hearts full of the Holy Spirit, free from clerical hierarchy, partisanship, improper ambitions and avarice'. This characterisation is emphasised visually by De Hooghe's positioning: the figure of the Church stands in the centre of the composition, with the elderly leaders occupying a place in the background. It is my contention that the images are intended to put forward not an actual representation of the current situation, but rather the truly ideal religious ministry. Unlike thinkers like Gottfried Arnold, Romeyn de Hooghe did not believe that true religion functioned only outside institutional churches, and he did not turn away from his own Church. He did, however, envisage an ongoing reformation of Church leaders. So yes, De Hooghe presents the Dutch Reformed Church as the church closest to the apostolic ideal, but it would be so only after it effected a

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111   See chapter 4 of this thesis and Van 't Hof, *Radicale, partisane ou idéaliste?*
112   De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 435, 436. See also chapter 4.2 above.

radical and ongoing reformation of its leaders. They should abandon all ambitions of political influence and should foster harmony in the Church and piety in the hearts of the faithful. This reformation into a group of modest and truly pastoral shepherds would also affect their treatment of dogmatic differences. These should not be discussed down to every last detail, as this preoccupation with minutiae would only produce strife over the correct interpretation of the scriptures. Instead of instigating religious schism with theological quarrels, ministers should focus on unity, tolerance and piety. *Hieroglyphica's* omnipresent priestcraft – present from the very beginning and extending even into Protestant religions – contains a warning and an exhortation that Reformed leaders not step into this ruinous pitfall.

6.6 Rethinking the role of the laity

Whilst opinions about the role and authority of the clergy were changing, so were ideas about the responsibilities and duties of simple believers. Although formally Protestant churches were based on the principle of 'the priesthood of all believers', in reality the priesthood remained quite firmly in the hands of the ministers.[113] In tandem with his criticism of the improper power exercised by the clergy, De Hooghe reproaches the faithful for providing their leaders with the opportunity to gain such authority. In many chapters the common people are presented as thoughtless, unreasoning fools who, driven by fear, are susceptible to the tricks of their leaders.[114] In plate 15 this vulnerable and blameworthy attitude is represented by a frightened Hare (C), who, together with other naïve and stupid figures, worships a dark and terrible woman denoting Superstition.[115] Another example is found in the figure of the Dazed Mind, who though not as timid as the Hare is also too frightened to stand up against his oppressors. Having been muzzled by a bridle and bowed down under a heavy yoke, he suffers in silence.[116]

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113 G. Groenhuis, *De Predikanten,* 29-38.

114 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 267, 425. This combination of fear and stupidity recurs in *Hieroglyphica*, present for instance in chapter 37, where De Hooghe states that witch-hunts could exist only where people were frightened and ignorant.

115 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 153,154.

116 Idem, 291.
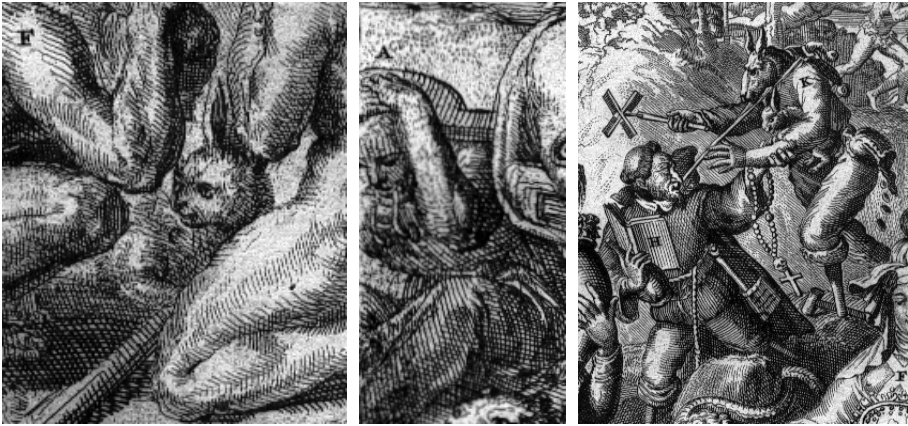
Fig. 163. De Hooghe, Haas [Hare], detail of Plate 15
Fig. 164. De Hooghe, Verzuft gemoed [A Dazed Mind], detail of Plate 39
Fig. 165. De Hooghe, Der Misleyders Spooreloosheyd [Lost by Misguidance], detail of Plate 47

Whereas in some instances De Hooghe's tone is understanding towards this human condition of fear, he becomes more critical over the course of the book, for example in chapter 47. In figure H a cleric is berated for deceiving people for his own gain, but in figure K, the silly 'victim' is also called to account. This figure, with a human body and an animal's head, is something between a sheep and a donkey, symbolis of recklessness and stupidity. In his hands he holds a toy windmill, denoting his instability and his susceptibility to fall for clever seducers, his tendency to move with any and every passing breeze without exercising independent judgement on his own. For good measure he carries a hare in his bosom. His neck is tied to the mouth of the seducer by a rope, a trope we saw earlier in a more general representation of a religious leader (D). The gravity of the situation is displayed in figure L, in which Adam and Eve are being driven out of Paradise. In his explanatory text De Hooghe points to the danger of stupidity, doubt and fickleness, which had led Adam and Eve to succumb to the temptations of the Devil.[117]

The expected antidote for stupidity is logically found in the education of the common believers, so that they are made capable of thinking for themselves and so can make wise and thoughtful decisions. This desired norm is immediately connected, of course, to the sharing of knowledge by the religious elite to lift people out of their ignorance through education. This emphasis on the spread of the knowledge of religion and the Bible was found in the teachings of theologians and ministers, amongst others. In the second half of the seventeenth century the Dutch Reformed Church had invested

117 Idem, 349, 350.

heavily in the teaching of the catechism, both orally in the regular Sunday-afternoon services and in the production of commentaries on the Heidelberg Catechism aimed at the laity.[118] Coccejus taught that the task of ministers was to educate and supervise their flocks in Bible study. The sect of the Hebrews, who required their followers to learn Hebrew so they could read the original biblical texts of the Old Testament, took an extreme position, but more mainstream Cocceian ministers like Salomon van Til and Johannes van der Waeyen also exhorted believers to devote serious study to the Bible.[119]

Hieroglyphica encourages individual research into religious matters and the formation of personal judgements about them; indeed this aim, as much as that of providing artists with models, was probably one of De Hooghe's chief intentions for his book.[120] In chapter 20, Van de Voorzegging, en Vervulling der Tyden [On Prophecy, and the Fullness of Time], he fervently endorses the Cocceian insistence on the entitlement of the laity to research scripture, and even to use the 'Cocceian key' for advanced exegesis and so read it in the emblematic, 'hieroglyphic' mode advocated by the more baroque followers of Coccejus:

> The Sacred Histories tell us that in time the seed of Abraham will experience a wondrously rich progress, under a free constitution, dependent on God's direction only. ... In these days we actually see this prophecy fulfilled, as it is still true and fitting, that now also the faithful are free to research the prophesies and textual references in the prefigurations of Moses (whose intended meaning is found in Christ), and, aided as if by the Golden Key of the Apostles, to rummage through the smallest and darkest corners; to perfect the image of Christ in filling in the collected sketches and

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118 W. Verboom, *De catechese van de Reformatie en de Nadere Reformatie* (Amsterdam: Buijten en Schipperheijn, 1986); W. Verboom, 'De catechese van kerk, gezin en school in de reformatorische traditie (zestiende - achttiende eeuw)', in *Leren geloven in de Lage Landen*, ed L.F. Groenendijk and J.C. Sturm (Amsterdam: Afdeling Historische Pedagogiek Vrije Universiteit, 1993), 33-56; W. Verboom, 'De Heidelbergse Catechismus in Nederland', in *Het troostboek van de kerk. Over de Heidelbergse Catechismus*, ed W. van 't Spijker et al. (Houten: Den Hertog, 2005) 151-168; W. Verboom, *Het ene lied en de vele stemmen. 52 catechismuspreken en -verklaringen door de eeuwen heen* (Heerenveen: Groen, 2013); Joke Spaans, *Newer Protestantism*, forthcoming.

119 Michiel Wielema, *Ketters en verlichters*, 19,20.

120 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 423. De Hooghe praises the Jansenists for their insistence on Bible study for the laity; *Hieroglyphica*, 430.

contours, against Erasmians, Socinians, Grotians, etc.[121]

A form of symbolism frequently used in *Hieroglyphica* and in other etchings of De Hooghe is the cloth of darkness, under which people were held in the dark in religious matters, only to be lifted when they start to think for themselves and thus discover true religion. In Plate 30 (fig. 39 in chapter 3) this lifting of the cloth indicates the understanding of the true word of God, and in chapter 57 a similar metaphor, in which blinders are cast off, is specifically used in reference to the common people in the build-up to the Reformation.[122] The theme is predominant in other works by De Hooghe as well (figs 166-168). Thus in De Hooghe's artistic oeuvre the theme of the disclosure of religious knowledge plays a significant part, and its importance culminates in *Hieroglyphica*. One of the possible interpretations of *Hieroglyphica* is to regard it as a book in which De Hooghe reveals the true nature of religion by explaining the meaning of symbolic 'hieroglyphs' that contained secrets that true believers had to discover for themselves.[123] As with the hieroglyphs present in the Bible, in *Hieroglyphica* ancient knowledge is not be withheld but instead is to be generously passed on to students.[124] This statement refers of course to the artistic know-how of De Hooghe but also, obviously, to the book's subject – the history of the decline and reformation of religions – in a work that fed into the popularity of emblems and hieroglyphs, with their characteristic double meanings, for a wide audience that was 'literate' in the reading of such combinations of text and image.[125]

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121 Idem, 187-188: 'De tyd bewyst, volgens de H. Historien, een wonderlyk weelige voortgang in 't Zaad Abrahams, en een gans vry bestier, niet als van Gods wenk afhankelyk. ... En zulks wordt nu vrywel uytgearbeyd, want het waar en betamelyk blijft, dat ook nu de gelovigen openstaat, van de schaduwen van *Mozes* (welker lichaam in Christus gevonden word) de voorbeduyding en zamenhang te onderzoeken en als door eene Gouden Sleutel der Apostelen geholpen, nu ook door te snuffelen de minste en donkerste hoekjens; om de schildery van *Christus* uyt alle de toevloeyende scherzen en omtrekken schoonder op te maken, tegen Erasmianen, Socinianen, Grotianen etc.'

122 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica,* 247, 409.

123 See chapter 2 above for further context on the hieroglyphic genre.

124 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 20

125 De Hooghe is very vague in his own description of what these hieroglyphs actually are; see above, chapter 2. For interest in esoteric themes amongst the elite, see Wouter Hanegraaff, *Esotericism and the Academy. Rejected knowledge in Western culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012). For the ideal of bringing humanist learning to a wider audience than princes and courtiers: Robertson, *The case for the Enlightenment*, 36.

Fig. 166. De Hooghe, frontispiece for Hieronymus Sweerts, *Innerlycke ziel-tochten op 't H. avontmaal en andere voorvallende gelegentheden* (Amsterdam: H. Sweerts, 1673)

Fig. 167. De Hooghe, frontispiece for *Alle de Voornaamste Historiën des Ouden en Nieuwen Testaments. Verbeeld in uytsteekende Konst-Platen*, vol. 1 (Amsterdam: J. Lindenberg, 1703)

Fig. 168. De Hooghe, frontispiece for Gottfried Arnold, *Historie der Kerken en Ketteren. Van den Beginnen des Nieuwen Testaments tot aan het Jaar onzes Heeren 1688* vol 1 (Amsterdam: Sebastiaan Petzold, 1701)

Fig. 169. De Hooghe, dove lifting cloth of the earth, detail from Plate 30

De Hooghe's emphasis on the education and edification of lay believers and his attention to religious truths regarded as universal, rather simple and, moreover, knowable by all humans indicate that the role of lay people had increased, and had done so at the expense of learned clerics and intellectual scholars. At the same time, as analysed in chapter 3 above, the emphasis on the heart and conscience suggests a turn to the individual, who was deemed capable of receiving the signs of the Holy Spirit without the intermediary of a minister or priest.[126]

Still, it cannot be said that this period gave expression to a modern democratic ideal in which every poor beggar should be educated and fully emancipated. Even in more enlightened circles one would have encountered a sceptical attitude towards the religious abilities of the common people. It was not believed that enlightened ideas would really work with the uneducated majority, that they would somehow be able to shake off superstition and become enlightened. True religion, so beautiful and delicate, was not for the (unwashed) masses.[127] This view is also made visual several times in *Hieroglyphica*, for instance in the animals at the feet of the religious impostor in Plate 59 (fig. 153) or in Plate 2 (fig. 170), the beastly figure M, Dulle Woeste Koppigheyd [Mad Wild Stubborness], described as corresponding to 'Onleerzame Verstanden' [Uninstructive minds]. Yet those capable of learning should be encouraged, and the rest should at least be kept in a relation of proper obedience to their betters.[128] The examples given of religious training – for instance the lady in Plate 39 (D) – are all self-taught, meaning that only the burghers who could spare the money and the time to study could rise to the point where they would have acquired theological knowledge and be capable of articulating individual opinions.

The advantage of the white lie: moral citizens
Along with De Hooghe's aversion to priestcraft and the empowerment of simple believers, he simultaneously engages with the appreciation of 'pious fraud'. Whereas someone like John Toland (1670-1722) argued for an exposure of the conspiracy between politicians and priests so that it could be abolished, an opposite opinion also gained ground, one that identified the indispensability and usefulness of deceit. The label given to this phenomenon was 'pious fraud'.[129] The new approach was linked to the emergence of a distinction between 'high'

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126 See also above chapter 3.

127 Peter van Rooden, 'Vroomheid, macht, Verlichting,' *De Achttiende Eeuw* 32 (2000): 57-75, there 64,65; Harrison, *'Religion' and the religions*, 85-87.

128 Ritchie Robertson, 'Religion and the Enlightenment: A Review Essay,' *German History* 25.3 (2007): 422-431, there, 430.

129 Champion, *The Pillars of priestcraft shaken*, 83.

and 'low' forms of religion. As Peter Harrison explains in his *'Religion' and the religions in the English Enlightenment,* the priestcraft accusation met with strong resistance from the clergy, who in turn found powerful support from the political elite. Thus there developed a variation on the theory in which true religion was too complex and not concrete enough for laypeople to either understand or to practise. Therefore priests had chosen to educate the masses only in the external elements of religion. The essential core of true belief was transmitted only via the intellectual elite.[130] Such ideas gained ground amongst radical deist thinkers, who not only reduced the essential elements of religion, this 'core' transmitted amongst priests, to a very limited number of elementary dogmas, but also began to view religion as a vehicle not so much of divine truth but of civil obedience.[131] If state security and societal order required it, then fraud should be deployed.

In Dutch Reformed circles similar ideas gained ground. Lieuwe van Aitzema boldly stated that religion was 'nothing but doing good and avoiding evil'.[132] For Van Aitzema only the Apostles' Creed, with its twelve plain articles, provided the basis for the faith.[133] Spinoza went even further. For him the question was no longer whether the truth of established dogma was a precondition for true religion, but whether a religion made people display the desired behaviour. Therefore devotional writings were useful only if they engendered a civilised lifestyle in their readers.[134] This particular appreciation of clerical deceit profoundly changed the anticlerical discourse of the seventeenth century: figures previously portrayed as evil religious deceivers were now seen as religious lawgivers who had turned an undisciplined mass into a civilised society. For Van Aitzema the ultimate argument against anti-Catholicism was that the medieval Catholic Church had civilised the barbarians. The changing opinion about clerical deceit also indicated a changing conception of religion, especially in the sense that it was regarded as a vehicle used for social political order.[135]

In *Hieroglyphica* we find both the idea that clerics were the cause of religious decay and the concept of invented religion as a means of social improvement, indicating the flexibility with which topics were approached. Throughout *Hieroglyphica* De Hooghe points to the stupidity of the masses, who were unable to grasp divine truths. Plate

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130 Harrison, *Religion and the religions*, 85-96.

131 Ibidem, and again, Spinoza and Hobbes.

132 Lieuwe van Aitzema, *Saken van Staet en Oorlogh, II (1633-1644)* ('s Gravenhage: Johan Veely, Johan Tongerloo and Jasper Doll, 1669), 673. On Aitzema see Gees van der Plaat, *Eendracht als opdracht. Lieuwe van Aitzema's bijdrage aan het publieke debat in de zeventiende-eeuwse Republiek* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2003).

133 J.D.M. Cornelissen, 'Lieuwe van Aitzema en Hugo de Groot,' *Bijdragen voor de geschiedenis der Nederlanden*, 1 (1946): 47-71, digression on De Groot in *Saken* II (1633-1644), 873-875.

134 Spinoza, *Theologisch-politiek traktaat*, 159, 328.

135 On Aitzema's religious views see Joke Spaans, *Repenser la Réformation*, 232-241.

2, Rakende de Naam en Eerste Gang van de Hieroglyphica of Beeldspraak-Konst in het gemeen [On the Name and First Use of Hieroglyphs or Allegorical Language in general] clearly distinguishes the elite from the uneducated in society. The upper half of the image shows the priests, scientists and kings, who are indeed deceiving the masses but do so for good political reasons. That their imposture serves a public purpose becomes clear in the figures in the lower part of the image, who are stubborn and dumb. Such people, for whom Cain is a representative precursor, are filled with base lusts and desires. It is naïve to think that they could be properly educated. For 'those people hieroglyphs are only a means to create fear for the present and the future, but they [these people] are not to be recruited as students'. Besides, as De Hooghe indicates with his allegories in the same chapter, the proper understanding of the natural and religious meaning of hieroglyphs required lots of time, energy and hard work – it would be unfeasible to expect such effort from most people, who in their 'laziness' despised philosophy and science.[136]

Fig. 170. De Hooghe, Plate 2, Rakende de Naam en Eerste Gang van de Hieroglyphica of Beeldspraak-Konst in het gemeen [On the Name and First Use of Hieroglyphs or Allegorical Language in general]

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136 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 30.

To govern the rough multitude of people and influence their behaviour, religion — as a political and social construct — was absolutely necessary, as they would never understand the true secrets of nature and the divine.[137] In chapter 1 of *Hieroglyphica*, De Hooghe had already exposed religious lies but had judged them as being appropriate for political purposes. For if the masses would be without religion, they would no longer fear the wrath of the gods, and this attitude would in turn instigate 'perjury, poisoning, theft and anger'.[138] The same duality is found in De Hooghe's judgement of priests:

> These heathen priests are villains, but we have to be grateful to them as, thanks to their imposture, many dangerous murders, cases of poisoning and other atrocities have been prevented.[139]

One of the chapters in which this appreciation of religion as a watchdog over societal morals is prominently present is the chapter containing De Hooghe's description of Islam. Although he does not follow some of his contemporaries in appreciating Muhammad as a lawgiver, De Hooghe takes a very approving stance about the effective moral discipline that exists within Islam. Muslims are sober (alcohol consumption is forbidden in Islam), hardworking, loyal, modest and trustworthy, and De Hooghe believes these traits should be an inspiration for Christians, who tended to be garrulous and given to alcohol abuse. This moral behaviour had to do with their religion's teaching about their salvation. In Islam, as De Hooghe had it, people needed only to behave well to achieve salvation – an easy road to get there, of course it seemed, and an attractive way of converting people to Islam. But De Hooghe also emphasises the practical and positive aspects of this belief: it made Muslims genuinely aware of their behavior, and as a result they were obedient to both political and parental authority.[140]

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137 Idem, 67.

138 Idem, 58, 76.

139 Idem, 34.

140 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 338. This last point about parents might have been especially attractive to De Hooghe, who had major difficulties with his daughter running away with a man whom he did not approve of. See, for the account of De Hooghe's daughter eloping, see De Haas, *Wie De Wereld Bestiert, Weet Ik Niet.*

6.7 Concluding remarks

From the perspective of an Enlightenment framework the degree of anticlericalism in De Hooghe's work is not easy to categorise. At first sight *Hieroglyphica* seems especially to chide Catholic priests and to laud the leaders of the Dutch Reformed Church as the heirs to the apostolic legacy. But the topic of deceitful priests runs continuously through the book, which considers priestcraft as it has infected religions of all times and places (including Protestantism) and features it in the frontispiece. This prominence functions as a cautionary background which keeps alerting Dutch Reformed leaders to the ongoing danger of priestcraft in every religion. Moreover, like many of his contemporaries, De Hooghe introduces the idea that the role of Church leaders and theologians should be refashioned – reformed – into one in which they serve as true spiritual shepherds who encourage believers to lead pious and tolerant lives. De Hooghe denounces detailed dogmatic debates as instances of selfish pedantry that cause schisms; decisions in the field of such debates should be taken by synods under the auspices of states. Believers in their turn should increase their biblical knowledge so that, instead of relying on priests, ministers and theologians, they can decide on spiritual and religious matters for themselves. As for those without the capacity or the means to engage in study, religion should serve as a moral guide and a bridle to check evil passions. This goal even allows De Hooghe to praise 'pious frauds'. This attention towards moral behaviour forms another current running throughout *Hieroglyphica*, as will be discussed in the next chapter. Although many of these anticlerical opinions are usually framed as radical, *Hieroglyphica* shows that this was probably not the case. De Hooghe's approach to clerical power is flexible and sometimes ambivalent, combining orthodox and 'radical' aspects seemingly unproblematically. On the whole, De Hooghe aims his attacks at the abuse of the clerical office, especially at all forms of power-grabbing and intellectual pride that stand in the way of the proper pastoral functions of the clergy.

