

The Tolerant Society



An examination of the origins of Dutch Tolerance in the Golden Age (1600-1875), and its social manifestation in colonial Dutch New York, in a cross-cultural comparative study between the United States and the United Netherlands.

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Introduction

Cross cultural comparisons serve a profoundly constructive purpose in the effort to define the cultural heritages of the old world and the new, and uncover the origins of the principle institutions that mold each society uniquely. Recently, historians and sociologists have expressed the utility of inter-cultural studies to form new approaches in defining cultural identities, especially for nations that express the remnants of many cultural manifestations such as Holland and the United States. These scholars have shifted their focus from the conception of a single collective national character to more region specific sub-cultural identities. New studies are emphasizing the acute influence of these small but influential ethnic communities in the development of the broader society in which they are integrated. By focusing on these sub-cultural identities, hints about the origins of a culture's political and social ideologies will likely be exposed. Thus, scholars aim to accomplish a transnational historiography of the United States, and cultural studies that pay special attention to the intricate interplay between local and global processes.¹ Further examinations of inter-cultural relations will surely yield social, political and even economic benefits for the future, as both Americans and Europeans will profit from further research in the fields of history and political science; two disciplines that hold the potential to uncover a more accurate portrait of a particular society's core cultural values. Inquiries about cross-national comparative histories will enlighten legislators, and heal the recent lack of open dialogue between the United States and Europe;² they will even help to debunk inaccurate stereotypes bred from ignorance.

By redefining our national identity and its transcending implications, the United States may better accomplish its strategic goals abroad, like countering the propaganda of corrupt dictatorial regimes and cultivating foreign markets. We must portray ourselves with accurate images which emphasize the complexity and diversity of the world's melting pot nation.³ In contemporary society, more pressure must be applied to the academic disciplines relevant to the improvement of international foreign relations and internal affairs.⁴ This naturally implies a serious engagement with the social sciences: sociology, anthropology, economics, political science, social and cultural geography and the like, which can offer valuable theoretical and methodological tools and substantive knowledge in interpreting American history and culture.⁵

With this established, it must be understood that the previous course of cultural studies have led scholars to focus on history from a relativist point of view. Dutch historian and sociologist Mel van Elteren argues this relativist perception has become

¹ Mel van Elteren, Repositioning American Studies in the New Millennium: Wishful Thinking by a European Practitioner. Journal of Popular Culture. p. 158

² this of course excluding the U.K., U.S. special relationship established after the Second World War.

³ Elteren, p. 169

⁴ Elteren, p. 161

⁵ Elteren, p. 163

absolute, assuming a set of relativistic certainties.⁶ He argues that current research trends are moving away from this self-reflective stance, the result of a proper concern for the politics of knowledge and the relationship between the subject and object of intellect, like for instance, in the case of “postmodern” or self-reflective ethnography.⁷

American culture as selectively received and appropriated elsewhere, is a significant part of the shared cultural repertoire of people who belong to separate nation-states. Therefore, it is worthwhile to study the United States from an inward perspective, while recognizing its various manifestations abroad, as this may lead to a better understanding of other national and local cultures across the Atlantic.⁸ Further analysis will positively impact the long history of Euro-American connections, and highlight Europe’s cultural and political influences on the American identity and the policies that come from it. American studies must strive not only to study American origins, but create and reconstruct the United States in its own discourse,⁹ thereby articulating the non-monolithic character of American culture. It must allow for the possibility of accommodating more than a single discourse in defining Americanism.¹⁰ New scholarship should imply the political interconnectedness of the world as it actually exists, because it is obvious that past and current hostilities between different nation-states have always been at least in some way, the result of misunderstandings bred from cultural isolation. Therefore, it is clear that a new and definitive look at our cultural perspective must take place in the greater effort to achieve enlightenment and compromise.¹¹

Historians are beginning to realize that local approaches formulate better cross-society comparisons that reveal deeper insights into the basic characteristics of American society, and the issues that burden it. Elteren aims to de-center the debate over the universality of American values and practices, and in the process overcome the separation of domestic and international perspectives,¹² ushering in new refracted ways for the United States to see itself in and through other parts of the world.¹³ This goal by definition entails a broadening of sources to include more non-English and non-U.S. based references. The possibility for social progress requires that cultural historians locate themselves and their society in a world apart, while preserving the fruitful roots of their own place, time, and temperament.

It was this situation that American studies might contribute to, by reducing ethnocentric errors made by citizens generally, and more particularly by scholars who

⁶ Morley, David. Theoretical Orthodoxies: Textualism, Constructivism and the New Ethnography in Cultural Studies. *Cultural Studies in Question* (121-73), p. 137. in Elteren p. 163

⁷ *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography.*, Ed., Clifford, James and Marcus, George, (Berkeley, CA: U of California P, 1986). in Elteren, p. 164

⁸ Elteren, p. 166

⁹ Ickstadt, Heinz, *The Status of Liberty Text with the Changing Self-Definition of American Studies*. Unpublished paper given at the EAAS Conference, (Luxembourg, March 25-28, 1994). in Elteren, p. 167

¹⁰ Isernhagen, Hartwig., *Global Island: Individualism Universalized, the Universe Internalized, or America Meets Postmodernism.*, *The Insular Dream*, 52-69., p. 69, in Elteren, p. 168

¹¹ Elteren, p. 169

¹² Lee, Benjamin., Critical Internationalism., *Public Culture* 7 (Spring 1995): pp. 559-92., p.584. in Elteren, p. 71

¹³ Kaenel, Andre, *American Internationalism.*, p. 41. in Elteren, p. 171

shape histories and opinions that influence public policy. Historian Lawrence Chisolm advocates the movement towards more cross-cultural comparative studies and recognizes their integral role in many fields of research.¹⁴ He urges the intellectual community to engage comparative cultural history in the sense of self-critical and self-reflective cross-cultural and intercultural collaborative scholarship that sets out to develop an awareness of unacknowledged cultural determinants, thereby reducing bias.¹⁵

American culture is defined precisely by its diversity and multivocality, a discrete entity which can cohere independently of international confrontations with other national, local and global cultural identities within and outside our borders. The critical force of multiculturalism then may lay itself open to recuperation by a renewed version of consensus.¹⁶ In this and other regards, international historians ought to recognize and try to work through possible differences with their counter-parts, and reconnect these with America as an object of study and a disseminator of all kinds of cultural manifestations, two areas that are often kept separate. Historian Amy Kaplan notes.

Instead of looking for the unique, quintessentially American aspect of a particular theme, the new challenge...is to see the United States in a wider context, with its own particularities....but also with its persistent involvement in a wider, Euro-American and world realm.¹⁷

Interesting developments can be seen in the domains of the transnationalization of America on one hand and a focus on U.S. regionalisms on the other, developments which are intertwined as far as the globalization of culture is concerned. That is, the complex interplay between globalizing (homogenizing, universalizing, integrating, centralizing) and localizing (particularizing, differentiating, fragmenting, decentralizing) tendencies. Comparative studies will retain their relevance not only with regard to cultural similarities, but also concerning differences between the United States and other societies.¹⁸

In this spirit, I have spent the past academic year researching a topic seldom focused on by American and European scholars, a study which will ultimately hint at many of the suggestions made above and reveal many more about defining American culture in terms of the European manifestations that create it. In examining all of the possibilities for a study that might introduce helpful implications about the most practical path for improved politics and inter-cultural and social relations, I was led on a quest to find the origins of toleration in the world. This journey led me to Holland, where there is no doubt that clement public policy persists, and has become famous for its practicality and progressive undertone. The Netherlands have become the champions of comprehending tolerance and resultantly, represent a vision of progress unparalleled in both the ancient and the present worlds. But where did this toleration come from, and how has it been transplanted and developed elsewhere? These questions serve as the

¹⁴ Chisolm, C. Lawrence., Cosmotopian Possibilities. American Studies in Transition. Ed., Fishwick, W. Marshall, Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania, (1964), p. 198-313. in Elteren, p. 172

¹⁵ Elteren, p. 173

¹⁶ Kaplan, Amy, *Introduction. Cultures of United States Imperialism.*, p. 15. in Elteren, p.174

¹⁷ Elteren, p. 174

¹⁸ Elteren, p. 178

focus of this examination, which directs our attention first on the origins of Dutch toleration developed during Holland's *Golden Age* (1600-1750), and second to the origins of tolerant policy in New York, and more specifically New York City; the Netherlands' most famous colonial remnant. Third, a comparison in social development and stratification between the Netherlands and the United States will offer some useful insights into the evolution of the broader Dutch and American identities.

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An examination of the origins of tolerance in the
Dutch Golden Age 1600-1750

Hollander's clement attitude towards drug use and alternative lifestyles distinguishes its society from the rest of the industrialized world, which feels a great ambivalence towards such matters. This attitude emerged from the depths of the politically unstable sixteenth century, which bore the reason based ideologies that initiated Europe's transition from the traditional to the modern worldview. Yet these ideologies also had a profound influence on the secular and religious leaders who guided the evolution of the Low Countries, and the divergence of a national trend towards lenient public policy. The unique synthesis of Humanism, Calvinism and enlightenment molded the perceptions of Nationalist Libertines, Reformed Ministers and Collegiants alike, who embraced utilitarianism and its useful applications in society, yielding a completely different *querelle des anciens modernes* experience for the United Netherlands.¹⁹

The evolution of *the Tolerant Society* is ultimately the product of five historical circumstances. It is first based in the unprecedented affects of the Enlightenment Movement on the Early Republic. National leaders emphasized the popular conceptions of the *Enlightenment Age* like the separation of church and state, and the freedom of the unrestricted individual conscience. Consequently, this trend towards rationalism and secularism affirmed the mission of the ruling magistrates to retain their respective political autonomy. Second it is owed to the vast ethnic and religious diversity of Holland's immigrant based population, a result of the chaotic atmosphere in the Low Countries and abroad during this period. Thirdly, tolerance flourished in the Netherlands because of its effective de-centralized state which sought to advocate public order and social peace above all; it inspired a deep sense of national unity focused around a secular leadership that collaborated to achieve fundamental commonalities in thought. The success of the Dutch commercial industries in the international publishing trade additionally promoted tolerance as Dutch pamphlets spread new progressive philosophies to all corners of the Republic and Europe. Economic prosperity allowed the leadership to direct their attention to the invention of a modern model society. Finally the emergence of tolerant policy was due to the profound effects of the *Dutch Collegiant Movement*. These forward thinking scholars shaped the foundation of a learned society that rejected absolutism.

¹⁹ Utilitarianism- the ethical doctrine that the greatest happiness of the greatest number should be the criterion of the virtue of action.

To fully comprehend the Dutch conception of clemency it is essential to understand the context of the Netherlands's birth. The United Provinces first acknowledged itself as a unified national body at the *Union of Utrecht* in 1579. Here the seven provinces of Northern Germania, (excluding Belgium and Luxembourg) made official their opposition to Hapsburg's Catholic Spain, a conflict initiated in 1568. The provinces of Holland engaged Phillip II and his predecessors in a war that consumed the first half of the seventeenth century. The *Eighty Years War* (1568-1648), shook the stability of Europe for decades and eventually gave birth to the sovereign Dutch Republic at the *Peace of Westphalia* in 1648.²⁰ Against all odds, Hollanders defeated their powerful over-lord and formed a loose confederation of relatively autonomous provinces governed by independent magistrates.

Therefore citizenship eligibility to the Early Republic relied on localized social restrictions dictated by the ruling authorities. This focus on relativity was necessary for a state with many existing social customs and ethnic traditions. It exhibited a medieval legacy of local precedents and bylaws that laid the foundation for early modern rules and practices.²¹ More simply, citizenship eligibility was determined by popular consensus. Rural environments generally exhibited a different atmosphere of social inclusion than developed urban areas. Small towns were many times under the direction of faithful bourgeois guildsmen, and church administrators who valued scripture as the only authority for moral action. Thus, these small rural communities could be regulated tightly and there was no guarantee of lenient policies regarding religious descent. Because local and unsupervised leadership controlled their respective communities, prejudicially motivated mandates sometimes excluded certain groups and created opportunities for open bigotry.

The civil authorities, often liberal in private, had allowed their churches to practice their rites as long as they did so discreetly, and as long as they were prepared to pay the occasional bribe that persuaded the men in charge to keep looking the other way.²²

Conversely cities were hubs for many ethnic and religious groups and here, the approach to public policy was much different. Foremost, magistrates sought to maintain social peace and order. Urban secular leaders understood that their own political preservation depended on the appeasement of all the inhabitants, not just the ethnic majority. To accomplish this, they instituted tolerant legislations that protected minorities and appealed to the masses.

The implicit understanding between ruling princes and their subjects was the reason behind legal commonalities that existed to reinforce provincial freedom and check the progress of absolutism. An example in the Early Republic was the *jus de evacando*. This universal Dutch mandate proclaimed the right of any citizen to a fair trial in a court of his native province. Authorities maintained these standards through the firm and diligent administration of justice and rigorously censored confessional polemic

²⁰ Po-Chia Hsia, R., and Henk F. K. Nierop. Calvinism and Religious Toleration in the Dutch Golden Age. 1st ed. Vol. 1. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2002. 1-175, p. 161

²¹ Hsia, p. 163

²² K.H.D. Haley, *The Dutch in the Seventeenth Century* (London, 1972), pp. 84-99; in J.L. Price, Culture and Society in the Dutch Republic in the Seventeenth Century (London, 1974), chapter 2

defamations that had even the potential to disrupt social peace. In the late sixteenth century Deacon Cornielius Buych, a powerful Calvinist Preacher of Woerden, insulted another Reformation Preacher and was fined an enormous penalty for inciting commotion.

Attention to geographic relativity also influenced the development of the Dutch identity. Magistrates attempted to associate the definition of community with town rather than religious denomination, to refocus thoughts regarding social inclusion. “It (the town) was the unifying factor in the community, not religious denomination or concession”.²³ In her essay, The Bond of Christian Piety, the Individual Practice of Tolerance and Intolerance in the Dutch Republic, Judith Pollmann asserts that violence was not prevalent in sixteenth and seventeenth century Holland, as it was in other parts of Europe.

The rarity of violence (in the Netherlands) highlights the moderation of the Dutch in their attitude towards religion...as citizens continued to live and work together with people of other denominations without any problems...other social bonds and conventions often outweighed religious difference.²⁴

Furthermore, she points out that confessional unity was not a priority among the nuclear kin of many second and third generation inhabitants. Therefore, the diverse population supported a trend towards secularism.

History reflected the provincial magistrate’s ability to prevent the onset of an absolutist sovereign for any extended period, and affirmed the nation’s effectiveness in enforcing independent and collective legislations.²⁵ Leaders efficiently mandated and enforced laws of tolerance because they realized that only if Dutch subjects valued magisterial leadership over religious and monarchical rule, could they maintain their respective autonomy.