The Fundamentals of True Religion and 'the playground of the well-minded'

The previous chapters of this thesis analysed *Hieroglyphica* as a book that aimed to educate its readers by presenting them with a historical narrative, and examined its engagement with the seventeenth-century historical and critical discourse on religion as manifested in topics such as where people found religion, the universality of religious corruption, and the issue of clerical authority versus lay agency. Generally, De Hooghe's historical account pays considerable attention to religious decline, corruption, superstition, philosophical reasoning and ignorance. We saw how De Hooghe combined a notion of sacred history (the history of sacred religion, opposed to other, false religions) with a more general historical approach in which we encountered his abhorrence of religion's scholastic disputes and schismatic conflicts and his emphasis on the morality and pious behaviour of religious leaders and the common faithful alike. The extent of his criticism notwithstanding, De Hooghe does not reject religion out of hand. We are left with the question of what and how De Hooghe believes religion should be.

This final chapter deals with the actual content of true religion as it is presented in *Hieroglyphica*. Befitting the loose style of the book – an 'artist's impression' rather than a dogmatic theological work – De Hooghe offers no clear-cut description of what true religion consists of. But throughout the book he makes remarks and presents images that offer insights into his ideas about the fundamental doctrines of true religion. On a few occasions he actually lists his 'required' doctrines and in other instances he emphasises specific aspects of true religion. Furthermore, De Hooghe in certain passages engages with much-debated topics, but elsewhere he passes over them quite easily. Back in chapter 3 there were references to the core tenets of faith, but these remarks were connected to the idea of a natural religion and were believed to be within reach of everybody, without the need for revelation. Now we are faced with the question of which doctrines De Hooghe considers necessary for a correct belief in the one true God and ultimately for salvation – beyond the general tenets of 'natural religion'. Answering this question

will determine how radical or orthodox *Hieroglyphica* in fact is.

The distinction between necessary and non-necessary articles of faith had a long tradition in Christianity. The apostle Paul had written that not all doctrines are equally important.[1] Early Christian authors also articulated the concept of more and less important dogmas. In his *De Principiis* [On First principles] the Church Father Origen (185-253 AD) distinguishes elementary dogmas that were essential to one's faith, and understandable for simple believers, from the more complicated dogmas intended for the 'wise and learned to explore'.[2] In the Early Modern period the distinction between the fundamental and the non-fundamental teachings of the Christian faith came to play a central role in debates about religious concord. Taking the lead in re-developing the concept of fundamental doctrines was Hugo Grotius (1583-1645). The Dutch jurist advocated the position that whereas on non-essential matters different opinions could exist amongst members of the same Church, there should be consensus on essential matters; universal consensus on the fundamentals of faith would be possible if Christians could only return to the purity of the First Church.[3] The theologian and philosopher Desiderius Erasmus (1466-1536) also made a distinction between *fundamenta*, or essential doctrines, on which believers should agree, and *adiaphora*, matters of indifference, on which one could agree to differ with others. Contrary to the basic teachings contained in the various credal formulations from late antiquity, *adiaphora* in general concerned matters not connected to salvation, such as dietary restrictions, family law and the monastic Rules, but also ceremonial customs. Erasmus, however, extended the category of *adiaphora* beyond ceremonial issues and into matters of doctrine, constantly aiming at an irenicist goal of a broad Church. He argued that only fundamental doctrines – combined with moral encouragement – should be addressed in sermons; *adiaphora* should be discussed outside the hearing

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1 Paul's tolerance in matters of less importance in his letter to the Romans is famous (Rom. 14:1-23). Moreover, in his letter he continues to emphasise the basic convictions of faith. In his first letter to the Corinthians he writes that "I resolved to know nothing … except Jesus Christ and him crucified" (1 Cor. 2:2) and "For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures" (15:3,4). In Galatians Paul mentions time and again that it is faith in Jesus Christ and nothing else that saves man from his sins (Gal. 2:16-21). Also the apostle John wrote in his first epistle that "the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin" (1:7); "Whoever believes in him is not condemned" (3:18a).

2 Everett Ferguson, *The Rule of Faith, a Guide* (Eugene: Cascade Books, 2015), 41-44.

3 Grotius wrote several irenic treatises, amongst them the unpublished *Miletius*. On irenism see G.H.M. Posthumus Meyjes, 'Protestants irenisme in de 16e en eerste helft van de 17e eeuw', *Nederlands Theologisch Tijdschrift* 36 (1982): 205-222; Edwin Rabbie, 'Het irenisme van Hugo de Groot', in *Jaarboek van de Maatschappij der Nederlandse Letterkunde te Leiden* 1992/1993 (Leiden, z.p. 1994), 55-72. See also Freya Sierhuis, *The Literature of the Arminian Controversy. Religion, Politics and the Stage in the Dutch Republic* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).

of the simple public. The famous irenic motto became: *In necessariis unitas, in dubiis libertas, in omnibus caritas* (in necessary things unity; in uncertain things freedom; in everything compassion).[4] A similar irenic goal was found in the Hartlib Circle, a group of several British thinkers named after the scientist Samuel Hartlib (1600-1662) who were involved in an effort to reunite the Protestant churches.[5]

However peaceable this aim, debate about *which* doctrines should then be considered 'fundamental' started almost immediately. A telling example is the disagreement between Erasmus and Luther over the matter of free will. They differed not only with regard to the theological case itself, but also about whether or not the issue was fundamental. For Luther the doctrine of free will – or actually the lack of human free will – was a fundamental doctrine. Erasmus disagreed.[6] In Germany a similar discussion reached its zenith with a controversy between Philipp Melanchton (1497-1560) and Matthias Flacius Illyricus (1520-1575). Melanchton signed the *Leipzig Interim* (1548), a document restoring certain Catholic ceremonies and doctrines. He defended his position by characterising the debated issues as 'adiaphora', and was of the opinion that difficult times demanded that people stick together on necessary matters and be lenient on things of lesser importance.[7] Many strict Lutherans, amongst them Flacius and Calvin, accused Melanchton of betrayal and giving in to popish idolatry.[8] In the British Reformation of the mid-sixteenth century the varying opinions on adiaphora resulted in the 'Vestiarian Controversy', in which debate swirled around vestments and many other Anglican traditions, ceremonies and doctrines.[9]

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4   Gary Remer, *Humanism and the Rhetoric of Toleration* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996), 50-54, 71-76, 118. For the history of the motto see: A. Eekhof, *De zinspreuk 'In necessariis unitas, in non necessariis libertas, in utrisque caritas': eenheid in het noodige, vrijheid in het niet noodige, in beide de liefde : oorsprong, beteekenis en verbreiding* (Leiden: A.W. Sijthoff, 1931).

5   Sarah Mortimer, *Reason and Religion in the English Revolution. The challenge of Socinianism*. On the Dutch reception of the ideas of the Hartlib Circle: E.G.E. van der Wall, 'De mystieke chiliast Petrus Serrarius (1600-1669) en zijn wereld' (PhD dissertation, University of Leiden, 1987).

6   Remer, *Humanism and the Rhetoric of Toleration*, 54-56. See also Johannes Trapman, 'Grotius en Erasmus', in *Hugo Grotius – Theologian. Essays in Honour of G.H.M. Posthumus Meyjes*, ed Henk J.M. Nellen and Edwin Rabbie (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 77-98.

7   Clyde L. Manschreck, *Melanchthon. Quiet Reformer* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1958), 281. Melanchthon wrote a book on the matter: *Loci Communes* (1521).

8   Steven D. Paulson, *Lutheran Theology* (London: T&T Clark, 2011), 261. See also Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed John T. McNeill, transl. Ford Lewis Battles (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006), chapter XIX, 8.

9   Paul Lim, 'The Trinity, *Adiaphora,* Ecclesiology and Reformation: John Owen's Theory of Religious Toleration in Context,' *Westminster Theological Journal* (2005): 281-300, esp. 297; Cameron, *The European Reformation*, 381-385.

Despite these currents in the Reformation period, the distinction between fundamental and non-fundamental doctrines was not central to Reformed orthodoxy. Seventeenth-century Calvinist theology had developed new scholastic doctrinal systems that defended the original thrust of the Reformation against confessional opponents, and in these systems several doctrines had become so tightly interwoven that there were not really 'less important' or 'non-necessary' doctrines. Voetius (1589-1676), for instance, states that this list of fundamentals cannot be as short as some would like it, because many doctrines are connected to or depend on other doctrines. For instance, Jesus's redemption is possible only because of his double nature of being at once truly God and also human, therefore the latter principle is a fundamental article. According to Voetius, the Bible contained a 'massive body of truths'.[10] So yes, the *basic* knowledge could be found in the Apostles' Creed, but other dogmas not contained within that profession of faith were also necessary for salvation. The Dutch theologian Herman Witsius adds to the doctrines of grace, faith, repentance and conversion the 'articles which concern the existence and veracity of God, and also the gracious rewards which he confers upon his people – since it is impossible for anyone to believe in God, unless he knows that he is, and that he is faithful in all his sayings'. To have true faith, one must know the true God, which then results in considering the divinity of Jesus and the Trinity as fundamental doctrines. In addition, the doctrines of sin, of sanctification from grace alone, of the true worship of God, and of resurrection and an eternal hereafter were necessary.

Moreover, Witsius warned against the blurring of boundaries: if one accepts the necessity of only a few general tenets then Christianity could not be distinguished from Islam or pagan religions in its morality, and thus the uniqueness and truth of Christianity would be threatened. For distinguishing amongst the specific theologies of the various Christian churches, their confessions functioned well, and new lists would add nothing. Still, in practice, Reformed theologians could not avoid being occupied with the categorisation of necessary and non-necessary dogmas. Especially in debates with Catholics, Lutherans, Socinians and Arminians, Reformed theology had to take a stance on the doctrines being debated. The core tenets of Reformed orthodoxy can be summarised as follows: priority of Scripture over tradition as the sole, absolute norm for theology; the unity of message of

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10   Henri Krop, '"The General Freedom which all men enjoy" in a Confessional State. The paradoxical language of politics in the Dutch Republic', in *Paradoxes of Religious Toleration in Early Modern Political Thought*, ed John Christian Laursen and Maria Jose Villaverde (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2012), 67-90, esp. 75-77; J.W. van Asselt, 'Voetius en Coccejus over de rechtvaardiging', in *De onbekende Voetius. Voordrachten wetenschappelijk symposium Utrecht 3 maart 1989*, ed. J. van Oort et al. (Kampen: Kok, 1989), 32-47. See also Richard A. Muller, *After Calvin. Studies in the Development of a Theological Tradition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 48.

Scripture and the covenant of God; Sacramentology (2 sacraments); Chalcedonian Christology (affirming two natures in one person); salvation by grace alone and emphasis on God's gracious election to eternal salvation.[11]

Despite the orthodox refusal to make a selection of necessary doctrines for true Christian belief, there was, in the early eighteenth century, a transitional period between high orthodoxy and the Age of Reason, a shift towards a more tolerant and latitudinarian view, expressing a concern parallel to that of the pietists.[12] Whereas, for instance, the Genevan theologian Francis Turretin (1623-1687) had considered the idea of a list of fundamentals and non-fundamentals 'rash and useless',[13] his son Jean-Alphonse Turretin (1671-1737) contended that only the basic credal articles strictly necessary to Christian faith could be identified as fundamental. Jean-Alphonse even corresponded with the English bishop William Blake about a pan-Protestant agreement that would include a Protestant Creed.[14] In 1748 in the Dutch Republic a writer in the satirical magazine *Lynceus* claimed that 'the dissension between confessions concerned … only frills and irrelevant details'.[15] In the 1750s the Reformed minister Antonius van Os (1722-1807) wrote that a certain freedom should be practised concerning doctrines, without being oppressed by tradition. Moreover, Van Os was of the opinion that the dogmas should be restricted to a minimum. 'In fact, the church would need nothing more than the early-Christian Creed' (i.e., the Apostolicum).[16] The notion of fundamental versus non-fundamental articles had thus

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11   Richard Muller, 'John Calvin and Later Calvinism: The Identity of the Reformed Tradition', in *The Cambridge Companion to Reformation Theology*, ed David Bagchi and David C. Steinmetz (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 130-149, 131, 132. On fundamental articles in reformed theology see Muller, *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics* I. *Prolegomena to theology*, 406-450.

12   Martin I. Klauber, 'The Uniqueness of Christ in Post-Reformation Reformed Theology: From Francis Turretin to Jean-Alphonse Turretin,' in *Church and School in Early Modern Protestantism. Studies in Honor of Richard A. Muller on the Maturation of a Theological Tradition*, ed Jordan J. Ballor, David S. Sytsma and Jason Zuidema (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 699-710, 706, 707. Muller, *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics* I. *Prolegomena to theology,* 294.

13   Muller, *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics* I. *Prolegomena to theology*, 294: 'rash because Scripture itself nowhere precisely defines such a category of doctrines; useless, since there appears to be no limit to the ways in which heretics – whether papist, Socinian or Anabaptists—manage to err in fundamental issues. This absence of an explicit and restrictive list, moreover, impugns neither the perfection of Scripture not the value of the church's confessions as norms of doctrines necessary to salvation and the ancients creeds provide satisfactory criteria for the determination of fundamentals.'

14   Klauber, *The Uniqueness of Christ in Post-Reformation Reformed Theology*, 706, 707.

15   Jan de Vet, 'Rigoreuze Kerkkritiek. Stoutmoedige journalistiek in de Republiek', in *Een veelzijdige verstandhouding. Religie en Verlichting in Nederland 1650-1850*, ed Ernestine van der Wall and Leo Wessels (Nijmegen: Vantilt, 2007), 151-163, 158. Original quotation on 160: 'De twist tussen de confessies ging – het werd reeds vastgesteld – louter over "frankjes", "bijwerk".'

16   Roel Bosch, 'Godsdienstig Liberalisme in de Gereformeerde Kerk. Antonius van der Os, slachtoffer van het licht,' in *Een veelzijdige verstandhouding. Religie en Verlichting in Nederland 1650-1850*, ed Ernestine van der Wall and Leo Wessels (Nijmegen: Vantilt, 2007), 111-118 , 113.

recurred in theological debates since the beginning of the Reformation, but always in a polemical context.

In De Hooghe's time, the fiercest debate had raged on the philosophical underpinnings of Reformed theology – Aristotelianism or Cartesianism – and about the best way to read scripture – either through the lens of the Confession or also allegorically, with the full use of recent philological and antiquarian scholarship. In 1694 the Resolution towards the Peace of the Church had put an end to public controversies on these questions, and forbade public preaching and teaching on anything outside the Formularies of Unity. The Resolution seems to mark a turning point in the discussion about fundamentals. In the 1670s orthodox theologians were still apprehensive about limiting the number of doctrines necessary for salvation, opposing the position taken by irenicists. By the end of the century, controversy had proven so divisive that limitation became indispensable to the pastoral office of the clergy. Over the course of the eighteenth century, a certain measure of latitudinarianism became mainstream.

7.1 Fundamentals in *Hieroglyphica*

To position De Hooghe's view of true religion within this shifting religious context it is important to find out what he considered to be the core of true Christian religion. But before discussing what De Hooghe actually mentioned as necessary doctrines, a consideration of his views on Church councils and the fixing of doctrines is in order, because those views seem to underlie his opinions in these matters. In chapter 36, VAN HET VASTGESTELDE GELOOF [On the Established Faith], many councils are discussed, and although De Hooghe endorses the Nicene Creed, he mainly points to the negative side of the councils. In De Hooghe's words:

> Sticking to one's [own definitions], and lobbying amongst one's clients was ofttimes the preparation of such church councils, and schism and bitterness their fruit.[17]

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17 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 274. 'Zyne streng vast houden, en daar toe zyne Schepzelen bekuypen, was 't voorbereydzel meenigmaal van zulke Kerkvergaderingen, en verwydering en bitterheyd de vrucht.'

Fig. 172. De Hooghe, Plate 36, Van het vastgestelde geloof [On the Established Faith]
Fig. 173. De Hooghe, Tartuf [Tartuffe], detail from Plate 36

According to De Hooghe, one of the means used to foment religious dissension involved the partisanship that often went into the canonisation of specific dogmas by Church councils, in which people tried to impose their opinions on others. This critical view culminates in the final and smallest figure in the image, figure (N), Scherpe Fynheid [Strict Precisianism], introduced as a Tartuf, after the hypocritical cleric Tartuffe from Molière's famous play. The text tells us that this Tartuf is using a shovel to make the already vertiginously steep road to heaven even narrower, breaking away the 'Free Ground', depicted in the print as a steep but wide and relatively easy stairway that God has left to believers to climb. Whereas God left room for some degree of the individual conscience in the lives and convictions of Christians, the often hypocritical 'Tartufs' consciously abridged this freedom, for example when proclaiming dogmas in councils. Throughout history clerics made religion more difficult and exacting than it needed to be. Although Moliere's Tartuffe had been based on a Catholic priest, De Hooghe does not specify his own as such; his warning is universally applicable and ties in with his remarks on clerical abuse.[18]

In chapter 61, Van de Gereformeerde Godsdienst [On the Reformed Religion], De Hooghe fulminates against theological squabbles. For the controversialists who engage in them the 'true and simple nourishment' from God's Word was no longer

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18   Idem, 424, where an exceptional heavy yoke is put upon a believer.

sufficient; they elaborated on all kinds of details and tried to 'embroider these as pearls onto the plain Christian veil', covering the 'true Gold with gilt'. In this way they made marginal topics too important or, in the words of De Hooghe, they 'made bark into marrow, and [took] leaf for fruit'.[19] These intellectuals looked down on the 'average' believers who were walking the straight path. The biggest problem, according to De Hooghe, is that their pedantic knowledge is not confined within university walls but spreads beyond them. Moreover, their ambition drives them to present minor issues as essential matters, a tendency perpetuated in the schools and eventually leading to major schisms:

> their learning counts for nothing if they cannot persuade others that they know better. Writing, printing, disturbing Church and State results, and this in turn produces a hair-splitting difference. In time, the pupil makes this [small issue] into a fundamental distinction. And thus people differ as two cross-wise lines, without rapprochement or mending of the split.[20]

So when it comes to the establishment of dogmas, De Hooghe is reluctant to accept very many as being necessary. This approach is continued in De Hooghe's summary of what true religion should consist of. Throughout *Hieroglyphica* we find indications about what true religion looks like. To begin with, in two passages De Hooghe offers a summary list of the 'basic tenets' of faith. The first reference is found at the beginning of *Hieroglyphica*, in chapter 2, RAKENDE DE NAAM EN EERSTE GANG VAN DE HIEROGLYPHICA OF BEELDSPRAAK-KONST IN HET GEMEEN [On the Name and First Use of Hieroglyphs or Allegorical Language in general], which we already touched upon in chapter 6 (fig. 170).

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19   Idem, *Hieroglyphica*, 440.

20   Idem, 441. '... haar weeten is niet, zoo zy anderen niet doen zien, dat ze Bet-weeten. Schryven, Drukken, Kerk en Staat ontstellen is de Vrucht; van den zulken komt een kleyn hayrklovend Verschil. De navolgende Leerling maakt het met'er tyd tot een Hoofd-onderscheyd. En dus verschilt men onderling als twee dwers van malkander leggende Lynen, zonder herstelling of lassing van de scheur.'

Fig. 174. De Hooghe, Seth engraving two pillars, detail from Plate 2

Here De Hooghe passes on to his readers what he thought that the Biblical Seth had engraved on the two pillars meant to survive the Flood [A]. These engravings encapsulated the core of true, original religion and consisted of only a few tenets. In a rather vague description De Hooghe accounts for these tenets as comprising an eternal God from which all comes, creating order from chaos; the Fall of mankind into sin resulting from the eating of forbidden fruit; the expulsion from Paradise; God's promises and the subsequent histories. With the help of these images, Seth preached humankind's fallen state and its hope for restitution. This minimal-core religion is seen by De Hooghe as a remedy against moral decline, and as encapsulating the true knowledge needed for salvation.[21]

De Hooghe returns to the issue of fundamental doctrines of true religion at the end of the book, in chapter 61, VAN DE GEREFORMEERDE GODSDIENST [On the Reformed Religion]. Parts of the image have been discussed in chapter 4 (see fig. 97), but here I will focus on De Hooghe's elaboration on the fundamental aspects of true religion. According to De Hooghe, God presented in the Bible a small number of doctrines necessary for salvation, which were basically limited to 'Christ's Incarnation, suffering, resurrection, Holy Spirit, Glory, etc.', on which agreement should exist – and which, if necessary, once decided upon in a church council, should be enforced by the political authorities.[22] Together the lists of chapters 2 and 61 nicely

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21 Idem, 25-26.
22 Idem, '439. 'Gelyk God zelf in zyn Woord aan ons voorgaat, latende naauw de overeenstemmende getuygenissen van de noodzakelyke Kennisse Gods, Christus Menschwording, Lyden, Opstanding, H. Geest, Heerlykheyd enz. …' On the role of the political authorities see his explanation of fig. G, the Commissaris Politycq, above, chapter 6.5.

cover the theological content of the Old and New Testaments, respectively, albeit in a rather offhand, non-theological, and dramatically shortened formulation.

The specific combination of tenets also overlaps with the hotly debated issues of the late seventeenth century. Although orthodox adherents of the Voetian mould had to accept that the State tolerated the clandestine organisation of Remonstrants and Catholics, the line of tolerance was drawn with doctrines which 'in their view, undermined the fundamentals of Christianity, especially those denying the divinity of Christ, the Trinity, and original sin, thus Socinianism and deism, as well as concealed and unconcealed atheism'.[23] Well known, of course, is the case of the Socinians, who rejected Original Sin and the Trinity, but we might here also detect a response to Adriaan Koerbagh, who in his *Een light schynenende in Duystere Plaatsen* [A light shining in dark places] rejected, amongst other denials, a creator God, the Holy Spirit as one of the three persons of the Deity, Original Sin and the existence of heaven and hell. Thus De Hooghe's list of fundamentals largely mirrors the specific circumstances of the late seventeenth century and countenances the statement that Calvinist fundamental notions were not a goal as such, but had been articulated mainly in reaction to religious debates and were eventually decided upon by the political authorities with their *ius reformandi*.[24]

De Hooghe, in emphasising a restricted number of necessary fundamentals, may have been influenced by the broad range of people he worked with, hailing from all kinds of religious backgrounds. We find overlap, for instance, with the poem *De vreedzame Christen* (The peacable Christian) (+/- 1664) by the Remonstrant minister Gerardus Brandt (1626-1685), whose *Historie der Reformatie* (1671) De Hooghe illustrated. In his poem Brandt advocates the search for common fundamental articles, on the basis of which religious unity and peace could be achieved. Nevertheless, in the concrete execution of such a basic set of principles De Hooghe differs from irenic theologians such as Brandt. Whereas Brandt thinks that such a search should be conducted by an international convention of 'the most lenient (rekkelyksten) divines to weigh the various differences', Romeyn de Hooghe praises the 'wise men' at the Synod of Dordt, of a different caliber than the 'most lenient'. De Hooghe leaves the resolution of theological conflict to the authorities of church and state.[25]

Concerning the remainder of Christian dogmas – those excluded from De Hooghe's list – De Hooghe advocates that a large theological field should remain

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23 Israel, *The Dutch Republic,* 638, 909-910 with references to Voetius, *Politica Ecclesiastica*, vol. ii, 536-555, and *Politica Ecclesiastica*, vol. iv, 596-599.

24 See Muller, *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics*, I. *Prolegomena to theology*, 406-450.

25 Gerard Brandt, *De vreedzame Christen* (ong. 1664) quoted in Joris van Eijnatten, 'Lodestars of Latitude. Gerard Brandt's Peacable Christian (c. 1664), Irenicism and Religious Dissent', *Lias. Sources and Documents Relating to the Early modern History of Ideas* 26 (1999): 57-75.

open so that people can dive into the riches of the Bible. The Reformed Church – unlike the Catholic Church – leaves a considerable field open as a 'playground for the well-minded, as God himself showed us in His Word'. Besides the fundamental tenets of 'Christ's Incarnation, suffering, resurrection, Holy Spirit, and Glory', there is an 'Infinite See of curious Mysteries, from which new Truths, Coherences, Chains and Applications rise on a daily basis, in which the bright Minds can find their playing field'.[26] Labelling this free space as a 'playground' indicates that this portion of theological knowledge might be taken less seriously than the fundamentals summed up by De Hooghe. It could also point to an approach that regarded the Bible as a book full of hidden treasure, a view characteristic of Cocceian Reformed scholars. This approach was somewhat controversial. The Cocceian theologian Henricus Groenewegen (see above, chapter 2) was scolded by the Rotterdam minister Franciscus Ridderus (1620-1683) for his biblical exegesis. Ridderus thought that Groenewegen went too far in searching the Bible for all kinds of hidden meanings. Disputing Groenewegen's defence that this sort of pursuit was directed towards the increase of knowledge, Ridderus wrote that the Bible would always contain mysteries, which are not allowed to be 'rummaged through with playful interest'. Whereas Ridderus wrote that Groenewegen and his allies had crossed a line via their unbridled, licentious exegesis, De Hooghe actually emphasised the playful component of biblical exegesis.[27] De Hooghe's mentioning of 'new truths' in the citation above also stands out, indicating that biblical truths in this less important field are subject to developments in theological research.

In advocating both the freedom to research biblical mysteries and the idea of development in salvation history, De Hooghe identified with a Cocceian rather than a Voetian approach to biblical exegesis. Nevertheless, it is not sufficient to De Hooghes beliefs to portray him as either a Voetian or Cocceian. To interpret De Hooghe's views on true religion, we will first look into his representation of Original Sin and Christ, listed in his enumerations of fundamentals. God's eternity and Creation, also mentioned, have been discussed in chapter 5. Subsequently we will look at the Trinity, a core tenet of all Christian theology, and how it is, and is not, represented in *Hieroglyphica*. Finally, we will turn to De Hooghe's emphasis on sisterly freedom, pious behavior and religious unity, issues that may be more central to the argument of the book than any of the 'theological' fundamentals.

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26 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 439. 'Eene Onuytputtelyke Zee van wonderlyke Verborgentheden, waar uyt dagelyks nieuwe Waarheden, Zamenhangen, Aaneen-keteningen en Toepassingen opwellen, in welke de wakkere Geesten hunne Oeffeningen konnen vinden.'

27 Van Asselt, *De neus van de bruid*, 183.

A. The case of Original Sin

One of De Hooghe's fundamental dogmas, inscribed by Seth on the legendary columns erected to teach later generations the essentials of the faith, is 'the fall of mankind into sin resulting from the eating of fruit', a reference to the doctrine of Original Sin. The general Protestant doctrine was that humankind was depraved through Original Sin, resulting from Adam and Eve's Fall (more specifically their eating of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil), and salvation was only possible through faith in Christ and his atonement through his death on the cross. This basic doctrine is also present in *Hieroglyphica*. In chapter 4 Van de Goddelyke Huyshoudinge en het Raadbesluyt [On the Divine Oeconomy and the Decree] we encounter Adam and Eve, and the Devil in the guise of a serpent holding an apple.
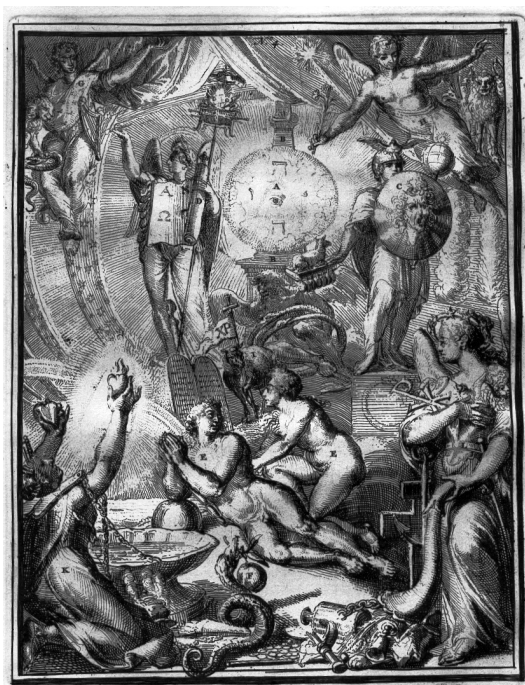
Fig. 175. De Hooghe, Plate 4, Van de Goddelyke Huyshoudinge en het Raadbesluyt [On the Divine Oeconomy and the Decree]
Fig. 176. De Hooghe, Adam, Eve and the Serpent Devil, detail from Plate 4

The text tells that God created man in his likeness. Nevertheless, De Hooghe continues, the first two humans lapsed into sin by their 'disobedience towards God, following the seduction of the Devil in the Garden of Eden'. By eating of the fruit the Devil offered them, Adam and Eve brought decay and death upon the

divinely created human nature. Completely in line with the Protestant view, for De Hooghe this sin and decay were not restricted to Adam and Eve themselves but, as the Original Sin, were the cause of a general corruption of humankind.

Although Christians generally believed this baseline account, ample questions remained about the how and what of the Fall and Original Sin. Reformers and their students did not agree on every detail, debating questions such as who exactly was tainted by Adam's fall, and for whom did Christ then die? And what exactly constituted the Fall – just the eating of the apple, the disobedience of God's command, or the urge of wanting to have the same knowledge as God?[28] An early interpretation of the doctrine came from Pelagius, who had denied the doctrine of Original Sin. He believed that the consequences of Adam and Eve's first sin were restricted to themselves, and that each new human being is born in a state of innocence, capable of doing the right things. Furthermore, Original Sin was debated from several angles. Arminians believed in the doctrine but considered its inevitability and the complete lack of free will problematic.[29] Balthasar Bekker refused to take the seduction carried out by the Devil literally. According to him, neither the serpent, nor the Devil by means of a serpent, could have spoken. How the Devil actually exerted influence on the Fall of man – Bekker did not deny Original Sin – he did not feel bound to explain.[30] In *Hieroglyphica*, these quite specific aspects of the doctrine of Original Sin are left untouched. However, here we do encounter the one more fundamental adaptation by Westerhovius. In the written commentary to Plate 3, De Hooghe elaborates on the Fall as being predestined in God's plan, in a passage that was omitted from the printed version of *Hieroglyphica*.[31] The question that remains is about as basic as can be: Did the Fall actually take place?

Although the story of the Fall could have a symbolical layer, in general 'all Christians in this period understood the story of Adam and Eve as history, an event that had actually taken place in the distant past'.[32] But some people considered the whole episode in Paradise critically or even allegorically. One of this view's most

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28   Michael Reeves and Hans Madueme, eds, *Adam, the Fall, and Original Sin. Theological, Biblical, and Scientific Perspectives* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2014). See esp. chapter 5 for the reformed differences in view on the exact content and circumstances of Original Sin. See also Keith D. Stanglin and Thomas H. McCall, eds, *Jacob Arminius. Theologian of Grace* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 144.

29   For similarity and difference between Arminians and Socinians see Mortimer, *Reason and Religion in the English Revolution*, 25, 26.

30   Michiel Wielema, *The March of the Libertines,* 57.

31   Noord-Hollands Archief, Haarlem (locatie Jansstraat), sign. 187 E2 and 187 E3.

32   Kathleen M. Crowther, *Adam and Eve in the Protestant Reformation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 102, 103.

important adherents was once again Socinus, who, denying that Adam and Eve's error in Eden had resulted in the complete depravity of humankind, contended 'that human nature had not been altered by the sin of Adam, leaving humans with both the freedom and the ability to choose the path of religion and virtue'.[33] Spinoza also read the story of the Fall in a spiritual sense, and Adriaan Koerbagh in his *Een light schynenende in Duystere Plaatsen* denied it.[34] Another blow to the historicity of original sin was struck by Isaac La Peyrère. In his Pre-Adamite theory the Fall took place but had consequences only for the Jewish part of humanity.[35]
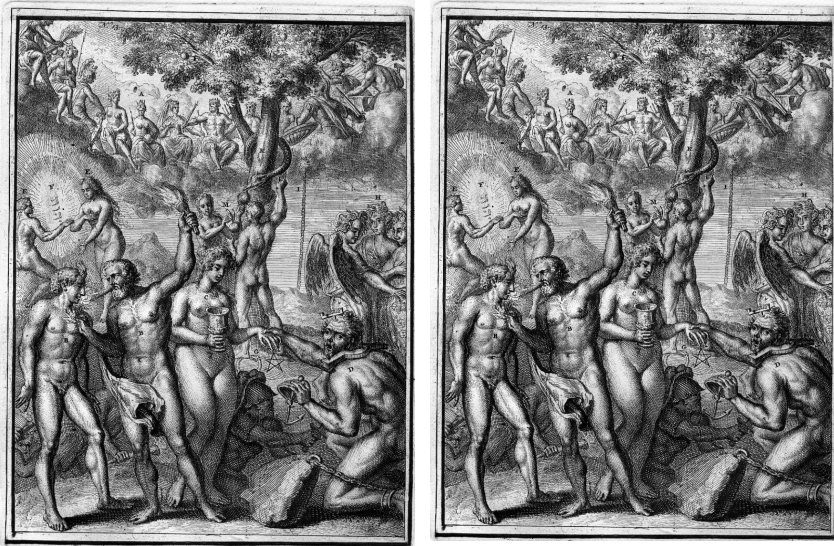
Fig. 177. De Hooghe, Plate 13, Van de Mensch-Schepping [On the Creation of Humans]
Fig. 178. De Hooghe, De Zondeval [The Fall], detail from Plate 13

De Hooghe addresses the historicity of the Fall in chapter 13, Van de Mensch-Schepping [On the Creation of Humans]. In figure K he represented the Fall. In the legend De Hooghe starts with a reference to Origen:

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33 Mortimer, *Reason and Religion in the English revolution*, 16,

34 Wiep van Bunge, Henri Krop, Piet Steenbakkers, Jeroen M.M. van de Ven, eds., *Bloomsbury Companion to Spinoza* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2014), 179. Wielema, *March of the Libertines*, 93.

35 William Poole, *Milton and the Idea of the Fall* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 76 and further. See also W.J. van Asselt, 'Adam en Eva als laatkomers. De pre-adamitische speculaties van Isaac La Peyrére (1596-1676)', in *Adam en Eva in het paradijs. Actuele visies op man en vrouw uit 2000 jaar christelijke theologie*, ed Harm Goris and Susanne Hennecke (Zoetermeer: Boekencentrum, 2005), 99-115.

> Origen and others amongst the first well-respected defenders of Christianity marked the history of Adam, Paradise, the apple and Eve, and the Devil, as entirely allegorical, and not as a true history. But since we have been enlightened through the grace of the Divine Word, God occurs to us as the creator of Adam, to his image, and after that Eve from the latter's rib, who being in the garden of Eden in a perfect state, encouraged by the Devil, wanted to eat from a prohibited and excepted Tree, thus occasioned in themselves and in their offspring a state of imperfection, decay and catastrophe, because of their disobedience, passing on an I don't know what kind of insane stimulus, making the prohibited things – which otherwise would be of no interest – attractive, because they are prohibited.[36]

Origen – influenced by Plato – is believed to hold that Adam was not a historical person but rather a representation of humanity, and his lapse, rather than being a real historical event, was actually an allegory of humanity's Fall before actual history began.[37] Stating that Paradise and all its flora should be perceived as allegorical, he ridicules everyone who takes the trees to be real, as if God had planted their seeds as a gardener and their fruits were chewable. For Origen these function as symbols for deeper truths, but he does not mention Adam and Eve in this allegorical context. Overall, he is more clear on what Paradise is not than on what it may have looked like.[38]

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36   De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica,* 145: '*Origenes* en meer van der eerste welgeachte Voorvechters van 't Christendom hebben de Geschiedenis van *Adam,* 't Paradys, de Appel en *Eva*, en de Duyvel geheel maar *Hieroglypisch*, en niet als waarlyke gebeurde geschiedenissen aangemerkt. Doch wy door de Genade van 't Goddelyk Woord verlicht zynde, blykt ons GOD als de Schepper van *Adam*, naar zyn Evenbeeld, en daar na *Eva* uyt zyne Ribbe, die in eene Volmaakte staat zynde in 't Hof van *Eden*, door den Duyvel aangeprikkelt van eene Verbode en alleen uygezonderde Boom wilde eeten; hunlieder en der Nakomelingen onvolmaakten, bedorven, en rampzaligen staat makende, door hare Ongehoorzaamheyd, en in ons over doende gaan ik weet niet wat dolle prikkel, die de verboden dingen, anders aan ons onverschillende, dan aantrekklyk maakt, als dezelve verboden zyn.' Interestingly, the letter M in chapter 13, just above the apple in Eve's hand, has no explanation in the legend. It is frustrating that the handwritten printer's copy only goes as far as chapter 4, so we cannot find out what De Hooghe might have wanted to say about either Eve or the apple. It might of course just be a mistake, or perhaps Westerhovius omitted the last two references from the legend. But the letter L is not found on the plate.

37   John E. Toews, *The Story of Original Sin (*Cambridge: James Clarke & Co, 2013), 55-58.

38   Peter C. Bouteneff, *Beginnings. Ancient Christian Readings of the Biblical Creation Narratives* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008), 109; Philip C. Almond, *Adam and Eve in Seventeenth-Century Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 66. Origen's ideas about Paradise are actually rather ambiguous: there are many extant fragments of his writings but it is difficult to single out those that really define his ideas.

The doctrines of the Western Church did not develop along the lines of an allegorical interpretation of Genesis 3. Mainly under the influence of Augustine, the doctrine of Adam, Eve and their Original Sin became an important and truly historical teaching of the church. Its importance lay on different levels, for instance on the experience of powerlessness in real life. People actually experienced 'pain suffering and death, and needed redemption to overcome this life'. Whereas Origen and Philo only spoke of 'the spirit, of the reason, of the passions and of the emotions; history spoke of the body'. Another important objection concerned the risk of a slippery slope: if there had been no real Paradise, no Adam and Eve as historical personalities, where would the idea of biblical fables end?[39]

Despite more recent attacks on the Fall and Original Sin, for instance by the Socinians, for De Hooghe around 1700 Origen was still the most telling example of a thinker denying the historicity of the Fall in Paradise. Here he might have been influenced by Luther and Calvin, who also singled out Origen as someone who had ignored the grammatical sense of words and had turned everything into allegories. According to Luther, the literal, historical sense was 'the highest, best, strongest, in short the whole substance, nature and foundation of the holy scripture'.[40] In bringing up Origen, De Hooghe shows that recent criticism on the Paradise story was not original but had precursors in patristic thinkers, whose ideas were denounced as heretical. By attacking this age-old heresy he thus put into perspective and countered the newer ideas of, for instance, the Socinians. De Hooghe thus shows himself to conform to the orthodox interpretation on the event's historicity but does not go into the remaining theological issues concerning the topic. Apparently it suffices to believe that the story of the Fall happened; less important is the grasping of its exact cause, nature, content and circumstances.

B. The case of Christ: his incarnation and redemptive work

Next on De Hooghe's list of fundamentals in chapter 61 are the incarnation and the redemptive death of Christ. In Christianity the belief in Jesus Christ was of paramount importance as the Bible clearly teaches that Christ is the only way to God and to salvation. Nevertheless, this very principle had been debated during the second half of the seventeenth century by thinkers who saw Jesus (along with Moses and Muhammad) as a religious impostor, or by others who argued that reason or piety provided the most important route to a truly Christian life and salvation. Orthodox Reformed theologians firmly denounced this jettisoning of Jesus, clearly stating that this dogma had no exceptions and – of course – that

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39   Toews, *The Story of Original Sin,* especially chapter 6, 'Augustine's Theology of Original Sin (354-430)' 73-89. See also Almond, *Adam and Eve in Seventeenth-Century Thought*, 69.

40   Harrison, *The Bible, Protestantism and the Rise of Natural Sciences,* 108.

Christ was not an impostor. It was 'inadequate to say that Christ is the ordinary way of salvation but that God could, in extraordinary circumstances, grant salvation to those who live a moral life according to natural law'.[41] The uniqueness and necessity of Christ's death on the cross is emphasised over and over.

Still, this basic doctrine was debated even in Reformed circles. The influential Swiss theologian Jean Alphonse Turretin, already mentioned, was one of the people concerned with fairness. If Christ was the only way to God, how could it be fair that some people had been deprived of the Bible and therefore of the knowledge of Christ? Turretin found a solution in the idea that salvation also depended on the amount of revelation a person had access to. This theoretically left open 'the possibility of salvation apart from a specific knowledge of Christ'. Turretin's idea fits in with his aim of reconciling and reuniting the divided Protestants by narrowing down the number of fundamental articles necessary for salvation, consisting of 'those principles of religion, which so relate to the essence and foundation of it, and are of so great importance, that without them religion cannot stand, or at least will be destitute of a chief and necessary part.' But the question then again is: without *which* principles does it become the case that 'religion cannot stand'?[42]

De Hooghe endorses the general Reformed idea of Christ as the one and only way to salvation. Throughout *Hieroglyphica* Christ is present in De Hooghe's history of religion. Remarkably De Hooghe, avowedly, uses quite technical-theological terms to describe Christ's role in true religion from the beginning of human history. In chapter 4, entitled VAN DE GODDELYKE HUYSHOUDINGHE – EN HET RAADSBESLUIT [On the Divine Oeconomy and the Decree], De Hooghe distinguishes the 'natural theology' of the heathens, who depend on the light of nature, from the revealed knowledge of the eternal decree on the salvation of the elect, contracted among the persons of the Trinity. For this divine plan De Hooghe explicitly uses the *konstwoord* (artificial term) *Goddelyke Huyshouding* [Divine Oeconomy], phraseology with a prominent place in the Cocceian federal theology of the time.[43]

In this chapter and plate 4, following the creation and Fall of Adam and Eve in Paradise, figures I and L (figs. 179, 180) announce Christ and his redemptive sacrifice.

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41   Klauber, *The Uniqueness of Christ in Post-Reformation Reformed Theology*, 701.

42   Idem, 705, 707, 710.

43   See Van Asselt, *The Federal Theology*. On the decrees and the covenant in the history of Israel and the Church, see esp. 197-290.

Fig. 179. De Hooghe, Lam [The Lamb], detail from Plate 4
Fig. 180. De Hooghe, Boven-Natuurlyke Godsdienst [Supernatural Religion], detail from Plate 4

Figure I shows the Lamb of God, a well-known reference to Christ and his sacrifice. The description of the image accords with the general orthodox dogma: Christ took away the sins of the world and was incarnated in Jesus for the salvation of the chosen ones. The lamb is placed between Adam and Eve, as Jesus's coming had been foretold in the curse of the snake (Gen. 3:15) On the right-hand side of the image, figure L denotes the 'Supernatural Religion', i.e. revealed religion. Mirroring image K, Israel in the corner left, she is 'a new creature', showing that the 'kingdom of God starts within our souls'.[44] This figure leans on the cross of Christ, on whose sacrifice her salvation is based, and will occur completely independently of her actions.[45]

More elaborate is plate 32, entitled Christus in het Vleesch [On Christ in the Flesh], situated within the historical chronology of *Hieroglyphica* at the transition point from ancient history to the history of the Christian Church. This plate and chapter place the incarnated Christ at the centre and detail his part in religious history.