In their view, an acceptable though pragmatic compromise had been found for most of the problems that occupied these refugees. In the Dutch Republic, a large measure of religious tolerance was practiced; most citizens enjoyed protection under the law, and the enforcement of criminal justice was of a comparatively lenient nature. Furthermore, Dutch intellectuals were proud of their constitution. Although its loose federal structure...absolute power was never tolerated in the long term.²⁶

Magistrates propagandized the importance of idealisms like the separation of church and state in their effort to appeal to a diverse population. Even strict Calvinist civil servants publicly emphasized their loyalty first to the House of Orange, to focus the perspective of the masses on one common national consciousness.

The House of Orange and its princes were the official “stadtholders” of early Holland, although they struggled to establish an absolute monarchy throughout the duration of the *Golden Age*, we know they were not successful. This is unique because

²³ Hsia, p. 47

²⁴ Hsia, p. 55

²⁵ Hsia, p. 29

²⁶ Fix, Andrew C. Prophecy and Reason: the Dutch Collegiants in the Early Enlightenment, Princeton: Princeton UP, 1955. 1-256 p. 201

the other significant kingdoms of *feudal Europe* initiated a different solution to the early modern problem of inspiring political loyalty and pacifying diverse civic bodies. Accordingly, the early regimes of France, Spain and England were aware that to establish direct control over one official religious institution would ultimately increase the power of the ruling administration.²⁷ From this conception came the birth of the confessional state, a notion even justified in Augustinian philosophy.²⁸ St. Augustine argued that the inherent nature of state sponsored religion ensured the presence of scripturally guided monarchical agendas, consequently strengthening the influence of spiritual doctrine.²⁹ Furthermore, centralized religion undoubtedly served as a unifying element for the primitive feudal societies of Early Europe. Catholic doctrine asserted individual discipline and inspired social harmony, but restricted the human freedom of expression in the name of a morality of moderation. Therefore, confessional governments enforced limitations over the human conscience because they believed it to be for the general welfare of the people, and a benefit to the ruling administration. Yet, “whatever the degree of freedom granted to tolerated faiths, confessional states were always, by their inherent nature, intolerant towards religious descent”.³⁰ Whereas everywhere else the people were forcefully subjected to the mandates of an absolute monarch, the Dutch chose to never willingly legislate in the religious realm for any extended period.

Government policies in the Republic, generally speaking, were aimed at the welfare of the country as a whole; while in adjoining absolutist states the interests of citizens were subordinated to the dynastic ambitions of the monarchs.³¹

Sir William Temple (1628-1629) expressed the functioning practice of Dutch society in his *Observations Upon the United Provinces of the Netherlands*:

The great care of this state has ever been, to favor no particular or curious inquisition into the faith or religious principles of any peaceable man, who came to live under the protection of their laws. If the followers of any sect grow so numerous in any place, that they affect a publique congregation, and are content to purchase a place of assembly, to bear the change of a pastor or teacher, and to pray for this liberty to the publique, they go and propose their desire to the magistrate of the place, where they reside. Who inform themselves of their opinions and manners of worship, and if they find nothing either destructive to society, or prejudicial to the constitution of their state, and content themselves with the price that is offered for the purchase of this liberty. They easily allow it; But with the condition, that one or more commissioners shall be appointed, who shall have free admission at all their meetings, shall be both the observers and the witness of all that is acted or preached among them, and whose testimony shall be received

²⁷ Fix, p. 201

²⁸ Confessional State- the concept that government adheres to a specific creed and recognizes one official religion (these confessional states were guided by Roman Catholic doctrine).

²⁹ Augustine supports the increased influence of Catholic Spiritual Doctrine, the only established Christian authority before the Protestant Reformation.

³⁰ Hsia, p. 76

³¹ H. Bots a.o., “*Bibliotheque niverselle et Historique*” (1686-1693): *Een perodiek als trepunt van geletterd Europa.*, (Amsterdam 1981) in Fix, p. 201

concerning anything that passes there to the prejudice of the state; In which the laws and executions are as severe as against any civil crimes.³²

Continually, this secular tradition was “in accordance with the ancient manner of governing, that they (the government), bear with others’ (the proletariat) mistakes in matters of faith and not disturb any person on account of religion”.³³ Regardless of the ruling class, tolerance was a value placed above all others. It was based in the implicit relationship between the ecclesiastical and the civil authorities, itself focused on a new conception of the civic body.³⁴ This same tradition motivated the Germanic ancestors of the Dutch to rebel against the Roman Empire in the ninth century, when Batavians demanded the right to practice their “heretical” confessions openly.³⁵ Some centuries later, William of Orange pled for the freedom of the human conscience together with the freedom to worship for the various denominations, to unify his political loyalty in face of religious voices that advocated the exclusion of certain groups.³⁶

These voices developed out of the *Dutch Reformation* which began in 1560 with the introduction of Calvinism to the Northern Netherlands. Surprisingly, the nature of the early Reformed Church was not aggressive, and it mixed freely with the various indigenous populations of the region. In the beginning, Calvinists sought refuge just as the Jews, Catholics and Lutherans had in decade’s prior. However, shortly after the initiation of the Reformation Movement, Calvinism adapted a different form. The confession promptly evolved into a militant body, distinguishing itself from the Mennonites and other passive denominations. Whereas the prior establishment denied Christians the right to oppose an ungodly prince, Calvinism conveniently granted this liberty. This influential institution supported the Dutch resistance against their Spanish Catholic King in 1568, much like it offered legitimacy to the revolts of French Huguenots in the same era.³⁷

From 1572 to 1594 Reformed militants gained strongholds in the South and forced provincial magistrates to recognize the Reformed Church as the one official confession of the sovereign union.³⁸ The States General supported this national movement because they hoped it would counter-act deep Papist roots generated by the *Counter-Reformation*.³⁹ Calvinists took full advantage of their newly acquired political position, and by the end of the sixteenth century, they had ensured the exclusivity of voting privileges in the Republic to the Reformed congregation. This strict Protestant

³² Ibid, vol. 48, 18 April 1724, pp. 104-5

³³ Gerard Brandt, *Historie der Reformatie, en andre kerkyke geschiedenissen, in en ontrent de Nederlanden*, 4 vols (Amsterdam, 1671-1704), vol. 1, p. 833. Quote by: Cornelis Pieterszoon Hooft (Burgomaster of Amsterdam) translated in Hsia, p. 11

³⁴ Fix, p. 31

³⁵ Batavians- ancestral inhabitants of the Low Countries, they practiced paganism before Christianization

³⁶ W. Bergsma, ‘Church, State and People’, in K. Davids and J. Lucassen (eds.), *A Miracle Mirrored. The Dutch Republic in European Perspective* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 196-228

³⁷ Tensions led France to eight civil wars, from 1562 to 1598 between the Catholic monarchies of Charles IX and Henry III and Huguenots (French Calvinists)

³⁸ Hsia p. 76

³⁹ Counter-Reformation began with the pontificate of Pope Pius IV in 1560 and extended to the conclusion of the Thirty Years War in 1648.

community achieved political and economic gains through its size and aggressive orientation, and by the middle of the seventeenth century it was well established in annexed settlements in the south and original strongholds in the North. Calvinists focused on the role of religion as a necessity for assimilation, and were able to effectively encourage conversion for new immigrants to the decentralized state. For this reason, it assumed a commanding position within Dutch Protestantism shortly after the outbreak of the resistance.⁴⁰

Although the impact of Calvinism on the Early Republic cannot be ignored, the confession was ultimately denied absolute political control, and the opportunity to siege theological exclusivity in matters of Biblical interpretation. Rather, some significant factors hindered its ascent into the political realm. Today historians note the Calvinist Church as one of the many. It never encompassed a clear majority of the population, accounting for only 20% of Holland's total inhabitants from 1572 to 1620.⁴¹ Subsequently, magistrates were in no position to submit outright to the desires of the Reformed Church. Because religious influence in the secular realm was limited, the church became a compliant political partner in the construction of the Dutch confessional state. "A decentralized country with archaic constitutions and a fragmented political authority was not likely or inclined to impose religious conformity".⁴² Secular leaders were able to maintain control and gain social appeasement by means of collective lenient legislations. In sum, rulers of the United Provinces displayed a unique understanding of diversity; they enforced a tacit toleration that was allowed to flourish as long as the difference between believers did not endanger the unity of the body politic and the civic community.⁴³

Additionally, Calvinists could not eclipse certain communities established before the *Dutch Reformation*. These religious and ethnic groups were forced from their homes as a result of the unfortunate passing circumstances that developed prior to, and during, the politically unstable sixteenth century, including the *Spanish Inquisition*, the *Reformation* and the *Counter-Reformation*. Between 1585 and 1625 Holland experienced its first significant wave of immigration, an influx of approximately 150,000 refugees from all the corners of the continent.⁴⁴ This massive arrival doubled populations in some provinces and increased others by a third. Thus, the circumstance of diversity was profoundly influential to the development of early Dutch society. Colonel Jean-Baptiste Stroupe, commander of Louis XIV troops in Utrecht during the Spanish occupation of 1672-1673, highlighted this general dissimilarity in populace.

The States give unlimited freedom to all sorts of religions, which are completely at liberty to celebrate their mysteries and to serve God as they wish. You will therefore

⁴⁰ Zilverberg, S.B.J. *Geloof en geweten in de zeventiende eeuw*. Bussum, 1971. Re-printed as *Dissidenten in de Gouden Eeuw: Geloof en geweten in de Republiek*. Weesp, 1895, p. 14, translated in Jacob, Margaret C., and Wijand W. Mijnhart. *Dutch Republic in the Eighteenth Century*. Ithaca, New York: Cornell UP, 1992. 1-339. p. 29

⁴¹ Hsia, p. 85

⁴² Fix, p. 7

⁴³ Hsia, p. 32

⁴⁴ J. Briels, *Zuid-Nederlandes in de Republiek (1572-1630), En demografische en cultuurhistorische studie* [Sint Nikilass (Belgium), 1985]; J. Briels, *De Zuidnederlandse immigratie, Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis* 100 (1987), p. 331-355, translated in Hsia, p. 76

know that besides Protestants, there are Roman Catholics, Lutherans, Brownists, Independents, Arminians, Anabaptists, Socinians, Arians, Enthusiasts, Quakers, Borelists, Muscovites, Libertines and others whom we can call Seekers because they say they are seeking a religion and they do not profess any of those established, I do not say more of the Jews, Turks and Persians.⁴⁵

Jews, Catholics and Protestants all found refuge in the Netherlands for different reasons. Jews began a collective migration shortly after the *Spanish Inquisition* (1478), which left them with the choice to either leave or suffer at the hands of merciless Catholic authorities.⁴⁶ On the contrary, secular Dutch magistrates generally welcomed Jews because they brought with them vast networks of trade and wealth that guaranteed some measure of economic return to the cities and provinces that took them in. In the early 1630's, the city of Amsterdam even granted approval for the construction of a synagogue. This was significant because administrators, especially in Amsterdam, did not allow the many other unofficially tolerated confessions to build houses of worship.

The Anabaptist confession was founded in Zurich, Switzerland by Ulrich Zwingli in the early sixteenth century and by 1523, was widespread throughout the Low Countries. In 1530, they were well established in Amsterdam and Leewarden. Anabaptists, later called Mennonites, sought to restore the spiritual purity of primitive Christianity to the church, through a strict adherence to the Bible, great moral rigor, separation of church and state, and the rejection of infant baptism.⁴⁷ They flourished in the Republic because they were perceived as left wing, and promoted individualism and a morality which tended towards legalism.⁴⁸ Many were martyred at the hands of the Hapsburg Regime during the *Revolt*, and became powerful symbols of the Dutch resistance. In conclusion, the Mennonite contribution to the story of the Dutch nation must be credited; they were the most established and widespread Protestant group in the Netherlands before 1560.⁴⁹

Catholics began a mass migration to the Orange States shortly after 1560. They found refuge in the United Provinces, where they were granted more protection than in any other Protestant sponsored state in Europe, yet they did not enjoy the benefits of Dutch leniency.⁵⁰ Penal laws excluded Catholics from citizenship eligibility and hampered their organization as a religious community as early as 1581.⁵¹ In addition, magistrates rigorously controlled the development of Catholic parishes by minimizing the number of foreign missionaries allowed into the country. Authorities hoped this would prevent the occurrence of sacred leaders with questionable loyalties, as indigenous clergy

⁴⁵ J.B. Strouppe, *La Religion de Hollandois* [Cologne (=Leiden?), 1673], p. 32-79, translated in Hsia, p. 44

⁴⁶ The Spanish Inquisition was set up by King Ferdinand of Aragon and Queen Isabella of Castile in 1478 with the approval of Pope Sixtus IV. It continued in the Americas until Mexican Independence and was not abolished in Europe until 1834.

⁴⁷ Fix, p. 26

⁴⁸ Pijper, *Geestelijke Stroomingen*, W. Nijenhuis, *The Dutch Reformation*, in J.A. Helby (ed.), Lowland Highlights, Churches and Oecumene in the Netherlands (Kampen, 1972) pp. 42-45.

⁴⁹ Ziverberb, p. 8

⁵⁰ Ibid, vol. 48, 18 April 1724

⁵¹ *Resolution of the Council*, vol. 25, 21 August 1654, inv. No. 121, Stadsarchief II, Het Utrechts Archief. *On citizenship in Utrecht: Ronald Rommes, Oust, west, Utrecht best? Driehondred jaar migratie en mirgranten in de stad Utrecht* (Amsterdam, 1998), p. 36-43, translated in Hsia p. 162

would assure that Hollanders led churches.⁵² On August 21, 1654, the City of Utrecht proclaimed citizens provide testimony of their region and comportment, but Catholics were excluded. “No one coming from outside, into this town and being of the Popish religion can be admitted as a citizen or into any of the guilds”.⁵³ Without the right to Dutch citizenship, Catholics were not granted fair trials or permitted into the guilds, and their access to social mobility and hope for progress was forfeited. In the eyes of the secular and Reformed religious authorities, Papists represented ties to Spain and the very institutions and ideologies from which the Dutch wished to be free. Moreover, this rejection must be understood in the context of a social discrimination that economically crippled the Catholic community.

Following the rule of thumb, Mennonites and Lutherans were generally allowed to worship in private, as they were considered to have no ulterior motives, while the same freedom was denied to Catholics and Arminians among whom these motives were assumed.⁵⁴

However, there were exceptions. In Amsterdam for example, the only restriction regarding citizenship exclusively referenced Jews.⁵⁵ Thus, certain cities like Haarlem and Gouda cultivated international reputations for tolerance, others like Dordrecht and Groningendid did not.⁵⁶

Catholics were not eligible for citizenship in the United Provinces until 1724 and even then, it was mandated that they provide evidence of their comportment and a signed declaration from a Reformed consistory. Unfortunately, the consistory could simply deny these applications. Therefore in actuality, Papists were not afforded recognition until much later. Not until 1737 were they granted citizenship in the City of Arnhem,⁵⁷ and they remained unrecognized in Zowelle until 1766.⁵⁸ A case study on the City of Deventer during the late eighteenth century sheds light on the impact of bigotry in these communities.⁵⁹ Here, Catholics represented 16% of the population, but were described as an impoverished group in comparison to the Reformed majority.⁶⁰ Acceptance was inevitable, and in the latter part of the eighteenth century a general decline in the trend of bigoted legislation occurred, attributed partly to the fact that they began to take more drastic action against prejudicial laws.⁶¹

Catholics were not the only body politic that suffered discrimination in the Netherlands. The *Socianist Movement* was founded by a group of radical evangelical spiritualists who migrated into the Low-Countries from Germany in the early sixteenth

⁵² Hsia, p. 75

⁵³ Hsia, p. 163

⁵⁴ Hsia, p. 75

⁵⁵ Hsia, p. 171

⁵⁶ Fix, p. 17

⁵⁷ Arnhem- the capital city of the province Gelderland in the eastern Netherlands.