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44 On the Cocceian mirroring of the people of Israel and the New Testament religion see Johannes Coccejus, *De Leer van het Verbond en het Testament van God*, transl. W.J. van Asselt and H.G. Renger (Kampen: Uitgeverij De Groot Goudriaan, 1990), and Van Asselt, *The Federal Theology*.
45 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 65, 65.
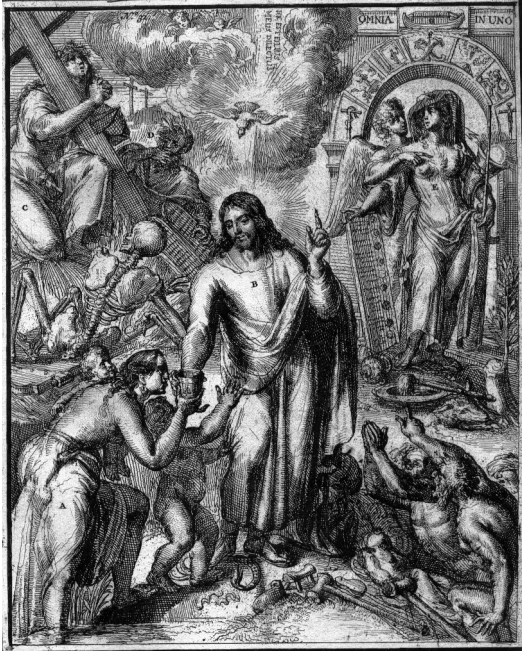
Fig. 181. De Hooghe, Plate 32, CHRISTUS IN HET VLEESCH [On Christ in the Flesh]

Central in the image is Jesus Christ or, as the legend adds, the Messiah, Saviour and Son of God. On his left, the woman who bows to him represents God's Church (A), drinking from the Communion cup and standing in the water of the River Jordan, references to the the sacraments of communion and baptism that Protestants had retained. Around Jesus's head De Hooghe engraved 'a divine radiance', which indicates that he is 'human and divine in one person', a direct reference to the doctrine of hypostatic union.[46] His finger points to his Father in heaven and to the text written there: 'hic est filius meus dilectus' ('this is my beloved son' – Matth 3: 17), which, together with a dove descending towards him, refers to Jesus's baptism.[47]

A second visualisation of the Church is found in figure E denoting the Church of God as she received the Holy Spirit after Christ's ascension. A 'heavenly messenger' stands behind this Church and points to the Gospels, to Jesus's 'coming into this world, his incarnation, his birth, his growing up, his proceedings, his life, teachings and suffering'. The law, with all its ceremonial obligations, has been jettisoned by Christ's death on the cross. In figure C we encounter another representation of

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46   Idem, 255.
47   This sentence occurs in Matthew 3:17, Mark 1:11 and Luke 3:21,22.

the Church of God: this time she is depicted as 'triumphant in the passion of her Saviour, here imagined, embracing his Cross, as her New Altar…' Her white attire is 'washed in the Blood of Christ'. Death (D) has to stand aside for her, because in the 'suffering of her Saviour she has a warranty for an eternal blissful life'. This suffering is represented by the enormous cross that the woman is holding.[48] The tripartite division of Church Militant (on earth), Church Penitent (in Purgatory) and Church Triumphant (in Heaven) is traditional within Catholicism.[49] In its place De Hooghe has presented several manifestations of the Church on earth: the humble Church of all ages, the betrothed of Christ who now sees her Bridegroom in the flesh, the Church that has received the New Testament, and the Church of accomplished believers. In this etching, Christological typology is abundantly present: there are several references to Old Testament prophecies of the coming of a Saviour. At the feet of figure E a tree-stump with a twig refers to Isaiah 11.[50] This female figure stands in front of an archway containing tableaus with biblical stories (F) that are connected to Christ and his salvational work, such as the brazen serpent from the wilderness which healed the snakebites of the Israelites,[51] and prefigures Christ's cross, which heals the wounds and corruption of sin. Furthermore, the fish that expelled Jonah after his three days within it is connected to Christ's victory over death, and Jesus's sacrifice is depicted as the fulfilment of the sacrifices of priests. His death brings forth complete atonement and makes other sacrifices redundant.[52] The arch is topped by the image of the Ark, which stands for the saved. So although there is no explicit image of Jesus

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48   De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 255, 256.

49   R.N. Swanson, *Religion and Devotion in Europe, c. 1215- c. 1515* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 19-20, 37.

50   Isaiah 11, verses 1-3: 'And there shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. 2. And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD. 3. And his delight shall be in the fear of the LORD. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide by what his ears hear.'

51   See Numbers 21.

52   De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 257. Although extreme forms of typology (especially its application to current and future events) were erected by Cocceian theologians and were controversial in the orthodox Church, the basic tool of typlogical exegesis was accepted and widely used. The examples that De Hooghe comes up with wer all completely accepted, especially because they were also referred to in the New Testament itself. John 3:14, for instance, connects the serpent in the wilderness to Christ. See Jitse van der Meer and Scott Mandelbrote, eds, *Nature and Scripture in the Abrahamic Religions. Up to 1700* (2 vols) (Leiden: Brill, 2008) 349; Richard A. Muller, *Post-reformation reformed dogmatics, vol. 2, Holy scripture. The cognitive Foundation of Theology* (---), 487-499, esp. 488, 490, and Lucas van Rompay, 'The Christian Syriac Tradition of Interpretation', in *Hebrew Bible/ Old Testament. The History of Its Interpretation*, vol. 1, ed Magne Saebo (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996), 612-641, there 634.

hanging on a cross, his salvific death is present within almost every depiction of his Church, indicating the utmost importance and connection of this Christ's sacrifice to true Christianity. This thread continues in De Hooghe's visualisation of the Trinity.

C. The missing case: the Trinity

In the debates about true religion the Trinity of God was one of the hot items. Although the doctrine is not present in De Hooghe's two shortlists, there are reasons to include it in this chapter. First, the Trinity is ubiquitous in *Hieroglyphica* as an essential aspect of true religion. The second and more remarkable reason is the fact that De Hooghe etched one plate devoted to the topic, complete with a legend, which was not admitted into the book. One impression of this etching is in the archives of Haarlem, together with a few loose-leaf handwritten parts of *Hieroglyphica*. The question inevitably arises: Why was this image excluded from *Hieroglyphica*?[53]

The issue of the Trinity had been debated ever since the Council of Nicaea of 325, where it was agreed that Christ, the Father and the Holy Spirit were 'of one substance', although they were separate Persons. Against the position of the Alexandrian priest Arius (d. 336), the Council declared that Christ was truly God and not one of God's creations.[54] The execution of Michael Servetus for his denial of the Trinity as well as his questioning of infant baptism show just how important the doctrine of the Trinity still was in the early modern period.[55] It came under further pressure from different angles, the Socinians' denial being the most famous. Socinus connected his denial to the idea of the original, true fundament of the Christian religion. As the Trinity – as well as justification by faith and Original Sin – had been decided upon only in fourth- and fifth-century Church councils, none of these beliefs could be counted amongst the few doctrines necessary for salvation.[56] Because of these opinions, Socinianism was considered the most

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53   Noord-Hollands Archief, Haarlem (locatie Jansstraat), sign 187 E2 and187 E3. The handwriting contains only *Hieroglyphica*'s chapters 1-4, and a few of the plates are also missing. Thanks to Henk van Nierop and Anna de Haas who brought this to my attention.

54   Mortimer, *Reason and Religion in the English Revolution*.

55   Roland H. Bainton, *Hunted Heretic* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1953). Benjamin J. Kaplan, *Divided by Faith. Religious Conflict and the Practice of Toleration in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007), 15-21 tells the story of Servet from Bainton's perspective.

56   Sara Mortimer and John Robertson, eds, *The Intellectual Consequences of Religious Heterodoxy 1600–1750* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 25. See further on Socianism: Sarah Mortimer, *Reason and Religion in the English Revolution*; Paul C. Lim, *Mystery unveiled. The Crisis of the Trinity in Early Modern England* [Oxford Studies in Historical Theology] (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012). For Socinianism in the Dutch Republic see W.J. Kühler, *Het Socinianisme in Nederland* Leiden, 1912) and J.C. van Slee, *De Geschiedenis van het Socinianisme in de Nederlanden* (Haarlem: heirs F. Bohn, 1914).

dangerous heresy of the late seventeenth century. Jonathan Israel estimates that Socinian ideas spread more rapidly than had previously been thought, and so this quick-moving vector of transmission might have prompted the fierce reaction against the movement.[57] In the political arena, anti-Trinitarianism remained strictly illegal in the United Provinces after the States of Holland's anti-Socinian decree of 1653.[58] Even as late as 1701, Pierre Bayle noted that public contradiction of the doctrine of the Holy Trinity could result in imprisonment.[59]

In theological circles, Socinianism was seen as a shared enemy by different Protestant denominations. One of the central principles of Voetius's *Politica Ecclesiastica* was 'that Socinianism, and anti-Trinitarianism generally, cannot be allowed, or tolerated, within a Christian society'. Voetius, considering the eradication of Socinianism and anti-Trinitarianism to be the responsibility of the States, believed that religious leaders should cooperate in this struggle, even within their own ranks. Cocceians agreed: they were as harsh on anti-Trinitarianism as their Voetian colleagues.[60] More broadly, even, the pursuit of a Lutheran-Calvinist unity by the Hartlib Circle was in part based on the exclusion of the Socinians (as was the toleration advocated by Locke in 1689).[61]

Within the Dutch Republic, the topic was not only part of academic debates but was discussed in vernacular writings as well. In the above-mentioned *Een light schynenende in Duystere Plaatsen,* Adriaan Koerbagh wrote in the vernacular about the fundamentals of theology. In his book, the Trinity is not only omitted

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57   Jonathan Israel, 'Spinoza and the Religious Radical Enlightenment', in *The Intellectual Consequences of Religious Heterodoxy*, ed Mortimer and Robertson (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 181-204, 187. At the same time Dutch Socinianism, with its Spinozistic bent, must have extended considerably beyond the boundaries of the Collegiant movement, because the latter's free, open, mostly undisturbed meetings of non-church Christians rejecting the Trinity were permitted only by the civic authorities in Amsterdam, Rotterdam and Rijnsburg (and even then precariously and solely on a purely de facto basis). Elsewhere such conventicles were effectively forbidden in the United Provinces, but there were many places where highly unorthodox forms of religion with a strong rational and anti-Trinitarian bent also spread under cover of a sometimes elaborate means of concealment, often assuming a character rather different from that of the Collegiant movement proper. It therefore seems safe to assume that Socinian variants of Spinozism did indeed ramify widely as part of the broader penetration of 'seductive philosophy' along the lines described by Bekker, Molinaeus and others.

58   Israel, *Spinoza and the Religious Radical Enlightenment*, 190.

59   Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, 676, 817.

60   Israel in his *The Dutch Republic*, 909-201, refers to Voetius, *Politica Ecclesiastica,* vol. ii, 544-551, 598, 599. Both Heidanus and Roell, for instance, saw the doctrine of the Holy Trinity as fundamentally important for true religion. Roell's innovative approach to the topic were debated, but it was specifically meant to come up with a defence against Socinianism and anti-Trinitarianism. See further below.

61   Mortimer, *Reason and Religon in the English Revolution*, 54; Locke, *Letter on Toleration*.

from a list of necessary dogmas: it is, moreover, denounced as impossible and as nothing but an irrational concoction. The orthodox answer that some theological doctrines are 'above' reason and are thus not completely understandable for humans is rejected by Koerbagh, who writes that this dogma is not 'above reason' but 'against reason' and therefore, one should not meekly believe it. Koerbagh thought it better to understand for oneself than to believe something on someone else's authority. As for the biblical passages concerning the Trinity, they are all later glosses and therefore less reliable. And wherever the Bible opposes rational knowledge, it should be rejected as false.[62] Another example is Hendrik Wyermars, an Amsterdam servant and amateur philosopher. In his book *Den ingebeelde Chaos* [The imagined Chaos] (1710) he is sceptical about both the creation and the Trinity, and for his ideas he was convicted in court and sentenced to fifteen years in prison.[63] Some thirty years later, in 1741, the Mennonite pastor in Harlingen, Johannes Stinstra (1709-1790), was dismissed from his office for his alleged denial of the Trinity. A similar judgement was meted out to Petrus Ens (1699-after 1790), a professor of theology at the University of Harderwijk.[64]

Remarkable, too, is the case of the Lutheran painter Zacharias Webber (1644-1696), a colleague of De Hooghe. In 1696 Webber reacted to a controversy between the Franeker professor Herman Alexander Roëll (1653-1718) and his Leiden colleague Campegius Vitringa (1659-1722) on the relation between the Father and the Son in the Nicene Creed. This relation had been described as that of a biological father and son: 'begotten of the Father before all worlds'. At the same time, however, the creed states that Christ is God. Socinians rejected the juxtaposition of these two elements as conflicting: he who is begotten cannot be God from eternity.[65] According to Roëll – who wanted to counter Socinian ideas as much as other Reformed theologians – the 'eternal generation' of Christ is not like the procreation of a son by a human father but instead should be seen as the

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62 Koerbagh, *A light shining in dark places*, 95-105.

63 Wyermars, *Den ingebeelde Chaos;* Gaillard, *De zaak Wyermars of: de ingebeelde tolerantie in de Republiek?,*

1-8; Rienk Vermij, 'De boeventaal der vrijgeesten. Carolus Tuinman (1659-1728) en het hattemisme', in *Verlichting in Nederland 1650-1850. Vrede tussen rede en religie?* ed Jan Wim Buisman (Nijmegen: Vantilt, 2013), 31-50, there 41.

64 Van Eijnatten and Van Lieburg, *Nederlandse Religiegeschiedenis*, 216, 217.

65 This relation had been described as that of a father and a son in the Nicene Creed: 'zoon uit de vader geboren voor alle eeuwen'. At the same time, however, the creed states that Christ is 'truly God from truly God'. Socinians rejected the juxtaposition of these two elements as conflicting: he who is born cannot be from eternity. That is, if the word 'born' is used in the proper sense of the word, that is 'a change from not-being into being'. Praamsma, *Zacharias Webber (1644-1696),* 140. See also Jacob van Sluis, *Herman Alexander Roëll* (Leeuwarden: Fryske Akademy, 1988).

expression of the 'close communion between the separate persons of the Trinity'.[66] Zacharias Webber also wanted to counter the Socinian arguments against the Trinity. In his apologetic essay *Eenvoudig bedenken* [Simple Thoughts] Webber sought to show how rational and logical the doctrine really was. Writing in simple Dutch, the painter tries to present both the Trinity and the divinity of Christ in an understandable manner. Like Roëll, Webber believed that the 'birth' of Christ in the Nicene Creed should be seen as a non-literal arrival in the world, which he tries to explain with the image of candlelight or the light of the sun. The light is already there, but it comes out with sunrise: 'that is how the father brings forth the Son, while He has never been without the Son'. With an overload of natural metaphors Webber points to the distinction between 'person' and 'God'.[67]

Despite Webber's apologetical intention, his work was criticised for making things actually more complicated, and for using wrong examples. Other accusations levelled at Webber included the charge that he denied the 'three separate persons in the Deity', that his tone was irenic and that he acknowledged Socinian terminology. A highly interesting critique is that Webber's essay denies the *mystery* of the Trinity. As his opponent Swidde says: 'the Holy Trinity and the eternal generation of the Son of God have always been considered by orthodox theologians a mystery that people cannot understand'.[68] Webber, with his writing on the Trinity as a rationalistic, simple and understandable doctrine, was at odds with this prevailing theology. For Webber, this change provided opportunities for the presentation of a broad and irenic Protestant theology, but his perspective ran the risk that *ratio* alone was sufficient to understand the Christian faith, which was the credo of, for instance, Socinianism and deism.[69]

Within the circle around De Hooghe the Trinity was also contested. In the handwritten notes of Ericus Walten – one of the people De Hooghe worked with –

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66 Roëll acknowledged the critique of Christ as being 'born from the father', since this would damage the aseity of Christ himself. Praamsma, *Zacharias Webber*, 142, 134. See also Klaus Scholder, *The Birth of Modern Critical Theology. Origins and Problems of Biblical Criticism in the Seventeenth Century*, transl. John Bowden (London: SCM Press, 1990), 26.

67 Zacharias F. Webber*, Eenvoudigh bedenken. Zijnde een brief, Aan seeker Vrint geschreeven over het Dispuyt van de geboorte des soons en van van tydelyken dood der geloovigen* (Amsterdam: Andries van Damme, 1696).

68 Praamsma, *Zacharias Webber*, 168, referring to Swidde, *Antwoord*, 9, who reflects that orthodox thelogians always considered the 'H. Drie-eenighyd en de eeuwige geboorte des Soons Gods' to be a challenge to human understanding 'een mysterie, een groot geheimenis en verborgenhyd, als 't geen wy menschen niet kunnen verstaan nog begrypen'.

69 Praamsma, *Zacharias Webber*, 170-172. This shows a similarity with the deist idea that religion is neither contra reason nor above *ratio*. The latter idea was especially dangerous, as it got close to a kind of religion that did not need revelation; see Johannes van den Berg, *Religious Currents and Cross-Currents: Essays on Early Modern Protestantism* (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 183 and further.

the Trinity is denied. In line with Adriaan Koerbagh, Walten writes that 'the word "Persons" or "Trinity" is not found in the Bible, and the word "persons" is derived from the comedies'.[70] Moreover, in his second notebook Walten even writes that calling Jesus 'God' is a devilish idolatry:

> Jesus is the Son of God, says the Devil, he knew it and planted the idea in the heads of the mockers. The Jews deny that Jesus is God's Son. The Jews say that he is a bastard. As that argument is sound, so is this one. To believe that he is [the son of God], is from the Devil. The Devil said so too, and has said it first.[71]

Such ideas are not found in *Hieroglyphica*. Throughout his book De Hooghe voices his adherence to the doctrine of the Trinity, which is several times said to belong to the concept of true religion, and to be a (revealed) mystery of the faith. In chapter 13, Van de Mensch-Schepping [On the Creation of Humans], for instance, De Hooghe refers to the Holy Trinity as the 'true knowledge of God', then remarks that this knowledge is not acquired from 'Flesh and Blood', that is, this knowledge is not naturally present in humans.[72] In chapter 33, Van de Eerste Kerk [On the Primitive Church], De Hooghe presents the Trinity as one of the pillars of the first Christian Church. Figure A, representing Christ's chosen Church, has a triangle on her breast, because 'In her bosom the pure Sun of knowledge of the Holy Trinity has arisen'.[73]

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70   I thank Frank Daudeij for pointing me to the notebooks of Ericus Walten, which are in the National Archive of The Hague: Archive Hof van Holland 1482-1811 (T 3.03.01.0), inv. nr. 374. Part 1, p. 27: 'Het woord personen, of drie-eenheid staat in den bijbel niet. En 't woord personen is van de commedien ontleend.'

71   Second notebook of Walten, Archive Hof van Holland 1482-1811 (T 3.03.01.0), inv. nr. 374 part 2, p. 89: "...Jesus gij sone Gods, segt der Duijvel, en hij wist het en bragt het andere in de hoofden van de spotters. Niet te geloven dat Jesus Gods soon is, is joods. De Joden seggen dat hij een basterd is. Wel. So dat argument goed is, so is dit ook goed. Te geloven da hij't is is duijvels. De duijvel segt het ook, en heeft het eerst gesegt.'

72   De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 128. See for a similar line of reasoning about natural knowledge vs revelation De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 31, 32, discussed in chapter 3.

73   Idem, 259.

Fig. 182. De Hooghe, De Gemeente van Christus, Zyne Uytverkore Kerk [The Congregation of Christ, His elected Church], detail from Plate 33

Fig. 183. De Hooghe, Ariaanse and Macedonische ketterij [Arianism and Macedonian heresy] , detail from Plate 36

Furthermore, the dogma recurs several times in chapter 36, Van het Vastgesteld Geloof [On the Established Faith] (see fig. 172 above). Figure F in Plate 36 shows Arius, the Alexandrian bishop after whom the doctrine of Arianism is named. At the council of Nicaea, Arianism – the teaching that Christ had been created by God and that the Trinity did not exist – was condemned as heresy, and in his comment, De Hooghe also refers to it as heretical. This judgement is made visual in the image: Arius carries a damaged triangle of unequal sides (symbolising his erroneous ideas about the Trinity) and a medallion of Jesus as a human being. An interesting element here is the torch that Arius is holding, explained in the legend as denoting the strife and discord that resulted from the different opinions on the matter of the Trinity. Arius, antagonised by his opponents, reacted by antagonising them, which 'engendered and strengthened factionalism'.[74] Without entering into the details of the Trinity De Hooghe emphasises here the devastating results of such religious quarrels – as he also does when he discusses controversies over other basic teachings of Christian doctrine. Next to Arius we find Macedonius (G), the bishop of Constantinople (died after 360) who was founder of the Macedonians, a sect that held that the Holy Spirit was not God. At the Council of Constantinople this theory

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74   Idem, 276, 277.

was condemned. De Hooghe endorses this judgement: he depicted Macedonius trying to keep a dove, the symbol of the Holy Spirit, outside of the triangle he holds in his hands. De Hooghe refers to this teaching as the 'Macedonian Heresy'. His triangle is also damaged: one of its sides lacks a radiant edge.

In chapter 58, VAN DE ZEVEN PERIODEN [On the Seven Periods] (fig. 32 in chapter 2), figure E stands for the Reformation period of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, when 'Albigensians, Mysians Bohemians, Russians, and many people in Scotland', all anti-papal medieval heretics, resisted papal errors. This figure is said to be 'enlightened by knowledge of God's Trinity', of which the radiant triangle is depicted upon his head. Throughout *Hieroglyphica*, the Reformation is seen as a re-appreciation of the simple piety of the first Church, and apparently true knowledge of the Trinity is part of the return to true original religion, which aligns with De Hooghe's positioning of the Trinity in the figure of the First Christian Church in plate 33. From this, it follows that the denunciation of the Trinity is a serious corrosion of true religion, as is seen in chapter 60, VAN DE AFVALLIGE HERVORMING [On the Apostate Reformation]. Here we find in figure E Socinianism, visualised as a monstrous creature, crawling up from a well. The legend harshly denounces Socinus's teachings. According to De Hooghe, Socinianism consists of a mingling of ancient heresies, which the creature with her 'whore's face' 'sells' via 'captivating and wheedling sweet-tongued reasoning' in which she 'tweaks the faith and sacred texts'.[75] With 'fox's claws and a belly full of poison she climbs from a pool of mud, threatening the "best of God's garden"'. After this highly judgemental description, De Hooghe turns to her anti-Trinitarianism, of which his rejection is equally fierce:

> The esteem which she holds for the Old Heresies, shows from the commemorative medals of Arius and Pelagius, who she dragged from the bottom of Hell and oblivion, who she revives, and polishes in order to make them shine even more attractively. She slashes with her unclean and presumptuous paw into the Most Holy Trinity, tearing apart the Truth and the Divine Being…[76]

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75   For similarity with Samuel de Marets, *hydra socianismi expugnata* (Groningen: Nocolaes Nicolaasz, 1651-1662; Vollenhove 1708). See also Mortimer, *Reason and Religion*, 22.

76   De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 429 'De achting, die zy voor de Oude Ketteryen heeft, blykt aan de Geheugpenningen van *Arrius* en *Pelagius*, dieze wederom uyt de grond van de Hel en vergetenheyd opgevoert, doet herleven, en ze polyst, om dezelve nog schoonder glimp voor hare verleyding te geven. Haare looze en verwate Poot slaat zy in de Alderheyligste Drie-eenheyd, verscheurende de Waarheyd en 't Goddelyk Weezen, …'

From these examples it becomes clear that although De Hooghe did not insert the Trinity within his lists of fundamentals, there is no doubt that De Hooghe's took the orthodox view that the Trinity was a necessary dogma for true religion. Still, in mentioning the doctrine, De Hooghe adheres to the basic notion as mentioned in the creeds, and does not enter into complicated theological debates such as those that Webber tampered with. As in the matter of Christ's divinity, De Hooghe asks no questions about the rationality of the Trinity or the exact way the doctrine should be understood.

This brings us to the curious plate preserved in the Haarlem city archive as part of the *Hieroglyphica* manuscript, but not present in the printed book. The heading of the etching is Van de Goddelicke Drie-eenheid [On the Divine Trinity].
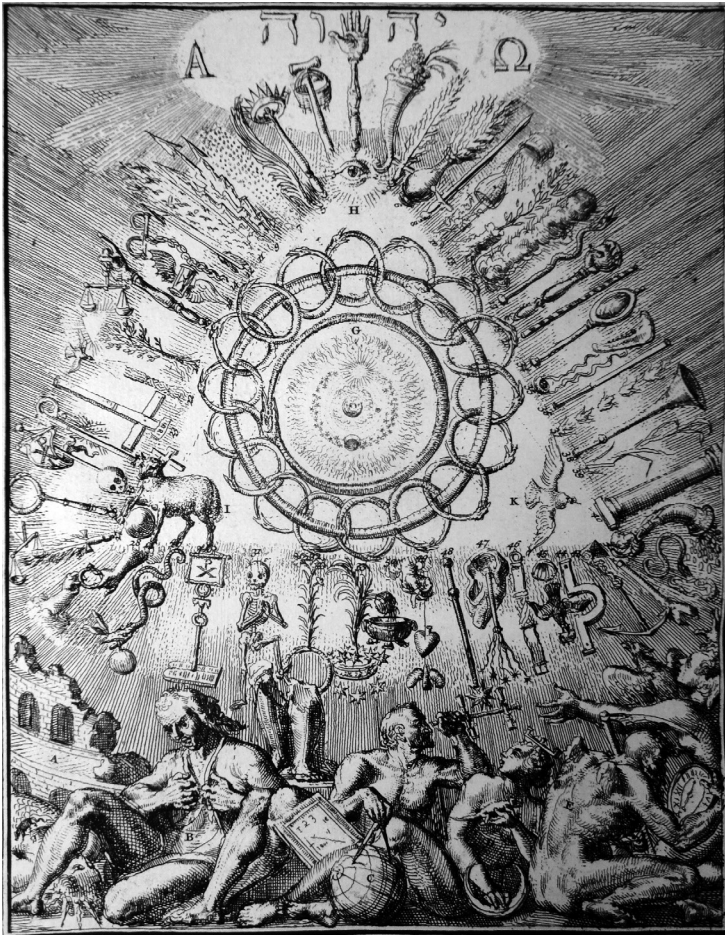
Fig. 184. De Hooghe, Van de Goddelicke Drie-eenheid [On the Divine Trinity]

As the title suggests, this is a thematic etching concerning the doctrine of the Trinity, but its shape differs from the other thematic etchings in *Hieroglyphica*. There is no comparison with other religions and the compositional structure of the entire etching – a triangle – refers directly to its topic. This etching imagines visually the concept of the Trinity consisting of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The legend starts by enumerating the characteristics that do not belong to the Deity.[77] Then it continues with quite an orthodox depiction and description of Father, Son and Spirit, in which biblical references are predominant and the line of thinking stretching back to the Apostles' Creed and through the Heidelberg Catechism can be detected.

The triangle form starts with a general depiction and description of God the Father (A) as 'Infinite, Eternal, Almighty and Allsufficient, his inaccessible Fire sustains everything with a preserving and creating power, and numerous serpents illustrate his Eternity'. Subsequently, De Hooghe explains this triangular form: 'This eternal Circle, without a start, was pleased to reveal himself in a radiant Triangle; as Father, Son and Holy Spirit'.
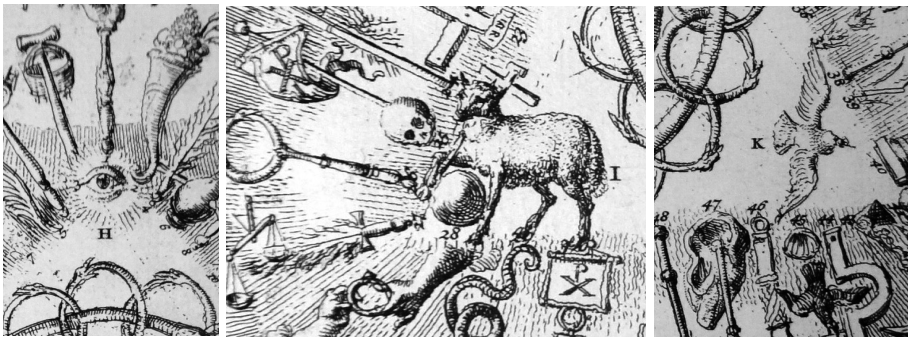
Fig. 185. De Hooghe, Alziende Oog [All Seeing Eye], detail from Van de Goddelicke Drie-eenheid [On the Divine Trinity]

Fig. 186. De Hooghe, Lam Gods [Lamb of God], detail from Van de Goddelicke Drie-eenheid [On the Divine Trinity]

Fig. 187. De Hooghe, Duif [Dove], detail from Van de Goddelicke Drie-eenheid [On the Divine Trinity]

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77 First, and interestingly, De Hooghe mentions the 'comparison of Tyrants and impostors with God', to which reference has already been made in chapter 5. Further characteristics alien to God are 'regret', 'measure, numbers and end', 'change', and 'beginning and end'. Figure F 'Understanding', does not so much concern God, as much as the human understanding of Him, indicating how De Hooghe concurs with the orthodox idea that some theological mysteries cannot be understood.

De Hooghe used as the central image for the Father the All-Seeing Eye, the 'true symbol of the Deity' who foresaw everything even before the creation of the earth.[78] The Son is depicted as the Lamb of God, taking away the sins of the world, saving God's elect through his death on the cross. The Holy Spirit is depicted as a dove, which stands for the renewed world after the Flood; it was also present in that form during the baptism of Jesus. De Hooghe then explicates his remarkable interpretation of the Deity's Triangle. Normally, the Trinity is depicted symbolically as a triangle surrounded by stripes, creating the suggestion of a radiant triangle. In this plate, De Hooghe replaced the stripes with symbols characteristic of the 'three distinctive Persons of the One Deity'. Some of the characters are quite general, others more specific and related to recent debates.

God the Father is characterised by twenty symbols representing his traits, amongst them the sceptre for his Almightiness, the cornucopia for his blessings, a flaming sword for his righteousness, and a palm feather for his gift of peace. Lightning stands for his defeat of the presumptuous; a vineyard, beehive and milk pail for his overflowing grace; and a pair of shackles for his punishment of the wicked. An hourglass denotes his predestination of human life, and a sceptre with a hand holding the earth stands for his creation from nothing. A shepherd's crook symbolises his predestination of the lives of his flock. So both predestination and the creation from nothing (see chapter 5) are underscored here as belonging to God the Father.

The nature of God the Son is illustrated in thirteen symbols. The first symbol, taking the form of the 'shoot of the tribe of Jesse', is explained to be the promise of Christ's incarnation, which miraculously combined his divine and human nature.[79] The second symbol indicates his becoming human, without committing sin.[80] The cross is also present in the images, denoting Christ's suffering and death so that he could bear humanity's curse Himself and thus fulfil God's judgement. A high priest's staff also stands for his sacrifice, with which he 'cleansed us'. A skull under a banner of victory symbolises Christ's victory over death, and his advocacy for us in heaven. A sceptre with the sign of eternity serves as a proof that Christ as the head of his Church is in heaven and will reign through all eternity on God's right-hand side. A flaming sword depicts His judgement, and a skeleton with cornstalks in its eye-sockets denotes the resurrection and eternal new life, which is depicted with a white lily. This characterisation of God the Son seems to be taken almost exactly from the Apostles' Creed, with the specific addition of Christ's death for human sins instead of the general 'forgiveness of sins'.

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78 This symbol of God the Father had increasingly been used since the renaissance. Corbett and Lightbown, *The Comely Frontispiece*, 40-42.

79 Isaiah 11: 1.

80 As stipulated in the Heidelberg Catechism, Sunday 14, question and answer 35.

Concerning the Holy Spirit, the images and text go much further than the Apostles' Creed, which only says that the believer 'believes in the Holy Spirit'. Seventeen 'hieroglyphs' characterise the Holy Spirit, starting with a mirror of carefulness, as a proof of God's Spirit living in his chosen people, guarding them from errors, idolatry and their revolting against God. Furthermore, the slingshot of King David refers to the Spirit's influence in making men brave against God's enemies. Other symbols are a guiding staff, tongues of fire for the Spirit's knowledge of languages, powers and predictions, a trumpet for frankness to speak about God, a pillar for steadfastness and a snake for the shedding of skin, symbolic of a new life. A plumbing line through a heart and kidneys denotes the soul-searching activities of the Holy Spirit, sackcloth and ashes denote penitence, and a broken heart the self-renunciation of the believer. This attention to the role played by the Holy Spirit plays in the life of believers conforms with De Hooghe's emphasis on the Spirit's work throughout *Hieroglyphica.*[81] As the content of this plate is founded upon biblical notions, the Three Forms of Unity and the Creeds, the big question remains why it was omitted from *Hieroglyphica*. The answer can be sought either in De Hooghe's treatment of the topic or in his visualisation of the persons of the Trinity, or in some combination of the two.

Regarding the orthodox content of the image, it is unlikely that an unorthodox theological view was the problem. What could have been problematic was De Hooghe's simplified visualisation of the Trinity. As we have seen, the aim of simplifying and making understandible the Trinity had landed Zacharias Webber in hot water. Although De Hooghe underscores the 'mystery' of the doctrine of One God and Three persons, he rather naïvely continues with the visualisation and description of the Divine Being. Thus, whilst De Hooghe did not delve into the finessed theological argument the way Webber did, his non-professional and vernacular writings and etching on the topic might have caused him hesitate, having Webber's case in mind. Moreover, seen against the background of the threat of Socinianism, and the extreme delicacy that the Trinity doctrine turned out to be, one can imagene that a loose, artistic visualisation of the three persons of the one God ran a significant risk of being interpreted the wrong way. Wiep van Bunge points to how the massive rejection of Socinianism resulted in some sort of self-censorship and a reluctance to touch the topic at all: 'one of the unfortunate consequences of Socinianism, according to Bernard, is that its poor reputation among orthodox divines had made it very hazardous to discuss the Trinity...'.[82]

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81 See chapter 3 in this thesis.
82 Wiep van Bunge, 'Jean Frederic Bernard's Global Perspective on Socinianism and Deism,' in *The World's first Encyclopaedia of Religion (1723-37)*, ed Silvia Berti and Jonathan Israel (Leiden: Brill, forthcoming), 6.

A second, perhaps more plausible reason for omitting the plate concerns not so much the simplification of a theological mystery but the depiction of the Divine Being. The broad view that Protestantism was generally iconophobic has been jettisoned. Nevertheless, the depiction of God was in fact prohibited.[83] Reformed theology considered it impossible to think about God as instantiated in form or matter; one could only imagine God via abstract ideas. The point was the likeness of images as 'attempting to capture the likeness of the living, incorruptible and invisible God in a dead and corruptible image was intrinsically absurd and therefore impossible, while realistic likeness of dead religious persons ran the opposite risk of endowing them with too much life'.[84] Above all, it was prohibited to make any anthropomorphic representation of God the Father. The Father could be depicted with words such as 'Adonai' or 'Jehovah', with a Tetragrammaton or with a triangle surrounded by a circle without beginning or end.[85] Another criterion for the depiction of God – or not – had to do with the general idea that one could depict things that were seen in reality, such as the cross, or an angel. God the Father could not be depicted simply because he was never seen.[86] This especially affected the case of the Trinity, 'whose shape and form (excluding Christ's) had never been seen by anyone, let alone any painter, and could not therefore be lawfully depicted. Even the visual testimony of visions and revelations had only ever established that the persons of the Trinity were three, not that they have specific shapes or forms – again, other than Christ's'.[87]

The depiction of the Trinity had, indeed, drawn criticised within the Dutch Republic. In 1637 regional synods questioned the illustrated title-page of the new Dutch Authorised Version of the Bible. The critique concerned the depiction of the Trinity as a radiant triangle in which the word 'Jahweh' was written. It turned out that the problem was not so much the tetragrammaton but the symbolic representation of the Trinity in the form of a triangle, which was omitted in later editions of the Bible. The inventory of the errors in the Authorised Version took some time, but a recurrent question was 'whether the title-page in which the

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83   David J. Davis, *Faith, Printing Pictures. Religious Identity during the English Reformation* (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 7-10. Stuart Clark, *Vanities of the Eye, Vision in Early Modern European Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 165.

84   Clark, *Vanities*, 163, 168.

85   Corbett and Lightbown, *The Comely Frontispiece:* 39- 42. De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 388.

86   Clark, *Vanities*, 162. 'The real distinction', it has been said, 'was epistemological, between those who believed humans could attain knowledge of divine reality through fleshy means such as images and those who believed that they could not'.

87   Clark, *Vanities,* 170.

symbol of the Sacred Trinity was depicted as a triangle should be omitted'.[88] After 1657, both the Tetragammaton and the triangle were no longer found on the title page. But in a broader sense as well, symbolism was criticised. One man who took umbrage at religious symbolism in general was Gisbertus Voetius, who denounced the use of emblems or hieroglyphs as representations of Jesus, Christ, the Holy Spirit or the Trinity. The use of images such as the lamb, a dove, a sun or a radiant triangle ran the risk of iconolatry and idolatry.[89]

These controversies and restrictions surrounding the depiction of Christ, the Holy Spirit or the Trinity seemed not to bother Romeyn de Hooghe, which landed one of the authors who commissioned images from him in trouble. In 1682, the regional Synod of South Holland raised questions about the illustrations in Johannes Möller's *Sleutel, dewelke verklaard de bybelse figuuren oover de vier evangelisten, Handelingen der Apostelen en Openbaaringe Johannis* [Key, which explains the Biblical Figures concerning the Four Gospels, Acts of the Apostles and the Book of Revelation], with illustrations by De Hooghe. A close examination of De Hooghe's engravings reveals very small representations of the Holy Spirit as a dove and rebus-like representations of Christ bringing eternal grace to the faithful. In her discussion of the case, Els Stronks, professor of Early Modern Dutch literature and culture, shows that this visualisation elicited two sorts of complaints. First, about the specific symbolic depictions, such as the dove for the Holy Spirit; second and more principally, about the introduction by Möller, in which he shared his idea that images were the best religious teacher, as it were, for lay believers. The latter reason was perceived as a popish error.[90] Moreover, images ran the risk of making up a representation that had been inspired by human selection and interpretation, which damaged the 'real' biblical story.[91]

De Hooghe seems to have been impervious to this indirect reprimand, as twelve years later he depicted the Trinity – including an anthropomorphic Father – in his etchings for David de la Ligne's Catholic devotional *Spiegel om wel te Sterven* (1694) [a translation of *Miroir des bonne mortes*], published in Amsterdam by the Catholic publisher and bookseller Johannes Stichter.[92] In this etching, both Father and Son are depicted in anthropomorphic forms, and the Holy Spirit is represented in

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88 'Of niet van de tytelplaet behoort weghgenomen te werden die beeltenis of dat hieroglyphicum S.S. Trinitatis, dat aldaer met een triangel uutgedruckt staet?' Els Stronks, 'Het beeld bij het woord onder gereformeerde censuur,' *Delineavit et Sculpsit* 34 (2010): 8-19, 13.

89 Idem, 13, 14.

90 Stronks, *Negotiating differences*, 221-227.

91 Idem, 24.

92 See Coppens, *Een Ars moriendi*, 189-192.

the guise of seven flames surrounding the Father's head.[93] Within a Catholic context this was not forbidden: in the Renaissance there were many examples depicting God the Father in human form, most often as an old man with a long beard.

Fig. 188. De Hooghe, illustration from David de la Vigne, *Spiegel om wel te sterven*
Fig. 189. De Hooghe, God de Vader [God the Father], detail from fig. 188

De Hooghe's etching in this *Ars Moriendi* was never questioned or sanctioned, as far as I know, probably because of the Catholic devotional context in which it was published.[94] Nevertheless, wheareas the depiction of God the Father was not controversial in Catholic contexts, the depiction of the Trinity was.[95]

Although De Hooghe's representations for the *Ars Moriendi* could be considered a professional adaptation to a Catholic way of depicting the Trinity, the etching for *Hieroglyphica* shows that the etcher himself was not easily impressed with theological restrictions, and agreed in principle with Möller that images provide a better way of understanding and remembering than words. In chapter 4, Van de Goddelyke Huyshouding en het Raadbesluyt [On the Divine Oeconomy and the Decree], De Hooghe depicts the Creator and Preserver of the world, the Eternal, as the All-Seeing eye – surrounded by a Triangle, the symbol for the Trinity, accompanied with the letters for Jahweh, JHWH.[96] The dove for the Holy Spirit is a recurring symbol, as is the Lamb for Christ. Plate 63 of *Hieroglyphica*

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93   See, for a historical description of the depiction of God the Father, Steven Bigham, *The Image of God the Father in Orthodox Theology and Iconography and Other Studies* (Torrance, CA: Oakwood Publications, 1995).

94   Although the Reformed Church resented the availability of Catholic books and devotional objects, Catholic books were not subjected to censorship, unless they were too 'political' or when such books were used in public schools. Ingrid Weekhout, *Boekencensuur in de Noordelijke Nederlanden. De vrijheid van drukpers in de zeventiende eeuw* (The Hague: Sdu, 1998), 98-100.

95   Bigham, *The Image of God the Father in Orthodox Theology and Iconography*, 73-76.

96   De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, chapter 4.

(see fig. 46 in chapter 3) combines them all: the dove for the Holy Spirit, the Lamb for the son of God (O) and a tetragrammaton in a triangle surrounded by a ourobouros for the eternal Trinity. Remarkable here is the depiction of Christ on his judgement seat in heaven (P). Although theologically the idea of Christ as reigning in heaven was present in all creeds, De Hooghe's depiction seems very similar to the Renaissance images of God the Father. It was probably due to its tiny proportions, the late appearance and to the book's limited readersship that this figuring of Christ did not raise any questions.
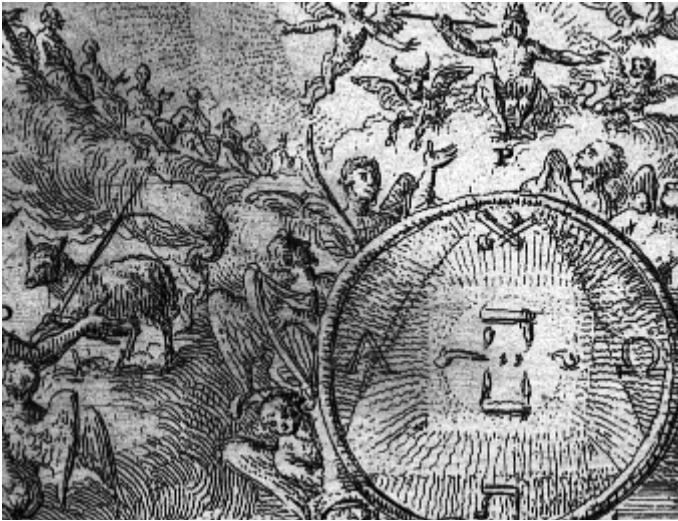
Fig. 190. De Hooghe, Drie-eenigheyd [Trinity], detail from Plate 63

Once again, why was De Hooghe's Trinity image not included in the book? It doesn't seem logical to assume the decision was De Hooghe's. Probably Hendrik Westerhovius and/or the publisher Van der Woude – against the background of the Muller case and the potentially explosive theological matter of the Trinity – opted to have the plate left out. This decision allowed them to avoid misinterpretations of a hotly debated theological issue, accusations of simplifying a theological mystery and criticism of the actual depiction of the Trinity. Omitting the image thus had nothing to do with questioning the fundamental status of the doctrine of the Trinity. On the contrary: it was probably the result of what Van Bunge has noticed, namely that the topic was important and controversial enough that people chose to steer clear of it. This mechanism, in turn, could have influenced the development towards the devotion of less attention towards specific theological issues and details, and more towards pious behavior and religious unity, an evolution that is evident in *Hieroglyphica*.