⁵⁸ Zowelle- is a municipality and the capital city of the province of Overijssel, Netherlands, 120 kilometer northeast of Amsterdam.

⁵⁹ Deventer- municipality and city in the Salland Region (north-western area) of the province Overijssel

⁶⁰ Hsia, p. 167

⁶¹ They were perceived as enemies of the Republic and opponents to the Reformed Church.

century. Under the pulpit of Sebastian Franck (1499-1543) and Kasper Schwenkfeld (1489-1561), Socianists' came to reject the importance of all external religious institutions, sacraments and ceremonies. Most fundamentally, they denied the Trinity, which made them unwelcome in Catholic Italy, France and Spain and Protestant Germany alike. As a result, Socianism became a predominantly Dutch movement.⁶² However in 1653, the States of Holland and States General enacted anti-Socian legislations affirming they were no longer welcome in the Orange Provinces either. Just as Socianists and Catholics were excluded from Dutch leniency, so were Unitarianists, who rejected the divinity of the Savior, and atheists who denied the existence of God altogether.

Provincial magistrates collectively rejected communities that threatened the existence of social harmony, and changing tides in the general acceptance of particular religious groups was influenced by the political situation of the period. In the later part of the seventeenth century, authorities instituted legislation that transferred the responsibility of caring for the poor to the sacred realm. This mandate redefined the role of religious communities in society and made churches like mutual insurance organizations, caring for their own feeble congregants. As a result of the increased role of the denominational institution in secular politics, church elders gained more power and influence in their respective communities.

In unofficially tolerated churches, administrators were held responsible by the government for the conduct of their respective communities. Public consensus set social boundaries and community leaders enforced them, when it was determined a religious institution wrongly encroached on public life. Accordingly, dissatisfaction amongst the poor could now be directed at church clergy. Secular administrations closely monitored the clergy of tolerated faiths, arbitrated cases of schism and accorded churches whatever limits of freedom they deemed appropriate. The degree of restriction depended on location and confession, and it evolved with changing tides in public sentiments. In conclusion, a Dutch society comprised of several sharply defined religious communities was created, each controlled by civil magistrates, through church elders.⁶³

As responsibility for the poor became an established institution, some confessions altered their mission to express rigorous congregational requirements meant to discourage and even prevent the less privileged from joining. As a result, these churches evolved into wealthy and highly elitist religious bodies.⁶⁴ Comparatively, the Reformed Church held a social position between these elitist churches and the poor communities. In conclusion, legislative mandates directed the development of social hierarchy, with the civil authorities in power delegating the church's obligations to the clergy and their poor.

Civil authorities placed significant value in the teachings of the *Enlightenment* and recognized its practical applications in public policy. Yet, in order to recognize the circumstances that bore these useful applications, it is necessary to comprehend the implications of the intellectual movement which created them. Paul Hazzard accurately illustrates the importance of the *Century of Lights* in the broad sense:

⁶² Fix, p. 29

⁶³ Hsia, p. 84

⁶⁴ The eighteenth century Mennonites is one example.

Never was there a greater contrast, never a more sudden transition than this! A hierarchical system ensued by authority; life firmly based on dogmatic principles such as the things held dear by the people of the seventeenth century, but these controls, authority, dogmas and the like, were the very things that their immediate successors of the eighteenth century held in cordial detestation. The former were upholders of Christianity, the latter were its foes. The former believed in the laws of God, the latter in the laws of nature. The former lived contently enough in a world composed of unequal social grades, of the latter the one absorbing dream with equality. It was revolution!⁶⁵

Hazzard refers to the relatively recent transition of society from a traditional religious based perception, to a modern worldview focused on humanist ideologies. He further asserts the values and insinuations of both perceptions. This illustration is important because it yields a clearer essence of post and pre *Enlightenment* society, and highlights the progress and development of this significant intellectual renaissance.

Origins of the *Enlightenment* are found in Wittenburg in 1517 with quill and ink. Here Martin Luther nailed his 95 protests to the door of Catholic hierarchy. When he did this, he was not just asserting his own individual beliefs and dissatisfactions with the only Christian church in Europe at the time; he was also nailing a doctrine of revolt against hierarchy in general. Through this protest, he demonstrated his inalienable right to express his conscience and challenge the mandates of a corrupt authority. Luther's actions served as a necessary step for the preservation of humanity, against the evils of the Catholic Church and the absolutist states of Western Europe.

Innovations developed during the *Scientific Revolution* such as the Printing Press ensured that the principles of the *Protestant Reformation* would reach the ends of known civilization. Founded by its theological fathers, Luther of Germany, Zwingli of Switzerland and Calvin of Geneva, this theological movement effectively swept across Europe influencing kings and subjects alike. It gained the support of the ruling classes because it provided the opportunity for monarchs to challenge the authority of the mighty Catholic Church, as Henry VIII so famously took advantage of; while at the same time appealing to the persecuted masses by illuminating a new glimmer of hope from the horrific tragedies of the age.⁶⁶ Ernest Cassirer noted that the seventeenth century played a major role in the gradual displacement of the traditional worldview, as it was the result of a challenge to religious authorities produced by the *Protestant Reformation*. When the individual conscience was accepted as the only interpreter of scripture, and thus the individual's primary guide to religious truth, the next step was to ask how the individual's conscience operated.⁶⁷ Here the goal of the *Protestant Reformation* and European *Enlightenment* is stated most eloquently.

Since we all gaze at the same stars, and all for the same goal of eternity, what does it of his course? He was the right who said that it is not possible to arrive at such a great

⁶⁵ Paul Hazzard, *The European Mind, 1680-1715* (Cleveland 1964), p. xv.

⁶⁶ Henry VIII, monarch of Great Britain (1491-1547) had once been a sincere Catholic and had even authored a book strongly criticizing Luther, but he later found it expedient and profitable to break with the Papacy. In 1534 *The Act of Supremacy* made Henry Supreme Head of the Church of England.

⁶⁷ Ernest Cassirer, *The Philosophy of the Enlightened.*, (Princeton, 1951), pp. 6-22

mystery by one route only, but one goal set for all, and one door is open to those who hasten towards it.⁶⁸

The Netherlands indeed adopted and incorporated the practices of *Enlightenment* thought into public policy and developed a unique legislative trend towards secularism and rationalism. To understand this trend and define toleration in the Dutch sense is to consider the thoughts of the most influential scholars of the *Century of Reason*. Philosophers like Locke, who highlighted in 1689 that religious difference rigorously divided civil society to which one is obliged to belong and thus, both individuals and governments are forced to accept the diversity of religious opinions in a plural society.⁶⁹ Bayle later advocated the separation of reason and faith and the inalienable right of the erring consciousness. His epistemological scruples separated reason from faith and religion from morals.⁷⁰ Finally, the considerations of Voltaire were significant because he combined both perspectives.⁷¹ Such attitudes molded the perceptions of the Early Republic and were certainly present in the minds of ruling magistrates. Benedict Spinoza referenced these conceptions and their application in Dutch society often.

Now since I have the rare good fortune to live in the commonwealth where freedom of judgment is full granted to the individual citizen and he may worship God as he pleases, and where nothing is esteemed dearer and more precious than freedom. I think I am undertaking no ungrateful or unprofitable task in demonstrating that not only can this freedom be granted without endangering piety and the peace of the commonwealth, but also that the peace of the commonwealth and piety depend on this freedom”.⁷²

The circumstances of sixteenth and seventeenth century Holland amplified its ascendancy into a *Golden Age* and yielded a world empire far out of proportion to its resources. During this Age, the Dutch played a notable role in the draining wars against Louis XIV of France, and emerged as a center of international culture and finance. Its publishing industry made the Netherlands one of the main bases and clearinghouses of the *Enlightenment*. However, it constituted the Dutch version, favored by Dutch intellectuals and adapted to the religious, political and intellectual values and traditions of the Republic.

The arrival of many printers and booksellers made the Dutch publishing industry Europe's greatest seller of Latin literature. Humanists and Calvinists together were responsible for the repute of Dutch universities. The international fame of the Dutch editions of classical texts was based on humanist philological expertise, and the

⁶⁸ Arnoldus Buchelius, '*Commentarius rerum quotidianarum, in quo, praeter itinera sarum regionum, ubiam, oppidorumque situs, antiquitates, principes, instituta mores, multa eorum quae tam inter publicos quam privitos constingere solent, occurrent exempla*', Ms. 789, vol II, fo, IIIV (23 September 1589), fo. 132v (10 October 1589), fo. 144r (16 June 1591), fo. 155v (August 1591), University Library Utrecht, translated in Hsia, p. 159

⁶⁹ C. J. Locke, *Lettre sur la tolerance* (n.p. 1689), in Hsia, p. 28

⁷⁰ Pierre Bayle, *Commentaire philosophique sur ces paroles de Jesus Christ Contrains-les d'entrer* (Amsterdam, 1689), in Hsia, p. 28

⁷¹ Voltaire, *Traite sur la tolerance*, ed. J. Renwick (Oxford, 1999) in Hsia p. 28

⁷² Spinoza, *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus*, trans. S. Shirley (Leiden 1989), p. 51; Spinoza, *Opera*, ed. Carl Gebhardt, 4 vols. (Heidelberg, 1925), pp. iii, 7, in Hsia, p. 128

application of such methods to Calvinist Biblical research resulted in the fine reputation on Dutch Oriental Studies. Dutch seventeenth-century political theory drew heavily on both Calvinism and humanist traditions, and the writing of the Dutch language, strongly advocated by Dutch humanists, was according to principals derived from Latin Literature. In summary, it may be said that Calvinism and especially humanism provided the dominant elements of seventeenth century Dutch national cultural conscience.⁷³

Because the publishing of spectatorial periodicals was a strictly commercial venture, public interest in them expanded continually throughout the seventeenth century. Commercial accomplishments earned the Low Countries a reputation that affirmed its own interpretation of the individual conscience. Furthermore, commercial success helped spread *Enlightenment* ideologies to every corner of Europe. As a result, poverty was averted, benevolence encouraged, common sense cultivated, superstition fought, scholarship promoted, the arts perfected, and a society created based on mutual obligations and necessities.⁷⁴

The periodicals had preached that only in voluntary association could men and few women establish a basis for knowledge, virtue, and happiness. Only a society in which one felt at ease could one learn to control one's passions to value consensus, to free oneself of prejudice and acquire virtue by means of the refining and useful sciences. Consequently, the Dutch attitude toward official authority was completely different from that of the semiofficial-learned societies. They did not need official recognition (outside approval) but rather sought confirmation from within. In the eyes of their members, the act of subscribing to the often minutely detailed statuettes granted the society a much stronger basis than any government charter could supply.⁷⁵

When one considers the development of the modern worldview, the roles of figures like Voltaire, Spinoza, Locke and all the great champions of the intelligible realm, cannot be overlooked. But for a worldview to impose itself upon the common consciousness of a generation or an era, it must have followers, a public as well as leaders. The story of the *Collegiant Movement* is one explanation of how the modern rational and secular worldview gained a following among the educated public of the United Provinces.⁷⁶

The story of the Dutch Collegiants begins at the start of the seventeenth century when the Reformed Church attempted to establish itself as a body tied to state legislation. An influential group of Calvinists from the Southern Netherlands known as *Preceizen*, came to favor a rigorous interpretation of the doctrines of predestination, a practice of strict discipline and intolerance towards religious descent.⁷⁷ Shortly after 1600, the influence of this Geneva oriented theology became more present in the theology of the

⁷³ E.H. Kossman, *The Development of Dutch Political Theory in the Seventeenth Century*, in Britain and the Netherlands, vol. I ed. J.S. Bromley and E.H. Kossman (1979)

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, no. 20 (1760)

⁷⁵ Jacob, p. 218

⁷⁶ Fix, p. 19

⁷⁷ G.J. Heering, "Het godsdienstig beginsel der Remonstranten tegenover dat der Calvinisten" in G.J. Heering (ed.), *De Remonstranten: gedenboek bij het 300-jarig bestaan der Remonstrantsche Broederschap* (Leiden, 1919), p. 22 in Carl Bangs, Arminius, A Study in the Dutch Reformation (Nashville, 1971), p. 54

Reformed Church, leading to an increased adherence to confessions in religious life and a growing trend towards a greater doctrinal rigidity. Tension between these radical *Preceizen* and the older, more moderate branch of Dutch Protestants, triggered a dispute that determined the nature of church affairs for the duration of the century and beyond. This conflict bore the limbs of the *Remonstrant Movement* and provided a base for the eventual emergence of the Dutch Collegiants.⁷⁸

This theological controversy was inspired by the preaching of Jacob Arminius (1560-1609), one of three professors of theology at *Leiden University* founded in 1575, and a spokesman for the moderate reform movement in the Dutch Republic. Arminius believed that God predestined all people who sought salvation through faith to be saved, and held that God's grace actualized the individual's potential free will and made it possible to choose faith. With these ideas, Arminius sought to preserve human free will from the threat of radical Calvinist determinism.⁷⁹ Thus, Arminius and his followers called for a unified belief in a few fundamental doctrines of Christianity, toleration with regard to all other doctrines, and recognition of the supreme authority of scripture in answering sacred questions. These ideas later evolved into central Collegiant beliefs.⁸⁰

Johannes Uytenbogaert, a compatriot of Arminius and influential court preacher to Prince Maurice of Nassau played a major role in the organization of the Remonstrants, who established themselves throughout the United Provinces as an unofficially tolerated church. They quickly laid claim to a prominent place in seventeenth century religious life. Particular Remonstrant congregations that met secretly to pray and read scripture without the presence of a minister held the first college assemblies. It can be said that Collegiants were born from a Remonstrant parentage into a world of religious turmoil and debate.⁸¹

The term "college" had been used in the Netherlands since the late sixteenth century to refer to informal gatherings of Protestants for the purpose of religious education and Biblical study. Preceding 1575, these gatherings served as one means of producing knowledgeable Calvinist preachers. The evangelical emphasis on the *Reformation* created a growing need for scriptural knowledge among both the clergy and laity of the Protestant churches. When these meetings grew into a movement that expanded beyond the borders of tiny villages, both participants and observers came to apply the name Collegiant to those who followed the religious principals and practices that developed from these assemblies.