7.2 Sisterly freedom, pious behaviour and religious unity

De Hooghe's two lists of fundamentals, although different in context, are both very concise but entirely orthodox. We see a loose resemblance to the basic notions of the Apostles' Creed. Despite De Hooghe's support for the Synod of Dordt, he omits the Dordrecht doctrines and the Belgic Confession (1561) from fundamentals. Interestingly, throughout *Hieroglyphica*, De Hooghe pays much more attention to the avoidance of schism and to religious harmony and pious behaviour than to theological exegesis, and his presentation of either true or false religion is largely related to non-dogmatic characteristics. This emphasis can already be detected in De Hooghe's depiction of the supreme Egyptian god Yunx, which he describes as a prototype for other supreme gods. Above the image De Hooghe put the letters ΦΥΛΟ, which he thought should be read as 'Love and communion'. This might apply not only to the relation between God and believers but also to the purpose of religion itself.[97] *Hieroglyphica*'s images and descriptions of the true Church and true religion, for the most part, envision a simple, pure and kind-hearted Church, and his false religion is most frequently luxurious, proud and oppressive.
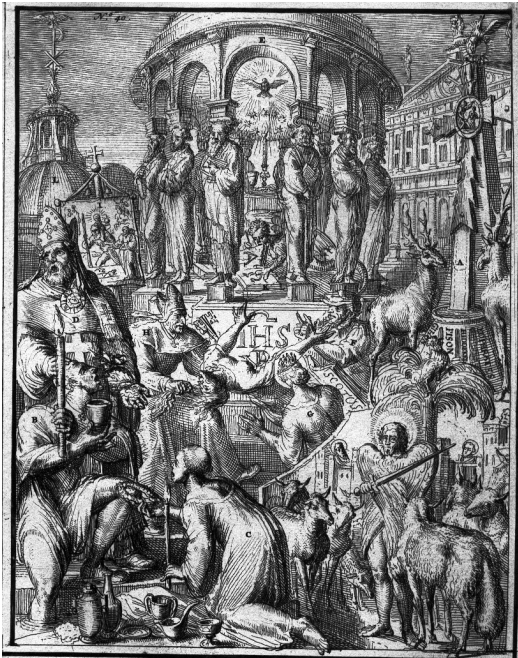
Fig. 191. De Hooghe, Plate 40, Van het Kerkbestier [On Church Governance]

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97   See also chapter 2.2 and 3.5 of this thesis.

In plate 40 we find the difference between the true and the false church indicated by the plainness of the first churches and the pompous riches and enormous buildings of the Catholic Church.[98] In De Hooghe's words: 'the grandeur, esteem, power and riches of the Christian Church diverged from the benign modesty and helpful poverty found in Christ'.[99] In contrast to this development, *Hieroglyphica* characterises the true Church as a modest and peaceful institution, practising sisterly freedom and aiming for religious unity. In chapter 38, VAN HET VERVAL VAN DE WAARHEYD [On the Decline of Truth], De Hooghe depicts 'God's Simple Church' [Eenvoudige kerk gods] as a plainly dressed woman (L). Guided by the Holy Spirit, she follows her Saviour, carrying a cross on her back. She builds the Church with 'the sun of true knowledge in her bosom'. Again, De Hooghe does not specify what this 'true knowledge' means, stating only that 'she differs from the erroneous church' and is attempting to withdraw from the 'world of seduction and persecution'.[100]
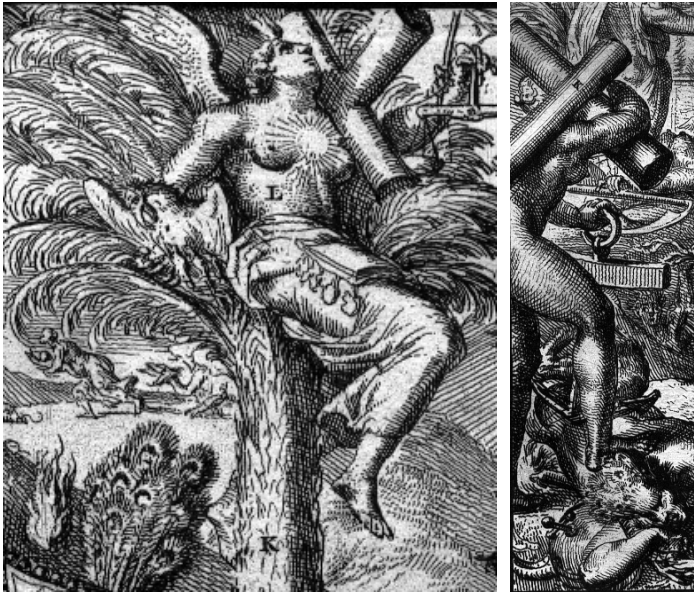
Fig. 192. De Hooghe, Eenvoudige Kerke Gods [God's Simple Church], detail from Plate 38
Fig. 193. De Hooghe, De Ware Christenheyd [True Christianity], detail from Plate 63

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98 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, chapter 40, and page 298.
99 Idem*, 363. 'De Grootheyd, de Hoogachting, Macht en Rykdom, van de Christen Kerk, te veel verschillende van de zachtmoedige Nederigheyd, en behulpzame armoede, in Christus gezien…'
100 Idem, 287, 288.

Introducing his final chapter, Toepassing [Application]*,* De Hooghe announces that in this chapter false religion will be opposed to the 'true soul-saving teachings'. As for figure K De Ware Christenheyd [True Christianity], where one would expect to find an elaborate idea about what true Christianity looks like, the legend briefly explains that this woman (K) is:

> A strong Virgin, naked and released of all outward pretence or splendour, willingly carrying her Cross, following in the footsteps of her Saviour. With her left hand she holds on to the Anchor of Hope, which does not deceive.[101]

Another figure, also named True Christianity ([H] in Plate 57), is briefly described as a 'Sweet, Peaceful and Friendly Virgin, almost equal to the Truth, [who] is naked to denote the pure state of Regeneration'.[102] This new religion is brighter, has 'better Morals, a Spiritual Humility [and acts] in accordance to the despised duty of Humility and Gentleness'.[103]
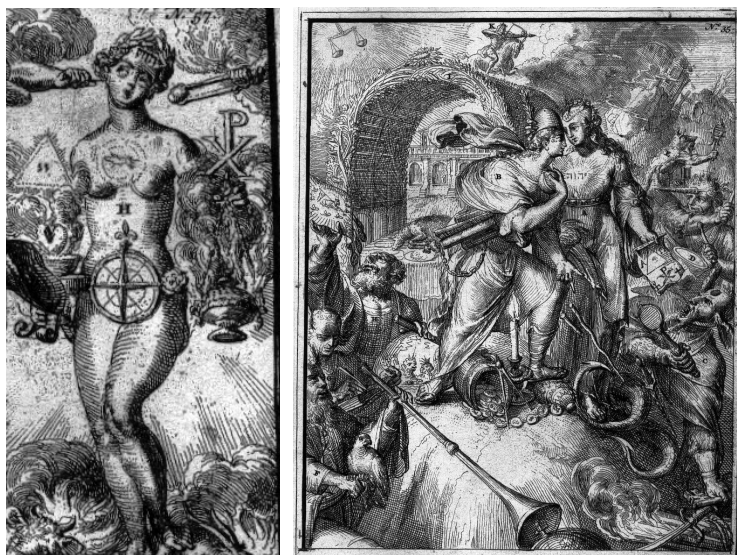
Fig. 194. De Hooghe, Waare Christelykheyd [True Christianity]*,* detail from Plate 57
Fig. 195. De Hooghe, Plate 35, Van de Vrede van Gods Kerk [On the Peace of God's Church]

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101 Idem, 452. 'De Ware Christenheyd, ene sterke Maagd, naakt en los gemaakt, van alle uyterlyke schyn of Praal, dragende bereydwillig haar Kruys, en opvolgende het spoor van haren Heyland'.

102 Idem, 412. 'Waare Christelykheid… Deze zoetaardige Vreedelievende, en Vriendelyke Maagd is de Waarheyd naast gelyk; zy is mede naakt, en toont over al, den zuyveren staat van de Wedergeboorte.'

103 Idem, 410.

A core chapter concerning De Hooghe's approach to the values of the true Church is chapter 35, VAN DE VREDE VAN GODS KERK [On the Peace of God's Church]. The first sentence is explanatory: 'The Peace of God's Church (the Sweetest above all), the True Salem, is visualised as an amiable, pleasant and beautiful Bride…'[104]

In etching 35, the female depicted in the center of the plate in figure A is the bride, Christ's church, called by the name of Peace of God's Church. In her left hand she holds the 'knowledge of God from the Bible', such as the 'Sacred Trinity in a living Deity, and the victorious Name of Christ'. In her right hand she carries an olive branch – symbol of peace – with which 'she grants the Christian freedom to her church members'. On her waist De Hooghe depicted a diamond knot of 'order and unity' by which she ties her sister to her. Whereas figure B represents the Church as an institution, the sister in figure B stands for its members. According to De Hooghe, it is the peace of sister A that encourages Christian freedom for her members, present in sister B. This liberty – visualised in the 'liberty hat' this sister wears – existed in the freedom to 'research the divine writings for hidden treasures', a research that is allowed 'without fear for schism', De Hooghe explicitly adds. Therefore, she holds the Old and New Testaments in her arms, and at her feet there are different tools to further the understanding of the Bible, symbolised by ancient coins and a compass. Beneath her other foot, she crushes the oppression present in other churches, most importantly the Catholic Church, hence the tiara.

It is remarkable that in this image the two women are portrayed as 'sisters', indicating an intriguing equality during a period when the group, the institution, the whole, was always more important than the individual. Nevertheless, 'sister B' is prepared to hold on to the unity of the church, should she find herself on 'dangerous roads'. Still, De Hooghe does not explicate what these dangerous walks might be. In general, the freedom of people to read the Bible for themselves was quite accepted in Reformed circles, although it was to be done so strictly through the lens of the Heidelberg Catechism [1563]. De Hooghe does not mention the catechism or any other Reformed Form of Unity here.[105] The consequence of such study by individual believers might be different opinions on various matters. De Hooghe's answer to such potential interpretive diversity is given in the form of a pomegranate, 'in which so many tasty and salutary parts are kept together in one

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104 Idem, 269 'De Vreede van Gods Kerk (Het Lieffelykste boven alles) het Ware Salem, word verbeeld als een zeer beminnelyke, aangename en schoone Bruyd…'. With Salem, De Hooghe refers to several passages in the Bible where Salem is representative of Peace, either as a geographical city or as another name for (the idealised or heavenly) Jerusalem.

105 J.J. Touber, 'Biblical Philology and Hermeneutical Debate in the Dutch Republic in the Second Half of the Seventeenth Century,' in *Scriptural Authority and Biblical Criticism in the Dutch Golden Age. God's Word Questioned*, ed Dirk van Miert et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 325-47.

peel'.[106] The pomegranate indicates De Hooghe's preference for the possibility of religious freedom and variety within the church, as long as the peel holds everything together. Although there is no further explication here of what precisely this 'peel' consists of, the allegory probably refers to the common faith and membership in the one True Church, irrespective of debates over non-fundamental issues.

There might be a historical context to plate 35. Its chronological position – between the primitive churches of chapter 33 and the Church councils of chapter 36 – indicates that De Hooghe is representing the situation in the Christian Church before the councils ratified several theological doctrines as orthodox or heretical, and of course before the controversies raised by these decisions. Remarkable, however, is the caption of the chapter: DE VREDE VAN GOD'S KERK [On the Peace of Gods Church], which is reminiscent of a series of resolutions 'towards the peace of the Church' declared by the States of Holland, first during the Arminian Controversy (1614) and later during the much more recent Voetian and Cocceian Controversies (1656, 1673, 1694). In each of these resolutions, further discussion about the points in dispute was forbidden, and the authorities insisted on peace and unity in the Church.[107]

This resonance chimes with De Hooghe's recurring rejection of theological debates, scholasticism and the tendency towards the strict definition of every detail as the primal cause of religious schism and religious unrest.[108] Besides the examples we encountered in chapter 3, De Hooghe elaborates on the topic in chapter 33. Here he expounds on the reason for the decline of the first churches, which had been caused by 'people inside the church who, under the guise of God's will, started clever debates with which they diverted the pious'. These trouble-seekers had ruined the first Church.[109] On other occasions De Hooghe contends that 'It is better to pray devoutly for soul-saving knowledge … than to sow concepts of adorned reasoning as stings in simple minds'.[110] De Hooghe even mentions that in practice, it was not so much heresy that had damaged the Church but its persecuting spirit, love of pomp and circumstance and drive to accumulate papal power.[111] Although De Hooghe advocates freedom and tolerance of diversity, he considers it wise that all submit themselves to regulation, by church and state, as pedantically debating details only results in growing disagreements and eventually ecclesiastical schism.

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106 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 269, 270, 438.
107 An example is the prohibition of the debate on the dogma of predestination, see chapter 5 above.
108 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 300, 440, 441.
109 Idem, 261.
110 Idem, 58, 59.
111 Idem, 289-302.

In his characterisations of true religion and the True Church, De Hooghe in general avoids theological specifics and details, instead emphasising labels such as 'plainness', 'purity', 'humility', 'concord' and 'sisterly freedom'. Notwithstanding the emphasis on research and inner spirituality that is displayed in *Hieroglyphica*, De Hooghe does not encourage believers to use their brains and follow their hearts and leave it at that. It seems that an even better task was reserved for them, the task of practical piety. In De Hooghe's words:

> The treatment of these matters [the loss of innocence of the first humans] by the pagan poets is very perceptive and most beautiful, proving how our passions drive us to know and test everything… Much more Blissfull it would be (either understood from pagan or from Sacred Writings) when people, in Sacred Ignorance, knew less and behaved better. One finds the footprints [examples] of such a Simple Piety rather with poor Burghers, here and elsewhere, than amongst the finest and most profound Thinkers at Courts and Universities.[112]

In a world where the first decline of the Fall came with the passion to knowing more than one needed to, it would be much better to focus on good behaviour. In chapter 6 we saw that the primary role of De Hooghe's church shepherds is to unite their flock, not by means of forcing them to believe dogmatic details of biblical exegesis but by prompting them to grow in piety. In the same manner De Hooghe refers to the Bible as a 'Guideline of Morals and Knowledge' in chapter 35. Examples stressing that a pious lifestyle is more fundamental than theological doctrine can be found in De Hooghe's emphasis on childlike pious simplicity, and even the biblical pagan magi, following the Star of Bethlehem, are presented as exemplars of good behaviour, to be included within De Hooghe's symbolic Trinity etching.[113]

For De Hooghe, true religion leaves open 'a playground for the well-minded' on the field of theology, a realm where bright minds can conduct their own enquiries, whether or not such study results in different opinions. Striving for and debating the 'true' doctrine should be avoided on detailed issues. If people really want to rival one another, De Hooghe suggests that they incite one another towards the

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112 Idem, 145-146. 'De vinding der Heydensche Dichters is omtrent deze stof [de zondeval] zeer zinrijk en overfraay, bewyzende onze driften, om alles te weten en te beproeven..... Veel Gelukzaliger was 't gewis, ('t zy Heydensch, of naar de H. Schriften gevat) indien men met een heylige Onnozelheyd minder wist, en beter deed. Gelyk men nog van zulke Eenvoudige Vroomheid meer Voetstappen by de slechte Huysluyden hier of elders zoude vinden, als in de fynst-overgehaalde Geesten der Hoven en Hoge Schoolen.'

113 Idem, 255, 269.

attainment of better morals. This is shown again in chapter 61, in the harmony between the two calm sisters: pious Voetianism, with its insistence on the pious discipline of life, and Cocceianism, with its attention to speculative Bible study:

> The forbidding of such (i.e. free enquiry) is papist and constrains the consciousness; but it is nevertheless wise to submit to good Church and State ordinances, a useful seed, from comes mutual training of the minds, and challenge into diligence for the best [behaviour].[114]

This exhortation to sidestep actual theological debates and to focus on the piety of simple believers was not original. As mentioned, an irenic approach in theology is often attributed to Remonstrants like Grotius, but it is also characteristic of the Catholic Erasmus, who emphasised the importance of heart and deeds over intellectual debate, adding the living of an ethical life to the fundamentals of Christianity. Even before these writers, the Reformed theologian Franciscus Junius Sr. (1545-1602) had 'coined' the term 'irenic',[115] and the Huguenot Isaac Casaubon had fulminated against the 'deep-routed habit of quarrelling endlessly about abstruse theological matters'.[116] During the second half of the seventeenth century Johannes Cocceius himself pointed at the danger of focusing on theoretical religion rather than practical piety, which would result in discord and rivalry and disrupt the peace and unity within the Church. Instead, believers should aim at achieving the 'purity and simplicity of God'.[117] The earlier mentioned Zacharias Webber focussed on the unity of one Protestant Church, from a Lutheran background. The focus on simple piety can be connected to the much broader pietist movement of renewal of the churches from within, in which theologians and ministers called for the engendering of a personal, inner faith and the denunciation of public sins, and preached inward belief and practical piety. This foregrounding of Christian personal faith and practical piety – taught by Voetius for

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114 De Hooghe, *Hieroglyphica*, 441. 'Zulks wech te neemen is Pausselyk en word Gemoeds-dwang; maar wysselyk, zich die goede Kerk en Staat-ordere te onderwerpen, een nut Zaad, waar uyt de Verstanden malkanderen oeffenen, en tot meerder vlyt in 't beste aanprikkelen.'

115 Gary Remer, *Humanism and the Rhetoric of toleration*, 52, 53. 'For Erasmus, the philosophy of Christ is found "not in the ceremonies alone and syllogistic propositions but in the heart itself and in the whole life."' See also G.H.M. Posthumus Meyjes, 'Protestants irenisme in de 16e en eerste helft van de 17e eeuw,' *Nederlands Theologisch Tijdschrift* 36 (1982): 205-222 Edwin Rabbie, 'Het irenisme van Hugo de Groot', *Jaarboek van de Maatschappij der Nederlandse Letterkunde* (1993) 56-69; C. de Jonge, *De irenische ecclesiologie van Franciscus Junius (1545-1602)* (Nieuwkoop: B. de Graaf, 1980).

116 Henk Nellen, 'Minimal Faith and Irenic Ideals in Seventeenth-Century Scholarly Circles. Hugo Grotius as a Guardian of Isaac Casaubon's Legacy,' *Church History and Religious Culture* 94 (2014): 444-478, 445.

117 Van Amersfoort, *Liever Turks dan Paaps?,* 57.

forty years – was aimed not so much at downsizing doctrinal quarrels and increasing religious unity as at animating the 'dry orthodoxy of the state church'. [118]

7.3 Concluding remarks

Although in some Early Modern writings – for instance, those of radical thinkers such as Spinoza and Koerbagh – the fundamentals of true Christianity were reduced to the level of pious living and ethical behaviour De Hooghe does not cross this bridge. What we encounter is the listing of basic Reformed fundamentals, albeit loosely formulated, since *Hieroglyphica* is no systematic theology. Most of the fundamentals enumerated by De Hooghe mirror specific debates of the late seventeenth century. This aligns with Reformed theology in which the naming of a select set of fundamentals was not a goal but rather a reaction to debates. Still, De Hooghe's search for the characteristics of true religion combines these fundamentals with an omnipresent emphasis on the simple piety of the common faithful. Although this idea that the main task of ministers should be the teaching of piety is reminiscent of the writings of radical thinkers like Spinoza, it is question worth asking whether such an emphasis was truly radical, just because Spinoza agreed with it.[119] Such a shift from theological dogmas to the emphasis on a pure, plain, humble and pious Church indicates a change in the view of what true religion is, but this change is not necessarily part of the radical Enlightenment discourse or the beginning of what is called 'the Further Reformation', consisting of a thorough embedding of all Reformed dogmas and pious behaviour in the lives of believers, combined with a strict Calvinist theology.[120] Instead, *Hieroglyphica* should be understood in the context of a truly 'further reformation' – a dynamic development in which Reformed religion was not as monolithic and tightly defined as is sometimes thought. In reaction to the seventeenth-century disputes, people resented the enormous amount of theological altercations about the correct way of reading the Bible. Similar to what was being expressed by synods and classes, De Hooghe not so much judges the content or the sides taken in the discussions as rejects wholesale the exercise of unproductive wrangling. The focus, rather, became the thorough education of church members in the necessary fundamentals, all in order to prompt them to engage in consistently pious and moral behaviour. In this context *Hieroglyphica*

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118 Van IJnatten, *Nederlandse Religiegeschiedenis*, 219-227, esp. 219.

119 Henri Krop, 'From religion in the singular to religions in the plural: 1700, a faultline in the conceptual history of religion', in *From Confessional Churches to Polite Piety*, ed Jetze J. Touber and Joke Spaans (Leiden: Brill, forthcoming).

120 See, for the problematic discourses of Enlightenment and Further Reformation, the introduction to this thesis.

shows its greatest abhorrence towards Catholicism, a religion characterised as being power hungry, luxurious, corrupt, and filled with the needless minutiae of scholastic theology. The ideal Church, by contrast, is rendered as pure, simple, friendly, humble, peaceful and gentle.

De Hooghe's depiction and description of specific theological dogmas suggest that a broader aim had arisen: the avoidance of unnecessary theological discussion and debate in order to prevent further schisms. Although he firmly denounces Socinian and deist ideas, De Hooghe keeps aloof from 'internal' debates. This could be a Cartesio-Cocceian suspension of judgement in cases that are not clear and distinct, but perhaps it conforms even more to the notion of 'learned ignorance', mentioned in chapter 3. Both principles are applied with the practical purpose of religious unity in view. Doctrines that proved both delicate and contentious – such as predestination – were accepted but not included in De Hooghe's list of fundamentals. In the case of the Trinity, the visualisation of the doctrine was omitted from the book. On the one hand, this approach of avoidance runs counter to the radical Enlightened adage that reason should be the interpreter of everything, as for instance Koerbagh preached. On the other hand, it does follow the trend in which fundamental religious doctrines were turned towards an expectation of a Christian unity. This last trend, however, should be considered less the outcome of some sort of radical Enlightenment than as belonging to the Long Reformation.

Overall, De Hooghe's view on True Christianity is much more concerned with religious concord and harmony, and the piety of believers, than with detailed theological specifics. Such theological details belong to the field of non-fundamentals which make up, for De Hooghe, a 'playground for the well-minded', suitable for the free enquiry of reasonable thinkers.

Conclusion

This thesis has analysed how religion is represented in Romeyn de Hooghe's *Hieroglyphica*. The book is quite atypical and hard to pin down. It is at once an artist's primer, a history of religion, a learned encyclopaedia, a book on different religions as well as a mythography. It is decidedly not a philosophical treatise nor a systematic theological work. Rather, it combines elements of different fields with considerable artistic freedom. So instead of focussing on one aspect of the book – for instance, the artistic value of the etchings – I have approached it from the most inclusive perspective possible, in order to interpret De Hooghe's *Hieroglyphica* in all its varying contexts at the same time: artistic, (book) historical, cultural and theological.

From these different perspectives this thesis has shown that the slippery and elusive *Hieroglyphica* was directed towards a twofold goal. Artistically, it is best characterised as a collection of etchings, matching De Hooghe's well-established style for frontispieces, which, accompanied by elaborate explanatory texts, educated readers in the depiction of ancient gods and religions. Simultaneously, the sequence of the plates contains an argument on religious decline and reformation. In this combination of these genres *Hieroglyphica* is quite unique. It seems De Hooghe took it as his charge to present himself as an artistic didactic, educating less-informed artists and offering his best depictions of gods and religious phenomena, and also a learned scholar, writing a history of religion in which decline and reformation together form the leading thread.

For all the fuss about De Hooghe's person and his presumed atheism, De Hooghe was predominantly viewed as a learned artist, and the reception of *Hieroglyphica* I found concerns mostly details about the correct depiction of ancient gods, as is shown in chapter 2. Although De Hooghe himself, and many of the writings about him, foreground his artistic originality and his autonomous and creative allegorical approach, current research reveals that De Hooghe was more traditional than has previously been thought. Quite a few of his images in

Hieroglyphica are adaptations of the work of people like Pierio Valeriano Bolzani or Cesare Ripa, and parts of the text are taken from other sources.

Unlike those contemporary and later readers of *Hieroglyphica* who focussed on its somewhat technical details, my main interest lies in the history of religion contained in the book, and what such a history can tell us about ideas of true religion. With its production period located somewhere around 1700, the book can be seen as a representative of a period of change in the religious culture of the Dutch Republic. Whereas the seventeenth century had been a period of sectarian conflicts and even schisms, as well as recurring government edicts aiming to shut down the quarrels between theological schools, the eighteenth century was an era dominated by a religious sphere that focussed on piety and personal spiritual rebirth. The reasons for this change are usually sought within the context of a widely acknowledged 'crisis of the late seventeenth century'. Famously described in Paul Hazard's *La crise de la conscience europ*éenne, this change has been explained in terms of a crisis with predominantly philosophical roots, which resulted in the Enlightenment. Recently, Jonathan Israel's Enlightenment trilogy, as well as *The Book that changed Europe* by Margaret Jacob, Lynn Hunt and Wijnand Mijnhardt, has revived the same thesis with some adaptations in time and place.

At first sight, both Romeyn de Hooghe and his *Hieroglyphica* would raise the suspicion of a critical, or 'radical' Enlightened view of religion. De Hooghe had a reputation of mocking God and of atheism, and the allegorical imagery in *Hieroglyphica* might have been used to veil his Enlightened ideas and critical historicism. Like Bernard and Picart's *Cérémonies*, De Hooghe's *Hieroglyphica* could then be seen as a sign of the broadening of a critical, Enlightened, deist view of religion, one that relativised Christianity and propagated religious tolerance. However, whereas Hunt, Jacob and Mijnhardt focus on the radical, deistic elements in the *Cérémonies* – omitting the chapters on Protestantism and mentioning only in passing that Catholicism was indeed attacked harshly in the *Ceremonies* – the current study has tried to do justice to the complete content of *Hieroglyphica*. As I explained in the introduction, such comprehensiveness and fidelity are to be achieved much less by a Straussian 'reading between the lines' than through Pocock's contextualism. After all, the accusations that tarnished De Hooghe's religious reputation are hardly proved by historical evidence and were mostly broadcast within the context of a political smear campaign, and should therefore not be the only lens through which to interpret his work.

Having analysed *Hieroglyphica* from cover to cover and with as much relevant context as possible, I have discovered that it is certainly not another 'book that changed Europe' (if there ever was such a book), and De Hooghe does not reveal himself in his book to be a closet Spinozist – let alone a full-blown one. What stands out throughout *Hieroglyphica* is De Hooghe's surprisingly flexible and

sometimes ambiguous or undecided takes on the debates swirling around him. He is thus hard to pin down as belonging to one of the categories that make up the enlightenment discourse, namely as an orthodox, moderate enlightened or radical figure. If one cherry-picks only a few elements from the book, it can be presented as, indeed, a radical work that foregrounds ingredients of the Enlightenment's anticlericalism, historicism and rationalism. At the same time, however, other elements would reveal *Hieroglyphica* as a product of Reformed orthodoxy, which denounces many forms of pagan error and idolatry as well as the entirety of the wayward paths of Catholicism, Socinianism and deism.

Chapter 2 shows De Hooghe's flexibility first via the broad range of genres that *Hieroglyphica* is part of. As a primer or encyclopaedic work on pagan gods, De Hooghe's depictions and descriptions are meant to educate and can be seen as comprising a rather matter-of-fact sequence of descriptions of gods. At the same time, however, the book is a history of religion that demonstrates the decline of religion through the ages, and thus belongs to a genre strongly charged with a value-laden view of religions. In chapter 3, where De Hooghe's scattered arguments on the different ways that religion can be known are brought together and analysed, I have shown how he places an orthodox emphasis on the Bible, to which the 'sources' of reason and nature are added, albeit with warnings about their dangers. Still, there are images in *Hieroglyphica* suggesting that the fundamental basis of the Bible is impaired and that nature is to be preferred when it comes to divine knowledge. De Hooghe reveals a remarkable reluctance to choose one specific guide, as all mediums and methods are presented as problematic and failing. Throughout *Hieroglyphica*, it seems rather that the orthodox notion of 'learned ignorance' developed into some kind of religious scepticism, and not into some 'religious enlightenment' in which human *ratio* prevailed over biblical authority. Surprisingly, De Hooghe pays considerable attention to the human heart and mind and to the workings of the spirit. In its search for the most reliable and universal source of religious knowledge, De Hooghe's book suggest a turn towards the individual's heart in the extraction of truth from the Bible.

The strongest ambiguity in *Hieroglyphica* is found in De Hooghe's exercise of religious comparison. His era was the age of reason that saw the rise of the 'modern comparative study of religious phenomena', as has been described by Guy Stroumsa and others. I have analysed De Hooghe's chronological history as an instance of 'sacred history', a genre that presents other religions as erroneous and as different and isolated from Christianity, which represents the sacred continuation of an original religion. However, by concentrating on *Hieroglyphica*'s thematic etchings, somewhat unconnected illustrations in which different hotly debated topics take the stage, we have seen how De Hooghe stresses the similarities among all religions, and the mutual influence at work between pagan religions and the

Church. Attentiveness to this emphasis means that several Christian dogmas – such as creation from nothing, Providence, the hereafter and the role of the Devil – can be perceived as having developed historically: they are not sacred givens. De Hooghe's emphasis on similarities among religions, and especially his take on the hereafter and an apparently positive reference to Frederik Leenhof's much-debated book *Een hemel op aarde* [Heaven on Earth], perhaps signals unorthodox leanings on the part of of De Hooghe. Yet the most important characteristic that religions share is the tendency towards religious error and decline, most of the time instigated by power-hungry priests.

Religion's invariable drift – or continuous headlong fall – into error was elaborated in chapter 6, which demonstrated that De Hooghe's most pregnant religious critique was aimed at the clergy. De Hooghe consistently points to the decline of religion that was caused by those religious leaders who tricked naïve believers into idolatry for their own benefit. Moreover, De Hooghe presents them as the *inventors* of religion. This had occurred not only in non-Christian religions, but is characteristic of all religions, in all times and places throughout the ages. Surprisingly, De Hooghe combines his abhorrence of priestcraft with some appreciation of the benefits of clerical deceit, which helped keep believers in check. De Hooghe's final chapters on Reformed religion present a vision of ideally formed ecclesiastical office-holders: humble clerics who are to be friendly and somewhat in the background. Although this stance can be interpreted as partisan propaganda for the Reformed religion, in the context of *Hieroglyphica* it should also be read as an admonition to enact further reform directed at leaders and believers alike. Apparently, these different points of view could coexist.

Finally, chapter 7 analysed which dogmas De Hooghe considered fundamental to true religion since its origin. Here the author proves quite orthodox in his preferences. He expounds on topics that had proved controversial in contemporary debates and defends mainline Reformed views. De Hooghe hardly ventures into the particulars of the recent controversies, however, and makes it clear that the focus of believers should centre on pious behaviour. Although De Hooghe could at some points be called 'undogmatic', his attitude hardly supports a 'radical' reading of *Hieroglyphica*, as this lack of dogmatism was a much broader trend within Protestantism. In De Hooghe's idealised image of true Protestantism he keeps pointing to religious tolerance and unity as being proper to Reformed Protestantism. His thoroughgoing advocacy of a plain, simple, unembellished religion, void of theological strife about minutiae, is conspicuous.

Thus, Romeyn de Hooghe presents the history and character of true religion in an ambivalent manner. The chronological trend in *Hieroglyphica* tells the story of religion from its very origins to its closure in the hereafter. Focussing on the stories of Biblical figures and developments in the history of the Christian churches, as

opposed to the institutions and practises of false pagan idolatry, it contributes to the writing of sacred history in which Israelite religion, Christianity and finally Reformed Protestantism stand out as the successive stages of the one true religion. At the same time, however, when Christianity's sacred uniqueness is questioned by the insertion of comparative etchings where elements of Christian religion are put on par with other religions and mythological gods and natural religion is acknowledged right alongside revealed religion. Furthermore, De Hooghe chides those who would engage in dogmatic precisionism, emphasises moral behaviour and criticises clerical authority.

Such ambiguity, combined with a lack of conceptual clarity, can also be found in the works of other seventeenth-century thinkers who, like De Hooghe, resist being fixed within categories. In this thesis we have found the examples of theologians such as Frederik van Leenhof and Jean Alphonse Turrettini, of philosophers like Pierre Bayle, of scholars like John Spencer and John Selden and of the bookseller and writer Willem Goeree. The natural philosophers Newton and Christian Huygens are of course famous as figures who, respectively, combined a bright scientific career with esoteric research and brought philosophy and science together with theology and religion. Examples closer to De Hooghe are found in the work of his colleagues, the artists Zacharias Webber and Jan Luyken, who also displayed contradictory opinions in his writings. Many modern historiographical debates on late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century religious thought has been framed in terms of 'Enlightenment', but the categories used (radical, moderate, orthodox) seem not especially apt for early modern thinkers.

The question is then whether the strict division of the Enlightenment framework in its different strands (radical, moderate, conservative/religious) can be maintained, as it does not seem to aptly fit many of the Early Modern thinkers who mingle orthodox and seemingly radical ideas in their writings. Historiographically, therefore, this thesis counters the still widespread idea of an immutable, unworldly, strict and anti-pagan orthodoxy that was cast aside due to new philosophical insights and the deist invention of comparative religion, by showing how De Hooghe's history was fuelled by many mainstream orthodox debates. It was not Bernard and Picart's 'deist-inspired' book *Cérémonies et coutumes religieuses de tous les peuples du monde* that changed European ideas about religion, and neither should Spinoza's radical ideas be seen as an abrupt watershed: the change was already underway. The debates and themes present in *Hieroglyphica* – reason versus revelation, the comparison of Christian religion with other religions, anticlericalism, and a focus on minimal dogmas, the human heart and piety – all have roots in mainstream Christian discourses on true religion, and were present long before 'the Enlightenment' entered the scene. It seems that some of these topics have too easily been attributed to the ideas of the radical Enlightenment of the philosophers.

A special reference should be made here to the idea of a 'Religious Enlightenment' around 1700, as presented in David Sorkin's *Religious Enlightenment*. In his book, Sorkin points at several Enlightened concepts and ideas in the work of theologians from different denominations. Although *Hieroglyphica* supports the view that Enlightened ideas are found in many more sources than philosophical treatments only, the question is whether this should be considered 'Religious Enlightenment'. For if so many of the characteristics of this 'Religious Enlightenment' – for instance the steering of a middle way between unbelief on the one hand and dogmatism and enthusiasm on the other, the acceptance of natural religion, and the characterisation of revealed knowledge as 'above reason' instead of 'against reason' – had been present in Christianity long before the Enlightenment set in, one needs to ask whether what Sorkin has described are the characteristics of a Religious 'Enlightenment' or of a broader internal movement of reform and change.

Where, then, should we place De Hooghe and his enigmatic *Hieroglyphica*? Instead of positioning De Hooghe as a radical critic of religion, an adherent of a Religious Enlightenment or an author of a partisan Reformed church history, I think De Hooghe should be seen as part of the aforementioned transition in focus from sacred history to the history of religions. Fuelled by the findings of elaborate humanist scholarship, much more historical – antiquarian and philological – information became available, which didn't always harmonise with the traditional story of a unique and sacred Christianity, isolated from paganism. This more scholarly critical attitude towards the Christian history and tradition, with its recurrent calls for reform, arose not so much from a philosophical field but to a much greater extent emerged from the field of historical, antiquarian and philological bible exegesis, as has become clear in the research of scholars such as Anthony Grafton, Noel Malcolm, Scott Mandelbrote, Jonathan Sheehan, Dmitri Levitin and Dirk van Miert.

This transition from sacred history to the history of religions in its turn can be connected to two larger 'internal' phenomena: the continuation of a 'Long Reformation' and the flexibility of Christian apologetics. Far into the eighteenth century the Reformation influenced ideas about religion in general and Christianity in particular. In this process, for instance, the Bible remained the main authoritative source for true religion, but its exegesis was democratised. This egalitarian levelling did not happen straight after Luther's Reformation; on the contrary, many Protestant ministers continued to command the same respect and authority accorded their priestly Catholic predecessors, and their judgement was seldom questioned. Such deference was not as common, however, in the late seventeenth century, as has become particularly clear in our analysis of De Hooghe's anticlericalism, apparent from *Hieroglyphica*. The role of the individual in matters of faith grew, and a long process of looking critical and

historically at Christianity by scholars and theologians (often combined in the same person) had already been going on since the Protestant Reformation and the rise of scholarly humanism. The very traumatic event of a schism within European Christianity displayed the fallibility of the true Christian religion, and altered the relations between different religions, resulting in convictions such as that being under Turkish rule was preferable over being under a Papist regime. Within this Long Reformation, with its critical attitude, and aiming for further eradication of remnants of what were considered Catholic superstitions, prominent Reformed theologians also criticised the overbearing behaviour of some ministers, and encouraged interested laymen and -women to study scripture.

The second crux is found in the flexibility of Early Modern apologetics. Although the Reformation focused on the adage of 'sola scriptura', over the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries scholars and theologians developed a much broader interest in the historical and textual legacy surrounding the Bible. Christian scholars used all available methods, from exegetic to scientific and historical, to prove and further clarify the truth of the Bible. Hence, the method of historicising the Bible and of the comparison of religions could just as well be part of a Christian apologetic history as of a deist attack on Christianity's unique status. For De Hooghe and a small group of 'hieroglyphic' theologians, the new discoveries in the text and context of the Bible served as material for innovative, but quite orthodox, allegorical interpretations. It is exactly this perspective on the flexibility and the credibility of Christian apologetics that might explain the interesting similarity between Protestant and deistic church histories and the problem of the unsuitability of existing categories. Analysing De Hooghe's *Hieroglyphica* and its context, it seems that these characteristics indeed fit into a critical attitude and an ongoing demand for reformation from within Protestantism, preceding and alongside the percolation of 'Enlightenment' philosophical ideas. As Dmitri Levitin puts it: 'the narrative of intellectual change does not solely belong to the linear story of "The Enlightenment". Religion always worked hand in glove with science, as apologetic instrument.'

This ongoing reformation, combined with the flexibility of apologetics, did result in seeming confusions, complexities and contradictions, which seldom come in nice convenient packages of radicality, orthodoxy or moderateness. De Hooghe shows that within an ambivalent approach like his, some topics turn out quite orthodox, like his view on reason, while others, such as his take on the devastating role of religious leaders, is quite far-reaching. This shows that ideas and topics have become tainted as 'radical' even if they originated within Christian theology itself. Moreover, such confusions and contradictions seem to have been relatively unproblematic up to the point where they became irreconcilable. In matters that defied harmonisation with ingrained habits and traditions, a solution was found

in selective neutrality and the postponement of judgment, which was applied predominantly in Cocceian circles. This is indeed visible in *Hieroglyphica*, where for several instances opposed ideas are left open for the reader to decide.

This current research supplements the existing approach not only by questioning the role and categorisation of the Enlightenment in religious change, but also by looking at a representative of an intellectual milieu outside that of the political, social and academic elites. Romeyn de Hooghe was neither a theologian nor a philosopher, and his book is anything but a structured theological or philosophical treatise. One might – rightly – wonder how an argument on true religion, which one would expect in a theological treatise, could be made within the loosely structured work of an artist at all. The answer is to be found by taking a broader look on Early Modern views of religion in the context of cultural history. The question is, of course, whether changing opinions about religion can be measured along the lines of highbrow philosophers and theologians, whose books were probably read only by a small intellectual elite. Here the concomitant problem is that – as in every field of research – radical change is found to be more exciting and interesting than gradual development. Yet it is of paramount importance to keep researching sources that have been left out of the dominant discourse. For our topic it is necessary to actually read the 'dull' writings of mainstream thinkers and theologians in order to do justice to the generally adhered-to opinions and to interpret the dashing 'new' ideas against a larger and 'thicker' background than some hot debate or a controversial book or author. On top of that, researchers in the humanities should be given the opportunity to repeat existing research, in order to make statements more reliable or to give a more complete analysis of a source often read by only one person.

Next to the writings of theologians, books by relative outsiders like De Hooghe are especially interesting because they do not fit the dominant discourses of, for instance, the Radical Enlightenment. They point to gaps and blind spots in this discourse. Obviously, De Hooghe was generally familiar with the current debates given his references to recent arguments, but he only touches upon them superficially, refraining from delving into details. De Hooghe's *Hieroglyphica* reflects first and foremost a non-expert take on religion and how it should function. In their mixing of genres, books like *Hieroglyphica* build bridges between the usually separate research fields of history, theology, art history, the history of literature, cultural history and philosophy. Such a more integrated approach can both connect disciplines and highlight the differences between traditional church history and literary or art history, between the belief of the elite and of laypersons. Researching the material aspects of religions, as manifested in image, sound and text, adds layers to the cultural history of Christianity, which has never been the focus of art historians.

From these different fields, De Hooghe's *Hieroglyphica* yields a many-faceted interpretation. First and foremost, De Hooghe's aim was to educate the masses. As a social climber and a largely self-taught but learned artist De Hooghe seems to have felt it important to convey his knowledge via a primer. With his *Spiegel van Staat* he taught political citizenship – as Frank Daudeij's dissertation shows – while *Hieroglyphica* educated its readers in the vernacular about the best attitude to take towards religion. The manner in which he wrote the book was inspired by all the kinds of fields he was familiar with; he worked within the fields of emblematic allegory, the hieroglyphic vogue, and the encyclopaedic genre, rather than limiting himself to one specific discipline. The display of his astute knowledge and engraving expertise must have contributed to the image he had fashioned of a learned burgher willing to share his knowledge with others, if they were willing to pay for it. Given the growing interest in illustrated comparative histories of religion, *Hieroglyphica*, and similar books, probably had a broader audience than the radical works of certain philosophers.

With the story De Hooghe tells in his educational book, he truly is a representative of the religious change that occurred in the period around 1700. Together with other books, *Hieroglyphica* displays a turn towards personal Bible study, piety and tolerance, as well as firm criticism of religious leaders. A recurring complaint by De Hooghe concerns the quarrels and debates about minor issues, which are chided firmly as pedantic and schismatic. Throughout the book theological hair-splitting is denounced, the list of necessary dogmas to be taken from the Bible is very short, and great emphasis is given to religious peace and concord. Christians, both leaders and believers, should in a brotherly (or rather sisterly, if we go by De Hooghe's etching) spirit accept one another and tolerate minor differences. If strife there be, such conflict should be about moral behaviour.