Colleges therefore, consisted largely of former Remonstrants seeking greater toleration and a more substantial means of expression for their undogmatic piety.⁸² Consequently, an atmosphere of extreme toleration prevailed in the colleges because their members believed such to be an aspect of the pristine spirituality of the primitive church they hoped to revive. By 1640 Collegiant influence was widespread among many Remonstrant and Mennonite groups. It evolved into an established and influential movement, that by the diverse nature of its members and ministers, inherently promoted

⁷⁸ Fix, p. 30

⁷⁹ Fix, p. 31; *Hoenderdaal*, in Hoenderdaal and Luca, eds., p. 15

⁸⁰ Fix, p. 32

⁸¹ Fix, p. 37

⁸² Fix, p. 40

clemency and humanism. Like freedom of thought, freedom of press was also greatest in the United Provinces. Thus, Dutch colleges in Amsterdam and elsewhere, published forward thinking political pamphlets and books that could be printed legally nowhere else. This freedom of expression heavily influenced the liberal orientation of Dutch universities, which provided the clerical leadership for the Reformed Church.

At the core of their beliefs, Collegiants rejected the spiritual authority of institutional churches and promoted religious reform, centered on the same principle of the individual conscience that Luther enunciated at Worms in 1521.⁸³ Just as Luther had rejected the doctrinal validity of Popes and councils in favor of his own conscience, the Collegiants discarded the unwanted authority of organized religion in favor of their own individual inner knowledge of truth. Because they did not consider themselves members of an organized confession, these progressive thinkers emphasized the need for individual free prophecy and tolerance in all aspects of religious life.⁸⁴ Dutch theologians understood that in a deeply and fundamentally divided society, compromise and consensus were vital to national survival.⁸⁵

In spite of the evidence that supports the prevalent existence of tolerance in the Early Republic, some historians still challenge the authenticity of Holland's acquired reputation, by debating the influence and intention of discriminatory legislations. Andrew Pettegree argues:

To the magistrates who promoted it (tolerance), it had no value or meaning in itself; it served merely as a weapon or party tool in their struggle for power with the ministers of the Reformed Church.⁸⁶

Critics note the absence of Catholic's rights in the Netherlands and the limitations placed upon other rejected communities like the Socianists and Unitarianists. In addition, the turbulent decade of the 1660's is also relevant to this discussion. This period was consumed by the on-going conflict between radical philosophers and apprehensive magistrates. In 1661, administrators sought to silence radical political philosophies that arose from the *Age of Reason*. This legislation sparked a massive outcry by members of the intellectual community who challenged secular leaders to enforce a standard of unrestricted expression. Influential theorists like Benedict Spinoza preached this liberty was an essential condition of the social concord between king and subject, and necessary in achieving the ideal human experience.

Spinoza's *Libertas Philosophandi* indeed stretched far beyond what had been conceded to the Cartesians under the States of Holland edict on philosophy in 1656, it was perceived as revolutionary and dangerous. It called for the unprecedented freedom to express ideas that conflict and contradict the theological premises on which contemporary cultural and

⁸³ *The Edict of Worms* was a decree issued by The Holy Roman Emperor Charles V banning the writings of Martin Luther and labeling him a "heretic" and enemy of the state. The Edict, issued on May 25, 1521, in the city of Worms in southwest Germany, was the culmination of an ongoing struggle between Martin Luther and the Roman Catholic Church over reform. Fix, p. 113

⁸⁴ Fix, p. 117

⁸⁵ Fix, p. 55

⁸⁶ Andrew Pettegree, *The Politics of Toleration in the Free Netherlands, 1572-1620* in O.P. Grell and B. Scribner (eds.), Tolerance and Intolerance in the European Reformation (Cambridge 1996).

intellectual life rested the final objective, presumably he meant to undermine the hegemony of theology in society and culture. "Freedom and reason to judge" causes all the arts and sciences to flourish, while lack of that freedom causes only decay.⁸⁷

Philosophers attempted to stretch acute legal boundaries to a measure of unlimited freedom, but most provincial magistrates openly rejected dangerous or potentially revolutionary political philosophies that threatened the right of the secular throne. They banned texts like Spinoza's *Tractatus* in 1674 and *Opera Posthuma* in 1678 and further discouraged Spinozism throughout the provinces. The publication and distribution of Spinoziastic texts periodically incurred severe penalties, including fines and terms of imprisonment, followed by banishment.⁸⁸ Similarly, elders of the Reformed Church also condemned open expressions of revolution. Although Calvinist preachers acknowledged virtue as the result of the continuous testing of personal conduct by reason, these influential Dutch theologians believed that reason alone was not sufficient. Religion was indispensable because it served as the basis for all human morality. Consequently, assertions that moral justification did not require scripture, threatened the sanctity of the church that vindicated its own secular influence on the notion of divine providence.

It is clear that both secular and religious administrations publicly disapproved of revolutionary philosophies as well as certain religious/ethnic groups they felt threatened their political power. As mentioned before, the motivation for these legislations was to gain popular appeasement for the secular leadership and maintain social order. Yet, a historian must observe these restrictive laws objectively, in the context of the situation and taking into account the implications of the action under scrutiny. These inconsistent periods of restrictive policy did not significantly impact the development of a tolerant society. These sporadic periods not only failed to hinder the cultivation of Dutch clemency, but were also consistent with the attitudes of the diverse proletariat class. More specifically, although the majority of people believed in a need for the separation of church and state and advocated the freedom of expression, they did not condone the complete absence of limitation. "According to the laws and practices of the state, there was no freedom to express (revolutionary) opinions, nor in the view of the vast majority, should there be".⁸⁹ In summary, magistrates generally initiated legislation consistent with popular consensus.

Even today, the extent of Dutch clemency exceeds a standard met by any known civilization. Holland's image of the seventeenth century revealed a nation that in a short lapse of time, had reached an unsurpassed level of economic prosperity, political and social stability, and cultural greatness. Therefore, it is surprising that in the context of current historical research, the Dutch influence on the modern worldview is little considered by many historians, who choose instead to focus on the inspirations for the *Age of Reason* in terms of the French, English and German contributions. This may be due in large part to the existence of little information about the unique Dutch synthesis of Calvinism, Humanism, and enlightenment. Nevertheless, there is no doubt this synthesis

⁸⁷ (Aert Wolsgryn, Johannes Duijkerius, et al.), *Het Leven van Philopater*, ed. Gerardine Marechal (Amsterdam, 1991), 99. 170-171, translated in Hsia, p. 152

⁸⁸ Isreal, Jonathan, *The Banning of Spinoza's Works*, p. 9, in Hsia, p. 151

⁸⁹ Hsia, p. 152

created a nation internationally renowned for its unparalleled incorporation of reason-based ideologies into society and government.⁹⁰

The fabric of society in the United Provinces is so perfect that it fully protects the natural freedom and independence of its members. Furthermore, it supplies, more than any other civil society that we know of, opportunities to participate in public life.⁹¹

Regardless of debates concerning the extent or even the existence of tolerant policy in the Netherlands, it is clear that the historical circumstances of enlightenment, diversity, public order, commercialism and scholarship all produced a culture that visibly recognized equality in human diversity. Through the incorporation of innovation into the development of early modern society, the Dutch discovered the secret ingredients of the potion for harmonistic socialization, and realized the extensive benefits of applying progressive concepts to public policy. The ultimate success of *The Tolerant Society* was based on the individual awareness that all humans are formed of frailty and error, and thus we must pardon reciprocally each other's folly.⁹² Furthermore it can be said that this eloquent interpretation of the duty of mankind not only gives credit to the mission of the Dutch in Europe but also reflects the attitudes of Orange colonists in the New World.

The Dutch in America
The story of Dutch New York and its manifestation of tolerance
1609-1875

The development of toleration in Dutch culture finds its origin in the turbulent sixteenth century and ever since, the function of clemency in modern society has validated its own effectiveness in pacifying a diverse populous. The Dutch not only developed a working system of socialization, but also exported it, laying the foundation for a progressive plural society that would come to pass as Holland's most successful and famous colonial remnant. Although most interpretations of American history have focused on the Anglo impact in defining Americanism, Hollanders have claim, recognized or not, to one prominent place in the evolution of our melting pot culture. Once the commercial heart of Dutch North America and today the financial center of the world, the culture of New Amsterdam confirms its non-English roots as much as affirms the Dutch civic and legislative precedents that have guided its progress. Although Holland's prominence in America was short lived, the persistence of Batavian values remained strongly intertwined with the culture and socialization of the "Empire State" and it's most famous city.

In 1609 the Dutch West India Company commissioned Henry Hudson's famous voyage to the New World. His exploration of the American Northeast was inspired by the journeys of those before him to find shorter trade routes to the exotic spice lands of the Far East. Although this goal was not accomplished, Hudson mapped the spectacular

⁹⁰ *Dutch Republic*. (2007). In *Encyclopedia Britannica*. Retrieved October 21, 2007, from Encyclopædia Britannica Online: <http://www.search.eb.com/eb/article-9031616>

⁹¹ *De Nederlandsche Spectator*, (Leiden, 1749-1760), no. 218 (1757), translated in Jacobs, p. 211

⁹² Francois- Marie Arouet - Voltaire

wilderness he discovered, and entertained its prospects for a promising fur trade. Consequently, Dutch colonists established communities between the fortieth and forty fifth latitudes from 1609 to 1614.⁹³

On October 11th, 1614, the Holland States General granted a charter to several merchants of the Dutch West India Company authorizing their exclusive right to construct trading posts in New Netherland. Immediately settlers constructed Fort Nassau (later Fort Orange) on the Upper-Hudson River and set up trade with the natives. In 1621 the Dutch West India Company was permitted to govern the North American Colony at their discretion, and in May of 1624 it dispatched its first ship of native Hollanders. These first colonists who landed on Manhattan Island later that year, quickly established communities on the Upper-Hudson and in Fort New Amsterdam. In 1625 the company established New Amsterdam as the headquarters for their new colonial empire and in 1626, Pieter Minuit, Chief Director of the colony, officially bought Manhattan Island in an exchange of goods with the local Lenape Indians for an astonishingly cheap sum. The Director and his Council ruled the colony autonomously, overseeing the sluggish expansion of New Netherland into Western Long Island, New Jersey and even south to the Delaware Valley.

Throughout the seventeenth century, the Dutch West India Company attempted unsuccessfully to lure settlers to the colony. The patroonship system was established in 1629 in the *Charter of Freedoms and Exemptions*, it was designed to attract prominent shareholders in the company by offering sixteen miles of coastal estate.⁹⁴ Yet the proposition granted no protection for the property or trade of the existing settlers; their land titles were not secure; their religious establishments received no guarantee and no consideration whatsoever was given to them in the political affairs of the colony. In some settlements along the Hudson and Delaware Rivers, several years elapsed before governing powers were taken from the hands of occupying military officers and placed in the care of civil officials.⁹⁵ The failure of administrators to provide persuasive incentives to settlers, discouraged many prospective travelers.

The patroons were given privileges which limited even such activities as fishing, hunting and milling by those people who settled on their estates. In addition, the patroons received extensive judicial rights over their colonists. In view of such restrictions, it is understandable why a Dutch historian over a half century ago stated that Hollanders did not go in great numbers to New Netherland to settle the patroonships because they wanted to remain free and not serfs.⁹⁶

Furthermore, Hollander's reputation for industriousness, their superior farming abilities and extensive knowledge of draining marshlands, made them attractive to competing European powers also attempting to establish empires across the Atlantic. English

⁹³ DeJong, Gerald F. The Dutch in America, 1609-1974. Boston, Mass.: *Twanyne*, 1975. 1-326. p. 11

⁹⁴ DeJong, p. 27

⁹⁵ McKinley, E. Albert., The Transition From Dutch to English Rule in New York: A Study in Political Imitation" in *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 6., No.4., (Jul., 1901), pp. 693-724, p. 694

⁹⁶ J. Van Hinte, *Nederlanders in Amerika: En Studie over Landverhuizers en Volkplanters in de 19th en 20th Eeuw in de Vereenigde Staten van Amerika* (Groningen, 1928), I, p.5 in DeJong, p. 29

developers offered Dutch immigrant's better incentives like larger estates without many pre-conditions, thereby convincing many to settle outside New Netherland.

For the century and a half of its primacy in world trade, Holland exemplified a market-oriented society.⁹⁷ With the largest overseas trade per capita of any nation in the world, seventeenth century Holland was the envy of their neighboring monarchical superpowers. It established a substantial stake in the *Atlantic Slave Trade* and created a highly diversified economy tied to the needs of its commercial hegemony and nourished by the most complex banking and market institutions of its time. Wage levels and living standards were the highest in Europe for well over a century.⁹⁸ Here political and religious liberties were widely enjoyed and many were reluctant to pick up and move from a situation that was faring them well. Accordingly, the Dutch West India Company was forced to rely on foreign settlers to populate the colony, resulting in a heterogeneous society vulnerable to invasion. One writer notes that only 30% of New Netherland was actually Dutch in 1664.⁹⁹ In sum, the eventual failure of New Netherland was testimony to the successful organization of government and society in the old Netherlands.¹⁰⁰

By 1664, only New Amsterdam was of substantial size, maintaining a population of over 1,500 inhabitants. Of the total white population in the region, between 8,000 and 10,000 or only about two thirds of the colonists were native Dutch. Even of these, many identified themselves as Dutch but were of diverse ethnic backgrounds. In seventeenth century Holland, more than two million of its subjects were permanent immigrants who had originally migrated from other parts of Europe. Accordingly, no more than half of the Dutch population in New Netherland was of actual Batavian origin, the rest were Dutch by choice. In the words of historian, Firth Haring Fabend:

Their reasons were likely rooted in the appeal of characteristics often associated with Dutch: tolerance, openness, the value placed on civic concord, pragmatism, charity, humanism, love of liberty, literacy, the relatively enlightened Dutch attitude toward women, and the perceived merits of Dutch law over English law. These New Netherlanders may be considered Dutch by choice.¹⁰¹

⁹⁷ See Thomas L. Haskell, *Convention and Hegemonic Interest in the Debate over Antislavery*, in *Bender Antislavery Debate*, 200-59, esp. p. 233-34. Haskell's argument, connecting the economic insignificance of slavery with the propensity to abolish it, recalls the opposite formulation by Adam Smith. In *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (1776), Smith commented wryly: "The late resolution of the Quakers in Pennsylvania to set at liberty all their negro slaves, may satisfy us that their number cannot be very great. Had they made any considerable part of their property, such a resolution could never have been agreed" (New York, 1937, p.366). Smith, and a sizable number of later historians, including economic historians, considered the economic insignificance of slavery to be the relevant factor in ensuring an early and rapid Quaker abolition. Haskell links slavery's economic insignificance to a *delay* in Dutch abolition. Neither Smith's nor Haskell's arguments work easily for both the Pennsylvania Quakers and the Dutch. in Drescher, p. 48

⁹⁸ Karel Davids and Leo Noordegraaf, eds., *The Dutch Economy in the Golden Age*, Amsterdam, (1993). in Drescher, p. 49

⁹⁹ Vlekke and Beets, *Hollanders Who Helped Build America*, p. 28 in DeJong, p. 35

¹⁰⁰ Fox, *Yankees and Yorkers*, p.40. in DeJong, p. 32

¹⁰¹ Fabend, Firth Haring. *Zion on the Hudson: Dutch New York and New Jersey in the Age of Revivals*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers UP, 2000. xvi-284. p. 9

Shortly after 1630 the Dutch Trading Company lost its monopoly over the American colony. Dutch settlements could not compete with their English neighbors who boasted a membership of more than 20,000 in 1640 and over 50,000 in 1664.¹⁰² Considering Holland's vast international empire and the initial failures of the patroonship plan, New Netherland was perceived as one of the Republic's least desirable colonies.¹⁰³ Although administrators made efforts to attract settlers, the initial focus of the empire and its subjects concentrated eastward towards the Mediterranean Sea.

Education in New Netherland was slow to develop in comparison to its mother nation. Although the charters of patroonships granted as early as 1629 required the presence of a schoolmaster, there is no evidence of one residing in New Amsterdam before 1638. Although by 1664 it is reported that all but two of the chartered towns in New Netherland had schoolmasters, these numbers manipulate the unfortunate reality that formal education was still relatively primitive and unimpressable at this time.¹⁰⁴ In sum, the Dutch of New Amsterdam failed to imitate the cultural awareness of their brethren across the Atlantic, who at the same moment were experiencing a *Golden Age* of enviable proportions.

In general, the seventeenth century New York Dutch were slow to develop cultural awareness because they lacked access to quality education, and the free time to cultivate humanist studies and refined talents. Early New Amsterdam also lacked a substantial population, in 1700, only 5,000 inhabitants occupied the city and at the outbreak of the *American Revolution* (1775-1783), the city boasted no more than 21,000 inhabitants.¹⁰⁵ Illiteracy was widespread and the culture was rugged. City records reveal that during the week of April 28th, 1639 there were 50 civil suits and 43 criminal cases including 8 complaints of slander.¹⁰⁶ In addition, many reports characterized the colonial Dutch as astonishingly concerned with profit and gain, hard working and dependable but shrewd in matters of money, and thrifty to the point of being parsimonious. In an ordinance mandated on March 10th, 1648 Governor Pieter Stuyvesant expressed alarm at the excessive drinking in New Amsterdam and the profusion of taverns, which made up about one-fourth of the settlement's business.¹⁰⁷ Smoking was also a popular trait among Dutch inhabitants.

Nearly all women who had passed their fortieth year smoked tobacco, even those who were considered as belonging to the foremost families. I frequently say about a dozen old ladies sitting about the fire smoking. Once in a while I discovered newly-married wives of twenty and some years sitting with there pipes in their mouths.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰² DeJong, p. 29

¹⁰³ DeJong, p.37

¹⁰⁴ DeJong, p. 75

¹⁰⁵ DeJong, p. 83

¹⁰⁶ Henry S. Lucas, ed., *Dutch Immigrant Memoirs and Related Writings* (Assen, The Netherlands, 1955), I., p.471. in DeJong, p. 83

¹⁰⁷ O'Callaghan, *Laws and Ordinances*, pp. 93-94, in DeJong, p.71

¹⁰⁸ Kalm, Peter, *Travels in North America*, II, p. 629. in DeJong, p. 71

In 1628, construction ensued on the first Reformed Church built in New Netherland.¹⁰⁹ The institution retained its privileged position as the only officially sanctioned religious body, reflecting the spiritual doctrines established at the Synod of Dortrecht in 1619. Here, religious affiliation was largely determined by ethnicity and thus the church became a symbol of national unity in the New World. Settlers were not legally bound to worship any particular faith and although public policy was lenient, the vast majority of colonists were willing members of the Reformed congregation. The church provided a spiritual home for those of diverse backgrounds and redefined itself as the religious base for persons of Dutch heritage.¹¹⁰ In addition, just like the debate that arose in Holland during this period concerning the emergence of new rigorous interpretations of the holy texts, the Dutch Church in America also suffered these theological debates.

In New York, compulsory church attendance was impossible where churches did not exist and in urban areas, there was simply not enough space to harbor all who wished to be actively spiritual. As a result, most were unaccustomed to regular public worship.¹¹¹

In view of the austerity and strictness that is traditionally associated with followers of Calvinism, one would assume that Dutch of colonial America thought of little else than going to church on Sunday and practicing piety in their daily living. Nothing could be further from the truth. Although Puritanical Sabbaths were the ideal sought by dominos, the frequency with which governmental regulations were issued on this matter during the New Netherland period indicates that the ideal was far from being a reality. A decree of October 26, 1656 shows that Dutch were not a solemn people to whom life was always a serious matter, but they enjoyed a great variety of amusements. This decree, in addition to prohibiting on Sunday “any ordinary labor, such as ploughing, sowing, mowing building, wood-shaving, smithing, bleaching, hunting and fishing as well as frequenting taverns or tipping houses, dancing, playing ball, cards, trick-track, tennis, cricket and going on pleasure parties in a boat or a wagon. On September 10, 1663 such activities were added including roving in search of nuts and strawberries and...unrestrained and excessive playing, shouting and screaming of children in the streets and highways.”¹¹²

On August 29, 1664 the Duke of York and Admiral Roger Nichols sailed into New Netherland Harbor commanding four British frigates holding 400 Redcoats. New Amsterdam’s Governor Pieter Stuyvesant was willing to fight with the mere 150 troops at his disposal, but eventually he came to his senses and surrendered the settlement on September 5th. Fort New Amsterdam became New York City and just a few weeks later Fort Orange (originally Fort Nassau) fell to the British invasion at Albany. The new English authorities were lenient and mandated that Hollanders were free to leave the

¹⁰⁹ It was built in New Amsterdam.

¹¹⁰ I have identified a number of individuals as culturally Dutch, even though they were born outside the Netherlands. This group includes Germans or French who had assimilated Dutch culture in Europe or in New Netherland. See David Steven Cohen, *How Dutch Were the Dutch of New Netherland?*, New York History, LXII (1981), pp. 43-60. and Oliver A. Rink, *The People of New Netherland: Notes on Non-English Immigration to New York in the Seventeenth Century*., in Goodfriend, p. 254

¹¹¹ N.Y. Col. Laws, I. 24., in McKinley, p. 711

¹¹² Such decrees were issued by the Director General and his council in 1641, 1647, 1648, 1656, 1657, 1658, 1661, and 1663. Edmund Bailly O’Callaghan, *Laws and Ordinances of New Netherland, 1638-1674* (Albany, 1868) pp. 25, 60-61, 93, 95, 98-99, 310-311, 342, 344, 425-416, 448.

colony and dispose of their property as they saw fit, while those who wished to stay were granted full citizenship.¹¹³

Upon arrival, the Duke upheld Dutch precedents in customs of inheritance and protected individual liberties. No sudden change in local government or public policy occurred. In New Amsterdam it was agreed that:

All inferior civil officers and magistrates shall continue as now they are (if they please) till the customary time of new elections, and then new ones to be chosen by themselves, provided that such new chosen magistrates shall take the oath of allegiance to his Majesty of England before they enter upon their office.¹¹⁴

The Duke of York was forced to adapt his political organization to the character of the predominating race in several sections of his lands. For example, the establishment of English political ideologies on Long Island was retarded by the longstanding Dutch precedent of local customs and policies. On the contrary, the Anglicizing process of the Dutch was hastened by the demands and opinions of the Long Island English.¹¹⁵ Thus, an initial position of indifference in accepting Dutch methods of governing harmonized well with the despotic powers of the Duke of York. The absence of any law allowing a general provincial legislative assembly in which the people were represented, indirectly affirmed the absolute authority of the Duke's Governor and his Council, almost exactly as it had existed previously under the Dutch West India's Company's Director and Council.¹¹⁶ He was the new and supreme commander of his acquired lands and to no other proprietor had such absolute political powers been granted; and in no other part of the continent from the Carolinas to Maine was there so much popular political liberty as was to be found in New Netherland.¹¹⁷

In 1665 the *Duke's Laws* were officially instituted in the colony. While these laws took some inspiration from the *New England Codes*, legislations in New York were significantly different. While accepting Dutch practices in many areas, the English municipal courts made one noticeable change. In place of the absolution of magistrates and arbitrators, the new English government established a court system of twelve appointed jurors, who mandated sentencing in civil and criminal cases.¹¹⁸ Furthermore, under the English, as under the Dutch, there was no popular participation in city government; and town magistrates appointed inferior officers, passed laws, tried petty cases, and admitted freemen.¹¹⁹ The City of New York continued to retain the trade privileges and monopolies granted to it in the Dutch days. For example, one could not exercise trade in the city, sell retail goods or even trade up the Hudson if not a three year

¹¹³ DeJong, p. 37

¹¹⁴ N.Y. Col. Doc., XIV. 559; Brodhead, History of the State of New York, II 46-47/ in McKinley, p.695

¹¹⁵ McKinley, p. 695

¹¹⁶ McKinley, p. 705

¹¹⁷ McKinley, p. 296

¹¹⁸ *Records of New Amsterdam*, V. 267, 279, etc. This jury system was discontinued by the Dutch during their reoccupation of New York in 1673-1674; but was again put in force by the English after their restoration; *Records of New Amsterdam*, VII. *Passim*; *Report of State Historian*, 1897, 286-288. in McKinley, p. 700

¹¹⁹ N.Y. Col. Doc., III. 337; *Penna Archives*, second series, V. 689., in McKinley, p. 700

resident freeman of New Amsterdam. Outsiders like residents in Albany, were prohibited from inter-state and most international trade, and no flour or biscuit for export could be manufactured outside the capital settlement. This central urban area remained the essential focal point of the entire province, where all merchandise was shipped and unloaded.¹²⁰

During the *Third Anglo-Dutch War* (1672-74) the Netherlands briefly retook the colony. On August 7th, 1673 with a fleet carrying six hundred men, Cornelis Evertsen Jr. challenged and defeated the British. Although the events preceding the *Glorious Revolution* (1688) inspired optimism in many Dutch colonists, the reoccupation lasted only six months and was transferred back to the English by the *Treaty of Westminster* on February 19th, 1674. By 1686 the process of formally Anglicizing the municipal government of New York was completed. There still remained the strong presence of Dutch blood, Dutch customs, and Dutch traditions and speech; but from the perspective of formal political organization, New York was by and large an English colony. However, in the extreme western part of Long Island where five Dutch settlements pre-existed New York City's five boroughs, county governments were modeled closely after the Dutch town-cooperation system. In an effort to avoid any major conflict which might disrupt the healthy operation of this vitally important center of commerce, the Duke made an exception, keeping Dutch customs and policies intact.

On the issue of immigration, Governor Nichols followed the pre-existing custom of New Netherland and the policy of Stuyvesant who ruled five years before him, that the admission of new inhabitants to the colony was not a subject for local determination (to prevent bias rejection), but belonged to the central authorities. Nichols' own experience in New England, his royal instructions, the *Duke's Charter* and existing Dutch sentiments, all opposed the exclusivity of the New England corporations and local governments, and in this feature, as in some others, the innovations of New York legislation made steps toward greater freedom, while at the same time establishing central government.¹²¹ The *Duke's Laws* imposed no religious qualifications upon voters or office-holders and it omitted altogether the title "heresy", which occupied such a prominent place in the *New England Codes*. Instead of the religious uniformity to which New England Puritans aspired, these laws developed a clement undertone.

Nor shall any person be molested, fined or Imprisoned for differing in judgment in matters of religion who professes Christianity...Economic and racial differences existing in New York would have interfered with the successful establishment of schools and colleges. The solidarity of New England society found no parallel in New York. In place thereof, we see various nationalities, many sects, and feudal ranks, all tending to mark off society into distinct classes....For unruly conduct on the part of the child or servant, the Duke's Laws punished the child, while New Haven and Massachusetts held the master or parent responsible and punished him for the waywardness of his child or servant.¹²²

¹²⁰ McKinley, p. 701

¹²¹ McKinley, p. 708

¹²² McKinley, p. 709

The most patent feature of policy the English were forced to adopt was religious toleration. In his royal instructions,¹²³ Nichols was cautioned to respect colonial religion. In the *Articles of Capitulation* composed at the surrender of New Amsterdam, he promised Dutchmen the continued liberty to worship freely.¹²⁴ Naturally, the Duke's Laws were framed to balance the priorities of Dutch and English towns in New York and thus took the only practicable position by accepting clement policy and religious indifference. Uniformity was impracticable in a population made up of Dutch Calvinists, Dutch Lutherans, English Puritans, Baptists, Quakers and many other minor sects. Therefore, the Duke legalized all Protestant sects and substituted the compulsory religious uniformity mandated by the *Puritan Codes*, for a public policy with tolerant undertones.

With many figures of this stripe for our authorities, we can confidently assert that the Protestant *Intelztiofi* in America was not towards religious toleration, let alone liberty. Yet it is also true that the colonies of Virginia and Massachusetts were the exceptions; they were the only colonies in which a program of intolerance had any real success, the only colonies in which a religious uniformity was achieved, and even in them for a relatively short time.¹²⁵

When the English assumed control over New Netherland, the number of sects already flourishing here precluded any new effective establishments. Governor of New Amsterdam, Thomas Dongan stated in 1687:

Here bee not many of the Church of England; few Roman Catholics; abundance of Quaker Preachers, men and women especially; singing Quakers; ranting Quakers; Sabbatarians; Anti-Sabbatarians; some Anabaptists; some Independents; some Jews; in short, of all sorts of opinions there are some, and the most part of none at all. The most prevailing opinion is that of the Dutch Calvinists...As for the King's natural born subjects that live on Long Island, and other parts of the province, I find it a hard task to make them pay their ministers.¹²⁶

Authorities did what they could to promote social harmony, but the best they could wring from a predominantly Dutch Calvinist assembly was the peculiar *Ministry Act of 1693*, which established four counties and six officially tolerated Protestant churches throughout the colony. No denomination advocated toleration on principle alone, rather the multitude of confessions that existed in this growing plural society rose to advocate religious liberty to protect their own establishments, and oppose the new official church (the English Anglican Church). "The circumstances placed insuperable obstacles in the way of intolerant public policy, especially in areas where a multiplicity of creeds checkmated each other".¹²⁷ In New England, selectmen were elected by democratic town meetings and possessed only such powers in legislation as were

¹²³ N.Y. Col. Doc., III. 51-61., in McKinley, p. 709

¹²⁴ N.Y. Col. Doc., II. 250-253., in McKinley, p. 709

¹²⁵ Miller, G.E., Perry, The Contribution of the Protestant Churches to Religious Liberty in Colonial America, *Church History*, Vol. 4, No. 1, (March, 1935), pp. 57-66. p. 59

¹²⁶ Miller, p. 64

¹²⁷ Miller, p. 60

delegated to them by those meetings. On the contrary, in regions concentrated with Dutchman, selectmen possessed independent local ordinance power aside from the rights granted to them by the Director and his Council. In this respect, Nichols copied the Dutch, re-affirming the power of community selectman. Therefore, the elective feature of local boards was English; the extent of their powers was Dutch.¹²⁸ The Duke framed his laws from New English, English and Dutch precedents, with some adaptations to certain peculiar conditions like the vast diversity in populous on Long Island. In political organization, the *Duke's Laws* were much narrower than the *New England Codes*, since they permitted no popular participation in provincial government and sought to deprive the town-meetings of their authority. With regards to toleration in general, they far outstripped the Puritanic legislations.¹²⁹

New England practices were first introduced on Eastern Long Island, where sentiments were overwhelmingly English. Conversely in New York City, despite a substantial English population, Dutch practices remained intact until 1653, and were not entirely abandoned after this date.¹³⁰ The Duke retained official job titles for civil service and court offices; the conception of double and triple nominations for political office and the idea for partial retirement. A town-meeting in former New Amsterdam, with all its mingled races and languages would have been an absurdity. Legislators understood that an urban cosmopolitan population required a centrally administered municipal government which enforced a policy that ensured that no one religious sect was in the ascendancy; Dutch practice furnished a good precedent for this. Furthermore, some features of Dutch land-tenure persisted upon the patroon estates and the exclusive trade privileges of New York City and its principle of municipal freemanship was retained. No doubt, the precedent of Dutch leniency provided for an easier transition into more social liberties, although it must not be taken as the sole cause of this.¹³¹

Some of the first *Dutch Reformation* preachers to settle in America were piests escaping persecution and criticism from right wing clerical bodies in Holland. The piest idea that ministers as well as laypeople experience a regenerative warming of their hearts for Christ was an unwelcome conception to the traditional ministry, as was pietism's inherent democratic bias. This controversy over human agency, or human ability, survived even into nineteenth century American religious life and dictated the path of the Dutch American Reformed Church for the remainder of its existence.