Despite De Hooghe's reputation as some godless, immoral, atheistic monster, *Hieroglyphica* does not underscore this image. Quite the contrary. Of course De Hooghe's personal belief cannot be identified too easily with the appeal that is made in his book. Nevertheless, since the book was published after De Hooghe's death, he could have inserted much more unorthodox ideas if he were a radical atheist. Instead, De Hooghe choose to be remembered as a self-educated scholar in the Cocceian mould, combining all his knowledge to inform his readers about the history of religions, and the consequences this might have for one's view of true religion.

Although the current research brought to the fore new insights into *Hieroglyphica*, it has raised many more questions. Besides the questions that still surround the production and afterlife of the book, the more important question is how stagnant religious ideas actually were in the late seventeenth century. How innovative could

religion be, and how did once-unorthodox ideas become accepted? [1] Although in many church historical research the turn from the more scholastic Protestantism of the early seventeenth century to the dominant constellation of the eighteenth century – with its moderate supernaturalism and focus on practical piety – is directly connected to the rise of 'Voetian Puritan precisionism' or the 'Further Reformation'. This interpretation, however, is not supported by *Hieroglyphica*, a work in which religious basics are foregrounded, theological hair-splitting is denounced firmly as schismatic, and precision is lacking. One guess made from my research on *Hieroglyphica* is that Cocceianism, with its emphasis on Bible exegesis instead of scholastic philosophy, played a role in this turn. To achieve greater insight into the religion of the seventeenth century in particular and into religion as a general concept it is necessary to research the religious writings of theologians and lay-believers next to the work of philosophers. The picture of religious change will probably become much less cut-and-dried – more shades of grey than black-and-white contrasts – but it will be much more historically accurate.

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1   See for instance J.J.L. Gommans & I. Loots (2015), 'Arguing with the Heathens: The Further Reformation and the Historical Ethnography of Johannes Hoornbeeck (1617-1666)', *Itinerario, European Journal of Overseas History 39*(1): 1-23.

SAMENVATTING

Dit boek maakt deel uit van het bredere onderzoeksproject *Faultline 1700, Early Enlightenment Conversations on Religion and the State*, waarin gekeken wordt naar de veranderende kijk op religie en staat rond 1700. Centraal hierin staat het werk van Romeyn de Hooghe (1645-1708), een van de belangrijkste etsers van de late zeventiende eeuw. Dit proefschrift zoomt in op De Hooghe's conceptualisering van 'ware religie', zoals die naar voren komt in zijn boek getiteld *Hieroglyphica,* dat bestaat uit 63 allegorische prenten met bijna 400 pagina's tekstuele uitleg.

Hoewel het niet direct voor de hand ligt om een veranderde kijk op religie te onderzoeken vanuit een kunstzinnige bron als *Hieroglyphica* geeft het boek hier toch aanleiding toe. Want hoewel *Hieroglyphica* een kunstzinnige bron is, is het veel meer dan dat, en draait de inhoud om religie. De complete titel laat daar al iets van zien. Die titel luidt als volgt: *Hieroglyphica, of merkbeelden der oude volkeren, namentlyk Egyptenaren, Chaldeuwen, Feniciers, Joden, Grieken, Romeynen enz. Nevens een omstandig Bericht van het Verval en voortkruypende Verbastering der Godsdiensten door verscheyde Eeuwen; en eyndelyk de Hervorming, tot op deze Tyden toe vervolgt.*

Met deze opvallende titel plaatste De Hooghe zijn boek allereerst in een 'hiëroglyfische' traditie, waarin veel meer boeken met de titel 'Hieroglyphica' verschenen. Voor al deze boeken gold dat ze 'hiërogliefen' bevatten; ofwel in een poging de oorspronkelijke Egyptische tekens uit te leggen, of om meer algemene symbolische tekens in dezelfde traditie als de hiëroglyfen plaatsen. De Renaissance kende een ware hiëroglyfische hype, die doorliep tot eind zeventiende eeuw. De Hooghe's boek was beïnvloed door eerdere 'Hieroglyphica's', hij name elementen over uit onder andere Pierio Valeriano Bolzani's *Hieroglyphica*, en ook uit Ripa's *Iconologia*.

In De Hooghe's *Hieroglyphica* vinden we, net als bij veel van zijn voorgangers, afbeeldingen, min of meer symbolisch van aard, die uitgelegd worden in de stijl van een naslagwerk. De prenten in het boek zijn symbolisch, overvol en levendig, en hebben nog het meeste weg van de karakteristieke titelprenten die De Hooghe

produceerde. Uitzonderlijk is dat De Hooghe zijn wat 'droge' naslagwerk verweeft met een tweede lijn, namelijk een geschiedenis van de opkomst, verval en hervorming van religie. Dit kondigt hij al aan in het tweede deel van de titel: *Nevens een omstandig Bericht van het Verval en voortkruypende Verbastering der Godsdiensten door verscheyde Eeuwen; en eyndelyk de Hervorming, tot op deze Tyden toe vervolgt.* Deze geschiedenis van religie wordt door De Hooghe verteld in een chronologische vorm, afgewisseld met thematische hoofdstukken waarin verschillende religies met elkaar vergeleken worden. Naast de afwisseling tussen een uitleg van 'hiërogliefen' in een encyclopedische stijl en een religiegeschiedenis zijn in *Hieroglyphica* meer genres te herkennen. De Hooghe zelf introduceert zijn boek als een leerboek voor kunstenaars, maar het boek heeft ook raakvlakken met het emblematische genre, met emblematische theologie en mythografie.

Met het gegeven dat de *Hieroglyphica* ergens rond 1700 gemaakt is, maakt het boek deel uit van een periode van verandering. Waar de zeventiende eeuw gekenmerkt werd door sektarische conflicten, theologische ruzies en schisma's, lag in de achttiende eeuw meer nadruk op vroomheid en persoonlijke spirituele groei. De oorzaak voor deze verandering wordt veelal gezocht in de 'crisis van de late zeventiende eeuw' en de Verlichting. Dit resulteert in een historiografie waarin veranderingen in de kijk op (ware) religie grotendeels toegeschreven wordt aan de Verlichting en met name door kritische filosofen in gang gezet is. Radicale opvattingen van denkers als Spinoza over de oorsprong van religie, de rol van religieuze leiders en de relatie tussen verschillende religies zouden dan doorsijpelen naar de minder geleerde lagen van de samenleving, die daardoor beïnvloed hun kijk op religie aanpassen. Uiteindelijk zou dit dan resulteren in secularisatie.

De belangrijkste vertegenwoordiger van deze historiografie is Jonathan Israel met zijn Verlichtings-trilogie. Hierin geeft hij de hoofdrol aan Spinoza die volgens hem aan de wieg stond van de radicale verlichting. Die verlichting wordt opgedeeld in drie groepen: een radicale groep van Spinoza en gelijkgestemden, een grotere groep van gematigde verlichters die (de kern van) het christendom in stand wilde houden, en een groep orthodoxe denkers. Door de prominentie van dit Verlichtings-discours is veel onderzoek naar religie in de late zeventiende eeuw gedaan in de context van die Verlichting. Daarbij werd vooral gekeken naar het werk van filosofen, wetenschappers en in mindere mate naar de geschriften van theologen. Op dit vlak is aanvulling nodig, en het doel van dit onderzoek was dan ook om te kijken op welke wijze deze 'verlichte' debatten terugkomen in het werk van mensen buiten de kring van expert filosofen, wetenschappers, politici en theologen.

Interessant in die context van niet-experts is het boek *The Book that changed Europe* van Margaret Jacob, Lynn Hunt and Wijnand Mijnhardt. Zij gaan uit van dezelfde filosofische oorzaak van verandering in de kijk op religie, maar stellen dat de verspreiding van de nieuwe, radicale opvattingen plaats vond via een

levendig geïllustreerd boek over diverse religies van de hand van de etser Bernard Picart getiteld *Cérémonies et coutumes religieuses de tous les peuples du monde* [Amsterdam, 1723-43]. Op het eerste gezicht lijkt de *Hieroglyphica* hier bij aan te sluiten. Net als Bernard and Picart's verlichte 'Book that changed Europe', presenteerde *Hieroglyphica* een brede kijk op religie, was het in dezelfde periode gepubliceerd, bevatte afbeeldingen en tekst, en werd vertaald naar het Duits. Bovendien had Romeyn de Hooghe een dubieuze religieuze reputatie, en werd hij van atheïsme beschuldigd. Hoewel dit ingrediënten lijken voor een radicaal boek over religie, laat dit onderzoek zien dat dit niet het geval is.

Bij de analyse van De Hooghe's *Hieroglyphica* is eerst gekeken naar de achtergrond van het boek, de genres waar het boek aan raakt, de auteur en andere betrokkenen en de receptie van het boek. Drie punten zijn hierin opvallend. Allereerst wordt duidelijk dat De Hooghe minder origineel was dan gedacht. Zowel De Hooghe zelf, zijn tijdgenoten als contemporaine onderzoekers brachten de artistieke creativiteit, autonome ontwerpen en originele allegorieën van de etser voor het voetlicht. In *Hieroglyphica* blijkt hij echter traditioneler dan gedacht; behoorlijk wat van de beelden uit *Hieroglyphica* zijn, al dan niet aangepast, overgenomen van bestaand werk van onder andere Pierio Valeriano Bolzani en Cesare Ripa.

Het tweede punt van aandacht is reden voor de late, postume publicatie van de Hieroglyphica, die blijft onduidelijk. Zeker is wel dat De Hooghe's werk gewaardeerd, en dus waardevol bleef. Daarnaast was er toenemende interesse in religieuze geschiedenis, die bijgedragen zou kunnen hebben aan een hernieuwde interesse rond 1735. Receptie-onderzoek leert echter dat het boek vooral gebruikt werd door mensen die geïnteresseerd waren in kunst en oude en klassieke geschiedenis, details op dit vlak werden uit *Hieroglyphica* overgenomen.

Als laatste iets over het slechte religieuze imago van De Hooghe. Hoewel het nog steeds mogelijk is dat De Hooghe een atheïst was, onderschrijft *Hieroglyphica* dit beeld niet, integendeel. Natuurlijk kan De Hooghe's persoonlijke geloof niet gelijkgesteld worden aan de opvattingen aanwezig in *Hieroglyphica*, maar als hij had gewild had De Hooghe, zeker gezien de postume publicatie, meer radicale noties in het boek kunnen opnemen.

Na deze analyse van context en genre zijn de hoofdstukken 3 tot en met 7 van dit proefschrift gewijd aan de kijk op ware religie. Het is daarbij onmogelijk om alle details uit Hieroglyphica te bespreken, en daarom ligt de focus op aspecten van religie die een hoofdrol spelen in de *Hieroglyphica.* Hoewel het boek geen filosofisch of theologische verhandeling is komen veel aspecten van religie aan de orde, die ook rond 1700 ter discussie stonden. Debatten werden gevoerd over de vraag waar religie haar oorsprong vond, welke relatie er bestond met afgoderij en andere religies, wat de beste bron voor religieuze kennis was, welke rol de religieuze elite zou moeten hebben en wat de fundamentele doctrines van ware religie zijn.

Zoals gezegd blijkt het beeld dat naar voren komt uit de analyse van de *Hieroglyphica* niet overeen te komen met de initiële verwachting van een 'radicaal' boek over religie. De diverse thema's zoals die in de hoofdstukken van dit boek beschreven worden laten een ogenschijnlijk ambivalent beeld zien van wat ware religie is. Hoofdstuk 3 laat zien hoe *Hieroglyphica* een onproblematische flexibiliteit toont in het aanwenden van diverse 'bronnen' van theologische kennis. Hoewel de Bijbel als belangrijkste bron gepresenteerd wordt, zijn er ook andere wegen. De menselijke ratio wordt gepresenteerd als een 'Gevaarlijke Vriend', die zowel goed als kwaad kan doen maar absoluut gebruikt dient te worden. De Hooghe's aandacht voor de natuur in dit opzicht niet uitzonderlijk; het idee dat God uit de natuur gekend kon worden was christelijk gemeengoed. Opvallend is De Hooghe's aandacht voor de kennis van God die vooral te vinden is in de harten en zielen van mensen.

De Hooghe's vergelijking van religies is ambivalent. De chronologische lijn in het boek benadrukt een grote kloof tussen het ware Protestante - of zelfs Gereformeerde - Christendom aan de ene kant, en de valse heidense en vervallen religies aan de andere kant. In zijn laatste hoofdstuk benadrukt De Hooghe dan ook de tegenstelling tussen de 'valsche Godsdiensten', en de 'ware Zaligmakende Leere'. Die ware leer is volgens De Hooghe te vinden in de Gereformeerde Kerk, die door hem geprezen wordt als de denominatie die het dichts bij de oorspronkelijke ware religie in de buurt komt.

De chronologische lijn wordt echter afgewisseld met thematische prenten die juist de overeenkomsten tussen religies benadrukken. Hoewel overeenkomsten tussen religies vaak gebruikt werden als bevestiging van een bepaald leerstuk (als alle religies een zondvloed beschrijven, is dat een argument voor de Bijbelse zondvloed) kon het ook de resulteren in relativering van het Christendom (als oude religies het al over een zondvloed hebben, wat maakt het Bijbelse verhaal dan origineel of uniek?). De Hooghe's thematische prenten beslaan thema's zoals de voorzienigheid, de zondvloed en de duivel. Het blijft hierbij onduidelijk of De Hooghe de overeenkomsten die hij vindt tussen het Christendom en andere religies ziet als een bewijs van de waarheid van het Christendom, of suggereert dat onderwerpen als de voorzienigheid, zondvloed en de duivel heidense verzinsels zijn. Het is hierbij van belang om te bedenken dat over deze onderwerpen geen dichtgetimmerde waarheden op detailniveau bestonden; ook binnen de kerk werd gedebatteerd over het hoe en wat van Bijbelse doctrines en passages. Het kritisch kijken naar een onderwerp als voorzienigheid of duivel moet dus niet onmiddellijk opgevat worden als een 'radicaal verlichte' neiging. De enige thematische prent die een concreet onorthodoxe opvatting suggereert is prent 62 over ingebeelde en ware hemel-voorstellingen. Hier wordt het idee van een 'Hemel op Aarde', naar het omstreden boek van Frederik Leenhof, volmondig onderschreven door De Hooghe.

Een ander thema dat standaard in de verlichte hoek geplaatst wordt is antiklerikalisme. In *Hieroglyphica* loopt de kritiek op religieuze leiders als een

rode draad door de hoofdstukken heen. Religieuze leiders worden neergezet als verachtelijke, zakkenvullende bedriegers die religie verzinnen en gelovigen met trucs overhalen om hen te volgen. Hiermee zijn zij volgens De Hooghe de oorzaak van religieus verval van alle tijden en plaatsen. Tegelijkertijd echter ziet De Hooghe het nut van religieus bedrog in: met religieuze verzinsels kon het plebs onder de duim gehouden worden. Deze beide kanten van priesterbedrog worden in de literatuur vaak gezien als 'verlicht'. Wanneer *Hieroglyphica* echter in zijn geheel bezien wordt blijkt dat De Hooghe's grootste kritiek gericht is op de Katholieke clerus, terwijl Protestante leiders weergegeven worden als de ware opvolgers van de apostelen. Hoewel dit eerder neigt naar Protestante propaganda dan naar verlichte kritiek, bevat de idealistische weergave van de Gereformeerde ambtsdragers een oproep tot verdere hervorming van religieuze leiders tot daadwerkelijk dienstbare herders. Wat betreft de rol van de gewone gelovigen; *Hieroglyphica* benadrukt het belang van persoonlijke studie van de Bijbel en roept gelovigen op tot een eenvoudig vroom leven, en tolerantie jegens hun andersdenkende geloofsgenoten.

Het laatste hoofdstuk in dit onderzoek kijkt naar de dogma's die De Hooghe als fundamenteel beschouwd voor ware religie. De Hooghe's opsomming van dogma's is orthodox te noemen; zijn opsomming bestaat uit het geloof in een Eeuwige God die scheiding in de chaos bracht, in de zondvloed, de uitdrijving uit het paradijs, en Gods belofte van redding. Daarnaast behoren Christus' menswording, lijden en opstanding, alsmede het geloof in de Heilige Geest en een eeuwig leven tot de fundamentele doctrines van het ware Christendom. Deze korte lijst laat meer dan genoeg thema's open voor onderzoek en debat, of zoals De Hooghe het omschrijft als een 'Oeffenperk voor de Brave Verstanden'. In *Hieroglyphica* combineert De Hooghe zijn summiere lijst van fundamentele doctrines keer op keer met de nadruk op eenvoudige vroomheid. Deze praktische vroomheid van de eenvoudige gelovige wordt afgezet tegen theologische muggenzifterij, iets wat De Hooghe resoluut afwijst omdat het resulteert in religieuze onenigheid en schisma's. Deze combinatie van een beperkte hoeveelheid doctrines en nadruk op praktisch vroomheid kan geïnterpreteerd worden als 'radicaal'. Denkers als Spinoza en Koerbagh reduceerden religie ook tot een paar basisovertuigingen waarbij het met name om goed ethisch gedrag ging. Toch moeten we ook hier uitkijken voor te makkelijke conclusies, eenzelfde tendens van aandacht voor praktische religie was aanwezig binnen de orthodoxie, onder andere in Piëtistische hoek.

Met deze diverse, soms ambivalente kijk op religie is het moeilijk om *Hieroglyphica* vast te pinnen in een bepaalde hoek. Het zou mogelijk zijn om een paar elementen uit het boek te lichten, en te duiden als een radicaal geschrift. Het omgekeerde is echter evengoed mogelijk: met een paar andere facetten biedt het boek een doorsnee Gereformeerde kijk op de geschiedenis van religie. Het complete boek biedt echter geen vastomlijnde duidelijke meningen die als

hapklare brokken in te delen zijn in de standaard categorisering van 'radicaal', 'gematigd verlicht' en 'orthodox'. Dit geldt niet alleen voor De Hooghe's werk, maar ook voor dat van zijn tijdgenoten, waar onderzoekers over blijven stechelen of een auteur nou radicaal en antireligieus was of toch kritisch maar gelovig.

Deze (ogenschijnlijke) ambivalentie in de *Hieroglyphica* kan beter geduid worden wanneer het geplaatst wordt in de context van een realistische kijk op de kerk. Het beeld dat de Gereformeerde Kerk een bastion van vastomlijnde, in detail uitgewerkte doctrines was, is verre van de waarheid; ook intern werden theologische opvattingen bediscussieerd, bestond er verschil van mening en was menig discussiepunt nog niet uitgekristalliseerd, laat staan vastgelegd. Flexibiliteit met betrekking tot diverse doctrines behoorde tot de mogelijkheden. Het blijkt dan ook dat veel thema's, termen en benaderingen die vaak tot het Verlichtings-discours gerekend worden, een veel langere en rijke traditie kennen die de Verlichting ver voor was. Priesterkritiek, het vergelijken van religies, het gebruik van de ratio, historisch kritische Bijbelexegese, het zoeken naar oorspronkelijke religie, en het zuiveren van religie van bijgeloof, waren allemaal kwesties die ook binnen de orthodoxe kerk al speelden, toegepast werden, of bediscussieerd werden.

De vraag die dan wat die verlichte thema's en terminologie inhouden als ze terug te vinden zijn in het werk van orthodoxe denkers? Waren zij allemaal verlicht, of waren dit Christelijke wetenschappers die hun religie met de beste wapens wilden verdedigen? Omgekeerd is het de vraag wat het betekent dat veel verlichte thematiek reeds voor de Verlichting aanwezig was in discussies tussen orthodoxe theologen? Zou het zo kunnen zijn dat sommige benaderingen die nu als 'verlicht' gekarakteriseerd worden, voortkwamen uit confessioneel apologetisch onderzoek? Het verwachte antwoord is hier dat dergelijke overlap alleen aanwezig zou zijn bij de groep van 'gematigde verlichters' maar het onderzoek naar De Hooghe's *Hieroglyphica*, en ander recent onderzoek naar tijdgenoten laat zien dat de grenzen tussen de categorieën 'orthodox', 'gematigd' en 'radicaal' niet zo duidelijk zijn.

Een concept dat mijns inziens een betere context biedt voor de *Hieroglyphica* dan de Verlichting, is het idee van een 'Doorgaande Reformatie' (niet te verwarren met het idee van de Nadere Reformatie). Uitgangspunt hierbij is dat de Reformatie nog steeds een belangrijk ijkpunt was en men nog steeds religie terug wilde brengen naar haar oorspronkelijke, pure vorm, vrij van (Katholieke) verzinsels. Om dat te bereiken was kritisch, rationeel en historisch onderzoek naar de Bijbel noodzakelijk. Bovendien bleef het priesterschap van alle gelovigen nog steeds een gewenst ideaal, iets wat onder andere duidelijk wordt uit de enorme toename van catechismussen voor leken in die periode. In de *Hieroglyphica* wijst De Hooghe op de noodzaak van doorgaande hervorming als tegengif tegen het universele verval van religie zoals dat door de eeuwen heen de kop opstak.

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After working as a history teacher in secondary education for a few years, Trudelien van 't Hof (1983) started as a PhD-candidate in the NWO project 'Faultline 1700: Early Enlightenment conversations on Religion and the State'. Her research focussed on religious history in the early modern period on which she published several articles. Next to her research she participated in the Utrecht Centre for Early Modern Studies and was a member of the Humanities PhD-council. Currently she works as a secretary to the University Council of Utrecht University.

Quaestiones Infinitae

Publications of the department of philosophy and religious studies