By emphasizing the Heidelberg Catechism, which downplayed the harsh doctrines of predestination and reprobation as outlined in the Canons of Dort, these first Piests were conveying a new idea to the New World, that personal holiness involved taking personal and moral responsibility for one's conduct and even for one's personal relationship with God, a novel and doctrinally daring idea for the Calvinist preachers to advocate.¹³²

¹²⁸ McKinley, p.713

¹²⁹ McKinley, p. 716

¹³⁰ McKinley, p. 723

¹³¹ McKinley, p. 724

¹³² Fabend, Firth Haring. Zion on the Hudson: Dutch New York and New Jersey in the Age of Revivals. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers UP, 2000. xvi-284. p. 17

The New Amsterdam Reformed laity never behaved like the deferential population tightly controlled by a rigidly traditionalist clergy, operating under unvarying rules of church order that some within the Reformed leadership wanted them to. In 1755 the Dutch Church officially separated from its ancestral roots and by the start of the nineteenth century, the emergence of liberal ideologies paramounted all but the most orthodox Protestants. The church came to dismiss the Canons of Dort as unnecessarily harsh and inflexible and perhaps even misunderstood. This long process of liberalization inspired originally by the rebellious ideas of Arminius, characterized the nature of the Reform Church and eventually helped it to shed the bleak image of Calvinism that had prevented its progress. The movement took on an evangelical theme that came to define the religious experiences of many sacred communities. As John Motley put it:

Evangelical religion made Americans the most religious people in the world, molded them into a unified, pietistic-perfectionist nation, and spurred them on to those heights of social reform, missionary endeavor, and imperialistic expansionism which constitute the moving forces of American history.¹³³

This was one major contributing factor to the great American revival. Yet, the revivalist evangelical movement affected the Dutch settlements outside of metropolitan New Amsterdam with greatest impact, as clergy in the city looked down upon these energetic visitation performances. Rural up-staters observed the Sabbath maybe less punctually than their New England counterparts, but far more punctually than the urban dwellers to their South.¹³⁴

The seventeenth century Reformed Church was ethnically enclosed but socially inclusive. In 1686, of 556 communicants, only 12 were non-Dutch including 5 Englishmen, 1 Frenchman and 6 free blacks.¹³⁵ In continuance, while only 65 (38%) of the 173 men in the lower half of the Dutch wealth spectrum were church members, 123 (72%) of the 170 men in the upper half of the economic gamut were also members.¹³⁶ Furthermore, church elders were not necessarily all of the mercantile elite, many successful tradesmen also occupied authoritative clerical positions. In general, church administrations were dominated by men,¹³⁷ but congregations were comprised mostly of females. Of the persons admitted into the church between 1665 and 1695, the majority (59%) were women. This trend continued from 1696 to 1730 when women outnumbered

¹³³ John E. Motley, *The Rise of the Dutch Republic* in Fabend, p. 29

¹³⁴ For an overview of church-state relations in New York colony see John Webb Pratt, *Religion, Politics, and Diversity: The Church-State Theme in New York History* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1967). Regarding observance of the Sabbath in colonial New York City see Winton U. Solberg, *Redeem the Time: The Puritan Sabbath in Early America* (Cambridge, Mass., 1977), pp. 197-221. in Goodfriend, p. 253

¹³⁵ Goodfriend, Joyce D., *The Social Dimensions of Congregational Life in Colonial New York City.*, in *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd Ser., Vol 46, No. 2. (Apr., 1989), pp. 252-278. p., 256.

¹³⁶ Goodfriend, D. Joyce, *Too Great A Mixture of Nations*, p. 194-196.

The city tax of 1695 was imposed to raise £50 for the relief of the poor for six months. The real and personal estates of residents were assessed at one farthing per pound. The tax list appears to include most members of the community, since it enumerates 37 people with assessments ranging from £0 to £5. {*Tax Lists of the City of New York, December 1695-July 15, 1699*, N.-Y. Hist. Soc., *Colls.*, XLIII (1 ~ 10) , XLIV (1911)}. in Goodfriend, p. 257

¹³⁷ *Catalogue of the Members of the Dutch Church, 1686*. in Goodfriend, p. 257

men in church association by a ratio of two to one.¹³⁸ By 1686, 44% of the households in New York City were represented in the religious body solely by virtue of a female member, who collectively represented 62% of the total congregation.¹³⁹

Preoccupied with business and civic affairs, many Dutch men must have ceded the religious leadership of the family to their wives. Not inclined to strong feelings about religious issues or too busy providing for their families, many husbands allowed their spouses to define family religious choices. Limited in experience and education and having only occasional contact with English society, Dutch housewives sought continuity in a world full of uncertainty. The English colonial government slowly chipped away at the egalitarian inheritance practices and other legal safeguards of women's rights that had been transplanted from the Netherlands, and the Reformed Church came to symbolize those aspects of the Dutch American experience that elevated the status of women.¹⁴⁰ In fundamental agreement with the clerical policy of preserving traditional ways, women reinforced the conservatism of the Reformed Church as it defined its response to the accelerating pace of cultural change in eighteenth century New York City.¹⁴¹ In 1730, 485 New York City taxpayers were members of the Dutch congregation¹⁴² which boasted 1,450 members.¹⁴³ Lutheran Pastor Henry Muhlenberg noted in his journal in 1751:

The Dutch Reformed Church was once the leading and predominant church, but in very few years the English Church has had an increase of many thousands with the result that a very large building can no longer contain the members and the second large church is now in the process of construction and will be completed in the near future. The reason for this is that the Dutch children forget their mother tongue and learn English. Since they cannot hear English in their own church, they go over to the other to hear what they understand and like.¹⁴⁴

¹³⁸ *Records of the Reformed Dutch Church, Members' List*, in Goodfriend, p. 258

¹³⁹ *Catalogue of the Members of the Dutch Church, 1686*. (I have omitted single men and women from this calculation because most of them were young adults who were attached to other families). in Goodfriend, p. 258

¹⁴⁰ Several recent studies focus on the impact of the transition from Dutch to English law on the legal status of women in New York. See Linda Briggs Biemer, *Women and Property in Colonial New York: The Transition from Dutch to English Law, 1643-1727* (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1983); David Evan Narrett, *Patterns of Inheritance in Colonial New York City, 1664-1775: A Study in the History of the Family* (Ph.D. diss., Cornell University, 1981), and *Dutch Customs of Inheritance and the Legal Status of Women in Colonial New York City* (paper presented at the Berkshire Conference on the History of Women, 1981); Joan R. Gundersen and Gwen Victor Gampel, *Married Women's Legal Status in Eighteenth-Century New York and Virginia*, *WMQ*, 4d Ser., XXXIX (1982), I 14-134; and Sherry Penney and Roberta Willenkin, *Dutch Women in Colonial Albany: Liberation and Retreat, de Halve Maen*, LII (Spring 1977), pp. 9-10. in Goodfriend, p. 276

¹⁴¹ Goodfriend, p. 277

¹⁴² Wilkenfeld, *New York City Neighborhoods, 1730*, *N.Y. Hist.*, LVII (1976), p.179. in Goodfriend, p. 260

¹⁴³ I use the sex ratio of persons admitted to the Dutch Reformed church between 1700 and 1730 to estimate the size of the congregation in 1730. Goodfriend, p. 264

¹⁴⁴ Theodore G. Tappert and John W. Doberstein, trans., *The Journals of Henry Melchior Muhlenberg*, 3 vols. (Philadelphia, 1942-1958), I, 283. in Goodfriend, p.268

The Dutch Church continued to say mass in its native tongue, which ultimately discouraged many young members from joining the congregation, because they were accustomed to the English vernacular and thus could not understand the sermons. Although this decision negatively impacted church membership, it also became symbolic of the persistence of the New York Dutch to keep their foreign affiliation.

Yet, New York City's ethnically centered configuration of congregational life began to fracture in the early decades of the eighteenth century, and by mid-century a more complex ordering had crystallized.¹⁴⁵ Personal predilection, social class, family, and education now played a greater part than ethnic identity, in formulating religious preferences. The decreasing salience of ethnicity in determining church affiliation was due to a variety of factors including the concerted efforts of missionaries like those of the *Anglican Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts*, an upsurge in piety among the Dutch Reformed, religious differentiation within the English community, and the ongoing effort of colonists to adapt to the English language and culture.¹⁴⁶

In New Netherland just as in Holland, Arminians, Quakers, Jews and Catholics occasionally suffered restricted liberties in small isolated communities.

In this spirit Penn founded his colony, on an explicit theory of liberty for all churches, though his conceptions were still not as broad as those of Williams and he would not enfranchise Jews or give harbor to Atheists. His plan was a little too broad for the home government, so that in 1705 the colony yielded to compulsion from Queen Anne and required the test-oath to be taken by office-holders, thus excluding Catholics from official positions.¹⁴⁷

In face of this, small congregations of Dutch Lutherans, Quakers, Jews and Catholics founded communities in and around New York City between 1666 and 1695.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁶ Goodfriend, D. Joyce, *Too Great a Mixture of Nations; Pointer, Seedbed of American Pluralism*; John Pershing Luidens, *The Americanization of the Dutch Reformed Church*, (Ph.D. diss., University of Oklahoma, 1969); Ronald William Howard, *Education and Ethnicity in Colonial New York, 1664-1763: A Study in the Transmission of Culture in Early America*, (Ph.D. diss., University of Tennessee, 1978). In Goodfriend, p. 262

¹⁴⁷ Miller, p. 63

¹⁴⁸ Goodfriend, D. Joyce, *Too Great a Mixture of Nations': The Development of New York City Society in the Seventeenth Century*, (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 1975), I 85-186.

Roman Catholics and English dissenters also were found in New York City during the late 17th century (*ibid.*, 122-123). On the Lutherans see Arnold J. H. van Laer, trans., *The Lutheran Church in New York, 1649-1772: Records in the Lutheran Church Archives at Amsterdam, Holland* (New York, 1946); Simon Hart and Harry J. Kreider, trans., *Protocol of the Lutheran Church in New York City, 1702-1750* (New York, 1958); Harry Julius Kreider, *The Beginnings of Lutheranism in Colonial New York* (New York, 1949), and *Lutheranism in Colonial New York* (New York, 1942). On the Quakers see John Cox, Jr., *Quakerism in the City of New York, 1657- 1930* (New York, 1930); Rufus M. Jones, *The Quakers in the American Colonies* (London, 1911); and Arthur J. Worrall, *Quakers in the Colonial Northeast* (Hanover, N.H., 1980). On the Jews see David and Tamar De Sola Pool, *An Old Faith in the New World: Portrait of Shearith Israel, 1654-1954* (New York, 1955); David De Sola Pool, *Portraits Etched in Stone: Early Jewish Settlers, 1682- 1831* (New York, 1952); *The Earliest Extant Minute Books of the Spanish and Portuguese Congregation Shearith Israel in New York, 1728-1786*, American Jewish Historical Society, Publications, No. 21 (1913), 1-171; and Jacob Rader Marcus, *Early American Jewry. Vol. I: The Jews of New York, New England, and Canada, 1649-1794* (Philadelphia, 1951). In Goodfriend, p. 253

Church records suggest that in the years prior to 1750, more than 70% of New Amsterdam's inhabitants were members of the Reformed Church. This large congregation included people from many different economic circumstances, and here too churches generally took responsibility for the poor of their respective religious communities.¹⁴⁹ Prior to the *American War of Independence* (1775-1783), the Dutch lived within a tightly knit, relatively static society; after the *Revolution* however, Dutch Americans passed through a bewildering era of accelerating mobility and economic expansion. Moreover, the merchant elder's commitment to the liberty of the colony did not imply any change in the community's hierarchical social structure. Well into the second decade of the eighteenth century, inhabitants re-affirmed this sentiment by continually electing the same church elders.¹⁵⁰

In 1840 there were 164 active clergymen in the Reformed Church in New York and New Jersey; in 1850 there were 285 and in 1860: 381.¹⁵¹ As a result of a slow build in membership, the Dutch Reformed Church in its internal and external struggle to succeed took measures in education, public relations and moral reform. By 1820 there were two Reformed higher learning institutions near New York City. *Queen's College* (which became *Rutgers University*) was chartered in 1766 along with its sister school, the *New Brunswick Theological Seminary*, the first graduate school of theology in the United States. In 1825 university administrators decided to maintain ties between the college and seminary; significant because it reemphasized a common origin and a specific group ancestry. It reinforced the sense of a reformed people the Dutch had already harbored; it affirmed that the Dutch were a group historically different and culturally distinct from other American communities. In other words, this decision sent out a clear message that the denomination's Dutch roots were too important for it to abandon, even as it constantly struggled to shed the negative effects of its foreign image.¹⁵² *Queen's University* maintained ties to the church until 1867 and did not become secular until 1884. It became a symbol of Dutch persistence in New York and New Jersey and an icon of their value for education. The second development of the Reformed Church was in educating the youth and in 1824 it affiliated with the *American Sunday School Union* in an effort to join its Protestant brethren in a full evangelical front towards greater quality religious education.¹⁵³ The denomination also invested particular efforts in the education of women. The *Rutgers Female Institute* established in 1827 was the foremost learning

¹⁴⁹ The Dutch Church took responsibility for all of the community's poor until the end of the eighteenth century. As late as 1773, when the Province of New York extended its laws "for the relief of the poor" to Albany, the Act stipulated that nothing of its content should be construed to "diminish the rights and privileges" of the Albany Reformed Church. *The Colonial Laws of New York from the Year 1664 to the Revolution* (Albany, 1841), 5585. in Hackett, G. David., *The Social Origins of Nationalism: Albany, New York 1754-1835* in *Journal of Social History*, Vol. 21, No. 4 (Summer, 1988), pp. 659-681., p. 661

¹⁵⁰ *City of Albany, Common Council Minutes, 1785-1820.*, New York State Library. For an observer's account of Albany's aristocratic politics at the turn of the century, see Gorham A. Worth, *Random Recollections of Albany from 1800 to 1808.*, (Albany, 1866). in Hackett, p. 668

¹⁵¹ Fabend, p. 74

¹⁵² Fabend, p. 34

¹⁵³ It should be noted that the first Dutch Reformed Sunday School was established in New Brunswick in 1799.

establishment of its kind. By 1856 the university had enrolled more than 4,000 young women.

At the start of the nineteenth century the church ventured into the world of media in an effort to recruit and educate. *The Magazine of the Reformed Dutch Church* began publication in 1826 as a monthly periodical and was replaced in 1830 by *The Christian Intelligencer*, a weekly newspaper. “The stated goals of the magazine were to advance the missionary cause abroad and at home, shape the minds and morals of every member of the church, defend the doctrines of the gospel as expressed with piety and precision in the canons and decrees of the Synod of Dort, and acquaint the rising generation with the history of the Reformed Church in the Netherlands”.¹⁵⁴ In the *Magazine’s* first year it had 1,750 subscribers and contributed to the eventual enfolding of member’s households in a larger community defined not by the narrow, parochial concerns of an ethnic church, but unified in the greater effort of the era, the transcendent common evangelical cause of saving America for Christ.

Let the church know this and mark it distinctly, we do favor all the charities of the day. We do embark heartily in the grand and holy (missionary) enterprise, at home and abroad. But we do it in our own cautious prudent Dutch way. We are fostering and sustaining, first of all, our own cause, our own home affairs...Those men who oppose us,- who oppose the *Magazine* who go fully and headlong into the Eastern policy, and mingle with the Hopkinsian and independent interests...they overlook and starve their own institutions...neglect the Theological Seminary, and the Missionary Society of the Reformed Dutch Church...while they pour out their riches in the lap of the theologians of the East.¹⁵⁵

Finally in a quest for sanctification, Protestants unified to form effective social and charitable organizations. In his work, *An Errand of Mercy*, historian Charles Foster compiled a list of 158 moral reforms, benevolent, charitable, and missionary societies, asylums, commissions, unions, associations, and auxiliaries that flourished in America during the nineteenth century evangelical age. By 1820 the leading clergy of the Reformed Church sat on the boards of all the major organizations included in this effort. Editors of the *Christian Intelligencer* noted that the Dutch Church was at this time “egregiously provincial, anxious about the rumored excess on the expanding frontier, and primarily concerned with purity in doctrine and practice.”¹⁵⁶

The Synod of Dort may has been described as “so like heaven” but for many, departing from Dort was edging too near hell. Reformed Church efforts in the 1820’s to join the mainstream American religious culture represented giant steps forward by an ethnic

¹⁵⁴ Porter, S. Elbert, *The Literature of the Church during the Last Hundred Years in Centenial Discourses. A Series of Sermons Delivered in the Year 1876*. By the Order of the General Synod of the Reformed Church in America. 2nd ed. (New York, 1877), pp.10-11. in Fabend, p. 42

¹⁵⁵ *Magazine of the Reformed Dutch Church* 3 (July 1828): p.4.- Samuel Hopkins was a student of Jonathan Edwards, from whose theological precepts he had slightly diverged, inflaming all of Calvinist Protestantism in the process. in Fabend, p. 57

¹⁵⁶ Hoeven, Van, *Dort and Albany.*, p 21. in Fabend p. 81

denomination that for two hundred years had looked to its Dutch antecedents to define its institutional integrity.¹⁵⁷

Indeed, the main decades of the eighteenth century revival went hand in hand not only with the spread of liberal Arminianized theology but also with such humanitarian concerns as were expressed in the church's moral reform movement. When Dutch Calvinists seceded from the Reformed Church in the Netherlands and arrived in New York in 1846, they found their American counterparts to be very different from themselves. For example, they had begun to adopt novelties of American revival culture like visitations.¹⁵⁸ By 1850 the church was becoming noticeably successful in shedding its foreign image, yet this should not discount the persistence of Dutch culture in New York as it continued live and well. A professor from the *University of Utrecht* visiting New York and New Jersey in 1850 commented that it was "a pleasure to find the Old Dutch ancestral customs maintained". In fact, such observations were recorded elsewhere during this period.

It is ironic that the persistence of Dutchness can be accounted for in part by the very public-relations effort that has been mounted to ease the denomination's *Magazine* and its successor the *Christian Intelligencer* to be instruments in the Americanization of its members, they adopted a policy of publishing extended historical discourses on the Golden Age (1600-1750) of Dutch history, Dutch contributions to American political and cultural history, and the heroic struggle of the Dutch people against feudalism, Spain, England, and Roman Catholicism that had the opposite effect and that actually revealed instead the denomination's ambivalence about giving up its Dutch heritage.¹⁵⁹

At a dinner hosted by the *New England Society* in 1875, Reformed Minister Dirck Broek rose to disabuse New Englander's of their misapprehensions about Holland's place in American history. He made clear that New Netherland was a trading colony eleven years before the Pilgrims even landed on Plymouth Rock and freedom to worship God was rather, the Pilgrims' freedom to prevent others from worshipping as they pleased. Dutch New York was a place of refuge for the persecuted of New England. Popular education and the American form of government derived its principled foundations from Holland, not England. In Holland the poorest classes corresponded to the middle classes of England. In continuance, Dutchman settled and cultivated the most soil rich regions on the Hudson, Mohawk and Raritan Rivers where they flourished with no thanks to the English.¹⁶⁰ Decades would pass, generations would come and go, and *Rutgers College* and *New Brunswick Seminary* would inculcate in hundreds of young men a love for their religious distinctiveness and their special history of Dutch ancestry.

In examining the close link between religious and ethnic identity in colonial New York, the fact that churches functioned as the nuclei of ethno religious communities was revealed. These communities supplied the institutional networks that brought a measure

¹⁵⁷ Fabend, p. 46

¹⁵⁸ Bratt, D. James, *Dutch Calvinism in Modern America: A History of a Conservative Subculture* (Grand Rapids, Mich., 1984). in Fabend, p. 62

¹⁵⁹ Fabend, p. 68

¹⁶⁰ Fabend, p. 70

of coherence to the city's social life during a turbulent era. Alterations in the social composition of congregations, along with the establishment of new denominations, bore witness to the diminishing influence of the city's ethno religious communities. Resultantly, New York City saw the emergence of a social system in which church affiliation was not solely a reflection of ethnic identity. The evidence of churchgoing and choices regarding denominational allegiance assembled here can be read not only for its value in deciphering the evolving social patterns of a pluralistic society, but also as a sign of the religious vitality of a city that gradually forged an unprecedented *modus vivendi* for accommodating conflicting belief systems.¹⁶¹

Geographical location and geopolitical factors varied the practices of Dutch settlements in New York. The Dutch in Albany, among whom it was often mistakenly thought that Dutch ways lingered longest, were in fact more progressive in their thinking than the Dutch in New Brunswick and Long Island, with their college and seminary and strong component of intellectuals and theologians with easy access to Manhattan. Further, Albany's trade was conducted down the Hudson with New York City, but also east with Boston and England. On the contrary, the bulk of New York Cities' trade was primarily with the rest of the continent. This was one factor in the slower Anglicization of lower New York in comparison. In continuation, the Hudson River and Catskill Mountains distanced Albany from Manhattan and discouraged frequent travel by colonists until the construction of the George Washington Bridge in early twentieth century.

Geopolitical factors also account for the differences in religious and political views in these two regions of former New Netherland. For example, the Hudson Valley was a neutral ground during the *American Revolution* and consequently suffered more British depredations than anywhere else. Accordingly, the Dutch in New York and elsewhere were not a monolithic block, but rather a number of differing cultural regions spread out over a large area. In 1826, the Dutch Church consisted of 12 regional classes- 8 in New York (New York City, Long Island, Albany, Ulster, Rensselaer, Washington, Poughkeepsie and Montgomery), 3 in New Jersey (New Brunswick, Bergen, Paramus) and 1 in Philadelphia. Each class consisted of a minister and elder Reformed consistory. In 1850, New York and New Jersey had 22 classes, 281 churches and 285 ministers. By 1876 there were 33 classes in total (including 5 in the Midwest).¹⁶²

The emergence of a public school system, the burgeoning moral reform and collective missionary movements all lead to the decline in a feeling of unique Dutch American identity. In 1850 immigrants were entering New York City at a rate of 17,000 a month. In spite of the joint Protestant effort to improve illiteracy rates among these new and uneducated immigrants, it was clear that church and state had to work together in order to be effective. Thus, a trend towards educational secularism embarked. Although the persistence of Dutchness in New York and New Jersey throughout the nineteenth century was closely related to the ethnicizing influence of the Reformed Church, it also suggested that the powerful de-ethnicizing, modernizing forces that conveyed the Dutch and their church into mainstream American life would ultimately

¹⁶¹ Goofriend, p. 278

¹⁶² Fabend, p. 84

prevail.¹⁶³ American state governments including New York recognized all Protestant churches as equals, a disturbing thought to Calvinists who regarded Christ's pure bride, the Reform Church, a "barred garden, a spring shut up, and a fountain sealed".¹⁶⁴ History proved that even this powerful institution could not avoid becoming naturally divided in terms of theology and eventually geography, as conservatives generally moved west, while liberals necessarily enveloped the urban cities.

To drop the word Dutch from the name of the denomination would hardly offend the principles of the *Reformation Movement*. Instead, it is to accept the fact, at long last, that the United States Constitution even as early as 1793, represented a new stage in history for the denomination, and all of America. Inspired not only by sacred precedents but obviously by secular ones as well, the Constitution and its articles and amendments vividly expressed a certain echo of Dutch toleration.¹⁶⁵ The Constitution in its implications made the break between church and state official, but American insistence on religion's voluntary nature permeated reformed thinking. The Reformed Dutch Church tried to maintain unity amid proliferating diversity, to keep faith with those who had come before while making it appealing to those who would come after, by turns it shaped itself to new circumstances and by turns it was itself shaped by forces over which it had little control.

If American history turns out to be one long story of different peoples struggling to identify themselves with their racial, ethnic, or national origins, it will be a sublime irony in the land that has long prided itself on its melting-pot model of assimilation. Irony it may be, but it is a story that well describes the Dutch experience in America.¹⁶⁶

The movement towards religious liberty in New York was carried to a speedy triumph in the revolutionary decades because the leadership was taken by a rational aristocracy, shot through with deistical beliefs, willing to see any number of religions have their freedom because they believed in none of them. There is a subtle and close connection between the shift of vital religious interests from elaborate intellectual systems of theology to the simplified emotional fervor of the new revivalism and the turning of Protestant Americans from a concern with ecclesiastical exclusiveness to the demand for liberty for all churches.¹⁶⁷ It must be emphasized that by and large, Protestants did not contribute to religious liberty, they stumbled into it, they were compelled into it, they accepted it at last because they had to, or because they saw its strategic value. In their original intention, Protestants were intolerant. Yet because of the sheer impossibility of unifying colonies characterized by diversity, because of the example of tolerance set by the Dutch and latter kept by the English, and because of a complete shift in the intellectual and theological situation of the eighteenth century,

¹⁶³ Fabend, p. 214

¹⁶⁴ William O. Van Eyck, *The Union of 1850: A Collection of Papers...* On The Union of The Classes of Holland (Michigan), with the Reformed Church in America, in June, 1850, selected and edited by the *Permanent Committee on History and Research of the General Synod of the Reformed Church in America* (Grand Rapids, Mich, 1950), p. 96. in Fabend, p. 215

¹⁶⁵ The First Amendment's disestablishment clause

¹⁶⁶ Fabend, p. 226-228

¹⁶⁷ Miller, p. 64

whereby religious liberty became a perfect solution for new issues, for these reasons, the Protestant churches and the citizens of New York did not so much achieve religious liberty as have liberty thrust upon them.¹⁶⁸

Analysis
Formal Education and Social Stratification
in the United Netherland and the United States.

The debate over social inequality has existed since the creation of civilization itself. From this evolution, the conception of social class emerged, influencing the general trend of particular cultural values and advancements. For centuries the presence of social class has been debated and justified under different context. For example, many scholars have justified this circumstance on the inherent diversity and potential of different species of human beings. Plato and Aristotle advocated this justification by asserting that society be ruled by those few endowed with superior character and values. Other influences such as institutionalized religion and economic developments have directed the evolution of culture and created a world of diversity. The creation of social science has forced the individual to further examine such conceptions of social class and social inequality.¹⁶⁹

It is possible to show that certain groups, through social interaction and control can determine that certain values will necessarily be satisfied by some members before others, on that certain values will be maintained in a dominant position in group interlocking or intermeshing.¹⁷⁰ The positions of these groups in relation to accessible means of power and social control, can determine that certain values will be dominant, or more clearly, satisfied first by various persons in constituent groups.¹⁷¹ “The order of value satisfaction in groups must be understood as the product of the interaction between many individuals, each pursuing his hierarchy, sacrificing something of lesser value for something of greater.”¹⁷² Differences between goals and values are important. Although all human beings are motivated to achieve success, one’s conception of one’s realistic goals is determined by the resources available to him, which can be characterized by social class. Thus, the environment one is exposed to influences his conception of values and effects achievement goals. In current thinking, mobility is associated with the reduction of inequality and the leveling of cultural barriers between classes. Therefore, the relationship between mobility and social stratification can be examined and exposed by analyzing the organizational imperatives that influence social structure.

¹⁶⁸ Miller, p. 66

¹⁶⁹ Zeyl, Van, and Cornelis J. *Ambition and Social Structure: Educational Structure and Mobility Orientation in the Netherlands and the United States*. Lexington, Mass.: *Lexington Books*, 1974. xvii-208.

¹⁷⁰ Zeyl, p. 5

¹⁷¹ Edwin, Lemert., *Human Deviance, Social Problems, and Social Control* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1967), p.5. in Zeyl, p.7

¹⁷² Zeyl, p. 8

Social mobility and class culture are related in that mobility is used to establish class boundaries, either strong or weak, depending upon the character of the mobility process and how it is institutionalized. In many stratification systems there is only a single avenue to mobility, carefully controlled by a dominate elite.¹⁷³ One develops their conception of values from the observations of their experience, which are dictated by class culture. Social scientists generally acknowledge that these values are determined by a number of factors. Although family is important in influencing such, it is not the total or even dominant influence. A more plausible explanation is ones occupation which is inherently connected to one's formal education. In the modern industrialized civilizations it can be said that, family and most importantly, education mold the values and aspirations of the individual. Furthermore, formal education is the medium by which these societies determine which persons will select, and be selected for, categories of roles.

Formal schooling accomplishes two objectives. Modern-day-society requires special skills that can only be accessed through education. Second it serves to form the moral character of a child, thus imposing values in him that are deemed desirable by those at the top of the social hierarchy. The primary reason for our emphasis on the school is its decisive impact of social selection. The school is the primary formal agency of status allocation in our society. The individual's performance in school and the amount of education he acquires are important determinants of his class membership. Insofar as there is a lack of value consensus within classes, individuals may be marked for mobility because they posses divergent values favored by the educational system. By setting up its own set of priorities, the school can force the mobile individual to accommodate his values to those favored by social selection.”¹⁷⁴

Although class distinction is inherited, it is directly related to education in the system of selection. Different cultures have established different ideologies in these systems of selection. Social selection, whether based upon inheritance or family position, is inevitably intertwined with social control.¹⁷⁵ Therefore it follows that an explanation of how mobile individuals acquire the value orientations appropriate to their destination, requires reference to the structure of the process of social selection within a particular society. Ralph H. Turner in his Sponsored and Contest Mobility and the School System asserts:

The accepted mode of upward mobility (in a society) shapes the school system directly and indirectly through its effects on the values which implements social control.¹⁷⁶

Accordingly the two systems which relate to this study are characterized with the distinctions, systems of contest mobility and systems of sponsored mobility. The contest mobility system is the adopted model for the system of formal education in the United States and the sponsored system the adopted model in England, the system adopted by the Dutch rests somewhere in the middle of these two.

¹⁷³ Zeyl, p. 21

¹⁷⁴ Zeyl, p. 27

¹⁷⁵ Zeyl, p. 37

¹⁷⁶ Zeyl, p. 43

Contest mobility is a system in which elite status is the prize in an open contest, and is taken by the aspirants' own efforts. While the "contest" is governed by some rules of fair play, the contestants have wide latitude in the strategies they may employ. Since the prize of successful upward mobility is not in the hands of the established elite to give out, the latter are not in a position to determine who shall attain it, and who shall not. Victory must be won solely by one's own efforts. The most satisfactory outcome is not necessarily a victory of the most able, but of the most deserving.¹⁷⁷ In the contest system as expressed by the United States, the process of selection to elite status is not determined until the very end of the education process. "American schools employ the most external and competitive standard available: they differentiate between the length of an elite aspirant's education rather than the quality".¹⁷⁸ Because the contest system focuses on future orientation, aspiration is relevant and important to the mobile individual. The individual must take an active role in emulating the values of the class to which he subsequently moves. From a structural standpoint, it is not the absence of a selective process, but rather the lack of a dominant process; there can be no formal and objective criteria such as academic ability (performance).¹⁷⁹ The important rewards are not given based on academic excellence alone, but a completion of higher level education in comparison to one's peers.

Under sponsored mobility, elite recruits are chosen by the established elite or their agents, and elite status is given' on the basis of some criterion or supposed merit and cannot be taken by any amount of effort or strategy. In this process the elite or their agents, who are best qualified to judge merit, call those individuals to elite status who express the appropriate qualities. Individuals do not win or seize elite status, but mobility is rather a process of sponsored induction into the elite class following selection.¹⁸⁰ Under sponsorship, the educational structure tends to be highly centralized in administration and selection procedures are highly standardized. Students are separated according to their destination and thus, the system serves as a medium of induction to a life of pre-determined possibilities and opportunities.

In the English system students are segregated early into their appropriate schools (at age 11) by examinations that will determine acceptance to college preparatory schools, and the rest who will attend secondary schools. Early selection allows a single set of standards or credentials to distinguish the elite, because others who have not met the initial test (inheritance) are disqualified from later competition. When a student reaches the university level, the process is considered to be complete and no competition or elimination occurs.

The most important feature of either system is first the structure of the elite, and second, the degree of elite control over its own selection and recruitment. Sponsorship suggests the presence of dominant and established elite and the latter, a lack of one. The Dutch school system is characterized somewhere in-between the systems employed by the English and the United States, yet this system most definitely does facilitate characteristics of the sponsorship ideology. Analyzing this system is difficult however

¹⁷⁷ Turner, Ralph, H., *The Social Context of Ambition*,. (San Francisco: Chandler Publishing Company, 1964), p.220. in Zeyl, p.43

¹⁷⁸ Zeyl, p. 46

¹⁷⁹ Zeyl, p.63

¹⁸⁰ Turner p.220 in Zeyl, p.43

because the concept of elite status in Dutch culture, constitutes both the wealthy merchants and the royal aristocracy (in England title is not distinguished by wealth but by birth and in America quite the opposite is true). This system of education developed in the seventeenth century. In reference to Dutch history, the distinction is usually made between the common and the learned class; each is representative of the level of education one receives. At age 11, students take a series of academic examinations that filter them into a particular type of school, which is totally determinant of one's subsequent educational and occupational career. However, the main difference between this and the British system is that everyone is eligible, admission is un-bias to inheritance.

Education for the learned class is centered on the humanistic tradition and focuses on a broad study of liberal arts, focusing on the ability to critically analyze, cultivate reason and inspire innovation. Students of the learned or upper class attend grammar schools and, only students who attend grammar schools can then advance to the university level. Separating the elite from the masses are those educated in clerical schools, the description of such schools in Parliamentary proceeding notes they lacked "the foundation and formative powers provided by classical learning".¹⁸¹ They provide general knowledge in business skills and other practical areas. In sum, it can be said that these schools promote necessary skills. Technical schools assume the rest of the population and are meant to cultivate a primitive understanding of knowledge directed towards an occupational destination that can be assumed as low-society (blue collar).

The goal of the Dutch education system was supposed to accomplish a dual cultivation of practical knowledge and a moral awareness. The study of classical languages, texts and cultures was necessary to the formation of intellect and personality. The purpose to maintain a rich cultural tradition embodied in self-conscious elite. Yet this was not practical for a society of such diversity as not everyone had the time or opportunity to cultivate such understandings (like colonial New Yorkers), thus the system took on a trend towards Social Darwinism. This method referred to as adaptive education, was a development bred in the early struggle between the royal aristocracy and the powerful merchant wealthy.

Students in each type of school receive a drastically different quality of education. Furthermore, the type of school one attends directly influences his destination and social class. Accesses to high society (white collar) occupations are restricted to products of the clerical schools, high level professional jobs for the grammar schools, and so on. Because the Dutch also wished to include aspects of moral teaching, in towns where only one of each kind of school might exist, there is a school for each religious block. This policy advanced the Dutch trend towards a segmented society.

Regarding the relationship between aspirations and mobility, an interesting conflict is presented. The contest system illustrates a method in which everyone is free to aspire and work towards upward social mobility, but it instills in the individual a false sense of obtainment. There are few elite positions and thus the exclusion process is unforgiving. The contest system may contribute to a society that has personal aspirations not consistent with reality. On the other hand, the sponsorship system establishes one's destination early, therefore, developing aspirations more akin to actuality. Yet, some

¹⁸¹ Zeyl, p.49

historians argue that it may also contribute a descent in the motivation to innovate, as students are doomed to a fate early on.

In a contest system, personal mobility aspirations are important both as a motivational fuel and as a component of the ideological rationale, yet the collective level of personal mobility aspirations are logically higher than the system can reasonably fill.

Under the contest the school system possesses few means of formal selection of candidates, therefore, it may rely upon informal means. The internalization of motivation or aspiration for higher status of primary importance: consequently differentiation of individuals by aspirations is the primary mode of selection. Academic ability is not unimportant as a selective mechanism and it is evaluated competitively, but it functions more as a guide to the individuals' evaluation of his potential than as an actual restraint that individuals of a wide range of ability can enter a university means that the primary mechanism by which they must be differentiated is their own personal aspiration for a college education.¹⁸²

This is important because it emphasizes a cultural variation with regard to a particular value system, which in fact lends a certain society its uniqueness, revealing the core elements of its foundation. However, the investigation of particular structural cleavages in comparing societies has not been granted much attention. Even the very broad concepts...unconscious system of meaning, core culture, cultural themes and others, are empirical generalizations, not analytical constructs. In both formulation and application, they have been too particularized to single cultures to permit systematic comparisons between societies, and at the same time, too grossly generalized to allow for the analysis of variations within.¹⁸³ All too frequently those who have demonstrated a uniqueness in the value system of different societies have ignored the fundamental fact of the universality of some human problems, and its correlate that human societies have found for some problems, approximately the same answers. Also, in most of the analyses of the common value element in culture patterning, the dominant values of peoples have been overstressed and the variant values largely ignored".¹⁸⁴

Cultural historian and sociologist Van Zeyl hypothesizes that the process of formal schooling reveals significant effects on three of the value indices, in each case stronger than that of background, but class background exerts a significant impact on individualism, while school does not. The direct effect of the school on values indicates the extent to which individuals divergent in social origin from the mean for their school, are being socialized to institutional values. Our finding that school level and social class both have substantial direct effects, is most consistent with the interpretation that both institutional socialization and socialization in the class context, are of equal importance in stratifying the values of individuals. In continuance, it is plausible that the individual who actually perceives his school level as a step to mobility is the one, in fact, most likely to internalize the model values that he finds in the institutional environment.¹⁸⁵ A

¹⁸² Zeyl, p. 69

¹⁸³ Zeyl, p. 145

¹⁸⁴ Kluckhohn, F., L., Strodbeck, and Roberts, J., *Variations in Value Orientations*, (New York: Row, Petersen, 1961). in Zeyl, p. 130

¹⁸⁵ Zeyl, p. 149

great proportion of the influence of class is channeled via school. In addition, he contends that the socialization in the family context has the most favorable effect on values when it determines school selection, which affects socialization to values. Because they are interconnected, institutional socialization has the most favorable effect on values when it determines aspirations that produce a greater orientation to specific values.¹⁸⁶

Zeyl employed the sponsored-contest paradigm on two levels, both as a description of institutional arrangements governing selection, and as a set of ideological formulations that facilitate social control. Using the educational system as a comparative base is justified in the fact that educational institutions are central to status transmission in industrial societies. The Dutch school system is consistent with the features of a sponsored system that promotes a sense of collective consciousness, by the process of controlled selection. It helps critical historians and social scientists to compare two ideal systems (specifically the Netherlands and U.S.) and ask the question, what is the impact of a sponsored system of education on cultural stratification? Van Zeyl's study suggests that cultural differences between classes are produced primarily by the operation of a dominant set of institutions that organize the sorting and sifting of individuals, for different social strata. The educational sorting and sifting which occurs under sponsorship, is largely a passive matter from the standpoint of the individual; whereas the formation of values may involve taking a more active stance regarding one's personal fate. The increasing importance of educational credentials has frequently been emphasized as a major factor in increasing rates of mobility, because education emphasizes personal achievement over the advantages of birth. Much contemporary thinking has emphasized the outcomes of social selection as manifested by a certain level of social inequality or a specific rate of mobility. Yet, it is equally important to understand the institutional structure which produces such outcomes, as it is to merely record them. Furthermore, both the systems of sponsorship and contest are variants of *democratic ideologies* and thus, have certain aspects in common. All in all a society must leave some upward mobility routes open to everyone, even though they are clearly difficult to access.¹⁸⁷

Achievement values are most strongly related to social processes that have the logic of a contest, even when sponsorship is the general norm. To an extent, both systems require an active response from the individual. Under contest, the individual is selected to some extent on the basis of his aspirations; therefore, his motivation can be taken for granted. Under sponsorship, the individual is selected for elite schooling on the basis of his academic ability. Once he is selected, he has the potential to enter an elite occupational position, whereas his cohorts, less favored by the selective process, do not. Sponsorship functions primarily to place a ceiling on a student's aspirations, rather than to restrict their absolute extent.¹⁸⁸

It is clear that plurality has directly influenced the social development of tolerance in the United Netherlands and present day New York. However, it is also true that the emergence of this general trend towards clemency evolved in these two separate contexts

¹⁸⁶ Zeyl, p. 152

¹⁸⁷ Zeyl, p. 160-170

¹⁸⁸ Zeyl, p. 175

out of different circumstances. In Holland, the composition of populous was the result of the mass migration of many sub-cultural identities, which established a multivocality of creeds that prevented the onslaught of strict Calvinist determinism. The rigid theology of the Netherlands's official state church thereby, became a compliant participant in a greater system designed to promote the importance of rational secularism, and an ideally unattached political authority, made up of both the inherited nobility and the wealthy merchant elite.

In New Netherland and especially New Amsterdam, the heterogeneous society was the result of an organizational failure of the Dutch West India Company to attract Batavian settlers to the colony, as well as the primitive, rugged nature of colonial life and the incentives that drew individuals from every spectrum to it. Here as in Holland, the establishment of many creeds prevented the dominance of any particular group with exception to the secular leadership, entrusted to uphold the precedent of lenient public policy. In America, the Reformed Church represented an ethnic community amidst a population of competing interests, struggling to survive and retain its prominence in the face of a trend towards liberalized theological interpretations. Although in both cases, the movement towards freedom can accurately characterize these experiences, so also can the involvement of religion as a significant median of truth in defining these cultures.

The existence of many sub-cultural identities represented in the general body politic, no doubt provided the conditions for a circumstance of tolerance, yet it was not the sole cause of this liberty. In addition to this force were the profound attempts of a social stratum struggling to assert its dominance and power over others, and the intellectual developments which came from the *Renaissance*, *Protestant Reformation*, the *Century of Reason*, and *Scientific Revolution*. All of these forces affected the divergence of rational secularism, while affirming the importance of the sacred traditions. Yet, these movements influenced all of the modernized industrial societies of Europe and their various manifestations abroad. Moreover, the question is raised, what factors made the Netherlands and New Netherland different?

One answer rests in the unique development of socialization and stratification in Batavian culture, which did not follow the trend of its larger neighboring monarchical states towards a system of social selection of sponsored mobility. More specifically, a system of sponsorship is the evolutionary product of feudalism, confirming the inherited privileges of the noble elite by establishing their direct control over the process of selection itself. This idea was naturally guided by notions of exclusion, resulting in a society deeply divided by class stratification, characterized by un-proportionality, and symbolic of a retreat from reason, fairness and secularism (as in these societies clergy was included in the elite).

On the contrary, in the Low Lands of Northern Germania, social stratification evolved to include both the inherited nobility and the unattached merchant wealthy, guided by self-interest and the interests of those (like themselves), not included in the established elite. Therefore, this added component affected the Dutch process of social or occupational selection to present a relatively rational and unbiased method for obtaining upward mobility. The ideological foundation for this specialized modern method was ultimately transplanted in urban Dutch settlements in the New World. The principle that an education process provides the opportunity for all to advance, influenced the development of the contest system, eventually adopted in the United States.

A critical eye might point out that in America, the dominant group is the financially endowed, or more clearly, this class stratum consists of only the “merchant elite”. Thus, it can be argued that in the new world, social mobility is exclusive to the financially able, even though it claims to express the most inclusive model for social selection. In response, even though this method of class regulation employs a different justification for doing so, it still de-emphasizes the entitlement of the noble class culture, extending the privilege of opportunity to all. In this distinctive feature, the American interpretation of socialization was most pertinently influenced more by Dutch precedents than Anglo-ideologies.

Whether the examining cultural historian chooses to attributes *Dominant Culture Theory*,¹⁸⁹ or sub-cultural identities to the course of social evolution in the Netherlands and the United States, the influence of one on the other reveals and highlights the intimacy of their relationship. Therefore, this study affirms the importance of broadening historical sources to non-Anglo and non-U.S. based references in attempting to define a national cultural identity.

¹⁸⁹ Dominant Culture Theory- Instead of a regarding the manifestation of the fact that everyone is striving for very similar cultural goals, this conception is a manifestation of the fact that there is a single dominant hierarchy of cultural values with determines what these goals should be.